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## 2020 NEC All-Conference Football Team

**Mobridge/Pollock:** 5-0 \*\*NEC Champions: Seniors Cayden Eisemann, Trace Cerney, Braden Goehring, Bryston Goehring, Zane Reinhart and sophomore Aiden Schoenhard. (Honorable Mention: Seniors Hudson Filler and Gavin Reinhart)

**Sisseton:** 4-1: Seniors Anthony Tchida, Andrew Kranhold, Carter Schaunaman, Levi Greseth and Isaiah Harrison. (Honorable Mention: Seniors Devan Appl and Xavier Donnell)

**Redfield:** 3-2: Seniors Dylan Whitley and Bradyn Robbins and juniors Troy Thompson and Sean Domke. (Honorable Mention: Juniors Easton Miller and Mason Fey)

**Aberdeen Roncalli:** 2-3: Senior Brent Ekanger and sophomores Jackson Isakson and Maddox May. (Honorable Mention: Junior Carson Helms and Brenden Livermont)

**Groton Area:** 1-4: Seniors Jaimen Farrell and Alex Morris. (Honorable Mention: Juniors Pierce Kettering and Jordan Bjerke)

**Webster:** 0-5: Junior Jayden Keller. (Honorable Mention: Seniors Colby Torrence and Jake Case)



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

The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.



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**The bowl to the water tower was assembled on Wednesday. As work continues to progress, the crew is working seven days a week and as soon as the bowl is fully assembled, the big crane will arrive in Groton as the sections to the tower will then be assembled.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



## Winter sports face virus-related rule changes

By Dana Hess  
For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — Figuring out how to allow athletes to compete in a close contact sport, like wrestling, during a pandemic was just one of the challenges faced by the South Dakota High School Activities Association board of directors at its meeting Wednesday, Nov. 4.

“Wrestling is going to give me ulcers and turn my hair gray,” according to SDHSAA Executive Director Daniel Swartos who explained the recommended rule changes for winter sports. “In general, it involves items surrounding the event and not the event itself.

Working from guidelines offered by a 29-member task force of educators and medical professionals, the board approved rule changes for wrestling, gymnastics and basketball.

The 22-page document detailing the recommendations of the task force can be found on the association’s website at [sdhsaa.com](http://sdhsaa.com).

In the task force recommendation, sports were judged as high risk or moderate risk. Basketball and gymnastics are moderate risk sports and wrestling was deemed high risk.

In its recommendation, the task force offered mandatory, optional and impermissible rule modifications. Mandatory rule changes must be followed, optional rule changes may be used by school districts and impermissible items are not allowed by SDHSAA rule.

All mandatory rules call for social distancing whenever possible and team benches reserved for players only.

Among the mandatory rules for each sport is a notification of exposure: “In the event a competitor tests positive for COVID, schools shall notify the school of any competitors of the positive individual during the previous 48 hours and inform them of the positive test and exposure. Participants who test positive are expected to be forthright in the close contact investigation and inform those completing the investigation of close contact with teammates and people on opposing teams.”

One of the mandatory rules for wrestling calls for developing “pods” in which athletes and coaches interact only in that group.

“The intent is to have common practice partners,” Swartos said, to help ensure precise contact tracing. He said coaches, if they go from pod to pod, should instruct wrestlers verbally rather than physically demonstrate moves with the wrestlers.

Referees will no longer perform skin checks or grooming checks, leaving that assignment to athletic trainers or school nurses. Headgear must be cleaned between each match with no tape allowed on the headgear.

Swartos said the idea of not allowing wrestling tournaments was considered, but eventually rejected. Schools with small wrestling rosters would find it hard to find opponents for duals, Swartos said.

The recommendation for wrestling tournaments is to limit them to a maximum of 112 participants from no more than 12 schools. If girls' wrestling is included in the tournament, it will be limited to 24 participants.

"We hope that allows those schools with small roster sizes to continue to compete," Swartos said.

In gymnastics, the mandatory rules call for competitors' gym bags to include a reusable cloth face covering; grips, wristbands and any braces used in practice; hand sanitizer; disinfectant wipes; athletic tape; a personal water bottle; shoes; and a gallon freezer bag with chalk for personal use. Everything in the bag is to be disinfected after every practice.

Basketball mandatory rules state that there will be no pre-game meeting between officials and team captains and no post-game handshakes. Officials will be at least six feet from a player on throw-ins. Basketballs used in the game will be sanitized and not used in warm-ups.

—30—

## Even in pandemic, show might go on for one-act plays

By Dana Hess  
For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — Winter fine arts programs in the state's high schools will face a variety of changes and uncertainty due to the pandemic. On Wednesday, Nov. 4, the South Dakota High School Activities Association board of directors approved a variety of recommendations from a task force of medical professionals and educators.

The task force recommends that the One-Act Play Festival be held in person rather than virtually.

"Our goal right now and our intention is to hold State One-Act in person," said SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos. "We are going to put together a virtual option to have in our back pocket."

While plans proceed to hold the festival in person, schools will also make arrangements to record their one-act plays in the event that the virus grows too rampant to hold the event in person.

All-State Band auditions will be held virtually, with the hope that the All-State Band event can still be held in person March 25-27, 2021.

Due to the lack of facilities that could accommodate social distancing for so many participants, the task force recommends that the state debate competition be held virtually.

Swartos said debate offers challenges for an in-person event because it involves the need for a facility with 30 to 40 classrooms at a school district that's willing to host 20 to 30 competing schools.

"This one is probably much more likely to go virtual," Swartos said.

Decisions about some fine arts events have not yet been made. Among those awaiting decisions are All-State Band, All-State Jazz Band and All-State Chorus and Orchestra.

"We're going to take a little bit more time to see where the situation goes in our state," Swartos said.



## Activities board settles on football classifications

By Dana Hess  
For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — After creating a subcommittee to offer plans that decrease football from seven classifications to five or six, the South Dakota High School Activities Association board of directors on Wednesday, Nov. 4, approved the first reading of a plan that keeps a seven-classification system.

A topic for more than two hours of discussion was a plan submitted by Sioux Falls Roosevelt Assistant Principal Steve Moore that would offer six classifications, three for 11-man football and three for nine-man. The current system has four 11-man classifications and three for nine-man. Prior to board consideration, Moore's plan was approved by a football advisory subcommittee on a vote of 13-4.

Moore's six classification plan offered a nine-team 11AA division that consisted of what he called the teams from South Dakota's metropolitan areas: Brandon Valley, Harrisburg, Rapid City Central and Stevens and Sioux Falls Lincoln, O'Gorman, Jefferson, Roosevelt and Washington.

In Moore's plan Class 11A would include Aberdeen Central, Brookings, Mitchell, Pierre, Tea Area, Watertown, Yankton, Douglas, Spearfish, Sturgis, Dakota Valley, Huron, Lennox, Madison, Sioux Falls Christian, Vermillion and West Central. Moore's Class 11B had the remaining 11-man eligible teams above a 56 average daily membership.

Moore said his plan stressed allowing teams to have competitive games which would keep athletes interested in the sport.

"It centers around trying to keep kids interested in the game," Moore said.

Moore's plan differed from the usual ranking system that relies on arranging football classifications based on each school's average daily membership of male students.

"It has nothing to do with ADM, really," Moore said of his plan.

Moore said his plan grouped the "metro" schools in the top class and the current Class 11-AA schools as well as the top seven 11-A schools in the second class. The next 17 schools would be in 11-B.

SDHSAA Assistant Executive Director John Krogstrand said ADM was not always an indicator of which schools fielded the best teams. He said football champions O'Gorman, Pierre, Canton and Bridgewater were all among the smallest schools in their classifications.

During a public forum early in the meeting, eight football coaches and activities directors spoke against Moore's proposal.

"I think we need to revisit this proposal," said Chad Conaway of Lennox. "I hope some consideration is given to how unbalanced the ADMs are."

The concerns expressed by member schools worried board member Michael Talley of Rapid City.

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"I have some heartburn about all this," Talley said. "It's really important for member schools to support this."

Board member Randy Soma of Brookings had safety concerns about the larger schools in Moore's proposed Class 11-A playing the smaller schools in that division.

"It's hard to justify for safety reasons," Soma said of Moore's plan. "The safety thing really is my biggest concern."

Ultimately the board approved on a 7-1 vote a plan for a seven-classification system that included Moore's metro schools in a nine-team 11AAA. The next classification would have the next largest 11 schools in 11AA and 14 schools in 11A. The rest of the schools would be in 11B. Nine-man football would stay in three classifications.

Talley was the lone dissenting vote. A second reading of the classification system will take place at the SDHSAA board meeting in January.

## #255 in a series

### **Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller**

I don't know whether this is my punishment for taking last night off to indulge in my usual election night revelry; but this is exceptionally awful. We're at 9,571,900 cases in the US, which is a whopping 1.1% more than yesterday. We're back in six figures with 106,800 new cases today. These numbers are mind-boggling. Cases in children increased by record numbers at the end of last month. The country has set a record for seven day average over 45% higher than two weeks ago at over 86,000 cases. Thirty-one states had record new-case averages last week. Thirty-seven states are experiencing at least a 10% increase in new cases. Only two states, Nebraska and Delaware, are not showing rising cases, which means this latest surge has now moved decisively into the Northeast and really no region of the country is being spared.

Active hospitalizations hit 50,000 yesterday. In the Midwest, the hospitalization rate is now 238 people per million residents.

Seventeen states had record numbers hospitalized, including a swath right up the middle of the country. Our health care system was not designed to have that many of us hospitalized at the same time; and these are typically not short stays. Some people are in for weeks to months. Suresh Gunasekaran, chief executive of the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics wrote, "We are in danger of losing control of this pandemic in Iowa. Our COVID positivity rates skyrocketed twice before, but this is the first time we have seen rates this high while also dealing with record patient hospitalizations." The head of the Arkansas Hospital Association said yesterday at a briefing that the state is facing a critical shortage of health care workers and is competing with other states for nurses. Several dozen Kansas hospitals expect to face serious staff shortages in the next week. Minnesota hospitals report they're running out of ICU beds; Twin Cities' hospitals are at 98% capacity, and statewide hospitals are at 92%. The state reported a record number of cases today. I could turn this entire update simply into a report of all the states sounding the alarm about health-care capacity; the crisis is spreading across the country right along with this virus. More than 480,000 have been hospitalized with this virus in the US so far in the pandemic; earlier peaks were higher with far smaller case loads, so I would look for this number to grow, even with the younger demographic we're seeing infected.

And we're going places with the deaths too: 1625 new deaths reported today, a 0.7% increase. I have not tracked this, but a quick scan of the voluminous stack of records I've been keeping tells me it was likely May 20 the last time we reported over 1500 deaths in a day. In general, doing things as we were doing them in May is not a laudable goal. We're now up to 234,196 deaths.

We're finally able to put some numbers on false negative tests. A false negative is a negative test in a person who actually is infected; we've known for a long time that there are a lot of them, which is one of the problems we've had controlling spread: If you don't know who's infected, it's difficult to interrupt transmission. A study in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine* took a look at false negative tests.

The study found that in the four days before your symptoms show up, your probability of getting a falsely negative test result is nearly 100%. That's right: A negative test in the days leading up to the onset of symptoms is pretty much meaningless. The probability of getting a false negative on Day 1 of symptoms is 38%, and by Day 3 drops to 20%. We know the virus takes some time to replicate in the body; apparently this shows us the timeline for building up enough virus to register on a test. No one should develop too much confidence because you've tested negative for the virus. You must still move through the world as though you are infected and infectious, a danger to others. Because you well could be and never realize it.

Now, of course, not everyone develops symptoms, and we know these asymptomatic folks can spread the virus too; so there is still value in testing asymptomatic individuals. It looks as though there isn't much point in getting tested until your third day after exposure. The incubation period (time between exposure and developing symptoms) for this virus can be as long as two weeks, although it generally runs around five days. And we know asymptomatic people shed virus and can act as a source to others. We figure you're infectious two days before symptoms develop and for a few days after; it's hard to pin down just when infected people with no symptoms are infectious. It is this asymptomatic spread which causes us

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so much trouble in trying to control these infections. Current estimates are that around 40% of infections are asymptomatic and 50% of transmissions occur before symptoms begin. That's a real problem for the control effort.

Remember that there are two basic categories of diagnostic test for Covid-19. One is the molecular tests which look for viral RNA; this is the RT-PCR or just PCR test. This test generally requires a nasal swab, but occasionally a throat swab or saliva. This is the more accurate kind of test, and it gets more accurate the more days have passed since you were exposed. It is less accurate in the folks who never develop symptoms. Results generally take some time to receive, up to a week. The other category is the antigen test, often called a rapid test. This is not the same thing as an antibody test. Antibody tests look in your bloodstream for antibodies to the virus, which is an indication you have been infected at some time in the past, but doesn't tell whether you are infected now. Antigen tests look for proteins from the virus, and the results are generally available within minutes, usually less than an hour. These are more prone to false negatives and so might need confirmation with a PCR test. Typically false negatives are far more likely than false positives—where the test says you're infected when you are not.

When used as the basis for decisions about where to go and whom to see, all tests have the same drawback, and this is that, besides testing accuracy problems, people tend to forget a test is just a snapshot in time. It tells whether you had sufficient virus to detect at the time that specimen was collected; it doesn't tell you whether you were exposed an hour later at the grocery store or the next day at work or when you go home to an infected roommate or spouse. And if you were tested and have to wait a few days for results, going on with your life while waiting means you can be exposed—or expose others—between the collection of the specimen and the day your result comes. There's no substitute for remaining vigilant, whether or not you've had a negative test.

We've talked from time to time about mutations in the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Short version to date is that the virus is not mutating very fast at all, but there have been many minor point mutations over the months it has been circulating in humans. These have been routinely tracked for months now, and none of these mutations has appreciably affected its virulence, either for good or for ill, although one seems to have increased transmissibility somewhat. It could be we are seeing our first really worrisome mutation now. A report has surfaced in Denmark, where mink farming is a major industry, of a mutation seen in virus recovered from mink, one against which antibodies may be only weakly effective. Worse, the same variant has been found in 12 people, so apparently this virus is transmitting not just from people to animals, but also from the animals back to people. This is a very concerning situation if the reports are accurate. The Danish government has notified the WHO about this mutation; but no report has been published yet. It seems few scientists outside the country have not seen the data on this or understood how this variant was tested; there is supposed to be a paper in preprint which has not yet been peer reviewed, so it is not clear just what these reports represent; but the authorities in Denmark are taking it seriously enough to slaughter millions of animals on 400 farms—both those with infected animals and those within some defined proximity to them—in an attempt to stamp out the viral variant. This is expected to wipe out the industry for some time to come. We've talked about infections in animals, particularly in minks, in earlier conversations. While most animals who have been infected with this virus have not become very ill, minks react to infection more the way humans do, and the fatality rate is relatively high in them. You may recall our conversation about the experience with this virus of mink farms in the US.

Andres Burgos lives in Caracas, Venezuela; and that country's been in serious economic trouble since long before the pandemic. He's an ad executive, and his business was drying up because of the economic slowdown. Many of his relatives had left the country, and so he found himself increasingly alone and surrounded by despair and hunger. So he decided to do something about it. He started cooking arepas, the traditional corn flour patties eaten across the country, and pedaling his bicycle around the streets to hand them out to the people who would otherwise spend their days rummaging through piles of garbage on the street for something edible. He calls it BiciArepazo, which means, more or less, Bike Arepas.

He started out a year ago using his own savings, passing the arepas out on his way to work or while moving about the city on errands. Then family, friends, and other business owners learned about his work



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and started to contribute to the effort. When quarantine came to Caracas, the number of people—some of them pretty well-dressed, but nonetheless hungry—grew. Burgos went from handing out 20 arepas a day to 150. There was hunger in Venezuela before this virus came, and there is little social safety net. If a job or source of income disappears, you simply don't eat. This man didn't think the situation was acceptable, so he pitched in.

He gets up at 3 am to cook. He makes dozens of arepas filled with meat or lentils and vegetables. He portions them out while they're still warm and puts them in a backpack. And then at first light, he sets off on his bike. He has regular customers who come right up when he arrives and blows a whistle to alert folks he's there. Everyone gets a meal. He says, "A smile is the best reward. It doesn't weigh me down at all. In fact, I enjoy it."

Most of the people he feeds eat their only meal of the day from his hands; the arepas means they do not need to dig through trash to find food. He dreams of expanding the project to other cities. "As long as there's the need and I have the materials and the money to do it, I'll do it. Whatever it takes."

Just like that. It would be easy to look at the vastness of the need and conclude whatever you do won't make much difference. Or you do what you can and know that, to someone, you've made all the difference. There are worse ways to live.

Take care. I'll be back tomorrow.

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## Area COVID-19 Cases

	Nov. 4	Nov. 5
Minnesota	156,313	160,070
Nebraska	74,060	75,888
Montana	35,159	35,955
Colorado	114,709	117,637
Wyoming	12,399	12,675
North Dakota	47,187	48,301
South Dakota	48,854	49,791
United States	9,385,324	9,488,591
US Deaths	232,635	233,734

Minnesota	3,379	3,757
Nebraska	1,440	1,828
Montana	+907	+796
Colorado	+2,562	+2,928
Wyoming	+340	+276
North Dakota	+1,172	1,114
South Dakota	+1,004	+937
United States	+92,043	+103,267
US Deaths	+1,069	+1,099

	Oct. 28	Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	Nov. 01	Nov. 02	Nov. 3
Minnesota	137,536	139,444	142,311	145,465	148,472	150,672	152,934
Nebraska	65,376	66,545	68,150	69,645	70,732	70,732	72,620
Montana	29,346	29,966	30,853	31,916	32,801	33,495	34,252
Colorado	98,733	100,208	102,014	104,426	107,350	109,910	112,147
Wyoming	10,035	10,288	10,589	11,020	11,276	11,638	12,059
North Dakota	39,130	39,907	41,130	42,483	43,916	45,043	46,015
South Dakota	39,494	40,589	41,507	44,559	45,992	47,324	47,850
United States	8,779,794	8,859,432	8,947,862	9,048,430	9,127,108	9,208,876	9,293,281
US Deaths	226,728	227,703	228,675	229,711	230,566	231,003	231,566

Minnesota	+2,164	1,908	+2,867	+3,154	+3,007	+2,200	2,262
Nebraska	+877	1,169	+1,605	+1,495	+1,087	----	1,888
Montana	+845	+620	+887	+1,063	+885	+694	+757
Colorado	+1,433	1,475	+1,806	+2,412	+2,924	2,560	2,237
Wyoming	+252	+253	+301	+431	+256	+362	+421
North Dakota	+896	+781	1,222	+1,353	+1,434	+1,128	+972
South Dakota	+984	+1,095	+918	+1,560	+1,433	+1,332	+529
United States	+74,667	+79,638	+88,430	+100,568	+78,678	+81,768	+84,405
US Deaths	+989	+975	+972	+1,036	+855	+437	+563

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## November 4th COVID-19 UPDATE

### Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

South Dakota recorded 14 more deaths and North Dakota recorded 12 more. Here in South Dakota, six were females and eight were males. 10 were in the 80+ age group, 1 in their 70s and 3 in their 60s. Counties affected were McPherson with its first death, Minnehaha and Turner each had 3, Pennington had 2 and having 1 each were Beadle, Codington, Custer, Kingsbury and Marshall.

Fifteen more patients were put on ventilation with the Sioux Empire Region having 16 and the South Central Plains having 1 fewer on ventilation.

Glacial Lakes hospital beds being occupied by COVID-19 patients as well as Minnehaha and Pennington counties: Walworth: 7 (+3) Occupied Beds.; Potter: 7 (0) Occupied Beds; Hughes: 13 (+4) Occupied Beds, 6 (+2) ICU Beds, 3 (0) Ventilation; Faulk: 1 (+1) Occupied Beds; Edmunds: 4 (+1) Occupied Bed; Brown: 15 (12) Occupied Beds, 3 (-1) ICU, 0 (0) Ventilation; Spink: 4 (0) Occupied Beds; Day: 3 Occupied Beds; Marshall: 3 (0) Occupied Beds; Grant: 3 (+1) Occupied Beds; Codington: 19 (+4) Occupied Beds, 7 (+3) ICU, 0 (-1) Ventilation; None (some counties have no hospitals): Clark, Hand, Hyde, Stanley, Sully, Campbell, McPherson, Roberts; Minnehaha: 236 (-10) Occupied Beds, 48 (+2) ICU, 61 (+16) Ventilation; Pennington: 69 (-2) Occupied Beds, 14 ICU, 7 (0) Ventilation

#### **Brown County:**

Total Positive: +17 (2,330) Positivity Rate: 4.2%

Total Tests: +403 (19,238)

Recovered: +19 (1,844)

Active Cases: -2 (480)

Ever Hospitalized: +3 (121)

Deaths: +0 (6)

Percent Recovered: 79.1%

#### **Hospital Reports:**

Avera St. Luke's: Covid-19 Occupied 12 (-1); ICU 3 (-1), Ventilation 0 (0).

Sanford Aberdeen: Covid-19 Occupied 3 (-1).

Sanford Webster: Covid-19 Occupied 3.

Marshall County Healthcare: Covid-19 Occupied: 3 (0).

#### **South Dakota:**

Positive: +937 (49,791 total) Positivity Rate: 15.1%

Total Tests: 6185 (450,431 total)

Hospitalized: +49 (2,873 total). 483 currently hospitalized +3)

Deaths: +14 (460 total)

Recovered: +382 (35,423 total)

Active Cases: +541 (13,908)

Percent Recovered: 71.1%

Total COVID-19 Occupied Beds: 483 (+3), Black Hills Region 103 (-2), Glacial Lakes Region 80 +12 Sioux Empire Region 250 (-13), South Central Plains 50 (+6).

ICU Units: Total 91 (+10), BH 16 (0), GL 16 (+4), SE 50 (+2), SCP 9 (+4).

Ventilation: Total 71 (+15), BH 7 (0), GL 3 (0), SE 61 (+16), SCP 0 (-1).

