

Groton Daily Independent

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"YOU CAN'T USE UP CREATIVITY.
THE MORE YOU USE,
THE MORE YOU HAVE."

-Maya Angelou

July 19-21
Legion Regions at Redfield

July 22-24
Jr. Teeners State Tourney at Hayti

July 23-24
Jr. Legion Region

July 29-Aug. 2
State Legion at Gregory

August 5-7: State Jr. Legion at Clark

Thursday, Aug. 4
First allowable day of football practice

Monday, Aug. 8
First allowable day of boys golf practice

Thursday, Aug. 11
First allowable day of volleyball and cross country practice

Groton Daily Independent
PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445
Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460

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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Town wide watering ban goes into effect Sept. 1

McGuire Iron will be coming to Groton to work on the city's 450,000 gallon reservoir. It will be sandblasted inside and outside and then repainted. The work will take about four or five weeks. Meanwhile, there will not be any outside watering allowed in the City of Groton. Currently, the booster pumps take water from the reservoir and push it into the water tower. The booster pumps can push upwards of 1,200 gallons a minute. WEB water refills the reservoir at a rate of 184 gallons a minute. Without the reservoir, the city's 125,000 gallon water tower will be the city's own source of water with WEB filling it at a rate of 184 gallons a minute. Without the restrictions, the city could quickly run out of water. The ban will be strictly enforced.

Ashley and Tom Bentz talked about the upcoming Shop and Sip. It was mentioned that the bars could sell alcohol inside their business and that people can take their drinks out on Main Street. The council lifted the ordinance from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday.

The survey and easement work at the airport is expected to cost \$2,000 to \$2,500. However, if the water does not go away on the south end, that price could nearly double. The council considered that IMEG should wait until the water disappears before any survey work is done.

A used bucket truck has been purchased for \$136,839.

The community center fees were discussed. The fees will be Groton Area businesses and gatherings for \$100 for the whole building, \$75 for the east room and \$15 for the southwest room. Out-of-area businesses and gathering will be double the fee. In addition, there will be a \$150 fee for lost keys. They will be required to leave a check for \$150 and will get it back when the keys are dropped off.

Groton Police Chief Stacy Mayor was authorized to attend the NESD Family Violence Prevention Conference Sept. 28-29 in Aberdeen. The cost of the conference is \$75.

Stacy to go to conference \$75 fee in Aberdeen.

The street chip seal project will be starting on Thursday. The project was reduced from 56 blocks to 40 blocks to keep the project within its budget.

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Groton City June Financial Report

June 2022

Dacotah Bank Checking Acct	\$ 4,311,313.70
General Cash	\$ 300.00
SD FIT Acct	\$ 1,554,881.31
Dacotah Bank Water CD	\$ 85,379.54
Cemetery Perp Care CD	\$ 32,876.69
Total	\$ 5,984,751.24

Invested In		
Cash	\$ 300.00	0.01%
Dacotah Bank	\$ 4,429,569.93	74.01%
SD Fit	\$ 1,554,881.31	25.98%
Total	\$ 5,984,751.24	100.00%

	Beginning	Revenue	Expenses	Transfers	Ending
	Cash Balance				Cash Balance
General	\$ 1,366,933.64	\$ 182,762.38	\$ 122,499.66		\$ 1,427,196.36
Bed, Board, Booze Tax	\$ 132,336.35	\$ 2,708.59			\$ 135,044.94
Baseball Uniforms	\$ 1,710.20				\$ 1,710.20
Airport	\$ 24,542.82				\$ 24,542.82
**Debt Service	\$ (43,764.26)	\$ 11,542.76	\$ 38,806.25		\$ (71,027.75)
Cemetery Perpetual Care	\$ 34,756.69				\$ 34,756.69
Water Tower	\$ 180,000.00				\$ 180,000.00
Water	\$ 522,809.70	\$ 42,269.21	\$ 24,251.13		\$ 540,827.78
Electric	\$ 2,899,524.01	\$ 124,131.89	\$ 86,216.72		\$ 2,937,439.18
Wastewater	\$ 517,451.38	\$ 17,677.31	\$ 798.99		\$ 534,329.70
Solid Waste	\$ 48,406.98	\$ 11,849.80	\$ 10,291.44		\$ 49,965.34
Family Crisis	\$ 11,044.54	\$ 1,191.21			\$ 12,235.75
Sales Tax	\$ 11,656.04	\$ 11,689.76	\$ 10,624.36		\$ 12,721.44
Employment	\$ (3,364.58)		\$ 259.00		\$ (3,105.58)
Utility Prepayments	\$ 74,278.93	\$ 1,460.85	\$ 458.74		\$ 75,281.04
Utility Deposits	\$ 91,193.01	\$ 750.00	\$ 1,360.00		\$ 90,583.01
Other	\$ 2,250.32				\$ 2,250.32
Totals	\$ 5,871,765.77	\$ 408,033.76	\$ 295,566.29	\$ -	\$ 5,984,751.24