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 18% Covid, 51% Non-Covid, 31% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 31% Covid, 33% Non-Covid, 37% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 17% Covid, 12% Non-Covid, 71% Available

Brown (6): +17 positive, +19 recovered (480 active cases)

Clark (1): +2 positive, +3 recovered (64 active cases)

Clay (8): +18 positive, +6 recovered (171 active cases)  
Codington (15): +20 positive, +27 recovered (399 active cases)

Davison (10): +13 positive, +26 recovered (442 active cases)

Day (2): +1 positive, +2 recovered (42 active cases)

Edmunds (1): +5 positive, +1 recovered (43 active cases)

Faulk (2): +2 positive, +0 recovered (54 active cases)

Grant (3): +7 positive, +2 recovered (67 active cases)

Hanson (1): +5 positive, +0 recovered (46 active cases)

Hughes (8): +9 positive, +3 recovered (188 active cases)

Lawrence (7): +40 positive, +12 recovered (386 active cases)

Lincoln (22): +75 positive, +26 recovered (1032 active cases)

Marshall (2): +2 positive, +1 recovered (10 active cases)

McCook (1): +9 positive, +3 recovered (125 active cases)

McPherson (1): +0 positive, +1 recovery (13 active case)

Minnehaha (118): +201 positive, +72 recovered (3566 active cases)

Potter: +8 positive, +2 recovered (60 active cases)

Roberts (6): +4 positive, +4 recovered (97 active cases)

Spink (1): +22 positive, +2 recovered (126 active cases)

Walworth (10): +1 positive, +2 recovered (53 active cases)

#### **NORTH DAKOTA**

COVID-19 Daily Report, Nov. 4:

- 12.8% rolling 14-day positivity
- 1,116 new positives
- 7,886 susceptible test encounters
- 220 currently hospitalized (+5)
- 8,571 active cases (+175)
- 567 total deaths (+12)



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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity
Aurora	219	154	726	0	Substantial	32.35%
Beadle	1479	1075	4092	16	Substantial	29.07%
Bennett	230	141	962	5	Substantial	30.38%
Bon Homme	1102	401	1643	1	Substantial	55.73%
Brookings	1601	1233	6689	7	Substantial	19.72%
Brown	2330	1844	8827	6	Substantial	27.09%
Brule	351	239	1428	2	Substantial	36.05%
Buffalo	287	234	803	4	Substantial	46.99%
Butte	451	258	2147	3	Substantial	27.13%
Campbell	84	64	168	1	Moderate	23.68%
Charles Mix	467	326	3060	1	Substantial	15.32%
Clark	153	88	702	1	Substantial	32.88%
Clay	914	731	3472	8	Substantial	23.02%
Codington	1755	1341	6599	16	Substantial	29.43%
Corson	250	157	795	2	Substantial	67.01%
Custer	352	277	1784	4	Substantial	21.48%
Davison	1202	758	4639	10	Substantial	31.08%
Day	184	140	1238	2	Substantial	26.88%
Deuel	206	166	805	1	Substantial	28.41%
Dewey	439	269	3412	1	Substantial	29.36%
Douglas	189	140	714	5	Substantial	16.28%
Edmunds	167	123	746	1	Substantial	8.12%
Fall River	244	175	1844	6	Substantial	18.89%
Faulk	230	174	528	2	Substantial	11.76%
Grant	341	271	1522	3	Substantial	15.04%
Gregory	269	185	867	10	Substantial	33.10%
Haakon	106	71	421	2	Substantial	5.22%
Hamlin	236	181	1255	0	Substantial	15.77%
Hand	163	93	578	1	Substantial	44.78%
Hanson	119	72	469	1	Substantial	35.94%
Harding	63	33	113	0	Substantial	59.09%
Hughes	952	773	3886	8	Substantial	16.97%
Hutchinson	268	191	1633	2	Substantial	12.09%

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Hyde	54	40	308	0	Moderate	23.68%
Jackson	143	88	775	3	Substantial	30.77%
Jerauld	175	141	385	13	Moderate	25.93%
Jones	37	30	133	0	Moderate	26.67%
Kingsbury	239	132	1088	3	Substantial	20.74%
Lake	476	324	1948	9	Substantial	36.59%
Lawrence	1155	763	5663	7	Substantial	27.21%
Lincoln	3367	2313	13662	22	Substantial	31.31%
Lyman	300	238	1444	6	Substantial	21.83%
Marshall	71	57	786	2	Moderate	9.30%
McCook	324	198	1131	1	Substantial	31.25%
McPherson	73	57	415	1	Moderate	4.46%
Meade	1090	862	5261	10	Substantial	24.64%
Mellette	101	73	574	1	Substantial	47.22%
Miner	149	94	430	2	Substantial	6.45%
Minnehaha	13186	9502	54274	118	Substantial	28.77%
Moody	259	178	1116	3	Substantial	34.21%
Oglala Lakota	1121	636	5652	9	Substantial	33.07%
Pennington	5181	3794	26138	51	Substantial	19.26%
Perkins	84	66	480	0	Moderate	17.86%
Potter	151	91	611	0	Substantial	17.89%
Roberts	406	303	3325	6	Substantial	23.31%
Sanborn	128	71	460	1	Substantial	28.57%
Spink	356	229	1659	1	Substantial	16.81%
Stanley	102	80	546	0	Substantial	20.34%
Sully	52	35	172	0	Moderate	35.29%
Todd	545	408	3462	6	Substantial	46.36%
Tripp	300	249	1172	2	Substantial	12.45%
Turner	557	363	1873	21	Substantial	38.89%
Union	826	649	4218	12	Substantial	19.68%
Walworth	290	227	1325	10	Substantial	14.05%
Yankton	975	675	6345	6	Substantial	10.57%
Ziebach	115	79	578	2	Substantial	32.26%
Unassigned	0	0	1029	0		

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## South Dakota



Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	1536	0
10-19 years	5149	0
20-29 years	10076	2
30-39 years	8493	7
40-49 years	7079	15
50-59 years	7100	35
60-69 years	5434	65
70-79 years	2808	83
80+ years	2116	253

### SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	25630	222
Male	24161	238



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## Brown County

New Confirmed Cases

11

New Probable Cases

6

Active Cases

480

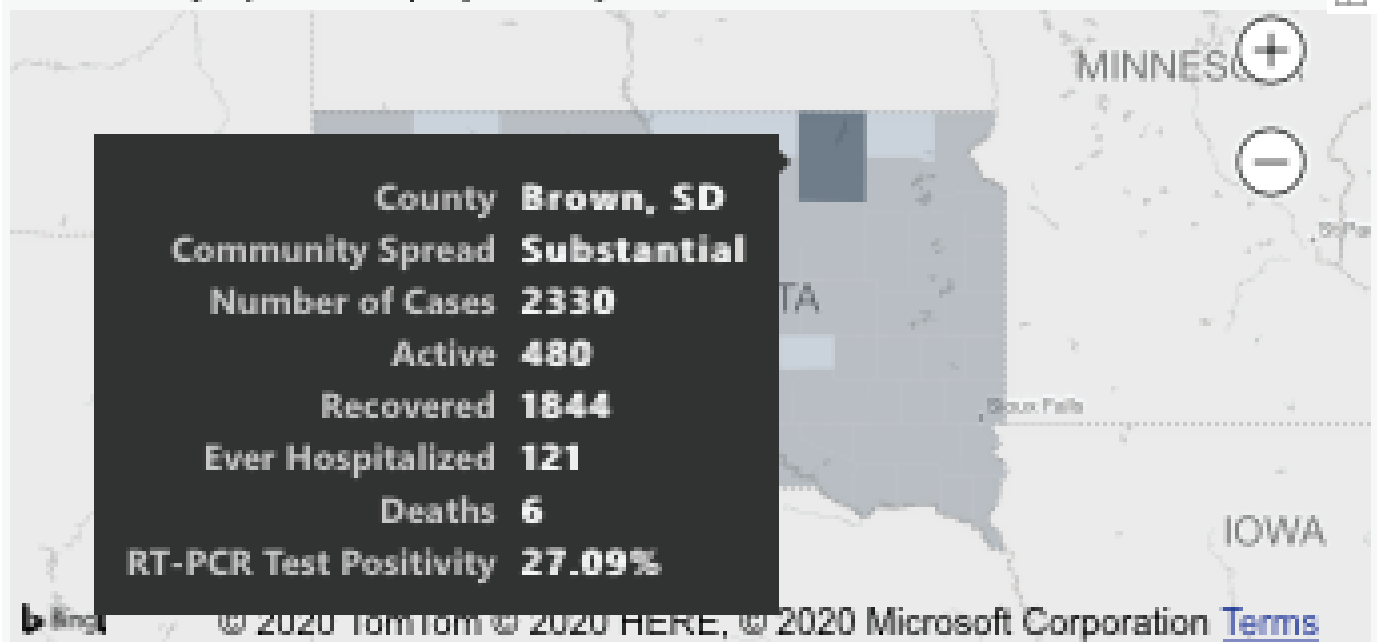
Recovered Cases

1,8...

Currently Hospitalized

483

### Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread ● Moderate ● Substantial

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange

Total Confirmed Cases

2,295

Total Probable Cases

35

Total Persons Tested

11,1...

Total Tests

19,...

Ever Hospitalized

121

Deaths

6

% Progress (October Goal: 44,233 Tests)

328%

% Progress (November Goal: 44,233 Tests)

25%

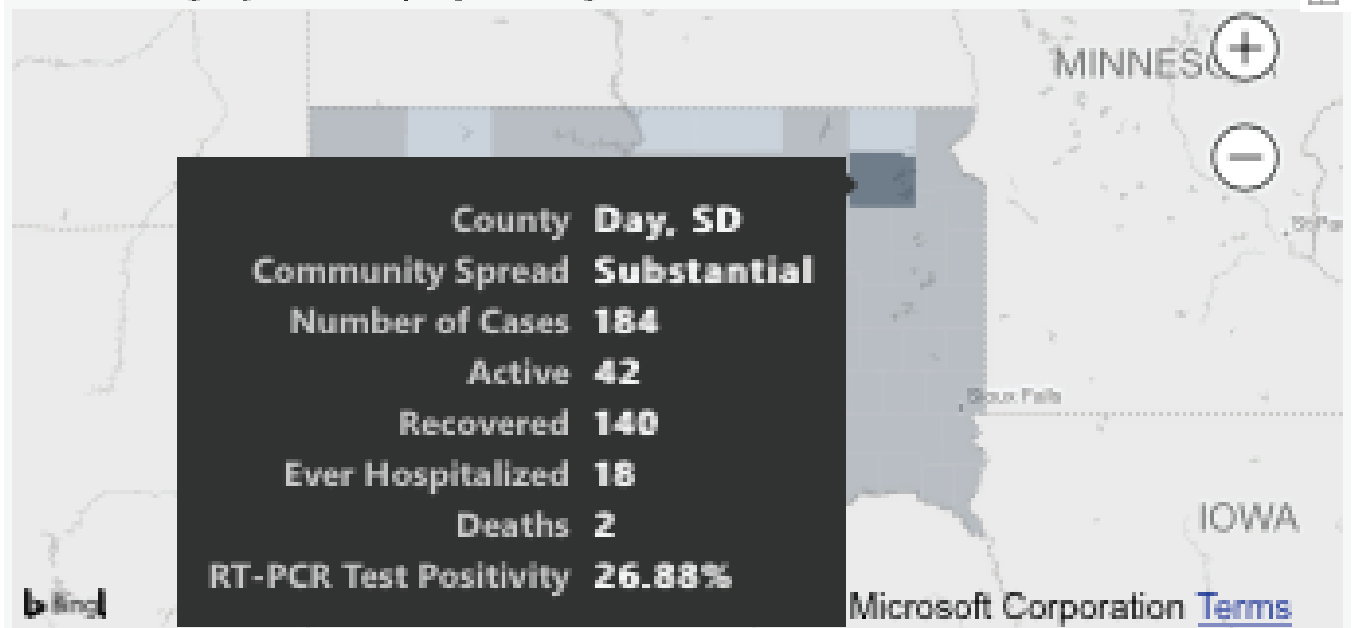
# Groton Daily Independent

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## Day County

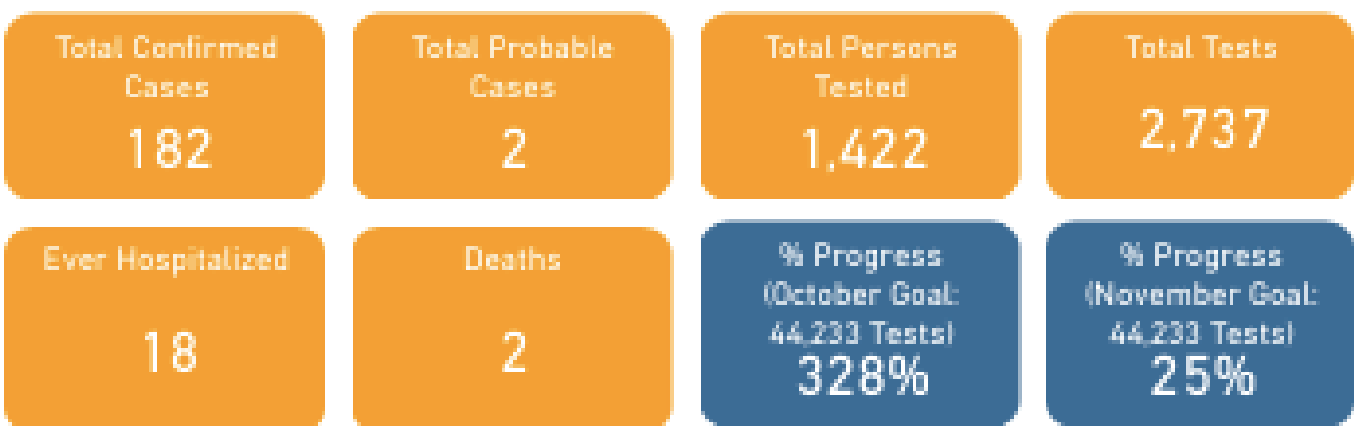


Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread ● Moderate ● Substantial

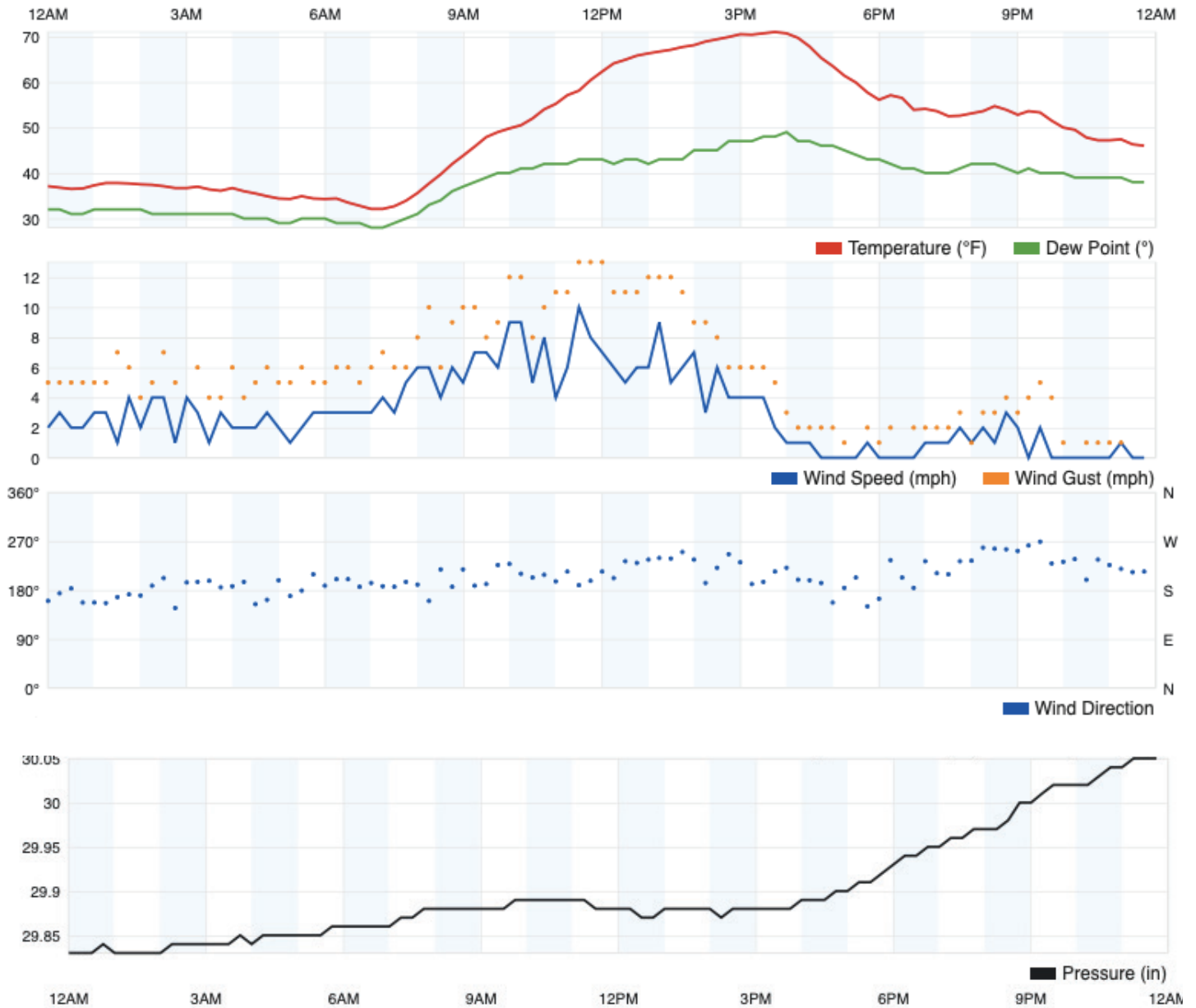
Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





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Today



Sunny

High: 72 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear

Low: 44 °F

Friday



Sunny

High: 75 °F

Friday  
Night



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 50 °F

Saturday



Partly Sunny

High: 69 °F

## Anomalously Warm Temperatures Continue

Highs: 70 to near 80 (central South Dakota) today and Friday.

Lows: Upper 30s to upper 40s tonight. Low 50s on the Coteau.

Outlook: Above average temperatures persist through the weekend before returning to below average early next week.

 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 11/5/2020 3:54 AM Central

Well above average temperatures will persist through the weekend before a trough passes through Sunday/Sunday night and ushers in much cooler temperatures to start next week.

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## Today in Weather History

November 5, 1959: A strong cold front brought near blizzard conditions and bitterly cold temperatures. High temperatures in many locations only reached the upper teens. Some daytime highs include; 19 degrees in Pierre and Waubay; 18 degrees in Aberdeen, Faulkton, Kennebec, Pollock, and Roscoe; 17 degrees in Eureka, Gettysburg, Mobridge and Watertown; and 15 degrees in Timber Lake and near McIntosh. Some record or near-record lows also occurred near midnight on the 5th. Some lows include; 2 degrees in Aberdeen; 1 degree near McIntosh; 0 degrees in Timber Lake and Pollock; and 2 degrees below zero in Kennebec.

1894: A significant snowstorm impacted New England on November 5 through the 6. It formed off the New Jersey coast on the 5 and passed east of Connecticut with rapidly increasing heavy rain and snow, along with high winds. The heavy snow and high winds caused significant damage to trees and brought down telegraph poles by the hundreds. The telegraph and telephone service in all southern New England was crippled, and fallen poles and trees delayed railroad trains.

2017: A classic Tornado Debris Signature (TDS) was observed in Washington County, Indiana.

1894 - The famous Election Day snowstorm occurred in Connecticut. As much as a foot of wet snow fell, and the snow and high winds caused great damage to wires and trees. Winds gusted to 60 mph at Block Island RI. (David Ludlum)

1961 - Strong Santa Ana winds fanned the flames of the Bel Air and Brentwood fires in southern California destroying many homes. At 10 PM the Los Angeles Civic Center reported a temperature of 74 degrees along with a dew point of 5 degrees. On the 6th, Burbank reported a relative humidity of three percent. (The Weather Channel)

1977 - A slow moving storm produced five to nine inch rains across northern Georgia causing the Toccoa Dam to burst. As the earthen dam collapsed the waters rushed through the Toccoa Falls Bible College killing three persons in the dorms. Thirty-eight persons perished at a trailer park along the stream. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Low pressure off the California coast produced stormy weather in the southwestern U.S. Flash flooding stranded 8000 persons in the Death Valley National Park of southern California. Thunderstorms over southern Nevada produced dime size hail and wind gusts to 68 mph around Las Vegas. Unseasonably mild weather in the northeastern U.S. was replaced with snow and gale force winds. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A powerful low pressure system produced high winds from the Great Plains to New England, and produced heavy snow in northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. Winds gusted to 64 mph at Knoxville TN, and reached 80 mph at Pleasant Valley VT. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Temperatures warmed into the 80s across much of Texas. Highs of 86 degrees at Abilene, Fort Worth and San Angelo were records for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

2002 - Severe thunderstorms moved across southeastern Alabama and the Florida panhandle, producing wind damage and several tornadoes. A tornado struck the Alabama town of Abbeville killing 2 people and injuring 25 (Associated Press).

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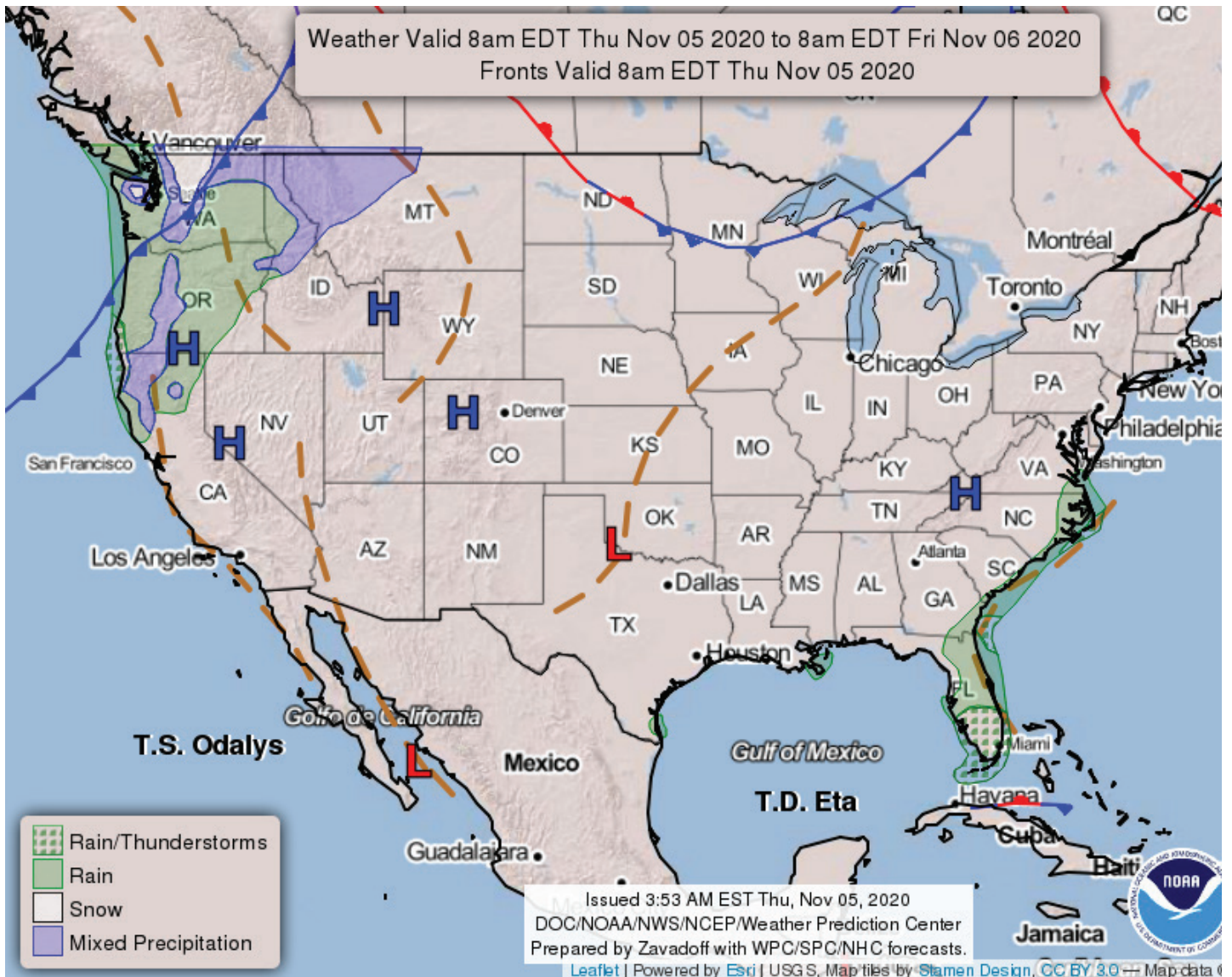
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 71 °F at 3:43 PM**  
**Low Temp: 32 °F at 6:55 AM**  
**Wind: 13 mph at 11:24 AM**  
**Precip: .00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 76° in 2016**  
**Record Low: -6° in 2003**  
**Average High: 46°F**  
**Average Low: 24°F**  
**Average Precip in Nov.: 0.12**  
**Precip to date in Nov.: 0.00**  
**Average Precip to date: 20.59**  
**Precip Year to Date: 16.34**  
**Sunset Tonight: 5:15 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:21 a.m.**





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## Guarded By God

There was a large stag - a red-coated deer - that roamed through the hills of Rome. No one ever came near it or tried to capture or kill it. Caesar protected it, and all were forbidden to disturb it. On its sides were the words, "Touch me not! I belong to Caesar." It was a sign of ownership, and no one dared to harm or hurt that animal.

There is a far more important statement about ownership in Psalm 105. It is a statement about those who belong to God: "Do not touch My anointed ones."

Sometimes the words of God are overlooked by the children of God. This verse is a good example of an "overlooked" rule given by the Lord. Few of us will admit to having never spoken evil of a fellow Christian. But...

We often listen carefully while one "saint" criticizes or condemns another "saint." We carefully listen to every detail when a fellow church member ridicules or runs down the person who sits next to us during the worship service. We do not see "for whom Christ cares" on the forehead of someone whose marriage is falling apart - so we anxiously listen to the sordid details of an unfaithful spouse. We blame others for "bad parenting skills" when their children become addicts rather than grieve with them over their loss. We carelessly pass on rumors about the honesty of someone who has more than we do. The tongue can easily become a weapon of wickedness and ultimately destroy "the Lord's anointed ones."

We must use our tongues to help, heal, and give hope, not hurt or harm!

Prayer: Thank you Father for your love and protection. Help us to turn deaf ears to words that hurt or harm others. Rather, help us to speak words of kindness and show Your love to them! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Do not touch My anointed ones. Psalm105:15a

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## 2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
- **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
- **CANCELLED** Father/Daughter dance.
- **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
- **CANCELLED** Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
- 07/24/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ferney Open Golf Tourney
- 07/25/2020 City-Wide Rummage Sales
- **CANCELLED** State American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
- 08/07/2020 Wine on Nine Event at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/12-13/2020 Groton Fly-In/Drive-In at the Groton Airport north of Groton
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
- 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/30/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
- 10/30/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
- **CANCELLED** Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
- 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
- 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates



## News from the Associated Press

### Juvenile arrested in fatal shooting of teen in Sioux Falls

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A juvenile has been arrested in the fatal shooting of a teenager in Sioux Falls last weekend, according to police.

Authorities did not provide any information about the juvenile, including age or gender or what charges could be filed.

Eighteen-year-old Venance Kitungano was killed Saturday night outside the Red Sea Pub where a Halloween party was taking place. The Lincoln High School student was not targeted and that he was “an innocent bystander,” police said.

Lt. Terrance Matia says Kitungano had left the pub and was walking down the street when he was shot in the face, the Argus Leader reported.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens said the court has instructed authorities to limit the amount of information provided on juvenile suspects.

If a 16- or 17-year-old has been accused of committing more serious crimes, such as manslaughter, murder, kidnapping and rape, they are automatically charged in adult court in South Dakota. Proceedings could be transferred to juvenile court on a judge’s ruling.

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

01-09-14-19-20

(one, nine, fourteen, nineteen, twenty)

Estimated jackpot: \$332,000

Lotto America

11-12-32-49-50, Star Ball: 4, ASB: 2

(eleven, twelve, thirty-two, forty-nine, fifty; Star Ball: four; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$3.05 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$142 million

Powerball

23-32-33-45-49, Powerball: 14, Power Play: 2

(twenty-three, thirty-two, thirty-three, forty-five, forty-nine; Powerball: fourteen; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$137 million

### South Dakota? Conservative state surprises with pot passage

By DAVE KOLPACK Associated Press

Marijuana fans in a conservative and rural state known for mountainside stone sculptures of four U.S. presidents may have been a bit dazed Wednesday morning upon learning that South Dakota residents voted to legalize recreational pot.

The state not only rejected medical cannabis four years ago and struggled recently to legalize industrial hemp, its Republican governor and GOP-controlled legislature opposed what organizers gently referred to as the “adult marijuana” measure. Instead, on a night when South Dakota swiftly delivered its three electoral votes to Donald Trump, it became the first state to legalize recreational and medical pot on the same ballot.

Reaction on social media took the same form in many cases, with posts wondering how the Mount

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Rushmore state could pass recreational marijuana before (insert state here). That included South Dakota native Dianna Anderson, 34, an author from Minneapolis who tweeted that "god help me if south dakota legalizes marijuana tonight and minnesota hasn't?"

Anderson noted in a message to The Associated Press Wednesday that South Dakota's "very strong libertarian streak" made it less surprising than it might appear to the rest of the country.

The South Dakota Chamber of Commerce and Industry took the lead on opposing the measure. The group's president, Dave Owen, said the fact the groups behind recreational and medical marijuana ran a joint campaign, no pun intended, proved to be effective because many people felt they needed to vote for both measures.

Owen said his group's campaign tried to separate the two initiatives but was at a huge financial disadvantage.

"The fact that medical passed with 70% and it was about 53% for recreational tells me our message was effective," Owen said. "But \$300,000 of South Dakota money up against \$1.5 million of out-of-state money from Washington, D.C.? You can't be surprised at the result."

Drey Samuelson, political director of the group that led the push, said the results showed that "not all power in this state resides in Pierre."

One supporter of both measures, retired police officer Joey Collins, of Brookings, figured the medical proposal was a slam dunk but said he was "extremely surprised" to see the recreational plan gain approval. Collins said he voted for the latter measure for financial reasons.

"The numbers show how much money the state can make," Collins said. "Those are dollars that can be used to give our teachers pay raises and go toward other different programs. And I think people felt that at some point it's going to be legal, it's not too early for the state to get to work on it."

The next step is for the state Department of Revenue to formulate the regulations and draw up licensing requirements for stores, said Brendan Johnson, a Sioux Falls lawyer who proposed the amendment. The initiative allows communities to prohibit businesses from setting up pot shops but residents of those towns who are 21 and older can possess up to 1 ounce. The measures are set to go into effect in July.

"We wrote this in a way where it will still be very well regulated along with a lot of local control," said Johnson, a former U.S. attorney.

Anderson, the Minneapolis author, questioned how much money could be made from sales of 1 ounce of marijuana and said it "remains to be seen if they'll develop the booming economy Colorado has, where it's not only legal, but it's regulated and sold."

Robert Crump, 43, of Rapid City, told The Associated Press he voted in favor of recreational marijuana when he lived in Colorado eight years ago but against it Tuesday for fear of hurting business and tourism in the Black Hills. He emphasized that point on Twitter the day before the election when he posted, "The stoners can drive to Denver if they want weed."

## Jackpot! Expansion of gambling in the US wins big at polls

By WAYNE PARRY Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — The U.S. gambling industry won big at the polls Tuesday, with three states authorizing legal sports betting and three others either approving or expanding casino gambling.

Maryland, South Dakota and Louisiana approved sports betting. That sets up a situation in which by the end of next year more than half the country could have legal sports betting, less than three years after a U.S. Supreme Court ruling cleared the way for all 50 states to adopt it if they chose.

Virginia approved casino gambling in four locations, Nebraska authorized adding casino games at its horse racing tracks, and Colorado expanded the number and type of casino games it can offer, along with eliminating some wagering limits.

"It appears that Americans are becoming increasingly comfortable with legalized gambling," said David Schwartz, a gambling historian with the University of Nevada Las Vegas. "The addition of casinos in Virginia and racetrack casinos in Nebraska indicates that casino-style gambling is on the upswing as well."

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We have reached a point where voters seem satisfied that legalizing gambling will offer positive returns for their state.”

The American Gaming Association, the casino industry’s main trade group, hailed the expansion votes. “As a result of successful ballot measures in six gaming states, more Americans will have access to much needed job opportunities, dedicated tax revenue, and safe, regulated entertainment options closer to home,” said Bill Miller, the organization’s CEO.

By the end of 2021, at least 25 states and the District of Columbia could have legal sports betting in place. Voters in four Virginia cities — Bristol, Danville, Portsmouth and Norfolk — approved ballot measures authorizing casinos.

Caesars Entertainment released a statement thanking voters for approving the Danville proposal. “We look forward to fulfilling the trust the voters have placed in us by bringing 1,300 good-paying jobs, tourism dollars and economic development to the city, and we are incredibly excited to begin construction,” CEO Tom Reeg said.

In South Dakota, the ballot question allows the Deadwood casinos to add in-person sports betting. For now, mobile sports betting, the largest and fastest-growing part of the industry, would not be permitted. Sports betting will become legal in Louisiana parishes that approved the measure; over three-quarters appeared to have done so.

Nebraska allowed casino games at racetracks in Omaha, Lincoln, Grand Island, Columbus and South Sioux City.

In Colorado, casinos in Central City, Black Hawk and Cripple Creek can do away with limits that restricted maximum bets to \$100. They also will be able to offer new games including baccarat, keno, and a spinning wheel.

Follow Wayne Parry at <http://twitter.com/WayneParryAC>

## Sioux Falls City Council advances mask mandate

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — An emergency order for a coronavirus mask mandate is advancing in Sioux Falls.

The City Council voted Tuesday night to send the ordinance on for a second reading on Nov. 10. The mandate would require face coverings in all indoor public places where 6 feet of social distancing isn’t possible.

The proposal comes after weeks of rising COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the state. The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 hit a new high Tuesday at 480, according to the South Dakota Department of Health.

Mayor Paul TenHaken has long said that while he strongly encourages residents to wear masks but he believes any sort of law requiring them would be “unenforceable.”

Curt Soehl, who sponsored the measure, cites the need to relieve public health systems and rises in hospitalizations. If passed Soehl says those who violate the mandate would receive a \$50 fine, KSFY-TV reported.

## With another Florida loss, Democrats begin second guessing

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN and BRENDAN FARRINGTON Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Perhaps only in Florida is a loss by fewer than 4 percentage points considered a public drubbing.

In a state famous for razor-thin margins, the size of former Vice President Joe Biden’s loss to President Donald Trump was humiliating for Democrats and sent many searching for answers to how they failed to close the deal with voters — again.

Democrats zeroed in on two clear explanations: Biden didn’t connect with the state’s Latino voters, performing particularly poorly with Cuban voters in South Florida. They also second-guessed the party’s

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decision to freeze in-person organizing during the worst of the pandemic, a decision that set them back in reaching voters.

"Clearly, Biden was not able to capture the imagination of the Florida electorate and create the type of enthusiasm to go out and vote for Biden like Trump did with his base of supporters in the state," said Fernand Amandi, a Miami-based Democratic pollster. "It's an unacceptable record of futility. What makes it so vexing is that the problems that need to be fixed are so apparent. But they just don't get fixed."

Amandi focused on the Biden campaign's struggles to connect with Hispanic voters in the state.

Trump and Republicans pummeled Biden for months with misleading claims suggesting he was a "socialist" and would cater to the left wing of the Democratic Party. The attacks carried added power with Cuban and Venezuelan Americans, who associate the labels with authoritarian and corrupt Latin American leaders.

Biden's weakness was most evident in his underperformance in Miami-Dade County, which has the state's deepest concentration of Hispanic voters, particularly Cuban Americans. Biden won the county, the state's most populous, by just 7 percentage points — compared with Democrat Hillary Clinton's 30-point victory margin four years ago against Trump.

AP VoteCast, a survey of the Florida electorate, found Trump won 58% of Cuban American voters statewide, while voters with South American heritage split evenly between Biden and Trump. The survey said Puerto Rican voters backed Biden by about 2 to 1.

The relatively poor showing in South Florida hurt other Democrats, as Republicans swept out two Miami-area congressional incumbents — Reps. Donna Shalala and Debbie Mucarsel-Powell.

"When you look at Miami-Dade in particular, there was a lot of advertising on the other side of the aisle dealing with socialism and in some cases even the word communism," said Democratic Rep. Charlie Crist, a former Republican governor who has held three statewide offices.

"I think that obviously had an impact," Crist said. "When you're attacked you need to fight back. I'm not sure how much of the fighting back occurred on our side."

Trump had a head start in his adopted home state and used it to make inroads with the Hispanic community, which accounts for about 1 in every 5 voters in Florida.

Biden had a late start. Not only did he have to secure his party's nomination, he was sidelined from a more aggressive campaign because of the coronavirus pandemic — for a while, Florida was off limits as an epicenter of the outbreak.

While Biden and his running mate, Sen. Kamala Harris, did eventually visit the key battleground state, much of the campaign was conducted virtually because of concerns over the pandemic. When Republicans resumed going to door-to-door, Democrats remained on the sidelines.

But the problems predated the pandemic, said state Sen. Annette Taddeo, who has long been a critic of her party's approach to campaigning.

"You need a constant presence, and you cannot take minority communities for granted," she said. "You can't come in two months before an election and expect to excite these communities."

Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis, for one, credits the Trump campaign for generating excitement, even amid a pandemic.

"He won a really significant victory in the state of Florida," said DeSantis, a key Trump ally.

"I think his barnstorming, to which the extent of his campaigning matters — in his case, doing these big events ... the electricity they generated," he said.

Some Democrats also give Republicans credit for registering thousands of new voters and narrowing the voter registration advantage Democrats have long had.

But Democrats also turned the tables on Republicans in absentee ballot requests, a key Republican strength in previous election cycles that helped drive turnout. While more Democrats voted by mail ahead of Tuesday's election, Republicans also made a quick pivot to turn out more of their party members to cast ballots in person during the early voting period.

While Democrats have long outnumbered Republicans, they have had little to show for it. In 2016, Clinton narrowly lost to Trump. Two years ago, Democratic gubernatorial candidate Andrew Gillum, who would



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have been Florida's first Black governor, narrowly lost to DeSantis. U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson also narrowly lost his bid for reelection.

As it stands, Democrats now only occupy one statewide office — the Commissioner of Agriculture, which is occupied by Nikki Fried, who is said to be considering a possible run for higher office. But her success could depend on what Democrats learn from their latest defeats.

For Taddeo, the Democratic state senator, it means going back to basics. "It's a math issue," she said. "We need to register voters all the time."

Find AP's full election coverage at [APNews.com/Election2020](https://www.apnews.com/Election2020).

## Biden needs 1 more battleground state to win the White House

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, ZEKE MILLER, JILL COLVIN and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrat Joe Biden was pushing closer to the 270 Electoral College votes needed to carry the White House, securing victories in the "blue wall" battlegrounds of Wisconsin and Michigan and narrowing President Donald Trump's path.

With just a handful of states still up for grabs, Trump tried to press his case in court in some key swing states. It was unclear if any of his campaign's legal maneuvering over balloting would succeed in shifting the race in his favor.

Two days after Election Day, neither candidate had amassed the votes needed to win the White House. But Biden's victories in the Great Lakes states left him at 264, meaning he was one battleground state away — any would do — from becoming president-elect.

Trump, with 214 electoral votes, faced a much higher hurdle. To reach 270, he needed to claim all four remaining battlegrounds: Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Georgia and Nevada.

With millions of votes yet to be tabulated, Biden already had received more than 71 million votes, the most in history. At an afternoon news conference Wednesday, the former vice president said he expected to win the presidency but stopped short of outright declaring victory.

"I will govern as an American president," Biden said. "There will be no red states and blue states when we win. Just the United States of America."

It was a stark contrast to the approach of Trump, who early Wednesday morning falsely claimed that he had won the election.

Trump's campaign engaged in a flurry of legal activity to try to improve the Republican president's chances and cast doubt on the election results, requesting a recount in Wisconsin and filing lawsuits in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Georgia. Statewide recounts in Wisconsin have historically changed the vote tally by only a few hundred votes; Biden led by more than 20,000 ballots out of nearly 3.3 million counted.

For four years, Democrats have been haunted by the crumbling of the blue wall, the trio of Great Lakes states — Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania — that their candidates had been able to count on every four years. But Trump's populist appeal struck a chord with white working-class voters and he captured all three in 2016 by a combined total of just 77,000 votes.

The candidates waged a fierce fight for the states this year, with Biden's everyman political persona resonating in blue-collar towns while his campaign also pushed to increase turnout among Black voters in cities like Detroit and Milwaukee.

It was unclear when a national winner would be determined after a long, bitter campaign dominated by the coronavirus and its effects on Americans and the national economy. But even as Biden's prospects improved, the U.S. on Wednesday set another record for daily confirmed coronavirus cases as several states posted all-time highs. The pandemic has killed more than 233,000 people in the United States.

Trump spent much of Wednesday in the White House residence, huddling with advisers and fuming at media coverage showing his Democratic rival picking up battlegrounds. Trump used his Twitter feed to falsely claim victory in several key states and amplify unsubstantiated conspiracy theories about Democratic gains as absentee and early votes were tabulated.



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Trump campaign manager Bill Stepien said the president would formally request a Wisconsin recount, citing "irregularities" in several counties. And the campaign said it was filing suit in Michigan and Pennsylvania to halt ballot counting on grounds that it wasn't given proper access to observe. Still more legal action was launched in Georgia.

At the same time, hundreds of thousands of votes were still to be counted in Pennsylvania, and Trump's campaign said it was moving to intervene in existing Supreme Court litigation over counting mail-in ballots there. The campaign also argued that outstanding votes still could flip the outcome in Arizona, which went for Biden, showcasing an inconsistency in its arguments over prolonged tabulation.

In other closely watched races, Trump picked up Florida, the largest of the swing states, and held onto Texas and Ohio while Biden kept New Hampshire and Minnesota.

Beyond the presidency, Democrats had hoped the election would allow the party to reclaim the Senate and pad its majority in the House. But while the voting scrambled seats in the House and Senate, it ultimately left Congress much like it began — deeply divided.

The candidates spent months pressing dramatically different visions for the nation's future, including on racial justice, and voters responded in huge numbers, with more than 100 million people casting votes ahead of Election Day.

Trump, in an extraordinary move from the White House, issued premature claims of victory and said he would take the election to the Supreme Court to stop the counting.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell discounted the president's quick claim of victory, saying it would take a while for states to conduct their vote counts. The Kentucky Republican said that "claiming you've won the election is different from finishing the counting."

Vote tabulations routinely continue beyond Election Day, and states largely set the rules for when the count has to end. In presidential elections, a key point is the date in December when presidential electors meet. That's set by federal law.

Dozens of Trump supporters chanting "Stop the count!" descended on a ballot-tallying center in Detroit, while thousands of anti-Trump protesters demanding a complete vote count took to the streets in cities across the U.S.

Protests — sometimes about the election, sometimes about racial inequality — took place Wednesday in at least a half-dozen cities, including Los Angeles, Seattle, Houston, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis and San Diego.

Several states allow mailed-in votes to be accepted after Election Day as long as they were postmarked by Tuesday. That includes Pennsylvania, where ballots postmarked by Nov. 3 can be accepted if they arrive up to three days later.

Trump appeared to suggest that those ballots should not be counted and that he would fight for that outcome at the high court. But legal experts were dubious of Trump's declaration. Trump has appointed three of the high court's nine justices including, most recently Amy Coney Barrett.

The Trump campaign on Wednesday pushed Republican donors to dig deeper into their pockets to help finance legal challenges. Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel, during a donor call, spoke plainly: "The fight's not over. We're in it."