**Debt to be Paid	
**2015 Refinance	\$ 1,972,637.49 by 12/1/2035
**West Sewer	\$ 13,951.37 by 10/15/2022
**RR Sewer Crossing	\$ 4,344.83 by 7/15/22
Total Debt	\$ 1,990,933.69

\$131,884.64 ARPA GRANT (Received to General)

\$89,223.86 Water tower loan payment

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Groton Legion Region Games

Groton Legion Post #39 Blows Away Hamlin by 25 Runs

Groton Legion Post #39 asserted their will over Hamlin Sr Post 37 / 217 on their way to an easy 27-2 victory

In the first inning, Groton Legion Post #39 got their offense started when Cole Simon grounded out, scoring one run.

Groton Legion Post #39 notched 11 runs in the fourth inning. Groton Legion Post #39's offense in the inning came from an error on a ball put in play by Ryan Groeblichhoff, Andrew Marzahn, and Pierce Kettering, singles by Dillon Abeln and Kaleb Hoover, a walk by Cade Larson, and a home run by Simon.

Kettering got the win for Groton Legion Post #39. The pitcher surrendered zero runs on zero hits over two and two-thirds innings, striking out two and walking one. Colby Dunker threw two and a third innings in relief out of the bullpen.

Dawson Arbach took the loss for Hamlin Sr Post 37 / 217. The pitcher surrendered two runs on zero hits over one inning.

Groton Legion Post #39 hit one home run on the day. Simon went yard in the fourth inning.

Groton Legion Post #39 collected 18 hits. Kettering, Dunker, Abeln, Hoover, Jackson Cogley, and Marzahn each managed multiple hits for Groton Legion Post #39. Abeln, Dunker, and Kettering each managed three hits to lead Groton Legion Post #39.

Watson Grantham led Hamlin Sr Post 37 / 217 with one hit in two at bats.

Late Score Costs Groton Legion Against Clark/Willow Lake

Groton Legion Post #39 stayed in it until the end, but Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U pulled away late in a 12-6 victory on Tuesday. Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U was down 6-5 in the top of the sixth inning when Mitchell Larson homered on a 2-1 count, scoring two runs.

Groton Legion Post #39 collected nine hits and Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U had ten in the high-scoring affair.

Groton Legion Post #39 got on the board in the first inning when Bradin Althoff drew a walk, scoring one run.

Groton Legion Post #39 notched three runs in the second inning. Althoff and Tate Larson all moved runners across the plate with RBIs in the inning.

Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U scored four runs in the seventh inning. Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U's big inning was driven by a single by Zach Winter, a home run by Mitchell Larson, and a double by Conner Mudgett.

Trey Huber led the Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U to victory on the pitcher's mound. The pitcher allowed zero hits and zero runs over two innings, striking out two.

Cole Simon took the loss for Groton Legion Post #39. The pitcher allowed six hits and seven runs over one and two-thirds innings, walking one.

Jackson Cogley started the game for Groton Legion Post #39. The righty surrendered five runs on four hits over five and a third innings, striking out six Hudson Fuller started the game for Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U. The righty allowed nine hits and six runs over five innings, striking out 11

Groton Legion Post #39 racked up nine hits on the day. Pierce Kettering and Ryan Groeblichhoff each had multiple hits for Groton Legion Post #39. Kettering led Groton Legion Post #39 with three hits in three at bats.