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Jaffe reported from Wilmington, Delaware. Associated Press writers Aamer Madhani and Andrew Taylor in Washington and Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento, Calif., contributed to this report.

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Find AP's full election coverage at [APNews.com/Election2020](https://www.apnews.com/Election2020).

## The Latest: Danes take action after virus mutation in minks

By The Associated Press undefined

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — Seven Danish mayors say restaurants will be closed across northern Denmark and people in the region will be encouraged to be tested after authorities found a mutation in the virus in 12 residents who got infected by minks.

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At the same time, the borders to seven northern Denmark municipalities will be closed, the mayor of Vesthimmerland, told Danish broadcaster TV2. Birgit Hansen, the mayor of the port town of Frederikshavn, said only people with "critical functions" can cross municipal boundaries.

People in that region, which has numerous mink farms, also will be urged to work from home.

The restrictions, which are to be announced later Thursday, would begin Friday and last for four weeks.

The move comes after Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said Wednesday that all 15 million minks in Danish farms should be culled to minimize the risk of them re-transmitting the coronavirus to humans.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE VIRUS OUTBREAK:

— Residents in England hit the town, visiting bars, restaurants and hairdressers before a month-long lockdown began Thursday to curb a surge in coronavirus cases

— US sets record number of daily infections as cases surge 45% in two weeks

— Germany hits record number of new daily coronavirus infections, nearly 20,000

— India sees a surge of infections in New Delhi, officials blame the festival season

— Head of Serbian Orthodox Church is hospitalized with COVID-19, days after leading prayers at a huge public funeral for head of the church in Montenegro

Follow AP's coronavirus pandemic coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/virus-outbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

ATHENS, Greece — Greece's prime minister has announced a nationwide three-week lockdown starting Saturday, saying that the increase in coronavirus infections must be stopped before the country's health care system comes under "unbearable" pressure.

The main difference between this lockdown and the one Greece imposed in the spring is that kindergartens and primary schools will remain open. High schools will operate by remote learning. The lockdown goes until Nov. 30.

Residents will only be able to leave their homes for specific reasons such as work, medical appointments or exercise, and after informing authorities by text message. Retail businesses will be shut down but not supermarkets and food stores. Restaurants will operate on a delivery-only basis.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said he "chose once again to take drastic measures sooner rather than later" after seeing an "aggressive increase in cases" over the last five days.

On Wednesday, Greece announced a record 18 daily deaths and 2,646 new cases, bringing the total confirmed cases to just under 47,000 and the deaths to 673.

MOSCOW -- Moscow authorities on Thursday extended online studies for middle and high school students for two more weeks amid a rapid resurgence in coronavirus cases.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin ordered school students from 6th to 11th grade to continue online classes until Nov. 22. "Lots of kids want to return to classes. This is understandable. But in the current situation ... it is obvious that it is too early to relax," Sobyenin said.

Russia's number of new infections has gone from over 5,000 a day in early September to over 19,000 a day this week. On Thursday, Russian officials reported 19,404 new cases, bringing the country's total to over 1.7 million. Russian authorities have also reported over 29,000 deaths in the pandemic.

Despite the rapid surge of infections, the authorities have insisted there was no need to impose a second lockdown or shut down businesses.

Moscow, which accounts for roughly 1/4 of Russia's daily new infections, has ordered its elderly residents to self-isolate at home and employers to have at least 30% of their staff work from home.

BERLIN — Germany has recorded nearly 20,000 new coronavirus cases in one day, its highest level yet.

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The national disease control center, the Robert Koch Institute, on Thursday said 19,990 infections had been confirmed in the past 24 hours. That tops the previous record of 19,059 set on Saturday.

It brought the total case tally in Germany, a nation of 83 million people, since the pandemic began to 597,583. Another 118 deaths raised the total to 10,930.

Like other European countries, Germany has seen a sharp rise in infections in recent weeks. A four-week partial shutdown took effect on Monday, with bars, restaurants, leisure and sports facilities being closed and new contact restrictions imposed. Shops and schools remain open.

Although Germany's situation is alarming officials, many other European countries are in worse shape. The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control said Wednesday that Germany has 237 new cases per 100,000 residents over 14 days — some seven times lower than in Belgium.

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WARSAW — Poland has hit a daily record of new infections with over 27,100 cases reported Thursday, up from some 24,700 the day before.

There were also 367 deaths. Most cases were registered in the western Poznan province and in southern Silesia province.

The total number of infections has reached almost 466,680 and almost 6,850 deaths in this nation of 38 million. Poland has been so far declined an offer of help for its coronavirus outbreak from German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, saying it has the situation under control.

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BELGRADE, Serbia — The patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church has been hospitalized after testing positive for the new coronavirus, days after leading prayers at a large public funeral for the head of the church in Montenegro, who died after contracting the virus.

The Serbian Orthodox Church said late Wednesday that the 90-year-old Patriarch Irinej was hospitalized, but has no symptoms and is in "excellent general condition."

Patriarch Irinej last Sunday led the prayers inside a packed church for the church head in Montenegro, Bishop Amfilohije, who had died after contracting COVID-19.

Many of those inside the church did not wear protective face masks or keep their distance from each other, in violation of coronavirus-fighting restrictions. Many kissed the bishop's body in an open coffin.

Among those in the church were Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic and the Montenegrin Prime Minister-designate Zdravko Krivokapic.

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LAHORE, Pakistan-- Thousands of radical Muslims have gathered in Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore for an annual congregation despite increasing coronavirus infections and deaths in the country.

Thursday's gathering took place after the Punjab government asked the Tableeghi Jamaat to adhere to social distancing rules at its annual event in which Muslims from various countries also participate.

Last year, members of Tableeghi Jamaat had been blamed for spreading the new virus in Pakistan and elsewhere in the world.

The latest development comes hours after Pakistan on Thursday reported 26 new fatalities from the coronavirus, one of the highest single-day tallies in recent months. Pakistan has reported 388,785 confirmed cases, including 6,893 deaths.

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BEIJING — China is suspending entry for most foreign passport holders who reside in Britain, reacting to a new surge of coronavirus cases in the United Kingdom.

The suspension covers those holding visas or residence permits issued prior to Nov. 3, with exceptions for diplomats and some others. Foreign nationals wishing to visit China for emergency needs may apply for special case visas.

The Chinese Embassy in London says the suspension will be "assessed in accordance with the evolving situation and any adjustment will be announced accordingly."

China has largely contained the spread of coronavirus within the country but continues to record imported cases, including another 20 reported Thursday. Chinese officials require all people arriving in China

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to undergo two weeks of quarantine.

**BRUSSELS** — Belgium's Brussels Airlines has reported record losses of 233 million euros (\$273.8 million) during the first nine months of the year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hard-hit by the worldwide restrictions on travel, the Lufthansa subsidiary said Thursday that its revenues fell by 70% compared with last year, to 339 million euros (\$398.3 million). From January to September, the airline said it transported 73% fewer passengers.

To weather the crisis, the company has set up a plan to reduce the fleet by 30% and its workforce by 25%. By the end of September, the number of employees had dropped by 14% compared with 2019, Brussels Airlines said.

The airline industry hopes that pre-flight testing programs will help relaunch air traffic.

**PRAGUE** — After a week, coronavirus infections in the Czech Republic have climbed to record levels again.

The Health Ministry says the day-to-day increase of new confirmed cases hit a new record high of 15,729 on Wednesday. That is 65 more than the previous record set on Oct 27.

The country of 10.7 million had 378,716 cases since the start of the pandemic, with almost 170,000 of them in the last two weeks.

The seven-day rolling average of daily new cases has risen over the past two weeks from 92.88 new cases per 100,000 people on Oct. 21 to 108.99 new cases per 100,000 people on Wednesday.

A total of 4,133 people have died, including a daily record of 223 on Tuesday.

**NEW DELHI, India** — India is reporting 50,209 new coronavirus cases for the previous 24 hours amid a surge in the capital of New Delhi, which officials now say is in its third wave of infections.

The Health Ministry on Thursday also reported 704 deaths from COVID-19 across the country, raising its toll for the pandemic to 124,315.

Nerves are frayed in New Delhi, which reported a record-high 6,842 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, giving the city 37,369 active confirmed cases. The city has had 6,703 people die from COVID-19 so far.

The Health Ministry has attributed the surge in New Delhi to the festival season and warns that the situation can worsen due to people crowding markets for festival shopping.

**NEW YORK** — The United States has set another record for daily confirmed coronavirus cases as several states posted all-time highs Wednesday, underscoring the vexing issue confronting the winner of the presidential race.

Public health experts fear potentially dire consequences, at least in the short term.

Daily new confirmed coronavirus cases in the U.S. have surged 45% over the past two weeks, to a record seven-day average of 86,352, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

Deaths are also on the rise, up 15% to an average of 846 deaths every day.

The total U.S. death toll is already more than 232,000, and total confirmed U.S. cases have surpassed 9 million. Those are the highest totals in the world, and new infections are increasing in nearly every state.

**MINNEAPOLIS** — Minnesota hospitals are under pressure and ICU beds are nearing full capacity as coronavirus cases reach a new high and hospitalizations continue to surge.

The state Department of Health said that as of Wednesday afternoon, 887 patients were hospitalized with COVID-19, including 219 in intensive care.

Officials said ICU bed use is at 98% capacity in the Twin Cities area and 92% statewide. The vast majority of ICU beds are occupied by patients with ailments unrelated to COVID-19, but the rise in hospitalizations is straining capacity.

Minnesota reported a record-high 3,844 new cases of the coronavirus Wednesday and 31 deaths. The



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state has seen 160,923 cases and 2,530 deaths since the pandemic began.

**NICOSIA, Cyprus** — Cyprus is bringing back an island-wide, overnight curfew in a bid to curb a surge of new COVID-19 infections that authorities worry could overburden the country's health care system.

The curfew, which is to take effect Friday, orders bars, restaurants, shopping malls and cafes to shut by 10:30 p.m.

The only exceptions to the curfew will be for anyone who's on the job and for emergency medical reasons. A 10-person maximum for gatherings at home or any public space — except in bars and restaurants — is part of the effort.

Health Minister Constantinos Ioannou also announced a ban on all kids' sports and social activities, and the closure of indoor and outdoor playgrounds as well as gyms.

**ROME** — Four regions in Italy are being put under severe lockdown, forbidding people to leave their homes except for essential reasons, in an effort to slow surging COVID-19 infections and prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed.

Premier Giuseppe Conte on Wednesday night announced what he described as "very stringent" restrictions on the so-called "red zone" regions of high risk: Lombardy, Piedmont, Valle d'Aosta in the north and Calabria, the region forming the "toe" in the south of the Italian peninsula.

Except for few circumstances, no one will be allowed to enter or leave "red zone" regions or even travel between their towns, although people can exercise by themselves and while wearing masks near home. Non-essential stores will be closed, although barber shops and hair salons can stay open, and only nursery, elementary and the first year of middle school will have in-class instruction.

Conte said the lockdown will begin Friday to allow time to organize. Designations will be reviewed every two weeks.

## World markets rally as markets shrug off election limbo

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

U.S. futures and world shares surged on Thursday as investors awaited the outcome of the U.S. presidential election and embraced the upside of more gridlock in Washington.

European markets opened higher after a day of gains in Asia, while the fate of the U.S. presidency remained undecided as neither President Donald Trump or Democratic challenger Joe Biden had secured the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win.

Analysts say a Congress likely once again split between a Democratic House and a Republican Senate is expected to keep U.S. tax and other policies relatively stable amid legislative stalemates. And share prices tend to rise regardless of who is in the White House.

Taking reassurance where they can, "markets have been happy to presume that this Democratic White . . . House and Republican Senate is the 'Goldilocks' outcome. In other words, a 'Goldilocks Gridlock,'" Mizuho Bank said in a commentary.

An expectation that Biden has a chance of winning also has raised hopes that U.S. foreign policies might be "more clear," said Jackson Wong, asset management director of Amber Hill Capital. He added, "investors are cheering for that. That's why the markets are performing well."

But while most markets have rallied since Tuesday's election rising coronavirus counts, job losses and recessions remain a dark backdrop for many countries.

Britain's FTSE 100 edged up 0.1% to 5,893.80 as England began a four-week lockdown Thursday that will keep closed all shops selling items deemed to be non-essential, such as books and clothes. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland also have announced wide-ranging restrictions on economic activity.

The Bank of England increased its monetary stimulus by a bigger than anticipated 150 billion pounds (\$195 billion) to help the economy weather the new lockdown measures. But as expected it kept its benchmark



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interest rate at an ultra-low 0.1%.

In Paris, the CAC 40 gained 1% to 4,969.79, while Germany's DAX also gained 1% to 12,449.54.

The future for the S&P 500 gained 1.4% and the future for the Dow industrials was up 1%.

Thursday's rallies followed a strong performance overnight on Wall Street, where the S&P 500 rose 2.2% for its best day in five months. The Nasdaq notched its biggest gain in more than six months as traders doubled down on technology stocks that are seemingly immune to pandemic shocks that bring more and more activity online.

In Asia on Thursday, Hong Kong's Hang Seng surged 3.3% to 25,695.92 while Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index climbed 1.7% to 24,105.28. South Korea's Kospi jumped 2.4% to 2,413.79. In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 gained 1.3% to 6,139.60. The Shanghai Composite index rose 1.3% to 3,320.13.

Shares also rose in Taiwan and Southeast Asia.

Indonesia's stock benchmark rose 3% after the government reported the country fell into recession for the first time in two decades in the past quarter. The economy, Southeast Asia's largest, shrank at at 3.49% annual rate in July-September, though that was an improvement over the 5.3% contraction in the previous quarter.

Looking ahead, continued Republican control of the U.S. Senate may further stymie an agreement on a fresh infusion of aid for the economy following the expiration of an earlier package of stimulus measures in July. That could add to pressures on the Federal Reserve to do even more on its own to support the economy, which could send the dollar lower against the euro and other currencies.

The Fed is meeting this week and had been due to announce its latest decision on interest rate policy on Thursday. But it may hold off on determining whether and how to expand its economic support until after final election results are confirmed.

In other trading:

U.S. benchmark crude oil lost 31 cents to \$38.84 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Overnight, it gained \$1.49 to \$39.15 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, gave up 27 cents to \$40.96 per barrel.

The U.S. dollar edged up to 104.27 Japanese yen from 104.26 yen. The euro strengthened to \$1.1782 from \$1.1736.

## **In Spain, coronavirus puts the poor at the back of the line**

By ARITZ PARRA Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Erika Oliva spends at least three hours a week standing in line at a soup kitchen.

She spends a couple more at the social worker's office with her 8-year-old son, who has autism. She waits on the phone to the health center or when she wants to check if her application for a basic income program will get her the promised 1,015 euros (\$1,188).

So far, it hasn't.

"They are always asking for more papers but we still haven't seen a euro. Everything seems to be closed because of the pandemic. Or you are told to go online," said Oliva. She managed to apply online, but others in her situation don't know how to use a computer or simply don't have one.

"Poor people queue. It's what we know how to do best," Oliva said.

Lower income families around the world have often suffered most from the pandemic for several reasons: their jobs might expose them more to the virus and their savings are typically lower. In Spain, their situation has been worse than in much of Europe due to the big role of hard-hit industries like tourism and weaker social welfare benefits.

"The pandemic is extending and intensifying poverty in a country that already had serious inequality problems," said Carlos Susías, president of the European Anti-Poverty Network, which encompasses dozens of non-profits. He says insufficient welfare spending, too much red tape, lack of access to technology and a resurgence of the pandemic are likely to widen what is already one of the developed world's biggest gaps between rich and poor.

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In Spain, over 38,000 have died and nearly 1.3 million have contracted the virus, although the real infection tally could be at least three times higher. Contagion has spread faster in densely populated working-class neighborhoods like Vallecas, in southern Madrid, where Oliva's family of seven share a 35 square-meter (375 square-foot) street-level apartment.

Manual workers like her husband, many in essential jobs and commuting on public transportation, are at greater peril of infection. And they have less financial safety to cope when they do fall ill.

It's what many experts are describing as a "K-shaped" economic recovery. The affluent are able to recover from the crisis - many working from home - while the most vulnerable lose what economic gains they made since last decade's financial crisis.

The International Monetary Fund expects Spain's economy to shrink 12.8% this year, the most among developed economies.

Lara Contreras, a campaigner with the Intermón Oxfam aid group, said the Spanish economy is more vulnerable due to its reliance on construction and tourism, where labor conditions have been squeezed.

When the pandemic hit, halting most global travel, 1 million people lost their jobs in Spain, and the unemployment rate hit 16.3% in September. That is more than double the average in the EU or the U.S., which reports new figures Friday.

The government has supported the wages of some 3.4 million workers and still keeps 600,000 under its national furlough scheme. The coalition of Socialists and the far-left led by Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez is heralding what he calls a "progressive" re-activation of the economy largely relying on billions of euros from the EU.

But experts warn that Spain needs to fix its job market, which is plagued with temporary and part-time contracts. Women and migrants tend to have the least job security, according to a survey by the main Catholic charity, Caritas. And yet, only one in four vulnerable households were receiving a government subsidy last year.

The pandemic can lead to a "totally broken economy," said Contreras. Her organization, Oxfam, has warned that the number of Spaniards who live under the poverty threshold — on less than 9,000 euros per year— could rise by 1.1 million from the current 9.8 million unless more is invested in health and social protection and the government broadens its flagship basic income scheme.

That program was touted in April as a way to help as many as 2.3 million families living in poverty. Although more than one million have applied for the support, only half of the requests have been processed and 136,000 applicants have been granted the subsidy. Regional governments, meanwhile, have taken the opportunity to save on similar programs to reduce poverty.

"The political decision was right, but its execution has been hellish," Contreras said.

Take Oliva's case. When her husband lost his job delivering milk to bars and restaurants in April, the family also lost a regional subsidy of 300 euros for those who work but struggle financially.

While surviving on a small unemployment benefit, Oliva then applied for the new national subsidy. More than six months later, Oliva has yet to see any of the money. She's also been told that she can't apply to get the regional allowance back. And although her husband has found work delivering beer, the family is facing a potential 100-euro rent hike.

Perhaps more worryingly, competition at the so-called "hunger queues" at soup kitchens is getting fiercer. At the Servants of Jesus monastery in Vallecas, each family can now only receive food handouts once per week instead of three times, Oliva explains as she pulls zucchinis, carrots, apples, washing powder and a dozen milk cartons from her groceries' cart.

"We are now living from day to day," she said.

The lines have also been getting longer at the Somos Tribuk community pantry, one of the many grass-roots networks that have popped up to help people in Vallecas. Volunteers gathered in a warehouse recently to sort out donations of food, diapers, oil and cleaning products.

Fernando Fernández Diego, who at 69 found himself with no pension and unable to sell garlic cloves in markets as he did before the pandemic, said that his household of six adults and three children now

survive entirely on food handouts.

As he pulled a shopping cart with donated goods, Fernández said that with politicians “quarreling all the time” while the virus spreads he had little trust in any government help for his family.

“Only the people will save other people” he said.

Follow AP’s coronavirus pandemic coverage at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Trump backers converge on vote centers in Michigan, Arizona

By MIKE HOUSEHOLDER and TIM SULLIVAN Associated Press

Dozens of angry supporters of President Donald Trump converged on vote-counting centers in Detroit and Phoenix as the returns went against him Wednesday in the two key states, while thousands of anti-Trump protesters demanding a complete tally of the ballots in the still-undecided election took to the streets in cities across the U.S.

“Stop the count!” the Trump supporters chanted in Detroit. “Stop the steal!” they said in Phoenix.

The protests came as the president insisted without evidence that there were major problems with the voting and the ballot counting, especially with mail-in votes, and as Republicans filed suit in various states over the election.

Wearing Trump gear, the Phoenix protesters filled much of the parking lot at the Maricopa County election center, and members of the crowd chanted, “Fox News sucks!” in anger over the network declaring Joe Biden the winner in Arizona.

Rep. Paul Gosar, an Arizona Republican and staunch Trump supporter, joined the crowd, declaring: “We’re not going to let this election be stolen. Period.”

However, observers from both major political parties were inside the election center as ballots were processed and counted, and the procedure was live-streamed online at all times.

Several sheriff’s deputies blocked the entrance to the building. And the vote-counting went on into the night, Maricopa County Elections Department spokeswoman Megan Gilbertson said.

Two top county officials — one a Democrat, the other a Republican — issued a statement expressing concern about how misinformation had spread about the integrity of the election process.

“Everyone should want all the votes to be counted, whether they were mailed or cast in person,” said the statement signed by Clint Hickman, the GOP chair of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, and Democratic Supervisor Steve Gallardo. “An accurate vote takes time. ... This is evidence of democracy, not fraud.”

Meanwhile, from New York City to Seattle, thousands of demonstrators turned out to demand that every vote be tallied.

In Portland, Oregon, which has been a scene of regular protests for months, Gov. Kate Brown called out the National Guard as demonstrators engaged in what authorities said was widespread violence downtown, including smashing windows. Protesters in Portland were demonstrating about a range of issues, including police brutality and the counting of the vote.

“It’s important to trust the process, and the system that has ensured free and fair elections in this country through the decades, even in times of great crisis,” Brown said in a statement. “We are all in this together.”

Richard March came to an anti-Trump demonstration in Portland despite a heart condition that makes him vulnerable to COVID-19.

“To cast doubt on this election has terrible consequences for our democracy,” he said. “I think we are a very polarized society now — and I’m worried about what’s going to come in the next days and weeks and months.”

In New York, hundreds of people paraded past boarded-up luxury stores on Manhattan’s Fifth Avenue, and in Chicago, demonstrators marched through downtown and along a street across the river from Trump Tower.

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Similar protests — sometimes about the election, sometimes about racial inequality — took place in at least a half-dozen cities, including Los Angeles, Houston, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis and San Diego.

The confrontation in Detroit started shortly before The Associated Press declared that Biden had won Michigan.

Video shot by local media showed angry people gathered outside the TCF Center and inside the lobby, with police officers lined up to keep them from entering the vote-counting area. They chanted, "Stop the count!" and "Stop the vote!"