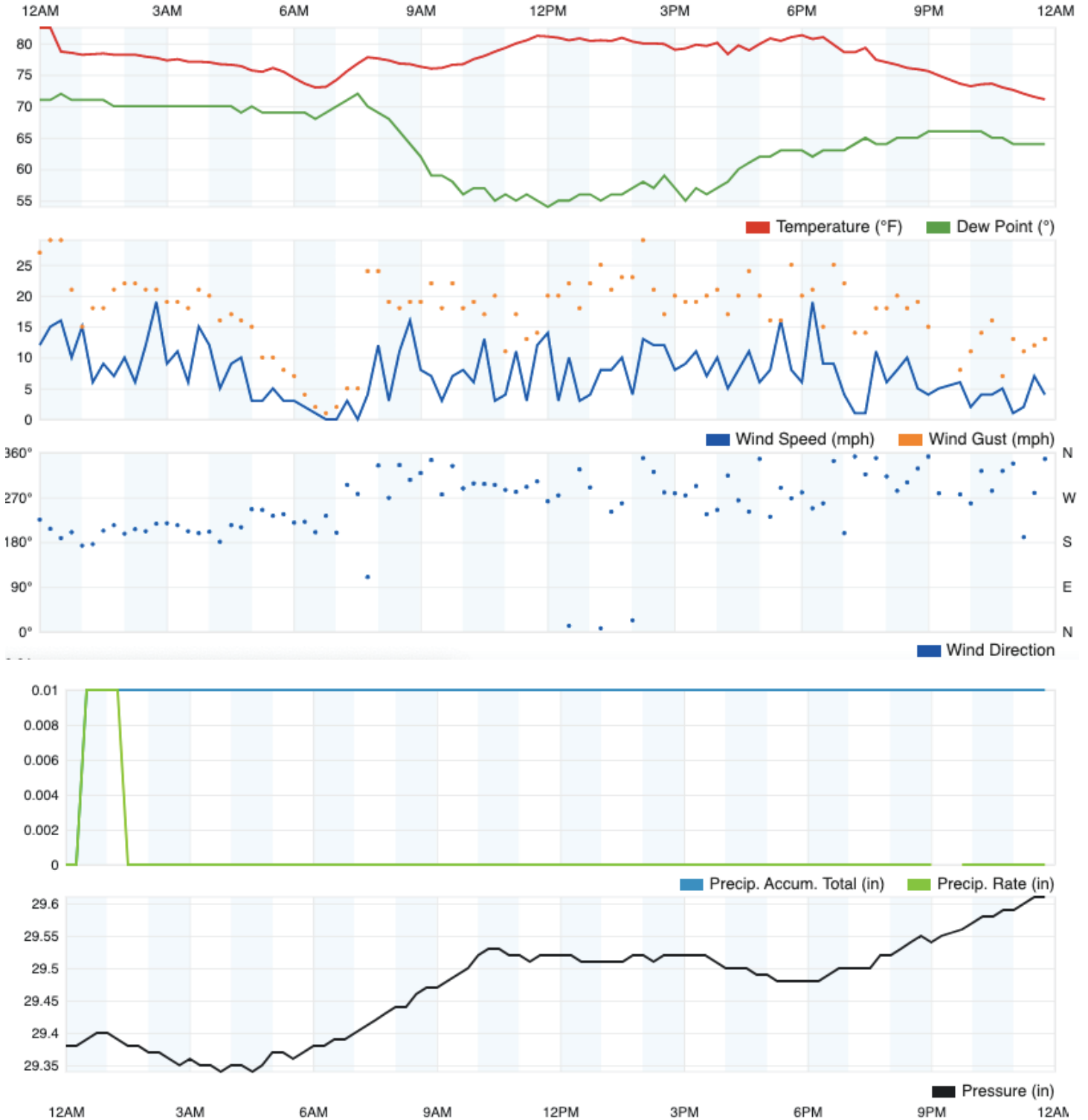
Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U had ten hits in the game. Mitchell Larson, Lucas Kannegieter, and Collin Gaikowski all collected multiple hits for Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U. Clark/Willow Lake Senators 18U didn't commit a single error in the field. Zach Winter had 14 chances in the field, the most on the team

Groton plays at 1 p.m. today in the double elimination tournament in Redfield.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Hot

High: 90 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear

Low: 58 °F

Thursday



Sunny then
Slight Chance
T-storms

High: 88 °F

Thursday
Night



Slight Chance
T-storms

Low: 64 °F

Friday



Hot

High: 93 °F

Today

- Sunny and warm with a slight chance of t-storms in northeast SD.
- Highs 88-98°F

Thursday

- Sunny and warm with a slight chance of showers.
- Highs 87-96°F

Friday

- Sunny and generally warmer.
- Highs 92-98°F



Updated: 7/20/2022 4:38 AM Central

Winds will be less gusty today, staying between 20 and 30 mph. Warm temperatures return today and last through the end of the work week with the generally warmest temperatures on Friday. Today's highs will be in the high 80s to high 90s with central SD seeing the higher end. Northeast SD has a slight chance of showers this afternoon.