Earlier, the Republican campaign filed suit in a bid to halt the count, demanding Michigan's Democratic secretary of state allow in more inspectors.

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, a Democrat, insisted both parties and the public had been given access to the tallying, "using a robust system of checks and balances to ensure that all ballots are counted fairly and accurately."

Michigan has been on edge for months over fears of political violence. Anti-government protesters openly carried guns into the state Capitol during protests over coronavirus restrictions in the spring, and six men were arrested last month on charges of plotting to kidnap Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer

On Election Night, scattered protests broke after voting ended, stretching from Washington, D.C., to Seattle, but there was no widespread unrest or significant violence.

The prolonged task of counting this year's deluge of mail-in votes raised fears that the lack of clarity in the presidential race could spark unrest.

## Election splits Congress, GOP bolstered as Democrats falter

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — The election scrambled seats in the House and Senate but ultimately left Congress much like it began, deeply split as voters resisted big changes despite the heated race at the top of the ticket for the White House.

It's an outcome that dampens Democratic demands for a bold new agenda, emboldens Republicans and almost ensures partisan gridlock regardless of who wins the presidency. Or perhaps, as some say, it provides a rare opening for modest across-the-aisle cooperation.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi was on track to keep control of the Democratic House, but saw her majority shrinking and her leadership called into question. Control of the Senate tilted Republicans' way as they fended off an onslaught of energized challengers, though a few races remained undecided Wednesday.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Wednesday he's confident "no matter who ends up running the government" they'll be "trying to overcome all that and get results."

One certainty is the upended projections will force a rethinking of polling, fundraising and the very messages the parties use to reach voters in the Trump era and beyond.

By evening, Pelosi had all but declared Democrat Joe Biden the winner, saying House Democrats "will now have the opportunity to deliver extraordinary progress" on party priorities — lowering health care costs, providing jobs through new infrastructure and others.

But the dismal outcome for congressional Democrats put in question the ambitious plans for legislative overhauls pushed by the party, eager for a sweep of Washington government.

Even if Democrats capture the White House and a narrowly split Senate, Pelosi's leverage to force deal-making on her terms will be diminished by her House losses.

If Donald Trump wins another term, his Republican allies particularly in the Senate will likely feel more comfortable sticking with him after escaping an electoral wipeout, though they have yet to outline a GOP agenda.

Scott Jennings, a Republican strategist close to McConnell, said win or lose Trump "reorganized the political parties," turning Republicans, not Democrats, into the party of "working-class" America.

"Democrats have a lot to think about when it comes to those voters," Jennings said. "And Republicans have a lot to think about enacting policies germane to those voters."



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Democrats countered that with Biden on the brink of victory, the mandate for solutions to the coronavirus crisis, faltering economy and other big issues was as strong as ever.

"We're going to get back to the business of governing," said Zac Petkanas, a Democratic strategist. "Republicans are going to have a choice — whether they're going to be helpful or stand in way."

Most immediately, a COVID relief bill remains within reach, as the pandemic blazes through the states. McConnell said he would also like to negotiate a big spending bill to keep the government running past a mid-December deadline.

House Republicans picked up five seats, so far, deflating Pelosi's plans to reach deep into Trump country by making rare gains with women and minority candidates.

Republicans defeated several Democratic freshmen who delivered the House majority in 2018 in a backlash against Trump, by linking them to their most liberal members, including Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and inaccurately branding them all as "socialist."

"We expanded this party that reflects America, that looks like America," said House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., in a conference call with reporters.

A handful of new progressives will be coming to Washington to join House Democrats, while Republicans will see new right-flank members, including Marjorie Taylor Greene, who has espoused unfounded QAnon conspiracy theories and won a vacant seat in northwest Georgia. Trump has called Greene a "future Republican star."

While Democrats picked up must-win Senate seats in Colorado and Arizona, they suffered a setback in Alabama, and Republicans held their own in one race after another — in South Carolina, Maine, Iowa, Texas, Kansas and Montana, dramatically limiting Democrats' hopes of making inroads.

"I know folks are anxious," Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy told followers on a live Twitter video. "We need to count the votes."

Democrats halted a Republican push for John James, a Black businessman trying to unseat Democratic Sen. Gary Peters, who won reelection late Wednesday.

The races attracted an unprecedented outpouring of small-dollar donations for Democrats from Americans apparently voting with their pocketbooks to propel long-shot Senate campaigns.

"You wasted a lot of money," said White House ally Sen. Lindsey Graham in Columbia, South Carolina, after defeating Jamie Harrison, despite the Democrat's stunning \$100 million haul for his upstart campaign.

Still, Republican strategist Steven Law, president of the Senate Leadership Fund, which supports GOP senators, said future candidates are going to have to step up their own fundraising.

McConnell also warned of the continued problems Republicans face in the Trump era as voters turn away from the GOP.

"We need to win back the suburbs," McConnell said. "We had a better election than most people thought we'd have, but we have improvements we need to make."

Republicans believe Democrats erred by focusing almost exclusively on the COVID crisis and the risks to Americans' health care as Trump and the GOP try to unravel the Obama-era Affordable Care Act.

Voters care almost as much about the economy, they said.

According to AP VoteCast, a national survey of the electorate, voters ranked the pandemic and the economy as top concerns.

"It's time for a different approach," said Democrat John Hickenlooper, a former governor who unseated Republican Sen. Cory Gardner in Colorado.

Yet voters, for the most part, stuck with the status quo.

Securing the Senate majority will be vital for the winner of the presidency. Senators confirm administration nominees, including for the Cabinet, and can propel or stall the White House agenda. With Republicans now controlling the chamber, 53-47, three or four seats will determine party control, depending on who wins the presidency because the vice president can break a tie in the Senate.

The final breakdown awaited the outcome of races in Alaska, Georgia and North Carolina, where Republican Sen. Thom Tillis has struggled against Democrat Cal Cunningham, despite the married challenger's



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sexting scandal with a public relations strategist.

In Georgia, two seats were being contested and at least one is headed to a runoff after no candidate reached the 50% threshold to win.

GOP Sen. Kelly Loeffler will face Democrat Raphael Warnock, a Black pastor at the church where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. preached, in the Jan. 5 runoff.

In the other Georgia race, GOP Sen. David Perdue, the former business executive Trump calls his favorite senator, tried to stave off Democrat Jon Ossoff. It, too, could go to a runoff.

Associated Press writers Alan Fram, Mary Clare Jalonick, Matthew Daly, Andrew Taylor and Padmananda Rama contributed to this report.

## **EXPLAINER: States still in play and what makes them that way**

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A handful of pivotal states remained in play Wednesday in the tightly contested U.S. presidential race. Here, The Associated Press reviews them and examines the reasons why they could still go to either Republican Donald Trump or Democrat Joe Biden:

**GEORGIA:** Outstanding ballots left to be counted in counties where Biden has performed well.

**THE BACKGROUND:** Early Wednesday, Trump prematurely claimed he carried Georgia.

"It's ... clear that we have won Georgia. We're up by 2.5%, or 117,000 (votes) with only 7% (of the vote) left" to count, Trump said during an early morning appearance at the White House. He also said he planned to contest the U.S. presidential election before the Supreme Court. It was unclear exactly what legal action he might pursue.

The race is too early to call because an estimated 4% of the vote remains to be counted. That includes mailed ballots from population-dense counties in the Atlanta metro region that lean Democratic. Biden is overperforming Hillary Clinton's 2016 showing in those counties, including in their more upscale suburban reaches.

**NEVADA:** Race too early to call.

**THE BACKGROUND:** About 75% of the votes are in and Biden leads by less than 8,000 votes.

But there are outstanding ballots left to be counted in the coming days. Under state law, they can still be accepted so long as they were postmarked by Election Day, on Nov. 3.

Trump narrowly lost Nevada in 2016 as the state has trended toward the Democrats in the past decade. The last Republican presidential contender to win the state was George W. Bush in 2004.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** Race too early to call. Ballots left to count.

**THE BACKGROUND:** Trump prematurely claimed early Wednesday that he won the state.

"We've clearly won North Carolina, where we're up 1.7%, 77,000 votes with only approximately 5% left. They can't catch us," he said during an appearance at the White House. Trump also said he planned to contest the U.S. presidential election before the Supreme Court. It was unclear, exactly, what legal action he might pursue.

Though Trump is correct that he held a nearly 77,000-vote lead in the state early Wednesday, the race is too early to call with up to 116,000 mail ballots left to count, as well as the potential of thousands of provisional ballots.

As long as those ballots are postmarked by Nov. 3, state election officials have until Nov. 12 to count them. And when it comes to mail ballots, Biden was outperforming Trump. That means the ballots yet to be counted could give Biden a lead.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** More than 1 million votes left to be counted.

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THE BACKGROUND: Pennsylvania is among a handful of battleground states Trump and Biden are narrowly contesting, and there were roughly 1 million votes left to be counted Wednesday afternoon.

Trump, who held a 675,000-vote lead early Wednesday, prematurely declared victory in the state.

"We're winning Pennsylvania by a tremendous amount. We're up 690,000 votes in Pennsylvania. These aren't even close. It's not like, 'Oh, it's close,'" Trump said during an appearance at the White House.

By Wednesday evening, his lead had slipped to about 239,000 — and the race is destined to get tighter.

One reason is because elections officials are not allowed to process mail-in ballots until Election Day under state law. It's a form of voting that has skewed heavily in Biden's favor after Trump spent months claiming without proof that voting by mail would lead to widespread voter fraud.

A final vote total may not be clear for days because the use of mail in ballots, which take more time to process, has surged as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Democrats had long considered Pennsylvania a part of their "blue wall" — a trifecta that also includes Wisconsin and Michigan — that for years had served as a bulwark in presidential elections. In 2016, Trump won each by less than a percentage point.

Biden, who was born in Scranton, claims favorite-son status in the state and has long played up the idea that he was Pennsylvania's "third senator" during his decades representing neighboring Delaware. He's also campaigned extensively in the state from his home in Delaware.

## Trump sues in 3 states, laying ground for contesting outcome

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As Democrat Joe Biden inched closer to the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the White House, President Donald Trump's campaign put into action the legal strategy the president had signaled for weeks: attacking the integrity of the voting process in states where the result could mean his defeat.

Democrats scoffed at the legal challenges the president's campaign filed Wednesday in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Georgia. In spite of the aggressive move, the flurry of court action did not seem obviously destined to impact the election's outcome.

The new filings, joining existing Republican legal challenges in Pennsylvania and Nevada, demand better access for campaign observers to locations where ballots are being processed and counted, and raised absentee ballot concerns, the campaign said.

The Associated Press called Michigan for Democrat Joe Biden on Wednesday. The AP has not called Nevada, Pennsylvania or Georgia.

The Trump campaign also is seeking to intervene in a Pennsylvania case at the Supreme Court that deals with whether ballots received up to three days after the election can be counted, deputy campaign manager Justin Clark said.

Trump's campaign also announced that it would ask for a recount in Wisconsin, a state the AP called for Biden on Wednesday afternoon. Campaign manager Bill Stepien cited "irregularities in several Wisconsin counties," without providing specifics.

Biden said Wednesday the count should continue in all states, adding, "No one's going to take our democracy away from us — not now, not ever."

Campaign spokesman Andrew Bates said legal challenges were not the behavior of a winning campaign.

"What makes these charades especially pathetic is that while Trump is demanding recounts in places he has already lost, he's simultaneously engaged in fruitless attempts to halt the counting of votes in other states in which he's on the road to defeat," Bates said in a statement.

Vote counting, meanwhile, stretched into Thursday. Every election, results reported on election night are unofficial and ballot counting extends past Election Day. But this year, unlike in previous years, states were contending with an avalanche of mail ballots driven by fears of voting in person during a pandemic.

Mail ballots normally take more time to verify and count. This year, because of the large numbers of mail ballots and a close race, results were expected to take longer.

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The lawsuits the Trump campaign filed in Michigan and Pennsylvania on Wednesday called for a temporary halt in the counting until it is given "meaningful" access in numerous locations and allowed to review ballots that already have been opened and processed.

The AP's Michigan call for Biden came after the suit was filed. The president is ahead in Pennsylvania, but his margin is shrinking as more mailed ballots are counted. The state had 3.1 million mail-in ballots that take time to count and an order allows them to be received and counted up until Friday if they are postmarked by Nov. 3.

Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, said in a CNN interview the Trump campaign's lawsuit was "more a political document than a legal document."

"There is transparency in this process. The counting has been going on. There are observers observing this counting, and the counting will continue," he said.

The Michigan lawsuit claims Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, a Democrat, was allowing absentee ballots to be counted without teams of bipartisan observers as well as challengers. Michigan Democrats said the suit was a longshot. Poll watchers from both sides were plentiful Wednesday at one major polling place in question — the TCF Center in Detroit, the AP observed.

The Georgia lawsuit filed in Chatham County essentially asks a judge to ensure the state laws are being followed on absentee ballots. Campaign officials said they were considering peppering a dozen other counties around the state with similar claims around absentee ballots.

Trump, addressing supporters at the White House early Wednesday, talked about taking the undecided race to the Supreme Court. Though it was unclear what he meant, his comments evoked a reprise of the court's intervention in the 2000 presidential election that ended with a decision effectively handing the presidency to George W. Bush.

But there are important differences from 2000 and they already were on display. In 2000, Republican-controlled Florida was the critical state and Bush clung to a small lead. Democrat Al Gore asked for a recount and the Supreme Court stopped it.

To some election law experts, calling for the Supreme Court to intervene now seemed premature, if not rash.

A case would have to come to the court from a state in which the outcome would determine the election's winner, Richard Hasen, a University of California, Irvine, law professor, wrote on the Election Law blog. The difference between the candidates' vote totals would have to be smaller than the ballots at stake in the lawsuit.

"As of this moment (though things can change) it does not appear that either condition will be met," Hasen wrote.

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Associated Press writers Ben Nadler in Atlanta, John Flesher in Traverse City, Mich., Mike Householder and Ed White in Detroit, Nomaan Merchant in Houston, Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento, Calif., and David Eggert in Lansing, Mich., contributed to this report.

## **Claim that Sharpie pens ruin Arizona ballots misses the mark**

By BEATRICE DUPUY Associated Press

As states across the U.S. release vote totals for the presidential election, some social media users are falsely claiming that ballots are being invalidated in Arizona. The supposed culprit: Sharpie markers.

In what's come to be known as #Sharpiegate, social media posts suggest that election officials in Maricopa County provided voters with Sharpie pens, which interfered with ballots being recorded, specifically those for President Donald Trump.

Arizona election officials say that voting with a Sharpie would have no impact on the votes being recorded by tabulation machines, and if there was an issue, there is a process that would keep the ballots from being canceled out.

Here's a look at the facts:

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CLAIM: Votes were eliminated in Arizona because people were made to use Sharpie pens to mark their ballots. This caused the tabulation machine to cancel the vote.

THE FACTS: As Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden was declared the winner of the presidential vote in Arizona, social media posts circulated falsely suggesting that votes for Trump were canceled because people were told to use Sharpies to fill out their ballots.

Arizona election officials confirmed that Sharpies were used in voting, but they said that would not invalidate a ballot. The Maricopa County Elections Department tweeted on Election Day that voting centers use Sharpies so that ink does not smudge when ballots are counted.

"New offset columns on the ballots means bleed through won't impact your vote!" they tweeted in an informational video.

One video with more than 821,000 views showed a woman speaking about how four different polling places were using Sharpies and a man asks her if "those ballots are not being counted" and "are invalid."

"They are invalidating votes is what they are doing," the man says. He went on to suggest voters use a ballpoint pen instead.

"People are coming here to vote for Donald Trump, and all those votes are getting invalidated," he says in the video.

Sophia Solis, public information officer for the Arizona Secretary of State, said in an email that votes would not be canceled if there was an issue with the ballot.

"If a voter's ballot is listed as canceled, it usually means the voter made an additional ballot request if they needed to have their original ballot replaced," Solis said. "Depending on when they returned their replacement ballot, that ballot is most likely still being processed by the county."

Clint Hickman, the Republican chairman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, and Steve Gallardo, the board's only Democrat, published a letter to voters expressing concern about misinformation. They said officials tested a wide variety of pens with their vote-tabulation equipment and "Sharpies are recommended by the manufacturer because they provide the fastest-drying ink."

According to the state's election procedures manual, a ballot review board duplicates ballots that cannot be read by the machine in cases where they are damaged or smudged with ink.

Videos making the false claim about Sharpies were also widely shared on TikTok. TikTok said the claims on invalidated ballots violated its policy against misleading information around the elections and would be removed. Facebook said it has blocked the Sharpiegate hashtag on its platform and pointed to fact checks on the matter by its outside fact-checkers, including The Associated Press.

While election officials took to social media to debunk the Sharpie rumors, others in Arizona were not convinced.

Republican Congressman Paul Gosar added his voice to the Sharpie claims Wednesday with a tweet that said he was reaching out to the state attorney general's office.

Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich's office sent a letter to Maricopa County election officials Wednesday demanding answers about which voting centers used the Sharpies and how many votes were rejected because of issues with the Sharpie ink.

A woman in the Phoenix area filed a lawsuit Wednesday alleging vote tabulation equipment was unable to record her ballot because she completed it with a county-issued Sharpie pen. The lawsuit alleged Laurie Aguilera asked poll workers for a new ballot, but they refused her request.

She is seeking a court order that all Maricopa County voters whose ballots were rejected as a result of using a Sharpie be given a chance to fix their ballots. Aguilera also is asking for such voters to be able to be present while election officials count their ballots.

Megan Gilbertson, a spokeswoman for the Maricopa County Elections Department, declined to comment on the lawsuit.

AP Technology Writer Barbara Ortutay in San Francisco and Associated Press writer Jacques Billeaud in Phoenix contributed to this story.



## **A weakened Eta moves on to Honduras with drenching rains**

By MARLON GONZÁLEZ Associated Press

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — Eta is moving over Honduras as a weakened tropical depression but still bringing the heavy rains that have caused deadly landslides while drenching the country's east and the north of neighboring Nicaragua.

The storm no longer carried the winds of the Category 4 hurricane that battered Nicaragua's coast Tuesday, but it was advancing so slowly and dumping so much rain that much of Central America remained on high alert. Eta had sustained winds of 35 mph (55 kph) and was moving west-northwest at 7 mph (11 kph) late Wednesday. It was 115 miles (185 kilometers) south-southeast of La Ceiba.

The long-term forecast called for Eta to spin back out into the Caribbean late Thursday and then reform as a tropical storm Friday — possibly reaching Cuba on Sunday and southern Florida on Monday.

Heavy rain was forecast to continue across Honduras through at least Thursday as Eta moved northward toward the capital of Tegucigalpa and the northern city of San Pedro Sula.

Before the center of Eta even reached Honduras, hundreds of people had been forced from their homes by floodwaters.

Early Tuesday, a 12-year-old girl died in a mudslide in San Pedro Sula, said Marvin Aparicio of Honduras' emergency management agency.

On Wednesday, Mayor Edy Chacón in the central Honduras town of Sulaco said a 15-year-old boy had drowned trying to cross a rain-swollen river. That brought the storm's death toll to at least four in Nicaragua and Honduras.

Aparicio said Wednesday that some 379 homes had been destroyed, mostly by floodwaters. There were 38 communities cut off by washed out roads and five bridges in the country were wiped out by swollen rivers.

Among those rescued were Karen Patricia Serrano, her husband and five children. Their home was flooded with waters from the Lancetilla river and they had been in a shelter in the northern city of Tela since Monday.

"We lost everything," the 32-year-old woman said. "I don't know what we're going to do. My husband is 74 years old and because of his age he can't work. I even lost my little animals," she said, referring to chickens, cats and dogs.

Oscar Armando Martínez Flores, his wife and seven children were in the same shelter. Their home near the Lancetilla river also flooded, and they made it out only with the clothes they were wearing.

"The rains began Monday and the river overflowed," Martínez said Wednesday. "The firefighters and police arrived to take us out because the houses were flooded."

Martínez was already in dire straits before the storm. A construction worker, he hadn't been able to find work in eight months since the coronavirus pandemic began there. He has been selling tortillas to keep his family afloat.

Francisco Argeñal, chief of meteorology at Honduras' Center for Atmospheric, Oceanographic and Seismic Studies, said he expected more of the country's rivers to spill from their banks.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center forecast that before Eta moved away, parts of Nicaragua and Honduras could receive 15 to 25 inches (380 to 635 millimeters) of rain, with 40 inches (1,000 millimeters) possible in some isolated parts.

Eta left a path of destruction across northern Nicaragua, starting with the coastal city of Bilwi.

In Bilwi on Wednesday, civil defense brigades worked to clear streets of downed trees, power lines and sheets of metal roofing. Some neighborhoods were completely flooded. Vice President and first lady Rosario Murillo said more than 51,000 families remained without power in the affected areas.

"The debris teams are starting to work and we still can't give a sense of what happened," said Ivania Díaz, a local government official in Bilwi. "We have seen very humble homes completely destroyed."

Two gold miners were killed in a landslide Tuesday in the Nicaraguan town of Bonanza, about 100 miles

(160 kilometers) west of where Eta made landfall, said Lt. Cesar Malespin of the Bonanza Fire Department.

In the country's northern province of Jinotega, communities were already flooded.

Northern Nicaragua is home to most of the country's production of coffee, a critical export. Lila Sevilla, president of the National Alliance of Nicaraguan Coffee Producers, said they were concerned about landslides that could affect coffee plants and block roads needed to get the harvest to market.

"It's still early to evaluate the impact of the rain, but we can expect damage to the road network in the northern towns," Sevilla said. The harvest hadn't started yet, but extended rain could cause the coffee to mature too quickly and affect its quality, she said.

Associated Press writer Christopher Sherman in Mexico City contributed to this report.

## **Biden wins Michigan, Wisconsin, now on brink of White House**

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, ZEKÉ MILLER, JILL COLVIN and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Joe Biden won the battleground prizes of Michigan and Wisconsin on Wednesday, reclaiming a key part of the "blue wall" that slipped away from Democrats four years ago and dramatically narrowing President Donald Trump's pathway to reelection.