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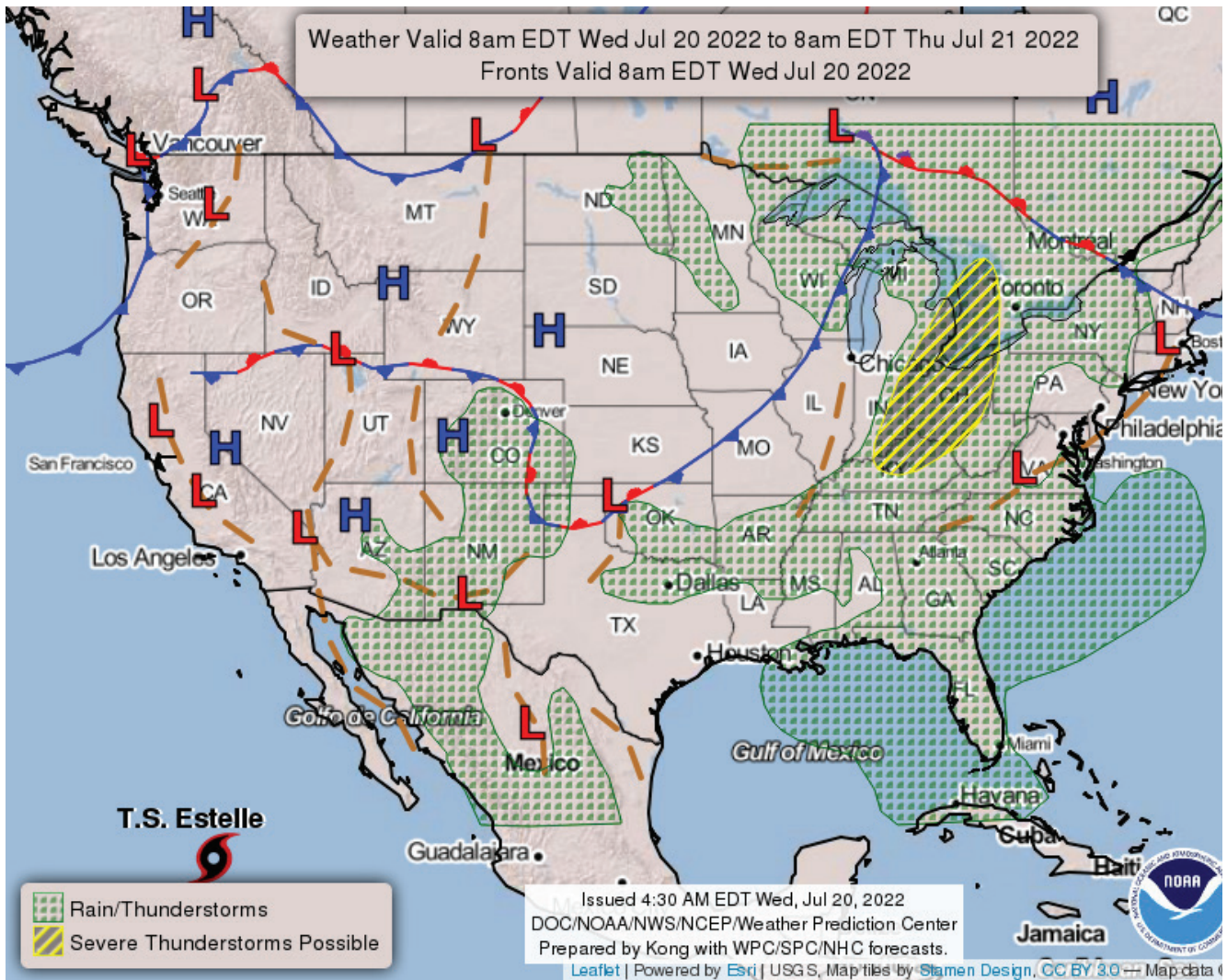
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 83 °F at 12:09 AM
Low Temp: 71 °F at 11:43 PM
Wind: 34 mph at 12:18 AM
Precip: 0.01