A full day after Election Day, neither candidate had cleared the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the White House. But Biden's victories in the Great Lakes states left him at 264, meaning he was one battleground state away from crossing the threshold and becoming president-elect.

Biden, who has received more than 71 million votes, the most in history, was joined by his running mate Kamala Harris at an afternoon news conference and said he now expected to win the presidency, though he stopped short of outright declaring victory.

"I will govern as an American president," Biden said. "There will be no red states and blue states when we win. Just the United States of America."

It was a stark contrast to Trump, who on Wednesday falsely proclaimed that he had won the election, even though millions of votes remained uncounted and the race was far from over.

The Associated Press called Wisconsin for Biden after election officials in the state said all outstanding ballots had been counted, save for a few hundred in one township and an expected small number of provisional votes.

Trump's campaign requested a recount, though statewide recounts in Wisconsin have historically changed the vote tally by only a few hundred votes. Biden led by 0.624 percentage point out of nearly 3.3 million ballots counted.

Since 2016, Democrats had been haunted by the crumbling of the blue wall, the trio of Great Lakes states — Pennsylvania is the third — that their candidates had been able to count on every four years. But Trump's populist appeal struck a chord with white working-class voters and he captured all three in 2016 by a total margin of just 77,000 votes.

Both candidates this year fiercely fought for the states, with Biden's everyman political persona resonating in blue-collar towns while his campaign also pushed to increase turnout among Black voters in cities like Detroit and Milwaukee.

Pennsylvania remained too early to call Wednesday night.

It was unclear when or how quickly a national winner could be determined after a long, bitter campaign dominated by the coronavirus and its effects on Americans and the national economy. But Biden's possible pathways to the White House were expanding rapidly.

After the victories in Wisconsin and Michigan, he was just six Electoral College votes away from the presidency. A win in any undecided state except for Alaska — but including Nevada, with its six votes — would be enough to end Trump's tenure in the White House.

Trump spent much of Wednesday in the White House residence, huddling with advisers and fuming at media coverage showing his Democratic rival picking up key battlegrounds. Trump falsely claimed victory in several key states and amplified unsubstantiated conspiracy theories about Democratic gains as absentee

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and early votes were tabulated.

Trump campaign manager Bill Stepien said the president would formally request a Wisconsin recount, citing "irregularities" in several counties. And the campaign said it was filing suit in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Georgia to demand better access for campaign observers to locations where ballots are being processed and counted, and to raise absentee ballot concerns.

At the same time, hundreds of thousands of votes were still to be counted in Pennsylvania, and Trump's campaign said it was moving to intervene in the existing Supreme Court litigation over counting mail-in ballots there. Yet, the campaign also argued that it was the outstanding votes in Arizona that could reverse the outcome there, showcasing an inherent inconsistency with their arguments.

In other closely watched races, Trump picked up Florida, the largest of the swing states, and held onto Texas and Ohio while Biden kept New Hampshire and Minnesota and flipped Arizona, a state that had reliably voted Republican in recent elections.

The unsettled nature of the presidential race was reflective of a somewhat disappointing night for Democrats, who had hoped to deliver a thorough repudiation of Trump's four years in office while also reclaiming the Senate to have a firm grasp on all of Washington. But the GOP held onto several Senate seats that had been considered vulnerable, including in Iowa, Texas, Maine and Kansas. Democrats lost House seats but were expected to retain control there.

The high-stakes election was held against the backdrop of a historic pandemic that has killed more than 232,000 Americans and wiped away millions of jobs. The U.S. on Wednesday set another record for daily confirmed coronavirus cases as several states posted all-time highs.

The candidates spent months pressing dramatically different visions for the nation's future, including on racial justice, and voters responded in huge numbers, with more than 100 million people casting votes ahead of Election Day.

Trump, in an extraordinary move from the White House, issued premature claims of victory — which he continued on Twitter Wednesday — and said he would take the election to the Supreme Court to stop the counting. It was unclear exactly what legal action he could try to pursue.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell discounted the president's quick claim of victory, saying it would take a while for states to conduct their vote counts. The Kentucky Republican said Wednesday that "claiming you've won the election is different from finishing the counting."

Vote tabulations routinely continue beyond Election Day, and states largely set the rules for when the count has to end. In presidential elections, a key point is the date in December when presidential electors met. That's set by federal law.

Dozens of Trump supporters chanting "Stop the count!" descended on a ballot-tallying center in Detroit, while thousands of anti-Trump protesters demanding a complete vote count took to the streets in cities across the U.S.

Protests — sometimes about the election, sometimes about racial inequality — took place Wednesday in at least a half-dozen cities, including Los Angeles, Seattle, Houston, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis and San Diego.

Several states allow mailed-in votes to be accepted as long as they were postmarked by Tuesday. That includes Pennsylvania, where ballots postmarked by Nov. 3 can be accepted if they arrive up to three days later.

Trump appeared to suggest those ballots should not be counted, and that he would fight for that outcome at the high court. But legal experts were dubious of Trump's declaration. Trump has appointed three of the high court's nine justices — including, most recently, Amy Coney Barrett.

The Trump campaign on Wednesday pushed Republican donors to dig deeper into their pockets to help finance legal challenges. Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel, during a donor call, spoke plainly: "The fight's not over. We're in it."

The momentum from early voting carried into Election Day, as an energized electorate produced long lines at polling sites throughout the country. Turnout was higher than in 2016 in numerous counties, including all of Florida, nearly every county in North Carolina and more than 100 counties in both Georgia and Texas. That tally seemed sure to increase as more counties reported their turnout figures.

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Voters braved worries of the coronavirus, threats of polling place intimidation and expectations of long lines caused by changes to voting systems, but appeared undeterred as turnout appeared it would easily surpass the 139 million ballots cast four years ago.

Jaffe reported from Wilmington, Delaware. Associated Press writers Aamer Madhani and Andrew Taylor in Washington, Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento, Calif., and Sophia Tulp in Atlanta contributed reporting.

Find AP's full election coverage at [APNews.com/Election2020](https://www.apnews.com/Election2020).

## Election officials scramble to count ballots in key states

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Election officials in several key states furiously counted ballots Wednesday as the nation awaited the outcome of the race between President Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden and braced for possible recounts and legal challenges.

Unlike in previous years, states were contending with an avalanche of mail ballots driven by the global pandemic. Every election, what's reported on election night are unofficial results, and the counting of votes extends past Election Day. This year, with so many mail ballots and close races in key states, counting every vote was expected to take more time.

Here's what was happening Wednesday in six key states:

### GEORGIA

Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said he was pushing counties to complete vote tallies, with just under 100,000 ballots left to count as of Wednesday night.

There was a narrow margin between Trump and Biden in Georgia, a close race in a state that has not backed a Democrat for president since 1992. There is no automatic recount, but a candidate can request one if the margin is within 0.5%.

"We have long anticipated – and said publicly – that counting would most likely take place into Wednesday night and perhaps Thursday morning," Raffensperger said in a statement issued earlier in the day. "We're on pace to accomplish that responsibly, ensuring that the voice of every eligible voter is heard. It's important to act quickly, but it's more important to get it right."

The outstanding vote was primarily in the Atlanta area, which tends to lean Democratic. On Wednesday, about 50 people were counting votes inside State Farm Arena, the home of the Atlanta Hawks NBA team. Counties have until 5 p.m. on Nov. 13 to certify results.

At stake in Georgia are 16 electoral votes. All absentee ballots were due Tuesday.

### MICHIGAN

The Associated Press called Michigan for Biden on Wednesday, as the Trump campaign filed legal challenges there and in other battleground states.

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson had urged patience as counties tallied thousand of ballots that had been received on Election Day. Many of those were from Democratic cities such as Detroit, Grand Rapids, Flint and Kalamazoo.

"These ballots were cast by tens of thousands of Michigan citizens who have the right to have their vote counted. We're going to make sure that right is protected," Benson said.

In its lawsuit, the Trump campaign demanded better access for observers at locations where ballots were being processed and counted. Campaign manager Bill Stepien said its observers had not been provided with "meaningful access" to monitor the opening of ballots and the counting process in numerous locations.

At one location, however, The Associated Press observed poll watchers from both sides monitoring on Wednesday.

Michigan has 16 electoral votes.

### NEVADA

The top elections official in Nevada's most populous county said more results will be released Thursday



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morning that include mail-in ballots received Tuesday and Wednesday.

Clark County Registrar of Voters Joe Gloria said at a news conference Wednesday afternoon that he did not yet have a number of how many ballots had been received but uncounted in the Las Vegas-area.

Unofficial results showed Biden with a slim lead over Trump, but it was too early to declare a winner in the race Wednesday with a large number of ballots yet to be counted. Ballots would continue to be accepted if they were postmarked by Election Day.

The number of outstanding mail ballots is difficult to estimate because Nevada opted to send ballots to all 1.7 million active registered voters this year due to the pandemic, and it's hard to predict how many will choose to return them.

At stake in Nevada are 6 electoral votes. All mail ballots are due Nov. 10 if postmarked by Election Day.

## NORTH CAROLINA

Elections officials were working through the remaining ballots and would continue to process and count those delivered by the Postal Service through Nov. 12, as long as they were postmarked by Election Day.

Though Trump is correct that he held a nearly 77,000-vote lead in the state early Wednesday, the race is too early to call with up to 116,000 mail ballots left to count, as well as the potential of thousands of provisional ballots.

The state board had extended the deadline for absentee ballots to be received at local election offices from Nov. 6 to Nov. 12 as part of a consent decree in a state lawsuit by voting rights advocates. They must be postmarked by Election Day. Counties have until Nov. 13 to finish counting.

"Regardless of vote differential, we never stop counting until all eligible votes are counted and added to the final certified and audited results," said Karen Brinson Bell, executive director of the state elections board.

At stake in North Carolina are 15 electoral votes.

## PENNSYLVANIA

An estimated 1 million ballots have yet to be counted in Pennsylvania, and the Trump campaign indicated it would be taking legal action to temporarily halt vote tallying.

State election officials had warned repeatedly in the lead up to Election Day that it would take days to count because of a massive surge in absentee ballots brought on by the pandemic and a recent change in state law that meant an excuse was no longer needed to vote absentee. Slowing the process down was the fact that local election officials could not begin processing and scanning ballots ahead of Election Day, as most states did.

On Wednesday, Philadelphia aired live video of workers in yellow and orange safety vests preparing ballots to be scanned. City officials counseled patience.

"Counting votes cast by mail, if you're going to do it right and you're going to do it accurately — because there's no other choice — takes a little bit of time," City Commissioner Al Schmidt said. "It's more important that we do it right than meet artificial deadlines."

A lingering question is what will happen to mail ballots that arrive after Election Day. State law allows for these ballots to be counted so long as they are received by Nov. 7. Trump's campaign said it would intervene in a case at the Supreme Court that deals with whether Pennsylvania ballots received up to three days after the election can be counted.

At stake in Pennsylvania are 20 electoral votes. All absentee and mail ballots are due Nov. 6 if mailed by Election Day.

## WISCONSIN

The Associated Press called Wisconsin for Biden on Wednesday afternoon, and Trump's campaign promised to seek an immediate recount citing "reports of irregularities in several counties."

All ballots had been counted with the exception of 300 votes outstanding from one township and an unknown number of uncounted provisional ballots, likely fewer than 1,000 based on prior elections.

Biden's lead was roughly 20,000 votes, or about six-tenths of a percentage point, and within the state's 1-point margin for recounts.

Meagan Wolfe, the state's top elections official, did not directly address the Trump campaign's claim of irregularities. Instead, Wolfe defended the state's voting processes, noting a recount of the 2016 presidential

result showed no widespread problems and resulted in only a few hundred votes changing.

"There are no dark corners or locked doors on elections," Wolfe said. "Anybody was free to watch those processes yesterday."

At stake in Wisconsin are 10 electoral votes. All absentee ballots were due Tuesday.

AP reporters from around the country contributed to this report.

## **In blue and red states, milestone wins for LGBTQ candidates**

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Across the nation, LGBTQ candidates achieved milestone victories in Tuesday's election, including the first transgender person elected to a state Senate, and the first openly gay Black men to win seats in Congress.

The landmark wins came not in only blue but also red states such as Tennessee, where Republican Eddie Mannis, who is gay, and Democrat Torrey Harris, who identifies as bisexual, won seats in the state House to become the first openly LGBTQ members of that legislature.

According to the LGBTQ Victory Fund, which recruits and supports LGBTQ candidates, that leaves only Alaska, Louisiana and Mississippi as states that have never elected an LGBTQ legislator.

"Torrey and Eddie sent a clear message that LGBTQ candidates can win in a deep red state while being their authentic selves," said the Victory Fund's president, former Houston Mayor Annise Parker. "Their presence in the state legislature can dilute the most toxic anti-LGBTQ voices and lead to more inclusive legislation."

In New York, attorney Mondaire Jones won in a district of New York City suburbs and Ritchie Torres, a member of the New York City Council, won in the Bronx to make history as the first gay Black men elected to the U.S. House. Both are Democrats; Torres identifies as Afro Latino.

The two "will bring unique perspectives based on lived experiences never before represented in the U.S. Congress," Parker said.

With the addition of Jones and Torres, there will be nine openly LGBTQ members of the House as of January. The seven incumbents all won their races.

In Delaware, Democrat Sarah McBride won her state Senate race with more than 70% of the vote and will become the first openly transgender state senator in the country.

"It is my hope that a young LGBTQ kid here in Delaware or really anywhere in this country can look at the results and know that our democracy is big enough for them, too," McBride said as her victory was confirmed Tuesday night.

McBride interned at the White House under President Barack Obama and in 2016 became the first openly transgender person to give a speech at a major party convention.

Two other Democrats became the first openly transgender people to win seats in their states' Houses: Taylor Small in Vermont and Stephanie Byers in Kansas.

Byers, a retired high school band teacher, expressed hope that her victory would encourage other transgender people in conservative Kansas.

"It helps those people who are transgender to reinforce that they are people who matter, they are people who are important and they're people who can be successful in their lives," she told The Wichita Eagle.

Before Tuesday's election, there were four other transgender lawmakers in state legislatures nationwide, according to the Victory Fund.

In Georgia, Democrat Kim Jackson, a lesbian social justice advocate, became the first LGBTQ person to win a seat in the state Senate. Shevrin Jones, a gay former state representative, accomplished that same feat in Florida's Senate. And in New York, Jabari Brisport, a gay math teacher, became the first openly LGBTQ person of color elected to the legislature.

In Oklahoma, Mauree Turner, a Democrat who is Black, Muslim and identifies as non-binary, won a seat in the state House.

"I have continuously lived a life where folks doubt my voice or the power that I have," Turner said. "I

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wouldn't have gotten far if I'd let something like that debilitate me."

There also were some notable losses for LGBTQ candidates.

In Texas, Gina Ortiz Jones, a Democratic former Air Force intelligence officer who is lesbian, had been seen as having a strong chance of winning in a sprawling, 800-mile congressional district that runs from San Antonio to El Paso. The seat had been held by Rep. Will Hurd, the House's only Black Republican, who opted not to seek re-election and endorsed Tony Gonzales, the GOP candidate who prevailed on Tuesday.

And in southwestern Michigan's 6th District, Jon Hoadley, seeking to become the state's first openly gay congressman, lost to 17-term GOP Rep. Fred Upton.

Associated Press writers Jonathan Mattise in Nashville, Tennessee, Margaret Stafford in Liberty, Missouri, and Sean Murphy in Oklahoma City contributed to this report.

## US sets record for cases amid election battle over virus

By LINDSEY TANNER AP Medical Writer

New confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S. have climbed to an all-time high of more than 86,000 per day on average, in a glimpse of the worsening crisis that lies ahead for the winner of the presidential election.

Cases and hospitalizations are setting records all around the country just as the holidays and winter approach, demonstrating the challenge that either President Donald Trump or former Vice President Joe Biden will face in the coming months.

Daily new confirmed coronavirus cases in the U.S. have surged 45% over the past two weeks, to a record 7-day average of 86,352, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. Deaths are also on the rise, up 15 percent to an average of 846 deaths every day.

The total U.S. death toll is already more than 232,000, and total confirmed U.S. cases have surpassed 9 million. Those are the highest totals in the world, and new infections are increasing in nearly every state.

Several states on Wednesday reported grim numbers that are fueling the national trends. Texas reported 9,048 new cases and 126 deaths, and the number of coronavirus patients in Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma hospitals set records. About a third of the new cases in Texas happened in hard-hit El Paso, where a top health official said hospitals are at a "breaking point."

Public health experts fear potentially dire consequences, at least in the short term.

Trump's current term doesn't end until Jan. 20. In the 86 days until then, 100,000 more Americans will likely die from the virus if the nation doesn't shift course, said Dr. Robert Murphy, executive director of the Institute for Global Health at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, echoing estimates from other public health experts.

"Where we are is in an extremely dire place as a country. Every metric that we have is trending in the wrong direction. This is a virus that will continue to escalate at an accelerated speed and that is not going to stop on its own," said Dr. Leana Wen, a public health expert at George Washington University.

Dr. Susan Bailey, president of the American Medical Association, said there are things Americans can do now to help change the trajectory.

"Regardless of the outcome of the election, everyone in America needs to buckle down," Bailey said.

"A lot of us have gotten kind of relaxed about physically distancing, not washing our hands quite as often as we used to, maybe not wearing our masks quite as faithfully. We all need to realize that things are escalating and we've got to be more careful than ever," she said.

Polls showed the public health crisis and the economy were top concerns for many Americans.

They are competing issues that Trump and Biden view through drastically different lenses.

Trump has ignored the advice of his top health advisors, who have issued increasingly urgent warnings in recent days about the need for preventive measures, instead holding rallies where face coverings were rare and falsely suggesting that the pandemic is waning.

By contrast, Biden has rarely been seen in public without a mask and made public health a key issue.

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Whether his voice will carry much influence if Trump is declared the winner is uncertain.

"President Trump has already made clear what his strategy is for COVID-19, which is to pretend that there is not a contagious virus all around us," Wen said. Trump has been touting treatments and vaccines, which won't be widely available to all Americans until at least mid-2021, she noted.

"There's a lot of suffering that is going to happen before then, which could have been prevented," Wen said.

Federal health officials have said they believe a vaccine could get emergency use authorization before the end of the year. The first limited supplies of doses would then be immediately distributed to the most vulnerable populations, which is likely to include frontline health care workers. Doses would then gradually become more widely available.

The timeline hinges on having a vaccine that's shown to be safe and effective, which experts note is not yet a certainty. "The vaccine has to move at the speed of science," said Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, vice dean for public health practice at Johns Hopkins University and former Maryland state health department chief.

On the treatment front, the makers of two experimental antibody drugs have asked the Food and Drug Administration to allow emergency use of them for people with mild to moderate COVID-19, and Trump, who received one when he was sickened last month, has said he wanted them available right away.

So far, the FDA has granted full approval to only one drug — the antiviral remdesivir — for hospitalized patients. Dexamethasone or similar steroids are recommended for certain severely ill patients under federal treatment guidelines.

The government continues to sponsor many studies testing other treatments alone and in combination with remdesivir.

But the development of treatments could be affected if Trump makes good on threats to fire Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease doctor, or other top health officials Trump has clashed with.

Most Americans support mandating mask-wearing in public and think preventing the virus from spreading is a higher priority than protecting the economy, according to AP VoteCast, a nationwide survey of over 133,000 voters and nonvoters conducted for The Associated Press by NORC at the University of Chicago.

While several European countries have imposed or proposed new lockdowns and other restrictions to control surging cases, Trump has resisted those approaches and has focused on rebuilding the economy.

Absent a national pandemic strategy, curbing virus spread in the U.S. will depend on more Americans taking necessary precautions and the upcoming holiday season will make that a challenge, said Dr. Cedric Dark, an emergency physician in Houston.

"It's going to be Thanksgiving, winter break for college students, Christmas time and Hannukah," but families may have to resist close get-togethers this year, he said. Outbreaks on college campuses mean many students may be bringing the virus home and spreading it to parents and grandparents, he said.

Dark, who hasn't seen his parents in over a year, has had to adjust his own holiday plans. This year, Thanksgiving will be in his parents' garage, with the door up, chairs at least 6 feet apart, and a space heater if needed.

"We can at least see each other, from a distance," Dark said.

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AP Medical Writer Marilynn Marchione and AP reporter Candice Choi contributed.

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Follow AP Medical Writer Lindsey Tanner at @LindseyTanner.

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The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Did social media actually counter election misinformation?

By MATT O'BRIEN and MAE ANDERSON AP Technology Writers

Ahead of the election, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube promised to clamp down on election misinforma-



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tion, including unsubstantiated charges of fraud and premature declarations of victory by candidates. And they mostly did just that — though not without a few hiccups.

But overall their measures still didn't really address the problems exposed by the 2020 U.S. presidential contest, critics of the social platforms contend.

"We're seeing exactly what we expected, which is not enough, especially in the case of Facebook," said Shannon McGregor, an assistant professor of journalism and media at the University of North Carolina.

One big test emerged early Wednesday morning as vote-counting continued in battleground states including Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania. President Donald Trump made a White House appearance before cheering supporters, declaring he would challenge the poll results. He also posted misleading statements about the election on Facebook and Twitter, following months of signaling his unfounded doubts about expanded mail-in voting and his desire for final election results when polls closed on Nov. 3.

So what did tech companies do about it? For the most part, what they said they would, which primarily meant labeling false or misleading election posts in order to point users to reliable information. In Twitter's case, that sometimes meant obscuring the offending posts, forcing readers to click through warnings to see them and limiting the ability to share them.

The video-sharing app TikTok, popular with young people, said it pulled down some videos Wednesday from high-profile accounts that were making election fraud allegations, saying they violated the app's policies on misleading information. For Facebook and YouTube, it mostly meant attaching authoritative information to election-related posts.

For instance, Google-owned YouTube showed video of Trump's White House remarks suggesting fraud and premature victories, just as some traditional news channels did. But Google placed an "information panel" beneath the videos noting that election results may not be final and linking to Google's election results page with additional information.

"They're just appending this little label to the president's posts, but they're appending those to any politician talking about the election," said McGregor, who blamed both the tech giants and traditional media outlets for shirking their responsibility to curb the spread of misinformation about the election results instead of amplifying a falsehood just because the president said it.

"Allowing any false claim to spread can lead more people to accept it once it's there," she said.

Trump wasn't alone in attracting such labels. Republican U.S. Sen. Thom Tillis got a label on Twitter for declaring a premature reelection victory in North Carolina. The same thing happened to a Democratic official claiming that former Vice President Joe Biden had won Wisconsin.

The flurry of Trump claims that began early Wednesday morning continued after the sun rose over Washington. By late morning, Trump was tweeting an unfounded complaint that his early lead in some states seemed to "magically disappear" as the night went on and more ballots were counted.

Twitter quickly slapped that with a warning that said "some or all of the content shared in this Tweet is disputed and might be misleading about an election or other civic process." It was among a series of such warnings Twitter applied to Trump tweets Wednesday, which make it harder for viewers to see the posts without first reading the warning.

Much of the slowdown in the tabulation of results had been widely forecasted for months, because the coronavirus pandemic led many states to make it easier to vote by mail, and millions chose to do so rather than venturing out to cast ballots in person. Mail ballots can take longer to process than ballots cast at polling places.

In a Sept. 3 post, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said that if a candidate or campaign tries to declare victory before the results are in, the social network would label their post to note that official results are not yet in and directing people to the official results.

But Facebook limited that policy to official candidates and campaigns declaring premature victory in the overall election. Posts that declared premature victory in specific states were flagged with a general notification about where to find election information but not warnings that the information was false or misleading.

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Facebook also issued a blanket statement on the top of Facebook and Instagram feeds on Wednesday noting that the votes for the U.S. presidential election are still being counted.

Twitter was a bit more proactive. Based on its "civic integrity policy," implemented last month, Twitter said it would label and reduce the visibility of Tweets containing "false or misleading information about civic processes" in order to provide more context. It labeled Trump's tweets declaring premature victory as well as claims from Trump and others about premature victory in specific states.

The Twitter and Facebook actions were a step in the right direction, but not that effective — particularly in Twitter's case, said Jennifer Grygiel, a professor at Syracuse University and social media expert.

That's because tweets from major figures can get almost instant traction, Grygiel said. So even though Twitter labeled Trump's tweets about "being up big," and votes being cast after polls closed and others, by the time the label appeared, several minutes after the tweet, the misinformation had already spread. One Wednesday Trump tweet falsely complaining that vote counters were "working hard" to make his lead in the Pennsylvania count "disappear" wasn't labeled for more than 15 minutes, and was not obscured.

"Twitter can't really enforce policies if they don't do it before it happens, in the case of the president," Grygiel said. "When a tweet hits the wire, essentially, it goes public. It already brings this full force of impact of market reaction."

Grygiel suggested that for prominent figures like Trump, Twitter could pre-moderate posts by delaying publication until a human moderator can decide whether it needs a label. That means flagged tweets would publish with a label, making it more difficult to spread unlabeled misinformation, especially during important events like the election.

This is less of an issue on Facebook or YouTube, where people are less likely to interact with posts in real time. YouTube could become more of an issue over the next few days, Grygiel suggested, if Trump's false claims are adopted by YouTubers who are analyzing the election.

"Generally, platforms have policies in place that are an attempt to do something, but at the end of the day it proved to be pretty ineffective," Grygiel said. "The president felt empowered to make claims."

## Trump and allies spread falsehoods to cast doubt on election

By AMANDA SEITZ, DAVID KLEPPER and ALI SWENSON Associated Press

While much of America was sleeping Wednesday morning, President Donald Trump's leads in crucial battleground states began slipping — and that's when online falsehoods about the election started surging.

More than 100,000 votes that Democratic nominee Joe Biden picked up in Wisconsin were evidence of "outright corruption," one Twitter user surmised. The ballots were "MAGICALLY" found, claimed another.

In fact, Biden's early morning comeback in the closely watched Midwestern state was simply the result of absentee and early votes being counted.

With the outcome of the U.S. presidential race still in limbo, Trump and his supporters seized on — and spread — online misinformation about legally cast absentee and mail-in votes in battleground states. They used it as fodder to support the president's baseless declaration on live television early Wednesday that Democrats were trying to "steal the election" from him.

"They are finding Biden votes all over the place — in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan. So bad for our Country!" Trump wrote in a tweet hours later. Trump's campaign filed lawsuits Wednesday in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Georgia, paving the way for him to contest the election's outcome.

It's standard practice in the United States to continue counting votes after Election Day.

Social media companies kept busy trying to counter the deluge of online misinformation, but experts say it is hard to completely blunt the impact.

Researchers at the Election Integrity Partnership, a group of some of the world's top misinformation researchers, found that mentions of voter fraud rose dramatically immediately following Trump's early morning remarks.

The unfounded allegations exploited public confusion over how elections are managed at a time when many voters were looking for help interpreting the unfolding results, said Kate Starbird, a University of

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Washington professor and online misinformation expert who is part of the group.

Many voters may have gone to sleep Tuesday assuming Trump's leads in states like Wisconsin would hold, only to see Biden take the lead overnight.

"You've got this post-election uncertainty," Starbird said. "We've seen a lot of things that were looking good for Trump in the night shift to blue, and we're seeing attempts to delegitimize these shifts."

On social media, the misinformation was rooted in allegations that the election had been stolen from Trump.

More than 221,000 retweets on Twitter mentioned stealing the election in a 24-hour period starting on Election Day, compared to just 10,000 tweets about the topic on Monday, according to an analysis from VineSight, a tech company that tracks online misinformation.

Terms like #StopTheSteal were mentioned nearly 120,000 times on websites and social media platforms throughout the day Tuesday. Philadelphia and Pennsylvania were referenced more than any other city or state, according to a similar analysis from media intelligence firm Signal Labs.

Pennsylvania was a hot spot for election misinformation Tuesday. There were misleading claims about discarded Trump ballots and voting machines being shut down at polling locations circulating across Facebook and Twitter.

Misinformation continued to swirl about the state into Wednesday as the state remained undecided, including vague claims on social media that ballots had just been "found" in the state and shouldn't be counted.

Others jumped on a data error in a map of Michigan that showed Biden getting a huge spike in votes in an update of results, with tweets shared thousands of times that said it showed "fraud." Decision Desk HQ, which tracks election results and published the map, confirmed it was an error that was corrected.

And fake images garnering tens of thousands of Facebook interactions included memes featuring cardboard boxes labeled "Emergency Democrat Votes" and a stock photograph of a woman with the caption, "Hang on, we found more votes!" People falsely claimed on social networks that counting mail-in ballots amounted to corruption.

When Milwaukee election officials finished counting the city's roughly 169,000 absentee ballots and uploaded the results around 3 a.m. Wednesday, pro-Trump social media accounts suggested it was a fraudulent "ballot dump." Trump won Wisconsin in 2016 but Biden picked it up on Wednesday.

The count of the absentee ballots was live streamed on YouTube for anyone to watch and when it was finished, Milwaukee police escorted the city's elections director from a central counting location to the county courthouse to deliver thumb drives with the data. Wisconsin law requires the results of those absentee ballots be reported all at once, Wisconsin Elections Commission Administrator Meagan Wolfe explained Wednesday.

"There are no dark corners or locked doors in elections," Wolfe said.

Seitz reported from Chicago. Klepper reported from Providence, R.I. Swenson reported from Seattle.

## Republicans retain power in states despite Democratic push

DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — After a costly and intense political battle for control of state capitols, the composition of state legislatures and governors' offices will look a lot like it did before Tuesday's elections.

That means Republicans will again control significantly more states than Democrats, giving the GOP greater power over the once-a-decade task of redrawing congressional and legislative districts based on census results as well as a continued platform to push for conservative economic and social policies.

"When you look at state legislative races, a lot of money got spent, a lot of turnout was had, and yet the end result was pretty much where we started," said Wendy Underhill, director of elections and redistricting at the National Conference of State Legislatures. "This was a status quo election."

Heading into Tuesday, Republicans had full control of 29 state legislatures compared to 19 for Democrats.

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The GOP also held 26 governors' offices while the Democrats had 24.

The GOP governors' count grew by one as Montana voters elected U.S. Rep. Greg Gianforte to succeed term-limited Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock. Republicans also appeared to flip control of the New Hampshire House and Senate, according to tracking by the NCSL and national Republican and Democratic groups.

Control of the Republican-led Arizona House and Senate — which ranked among the Democrats' top prospects for flipping chambers — remained undecided because of some close races.

If the Arizona chambers don't flip, the 2020 elections could produce the smallest number of changes in chamber control since the 1944 general election, Underhill said.

Democrats, who began the campaign cycle with a "flip everything" motto, acknowledged their disappointment while pinning the blame partly on their failures of a decade ago. In the 2010 elections, Republicans flipped 21 legislative chambers while sweeping into office in many state capitols. They then used that newfound power in some states to draw voting districts that benefitted GOP candidates in future elections.

"The reality is we are still running on very gerrymandered maps," said Christina Polizzi, national press secretary for the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee. She added: "As a party, we are still paying for the losses of 2010."

After being outspent by Republicans a decade ago, Democrats ramped up their efforts to win back chambers ahead of the next round of redistricting. The DLCC and four other Democratic-aligned groups combined to raise more than \$100 million this election cycle. They were countered by the Republican state leadership committee, which had a target of about \$70 million.

But Democrats failed Tuesday in several of their highly targeted states, including the Texas House, the North Carolina House and Senate, and the Florida House. The result is that Republicans will fully control redistricting in all three of those states, an advantage that's even more important because each could gain U.S. House seats as a result of its population growth.

The election results "will put the Republican Party in a position where we're able to secure a decade of power across the country" through redistricting, said Austin Chambers, president of the Republican State Leadership Committee.

But Republican redistricting power will be diminished in some states because of changes that occurred in recent years.

In Wisconsin, where the GOP-led Legislature drew some of the nation's most pro-Republican maps, the GOP will not have enough votes to override a potential redistricting veto by Democratic Gov. Tony Evers, who won election in 2018.

In Michigan, where Republican lawmakers controlled the last redistricting, voters in 2018 approved the creation of an independent redistricting commission to handle the task after the 2020 census. Ohio voters also approved ballot measures that will reduce the potential for partisan dominance in redistricting, even though Republicans continue to control the Legislature and key executive offices.

David Pepper, the chair of the Ohio Democratic Party, said Democrats did make one important gain Tuesday by adding a justice to the state Supreme Court. He said a third Democrat on the seven-member high court could result in fairer maps for legislative and congressional races because it's likely the court will end up enforcing redistricting procedures.

In North Carolina, Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper won re-election Tuesday but will have no legal authority to veto redistricting maps passed by the Republican-led Legislature. Cooper and Republican legislative leaders both talked of unity following their victories, but there were few signs that Republicans suddenly would embrace Cooper's agenda for Medicaid expansion or back off their own agenda of lower taxes and school choice.

"You should expect to see the same policies that voters convincingly supported (by) returning Republicans to control the Legislature," Senate leader Phil Berger said Wednesday.

Heading into Tuesday, Minnesota was the only state with a House controlled by one party and a Senate by the other. The state seems poised for more partisan gridlock, as Democrats retained a diminished House majority and Republicans appeared likely to hang onto their slim Senate majority, despite Democrats'



efforts to try to flip the chamber.

In Kansas, Democrats had hoped to flip at least a few seats to break the Republican supermajorities in the House and Senate. Instead, Republicans added to their House ranks with more conservatives, increasing the potential to override vetoes by Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly.

Associated Press writers Geoff Mulvihill in Davenport, Iowa; Gary Robertson in Raleigh, North Carolina; and Steve Karnowski, in Minneapolis, contributed to this report.

## Ride-hailing, delivery giants win fight against labor law

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ and MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Business Writers

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — App-based companies like Uber, Lyft and Doordash have dodged a potentially devastating blow to their industry by carving out an exemption from a California law that required them to classify their drivers as employees instead of contractors.

California voters passed Proposition 22 and delivered a stinging rebuke to state lawmakers and labor leaders who were fighting for better working conditions for a growing number of people who drive for ride-hailing and food delivery services.

California has one of the strictest laws in the country for determining when a company must treat its workers as employees with benefits such as minimum wage, overtime and sick days. Uber, Lyft, Doordash, Instacart and others sought to get out of those requirements, and after failing in court, succeeded in convincing voters to give them an exemption from most of the year-old law's provisions.

A record \$200 million spending spree by the companies and their supporters helped them win the vote. The investment yielded a huge return for Uber and Lyft, whose combined market value climbed by \$10 billion on Wednesday.

Supporters applauded the outcome, saying drivers would be able to maintain their independence while accessing new benefits such as a guaranteed minimum wage and health care subsidies.

Don Pruitt, an accountant in Stockton, was relieved by Proposition 22's passage because it will allow him to continue to drive for both Lyft and Uber, as well as handle deliveries for Postmates and Instacart, as he has been during the past three years whenever he isn't busy filing taxes for his clients.

"If Prop. 22 had lost, I wouldn't have been able to keep doing that to make extra money. I couldn't work for all of them if I had to be an employee," Pruitt said.

James Patterson, a Sacramento retiree who drove four years for Lyft but now does deliveries for DoorDash and Postmates, prefers the freedom of being able to make his own schedule.

"You can just work when you want and stop whenever you want," he said. "And as someone who is retired, it's nice to get a little supplemental income whenever you need it."

Others viewed the development as a major setback for gig workers.

"It should be a good wake-up call for us all, across the country, if these companies think they can buy their way out of having to comply with basic labor laws," said Shannon Liss-Riordan, a labor attorney who has been fighting for employment protections for app-based workers. "I'm worried about what these companies may try to pull off on a national basis."

The Independent Drivers Guild, which represents more than 200,000 drivers in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, called on state legislatures to quickly empower gig workers with collective bargaining rights.

"Proposition 22 leaves California's gig workers with no representation, no collective bargaining rights, no path to negotiate a livable wage, and no ability to have a real voice in their pay and benefits," said Brendan Sexton, the group's executive director.

Edan Alva, a former Lyft driver, stopped driving during the pandemic because he was shelling out for disinfectant, risking his health and barely making money. He was hoping the proposition would fail, leading to better working conditions so he could consider driving again.

"Labor rights are human rights, and the fact that Lyft and Uber managed to basically trump human rights doesn't mean everyone should give in," he said.

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Investors were thrilled with the outcome, largely because it allows the companies to preserve the status quo and puts them in a better position to reverse their long history of losses after the pandemic is over. Uber's stock surged more than 14% to close at \$40.99 while Lyft's shares gained more than 11% to finish at \$29.19.

Wedbush Securities analysts Dan Ives hailed the vote as "a landmark victory for the gig economy with Uber and Lyft front and center."

Of the more than \$220 million spent by the two opposing sides of the issues, Uber, Lyft and, DoorDash, Instacart and their supporters sunk roughly \$200 million into the campaign, underscoring how badly the companies wanted to preserve their business model.

Still pending in Alameda County Superior Court is a case brought by California's labor commissioner against Uber and Lyft in August, which accuse the companies in separate complaints of engaging in "wage theft." The suit seeks to recover unpaid wages and other penalties for the 10 months that California's law had been in effect before Proposition 22's passage.

Among the labor concessions embedded in Proposition 22 are requirements that Uber, Lyft and the other app-based companies provide 120% of minimum wage for "engaged" time such as when a driver is heading to pick up a passenger, a health care subsidy and expenses reimbursement per mile.

Uber told its drivers the company would let drivers know how to enroll in benefits in the next few weeks. "The future of independent work is more secure because so many drivers like you spoke up and made your voice heard—and voters across the state listened," Uber's CEO, Dara Khosrowshahi, said in an email to drivers.

John Zimmer, Lyft's president, called the decision a "turning point for the future of work in America," and said that during the pandemic many people are looking for work and for ways to get around safely.

"We're ready to work with labor leaders and others to continue to build a stronger safety net for workers," Zimmer said in an interview.

Some drivers supported the proposal out of fear that if it didn't pass, they would lose their working flexibility, if not their entire jobs.

"They get to keep their livelihood, and this would likely go away had Prop. 22 failed," said Arun Sundararajan, a professor at New York University's Stern School of Business and author of *The Sharing Economy*. It also is a starting point for improving working conditions for workers in the gig economy, he said.

"You have millions of people who drive and who deliver, who now have sort of a funding mechanism to start to get some benefits," Sundararajan said.

Some riders, such as Chris Martin, a 41-year-old teacher, were turned off by the companies' efforts to skirt the law.

"It's putting a sour taste in my mouth, so if there is a third option that pops up, I might choose that," he said, adding that he's willing to pay more to a company that provides better working conditions.

"I closed my mom-and-pop small business partially because of tax matching and work comp expenses on the employees," said Doug Lee, another rider, who owned a dog grooming business in La Jolla, California. "It's not really fair that Uber, Lyft etc. get to skate on these costs when other businesses don't."

Bussewitz reported from New York.

## Four Italian regions, including Milan, put under lockdown

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Four Italian regions are being put under "red-zone" lockdown, with severe limits imposed on the circumstances under which people can leave home, Premier Giuseppe Conte announced on Wednesday night.

What he called "very stringent" restrictions begin on Friday for Lombardy, Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta in the north, and for Calabria, which forms the southern toe of the Italian peninsula.

The lockdown is aimed at tamping down a surge in COVID-19 infections and preventing hospitals from

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being overwhelmed with cases. Lasting at least two weeks, it will involve some 16.5 million of Italy's 60 million residents and include the country's financial capital, Milan.

Barring very few exceptions, no one will be able to leave or enter the "red zone" regions. People there must stay home, except to go to work or shop for essentials. They can also exercise near their homes and while wearing masks.

After days of consultations with regional governors, Health Minister Roberto Speranza decided which regions received the "red-zone" designation.

"I know that these choices will mean sacrifices and difficulties, but they are the only way to bend the (contagion) curve," he said in a statement. "United, we can do it."

Barber shops and hair salons can stay open, although other non-essential shops in the "red zone" must close.

Less severe restrictions on movement were decided for southern Sicily and Puglia, where people will be able to leave their homes, but can't travel between towns or regions, and cafes and restaurants can only do takeout and delivery.

While classrooms are open in the rest of Italy except for high schools, which must do remote instructions, in the "red zone," only nursery, elementary and the first year of middle-school will still have in-class instruction.

The latest crackdown was supposed to start on Thursday, but Conte said it will begin instead on Friday to allow time to organize. Designations will be reviewed every two weeks.

He added that previously announced nationwide measures, like museum closures and an overnight curfew, would also start a day later, on Friday, and last until Dec. 3.

Conte promised that later this week his center-left government would approve more funds to aid businesses crippled by the latest closures.

Follow AP pandemic coverage at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak>

## With presidency in reach, Dems grapple with disappointment

By BILL BARROW and STEVE PEOPLES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats went into Election Day hoping to reclaim the White House and majorities in both chambers of Congress in a victory that would demonstrate an unmistakable repudiation of President Donald Trump and a Republican Party remade in his image.

It didn't work out that way.

More than 12 hours after polls closed, Biden held a narrow lead in some key states with hundreds of thousands of votes yet to be counted, and he has a comfortable advantage in the national popular vote. But as of midday Wednesday, there was no clear Democratic wave.

Republicans held key Senate seats that Democrats hoped to flip, and the GOP may ultimately shrink the Democrats' House majority. And even if Trump were to ultimately lose, the closeness of the presidential contest raised the prospect that a Biden presidency would have difficulty enacting progressive priorities or quickly move past the cultural and partisan fissures of the Trump era.

"The Trump coalition is more stubborn and resilient and capable than maybe we anticipated," said Rep. Gerald Connolly, a six-term Democratic lawmaker from Virginia. "The country is even more polarized and divided."

While Trump's critics were deeply disappointed that the hoped-for blue wave never materialized, Biden's allies encouraged the political world to step back and see the big picture. Dan Pfeiffer, a former aide to President Barack Obama, posted a message to Democrats on Medium entitled, "Biden is winning, act like it."

"The Republicans are already trying to neuter his ability to govern by casting aspersions about how he won," Pfeiffer wrote. "We cannot let them do that. The stakes are too damn high."

Indeed, should Trump lose, no matter the margin, he would be the first incumbent president to fail to win reelection since 1992. Biden has already flipped two states Trump carried four years ago, Arizona and

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Wisconsin, and held a modest lead in at least one other, Michigan, as he moved toward rebuilding the Democrats' so-called "Blue Wall."

"Today, the vice president will garner more votes than any presidential candidates in history," Biden campaign manager Jen O'Malley Dillon told reporters Wednesday. She added: "I feel like we had been abundantly clear that we thought this could be a close race."

Still, polls heading into Election Day suggested a much better election for Democrats up and down the ballot but clearly missed a surge of support for Trump and Republicans with turnout high across the political spectrum.

Several once-promising Democratic Senate challengers far fell short, despite a deluge of national fundraising support for headliners like Jaime Harrison in South Carolina, Amy McGrath in Kentucky and MJ Hegar in Texas.

Some House freshmen who helped give Democrats a majority in 2018 also lost, victims of stronger-than-expected performances for many Republican challengers. Democrats' gains in metro and suburban areas were matched or offset in many battleground states by a Republican deluge in small towns and rural areas.

And in a warning sign for Democrats, Trump demonstrated an uptick of support in some Black and Latino communities.

"You certainly had a lot of Latinos voting for him in south Texas and following him down the ballot," said Texas Democratic Chairman Gilberto Hinojosa, who started Election Day with hopes of flipping several congressional districts and gaining control of the Texas state House. Neither happened.

"It's very difficult to understand how there was such a big difference between what the polling was showing and what ultimately came out," he said. "To say it was a surprise is an understatement."

The evolving landscape represents a conundrum for a party that has a clearer claim to national majority support than the GOP. If trends hold, Democrats will have won the popular vote in seven out of the last eight presidential elections -- with President George W. Bush in 2004 being the lone Republican popular vote winner since his father's landslide victory in 1988.