Day length: 15 hours, 13 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 111 in 1934
Record Low: 43 in 1970
Average High: 85°F
Average Low: 60°F
Average Precip in July.: 2.18
Precip to date in July.: 2.26
Average Precip to date: 13.19
Precip Year to Date: 13.84
Sunset Tonight: 9:15:36 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:03:02 AM



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Today in Weather History

July 20, 1951: From the southeast residential section of Watertown, an estimated F2 tornado moved east, passing near Kranzburg and Goodwin. The storms destroyed one home and several barns.

July 20, 2002: A powerful severe thunderstorm moved over Rapid City and across the adjacent plains east of town. Downburst winds and the associated gust front caused damage along a nearly 30-mile long path. Extensive tree damage occurred throughout the eastern half of the city with countless trees and branches more than 24-inch diameter fell. Two roofs were torn off by the winds. Flying debris damaged numerous cars and buildings. The NWS office in downtown Rapid City measured an 80 mph wind gust, with meteorologists noting winds were sustained at 60 to 70 mph for 5 minutes. Ellsworth AFB wind equipment measured a 106 mph wind gust from the thunderstorm as it passed.

1915: A record high temperature of 115 degrees occurred in Yosemite Valley at the National Park Headquarters, California (around 4,000 feet elevation). This reading was the warmest day in a streak of 7 consecutive days of 110 degrees or higher at Yosemite Valley from the 19th through the 25th.

1930 - The temperature at Washington D.C. soared to an all-time record of 106 degrees. The next day Millsboro reached 110 degrees to set a record for the state of Delaware. July 1930 was one of the hottest and driest summers in the U.S., particularly in the Missouri Valley where severe drought conditions developed. Toward the end of the month state records were set for Kentucky with 114 degrees, and Mississippi with 115 degrees. (David Ludlum)

1934 - The temperature at Keokuk, IA, soared to 118 degrees to establish a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1953 - Twenty-two inches of hail reportedly fell northeast of Dickinson, ND. (The Weather Channel)

1977: A flash flood hits Johnstown, Pennsylvania, on this day in 1977, killing 84 people and causing millions of dollars in damages. This flood came 88 years after the infamous Great Flood of 1889 that killed more than 2,000 people in Johnstown.

1986 - The temperature at Charleston, SC, hit 104 degrees for the second day in a row to tie their all-time record high. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather across Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 87 mph at Mosinee, WI, and strong thunderstorm winds capsized twenty-six boats on Grand Traverse Bay drowning two women. Thunderstorms produced nine inches of rain at Shakopee, MN, with 7.83 inches reported in six hours at Chaska, MN. Thunderstorms in north central Nebraska produced hail as large as golf balls in southwestern Cherry County, which accumulated to a depth of 12 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - The temperature at Redding, CA, soared to an all-time record high of 118 degrees. Showers and thunderstorms produced much needed rains from New England to southern Texas. Salem, IN, was deluged with 7.2 inches of rain resulting in flash flooding. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Showers and thunderstorms in the Middle Atlantic Coast Region soaked Wilmington, DE, with 2.28 inches of rain, pushing their total for the period May through July past the previous record of 22.43 inches. Heavy rain over that three month period virtually wiped out a 16.82 inch deficit which had been building since drought conditions began in 1985. Thunderstorms in central Indiana deluged Lebanon with 6.50 inches of rain in twelve hours, and thunderstorms over Florida produced wind gusts to 84 mph at Flagler Beach. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005: Hurricane Emily made landfall in northern Mexico. When the central pressure fell to 29.43 inches of mercury, and its sustained winds reached 160 mph on the 16th, Emily became the strongest hurricane ever to form before August, breaking a record set by Hurricane Dennis just six days before. It was also the earliest Category 5 hurricane ever recorded in the Atlantic basin, beating Hurricane Allen's old record by nearly three weeks.

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WE ARE WHAT WE THINK

There is a parrot in Brazil that changes its color from green to red or even yellow when it is fed certain fish. And there are some canaries whose yellow feathers will cast off a red hue if they are fed cayenne pepper when they are molting. What is true in the natural realm is also true in the spiritual realm. We become what our minds "feed" upon.