One of Biden's principal arguments in a crowded Democratic presidential primary campaign was that he could expand Democrats' coalition to include more older voters, independents, and even moderate Republicans. He appeared to underperform among other key demographics, however, or at least not expand the alliance enough to quash Trump's base and remake Capitol Hill.

To be sure, Biden performed better than Hillary Clinton four years earlier in states like Iowa, Ohio, and Texas. But he also failed to win any of them. Democrats clung to the hope that Biden might eke out narrow victories in North Carolina and Georgia.

Veteran Democratic strategist Jesse Ferguson said it would be short-sighted to call Democrats' performance a failure when they were on track to resurrect the "Blue Wall" — Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — while flipping Arizona with a chance to claim Georgia, two states that haven't gone Democratic in presidential elections since the 1990s.

Ferguson noted that Biden was on track to do so while offering "the most progressive agenda of any Democratic nominee" in the modern era.

"The last time an incumbent president was defeated was 28 years ago," Ferguson said. "Incumbent presidents don't often lose, and this one is going to lose and lose resoundingly."

He added: "Elections are about where the votes end up, not how you felt while the counting was happening."

Ferguson and Hinojosa agreed that the mixed results suggest Democrats don't have to entertain a fundamental overhaul.

In Texas, Hinojosa said Trump could hold appeal with Latinos that doesn't translate into long-term party loyalty. And he said Democrats hamstrung themselves by going months not canvassing in-person because of the coronavirus pandemic, while the GOP's field operation reached voters directly.

"I'm not saying it was the wrong decision given the situation, but it affected us," he said. "We were taking a knife into a gunfight."



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Barrow reported from Atlanta. Associated Press reporter Alan Fram contributed.

## **AP VoteCast: Trump makes inroads with Latinos in key states**

By TAMMY WEBBER and HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. presidential election highlighted sharply different views on the ongoing public health crisis, a stubborn economic downturn and racial inequality. But it also showed that candidates can't always take traditional supporters for granted, according to AP VoteCast, a national survey of the electorate.

A majority of Latino voters largely supported Democrat Joe Biden nationally. But President Donald Trump was able to cut into that support in some competitive states, like Florida and Nevada, revealing important shifts among Latino voters from many different cultural backgrounds.

A summer of protests over racism in policing and the coronavirus pandemic also exposed deep racial divisions.

Here's a snapshot of who voted and what matters to them, based on preliminary results from AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 133,000 voters and nonvoters nationwide conducted for The Associated Press by NORC at the University of Chicago.

### **LATINO VOTERS**

Trump sought to make inroads into traditionally strong Latino support for Democrats, courting them with promises of job growth and misleading claims about Democrats and socialism.

Nationally, Biden earned support from roughly two-thirds of Latino voters, while Trump got the backing of about a third. About 3 in 10 Latino voters have supported Republican candidates in recent cycles, including in 2018, according to AP VoteCast, and in 2016, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of voters.

But Latino voters are not a monolithic bloc, given their vastly different cultures, and many U.S.-born Latinos have few cultural ties to Latin America.

In winning Florida, Trump was aided by Cuban voters, who are more likely than other Latinos to back Republicans. Cuban voters were 5% of the electorate in Florida, and 58% of them supported the president.

AP VoteCast also found South Americans made up 3% of the electorate, and they split about evenly between the two candidates. Puerto Ricans, who backed Biden by about two to one, made up 5%.

In Nevada, Biden received support from just about half of Latinos, and about 4 in 10 backed Trump.

In Arizona, by comparison, 18% of the electorate was Latino, and they backed Biden by a wide margin, 59% to 38%. A majority of Latino voters in Arizona identified as Mexican.

### **RACIAL DIVIDE**

A summer of protests over racial inequality in policing exposed sharply divergent views on racism, while the coronavirus pandemic laid bare racial disparities in health care. Both affected how voters cast their ballots.

Biden voters almost universally said racism is a serious problem in U.S. society and in policing, including about 7 in 10 who called it "very" serious. A slim majority of Trump voters — who are overwhelming white — called racism a serious problem in U.S. society, and just under half said it was a serious problem in policing.

There also were sharply divergent experiences with the pandemic. About 4 in 10 Black voters and about 3 in 10 Latino voters said they lost a family member or close friend to the virus, while just about 1 in 10 white voters said the same.

Latino and Black voters also were more likely to lose household income because of the pandemic.

Those voters fall into Biden's column, meaning his voters were somewhat more likely than Trump voters to say they've felt the impact in at least one of the ways the survey asked about, 73% to 62%.

### **VOTER CONFIDENCE**

Trump for months has sought to sow doubts about vote-counting — especially of mail-in ballots, which take longer to count and tend to favor Democrats — claiming without evidence that the process was ripe

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for fraud and that Democrats would try to steal the election.

The survey suggest his voters were listening.

Trump supporters were more likely to distrust the vote-counting process, though voters for both candidates had their doubts. About 7 in 10 voters were confident that votes would be counted accurately, though only about a quarter of voters were "very confident." Almost 8 in 10 Biden voters were confident, compared with about 6 in 10 Trump supporters.

Trump voters felt more confident about another democratic institution that has already played a role in this year's election: the Supreme Court. The high court, along with lower courts, handled lawsuits in recent weeks about the count of mail-in ballots in several states. That was before conservative Justice Amy Coney Barrett filled her seat on the Supreme Court after the Republican-controlled Senate sped through her confirmation just before the election.

About 9 in 10 Trump voters were at least somewhat confident in the high court to be fair and impartial in its decisions, compared with about half as many Biden voters.

## TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS

Longstanding partisan divides have defined the past four years, explaining why roughly three-quarters of voters said they've known all along who they were supporting in this election. VoteCast shows stark differences between Trump and Biden supporters — on the virus, the economy, even on football.

As U.S. coronavirus cases rise, claiming more than 232,000 lives, a majority of Biden voters — about 6 in 10 — said the pandemic was the most important issue facing the country. And Biden voters overwhelmingly said the federal government should prioritize limiting the spread of the virus — even if that damages the economy.

But Trump voters were more focused on the economy. About half of Trump voters called the economy and jobs the top issue facing the nation, while only 1 in 10 Biden voters named it most important.

The two groups did not agree on the state of the economy, either. Trump voters remain adamant that the economy is in good shape: About three-quarters call national economic conditions excellent or good. About 8 in 10 Biden voters call them not so good or poor.

Partisanship even seemed to cloud views on football among voters in many states, including Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan and Ohio. When the coronavirus threatened the Big Ten's college football season, Trump campaigned on ensuring the games would be played. Not surprisingly, across eight states, voters who approved of the Big Ten playing this year supported Trump over Biden. Those who saw it as a mistake were more likely to back Biden.

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Webber reported from Fenton, Michigan.

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AP VoteCast is a survey of the American electorate conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago for Fox News, NPR, PBS NewsHour, Univision News, USA Today Network, The Wall Street Journal and The Associated Press. The survey of 110,485 voters was conducted for eight days, concluding as polls closed. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. The survey combines a random sample of registered voters drawn from state voter files; self-identified registered voters using NORC's probability based Ameri-Speak panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population; and self-identified registered voters selected from nonprobability online panels. The margin of sampling error for voters is estimated to be plus or minus 0.4 percentage points. Find more details about AP VoteCast's methodology at <https://ap.org/votecast>.

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Online:

For AP's complete coverage of the U.S. presidential elections: <https://apnews.com/hub/election-2020>

## Flash of luck: Astronomers find cosmic radio burst source

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

A flash of luck helped astronomers solve a cosmic mystery: What causes powerful but fleeting radio

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bursts that zip and zigzag through the universe?

Scientists have known about these energetic pulses — called fast radio bursts — for about 13 years and have seen them coming from outside our galaxy, which makes it harder to trace them back to what's causing them. Making it even harder is that they happen so fast, in a couple of milliseconds.

Then this April, a rare but considerably weaker burst coming from inside our own Milky Way galaxy was spotted by two dissimilar telescopes: one a California doctoral student's set of handmade antennas, which included actual cake pans, the other a \$20 million Canadian observatory.

They tracked that fast radio burst to a weird type of star called a magnetar that's 32,000 light-years from Earth, according to four studies in Wednesday's journal *Nature*.

It was not only the first fast radio burst traced to a source, but the first emanating from our galaxy. Astronomers say there could be other sources for these bursts, but they are now sure about one guilty party: magnetars.

Magnetars are incredibly dense neutron stars, with 1.5 times the mass of our sun squeezed into a space the size of Manhattan. They have enormous magnetic fields that buzz and crackle with energy, and sometimes flares of X-rays and radio waves burst from them, according to McGill University astrophysicist Ziggy Pleunis, a co-author of the Canadian study.

The magnetic field around these magnetars "is so strong any atoms nearby are torn apart and bizarre aspects of fundamental physics can be seen," said astronomer Casey Law of the California Institute of Technology, who wasn't part of the research.

There are maybe a dozen or so of these magnetars in our galaxy, apparently because they are so young and part of the star birth process, and the Milky Way is not as flush with star births as other galaxies, said Cornell University Shami Chatterjee, who wasn't part of either discovery team.

This burst in less than a second contained about the same amount of energy that our sun produces in a month, and still that's far weaker than the radio bursts detected coming from outside our galaxy, said Caltech radio astronomer Christopher Bochenek. He helped spot the burst with handmade antennas.

These radio bursts aren't dangerous to us, not even the more powerful ones from outside our galaxy, astronomers said.

The ones that come from outside our galaxy and travel millions or billions of light-years are "tens of thousands to millions of times more powerful than anything we have detected in our galaxy," said co-author Daniele Michilli, an astrophysicist at McGill and part of the Canadian team.

Scientists think these are so frequent that they may happen more than 1,000 times a day outside our galaxy. But finding them isn't easy.

"You had to be looking at the right place at the right millisecond," Cornell's Chatterjee said. "Unless you were very, very lucky, you're not going to see one of these."

Even though this is a frequent occurrence outside the Milky Way, astronomers have no idea how often these bursts happen inside our galaxy.

"We still don't know how lucky we got," Bochenek said. "This could be a once-in-five-year thing or there could be a few events to happen each year."

Bochenek's antennas cost about \$15,000. Each is "the size of a large bucket. It's a piece of 6-inch metal pipe with two literal cake pans around it," the doctoral student said. They are crude instruments designed to look at a giant chunk of the sky — about a quarter of it — and see only the brightest of radio flashes.

Bochenek figured he had maybe a 1-in-10 chance of spotting a fast radio burst in a few years. But after one year, he hit pay dirt.

The Canadian observatory in British Columbia is more focused and refined but is aimed at a much smaller chunk of the sky, and it was able to pinpoint the source to the magnetar in the constellation Vulpecula.

Because the bursts are affected by all the material they pass through in space, astronomers might be able to use them to better understand and map the invisible-to-us material between galaxies and "weigh" the universe, said Jason Hessels, chief astronomer for the Netherlands Institute for Radio Astronomy, who wasn't part of the research.

Astronomers have had as many 50 different theories for what causes these fast radio bursts, including aliens, and they emphasize that magnetars may not be the only answer, especially since there seem to be two types of fast radio bursts. Some, like the one spotted in April, happen only once, while others repeat themselves often.

Michilli said his team has traced one outburst that happens every 16 days to a nearby galaxy and is getting close to pinpointing the source.

Some of these young magnetars are only a few decades old, "and that's what gives them enough energy to produce repeating fast radio bursts," Cornell's Chatterjee said.

Tracking even one outburst is a welcome surprise and an important finding, he said.

"No one really believed that we'd get so lucky," Chatterjee said. "To find one in our own galaxy, it just puts the cherry on top."

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Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears.

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The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Quake toll rises to 116 in Turkey; rescuers finish searches

By ANDREW WILKS Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — The death toll in last week's Aegean Sea earthquake rose to 116 on Wednesday as rescuers in the Turkish city of Izmir finished searching buildings that collapsed in the quake.

All but two of the victims were killed in Izmir, Turkey's third-largest city. Two teenagers died on the Greek island of Samos, which lies south of the epicenter of Friday's earthquake. The U.S. Geological Survey registered the quake's magnitude at 7.0, although other agencies recorded it as less severe.

Mehmet Gulluoglu, head of Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency, said search and rescue operations had been completed at 17 buildings that fell in Izmir. The rescue operation has been roaring at full tilt since Friday, pulling 107 survivors from the rubble.

Of the 1,035 people injured in the quake, 137 remained hospitalized on Wednesday, the agency added.

Following a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday evening, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan pledged not to give up until the final person was recovered. Rescuers' spirits were raised Tuesday when they pulled a 3-year-old girl from the wreckage of her family home 91 hours after the quake.

The tremors were felt across western Turkey, including in Istanbul, as well as in the Greek capital of Athens. Some 1,700 aftershocks followed, 45 of which were greater than 4.0 magnitude.

In Izmir, the quake reduced buildings to rubble or saw floors pancake in on themselves. Authorities have detained nine people, including contractors, for questioning over the collapse of six of the buildings.

Turkey has a mix of older buildings and new buildings made of cheap or illegal construction that do not withstand earthquakes well. Regulations have been tightened to strengthen or demolish older buildings, and urban renewal is underway in Turkish cities, but experts say it is not happening fast enough.

The country sits on top of two major fault lines and earthquakes are frequent.

## US formally exits Paris pact aiming to curb climate change

By FRANK JORDANS and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — The United States on Wednesday formally left the Paris Agreement, a global pact it helped forge five years ago to avert the threat of catastrophic climate change.

The move, long threatened by U.S. President Donald Trump and triggered by his administration a year ago, further isolates Washington in the world but has no immediate impact on international efforts to curb global warming.

Still, the U.N. agency that oversees the treaty, France as the host of the 2015 Paris talks and three coun-



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tries currently chairing the body that organizes them — Chile, Britain and Italy — issued a joint statement expressing regret at the U.S. withdrawal.

“There is no greater responsibility than protecting our planet and people from the threat of climate change,” the statement said. “The science is clear that we must urgently scale up action and work together to reduce the impacts of global warming and to ensure a greener, more resilient future for us all. The Paris Agreement provides the right framework to achieve this.”

“We remain committed to working with all U.S. stakeholders and partners around the world to accelerate climate action, and with all signatories to ensure the full implementation of the Paris Agreement,” they added.

The next planned round of U.N. climate talks takes place in Glasgow, Scotland, in 2021. At present, 189 countries have ratified the accord, which aims to keep the increase in average temperatures worldwide “well below” 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), ideally no more than 1.5C (2.7 F), compared to pre-industrial levels. A further six countries have signed, but not ratified the pact.

Scientists say that any rise beyond 2 degrees Celsius could have a devastating impact on large parts of the world, raising sea levels, stoking tropical storms and worsening droughts and floods.

The world has already warmed 1.2 degrees Celsius (2.2 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial time, so the efforts are really about preventing another 0.3 to 0.7 degrees Celsius (0.5 to 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit) warming from now.

“Having the U.S. pull out of Paris is likely to reduce efforts to mitigate, and therefore increase the number of people who are put into a life-or-death situation because of the impacts of climate change: this is clear from the science,” said Cornell University climate scientist Natalie Mahowald, a co-author of U.N. science reports on global warming.

The Paris accord requires countries to set their own voluntary targets for reducing greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, and to steadily increase those goals every few years. The only binding requirement is that nations have to accurately report on their efforts.

“The beauty of this system is that nobody can claim they were bullied into some sort of plan,” said Nigel Purvis, a former U.S. climate negotiator in the administrations of Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. “They’re not negotiated. They’re accepted.”

The United States is the world’s second biggest emitter after China of heat-trapping gases such as carbon dioxide and its contribution to cutting emissions is seen as important, but it’s not alone in the effort. In recent weeks, China, Japan and South Korea have joined the European Union and several other countries in setting national deadlines to stop pumping more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than can be removed from the air with trees and other methods.

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has said he favors signing the U.S. back up to the Paris accord. Because it was set up as an executive agreement, not a treaty, congressional approval is not required, Purvis said.

White House spokesman Judd Deere said the accord “shackles economies and has done nothing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

Should the U.S. continue to remain outside the pact, it’s likely that other countries will try to impose tariffs on U.S. imports — paving the way for fresh trade wars.

The European Union is currently debating a package of proposals, known as the EU New Green Deal, that would include a so-called carbon border adjustment, aimed at preventing companies from dodging emissions reduction efforts in the 27-nation bloc by manufacturing goods in places without stringent measures.

Germany, which currently holds the EU’s rotating presidency, said it was important for Europe to lead by example now that the United States had left the pact. German government spokesman Steffen Seibert noted Wednesday that the EU aims to become the first climate neutral continent by 2050.

Mahowald said she worries that with the U.S. out, China which initially agreed to emission curbs in a two-nation agreement with the Obama administrations, and other nations may decide they don’t have to do as much to cut carbon pollution.

While the Trump administration has shunned federal measures to cut emissions, Seibert noted that U.S.

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states, cities and businesses have pressed ahead with their own efforts.

In addition to condemnation from abroad, environmental and public health groups in the United States criticized Wednesday's withdrawal.

Seth Borenstein reported from Kensington, Maryland.

Follow Frank Jordans on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/wirereporter> and Seth Borenstein at <http://www.twitter.com/borenbears>

Read more stories on climate issues by The Associated Press at <https://www.apnews.com/Climate>

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Nov. 5, the 310th day of 2020. There are 56 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 5, 2009, a shooting rampage at the Fort Hood Army post in Texas left 13 people dead; Maj. Nidal Hasan, an Army psychiatrist, was later convicted of murder and sentenced to death. (No execution date has been set.)

On this date:

In 1605, the "Gunpowder Plot" failed as Guy Fawkes was seized before he could blow up the English Parliament.

In 1781, the Continental Congress elected John Hanson of Maryland its chairman, giving him the title of "President of the United States in Congress Assembled."

In 1872, suffragist Susan B. Anthony defied the law by attempting to cast a vote for President Ulysses S. Grant. (Anthony was convicted by a judge and fined \$100, but she never paid the penalty.)

In 1912, Democrat Woodrow Wilson was elected president, defeating Progressive Party candidate Theodore Roosevelt, incumbent Republican William Howard Taft and Socialist Eugene V. Debs.

In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt won an unprecedented third term in office as he defeated Republican challenger Wendell L. Willkie.

In 1968, Republican Richard M. Nixon won the presidency, defeating Democratic Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey and American Independent candidate George C. Wallace.

In 1992, Malice Green, a Black motorist, died after he was struck in the head 14 times with a flashlight by a Detroit police officer, Larry Nevers, outside a suspected crack house. (Nevers and his partner, Walter Budzyn, were found guilty of second-degree murder, but the convictions were overturned; they were later convicted of involuntary manslaughter.)

In 1994, former President Ronald Reagan disclosed he had Alzheimer's disease.

In 2003, President Bush signed a bill outlawing the procedure known by its critics as "partial-birth abortion"; less than an hour later, a federal judge in Nebraska issued a temporary restraining order against the ban. (In 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act.)

In 2006, Saddam Hussein was convicted and sentenced by the Iraqi High Tribunal to hang for crimes against humanity.

In 2014, a day after sweeping Republican election gains, President Barack Obama and incoming Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell pledged to try to turn divided government into a force for good rather than gridlock, yet warned of veto showdowns as well.

In 2017, a gunman armed with an assault rifle opened fire in a small South Texas church, killing more than two dozen people; the shooter, Devin Patrick Kelley, was later found dead in a vehicle after he was shot and chased by two men who heard the gunfire. (An autopsy revealed that he died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.)

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Ten years ago: President Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, boarded Air Force One to fly to Mumbai, India, the first stop of a 10-day tour through India, Indonesia, South Korea and Japan. A judge in Los Angeles sentenced Johannes Mehserle (yoh-HAH'-nes MEZ'-ur-lee), a white former transit officer, to two years in prison in the shooting death of Oscar Grant, a Black man, on an Oakland train platform; the minimal sentence provoked angry protests. (Mehserle ended up serving 11 months.) Cable channel MSNBC suspended host Keith Olbermann for two shows for making unapproved political donations. Actor Jill Clayburgh died in Lakeville, Connecticut, at age 66. Opera singer Shirley Verrett, 79, died in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Five years ago: A woman who kept mentally disabled adults captive in the basement of a Philadelphia home and in other states for their disability checks was sentenced by a federal judge to life in prison; Linda Weston, 55, apologized during the hearing, saying: "I believe in God and God knows what happened." Lisa Mearkle, a small-town police officer who fatally shot an unarmed motorist in the back as he was lying facedown on the ground, was acquitted at her murder trial in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.

One year ago: Virginia Democrats took full control of the statehouse for the first time in more than two decades, as suburban voters turned out in big numbers to back Democratic candidates. Residents of Tucson, Arizona, voted overwhelmingly not to become an official "sanctuary city" with more restrictions on how and when police could enforce immigration laws. Voters in Kansas City, Missouri, overwhelmingly approved removing the name of Dr. Martin Luther King from one of the city's most historic boulevards, less than a year after the city council decided to rename The Paseo for the civil rights icon.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Harris Yulin is 83. Actor Chris Robinson is 82. Actor Elke Sommer is 80. Singer Art Garfunkel is 79. Singer Peter Noone is 73. TV personality Kris Jenner is 65. Actor Nestor Serrano is 65. Actor-comedian Mo'Nique is 62. Actor Robert Patrick is 62. Singer Bryan Adams is 61. Actor Tilda Swinton is 60. Actor Michael Gaston is 58. Actor Tatum O'Neal is 57. Actor Andrea McArdle is 57. Rock singer Angelo Moore (Fishbone) is 55. Actor Judy Reyes is 53. Actor Seth Gilliam is 52. Rock musician Mark Hunter (James) is 52. Actor Sam Rockwell is 52. Country singers Heather and Jennifer Kinley (The Kinleys) are 50. Actor Corin Nemec is 49. Rock musician Jonny Greenwood (Radiohead) is 49. Country singer-musician Ryan Adams is 46. Actor Sam Page is 45. Actor Sebastian Arcelus is 44. Actor Luke Hemsworth is 40. Actor Jeremy Lelliott is 38. Actor Annet Mahendru (MAH'-hehn-droo) is 35. Rock musician Kevin Jonas (The Jonas Brothers) is 33. Actor Landon Gimenez is 17.