"The Lord's promises are pure," said David "...therefore we know that You will protect the oppressed." David knew that God's promises were absolute and that He would honor His word. But what does that mean? That he will simply "protect" the oppressed but leave them in that deplorable conditions? That certainly does not make any sense. Why would God only "protect" them and not help them to improve their lives?

The word "protect" means "to watch over you" and meet your needs. It carries with it the same significance as the promise God made to Jeremiah: "I am ready to perform My word." Moreover, God preserves (or performs or extends) His words- or promises - "from this generation forever – or, throughout eternity."

Because the Word of God stands forever, we know that its contents are true and reliable; it is God-glorifying in its message, Christ-honoring in its contents, and comes to life through the work and power of the Holy Spirit.

If we nourish our souls with God's promises and feed our minds on the message it embodies, it will enable us to fulfill His purpose for our lives, and we will reflect the grace of God to others. So, if we nourish our minds and hearts with His Word, our hands will be engaged in service to others – especially those in need. Put His Words to work.

Prayer: Father, may Your Spirit speak to our minds and open our hearts so that we will engage our hands in serving others in need. May we start today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: The Lord's promises are pure like silver refined in a furnace, purified seven times over. Therefore, Lord, we know you will protect the oppressed, preserving them forever from this lying generation. Psalm 12:6-7

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2022 Community Events

- 01/30/2022 84th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
01/30/2022 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am – 1pm, Groton Community Center, 109 N 3rd St, Groton,
04/07/2022 Groton CDE
04/09/2022 Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
04/09/2022 Dueling Pianos Baseball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39 6-11:30pm
04/23/2022 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/24/2022 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/07/2022 Lions Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sales 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
St John's Lutheran Church VBS 9-11am
05/30/2022 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
Transit Fundraiser at the Community Center 4-7pm (Thursday Mid-June)
06/17/2022 SDSU Alumni & Friends Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 12pm Start
06/18/2022 Groton Triathlon
06/20/2022 Ladies Invitational at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration 10am Start
06/25/2022 How can we... "Love Groton"? United Methodist Church 9:30am
07/04/2022 Firecracker Couples Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start
(4th of July)
07/10/2022 Lions Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
07/20/2022 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar 11am-1pm at the Groton Legion
07/21/2022 Pro Am Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/22/2022 Ferney Open Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
Moonlight Swim at the Swimming Pool 9-11pm for 9th grade to age 20
07/27/2022 Golf Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course 11a-1pm
08/05/2022 Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
08/12/2022 GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
No Date Set: Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day 4-5pm GHS Parking Lot
09/10/2022 Lions Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
No Date Set: 6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3:30-5pm
09/11/2022 Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10 a.m.
09/02-04: Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/01/2022 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/07/2022 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/31/2022 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
10/31/2022 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/12/2022 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/24/2022 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
12/03/2022 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party at Olive Grove Golf Course
No Date Set: Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm
01/29/2023 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)

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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

02-31-32-37-70, Mega Ball: 25, Megaplier: 3

(two, thirty-one, thirty-two, thirty-seven, seventy; Mega Ball: twenty-five; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$630,000,000

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: 101,000,000

Abortion ruling prompts variety of reactions from states

By The Associated Press undefined

The U.S. Supreme Court on June 24 overturned *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 decision that had provided a constitutional right to abortion. The ruling was expected to lead to abortion bans in roughly half the states, although the timing of those laws taking effect varies.

Some Republican-led states banned or severely limited abortion immediately, while other restrictions will take effect later. At least one state, Texas, was waiting until after the Supreme Court issues its formal judgment in the case, which is separate from the opinion issued in June and could take about a month. Nevertheless, the Texas Supreme Court has ruled that a long-dormant 1925 abortion ban is now in effect.

In anticipation of the decision, several states led by Democrats took steps to protect abortion access. The decision also set up the potential for legal fights between the states over whether providers and those who help women obtain abortions can be sued or prosecuted.

Here is an overview of abortion legislation and the expected impact of the court's decision in every state.

ALABAMA

Political control: Alabama's Republican-controlled Legislature and Republican governor want to ban or restrict access to abortions.

Background: In 2019, Alabama lawmakers approved what was then the most stringent abortion ban in the country, making it a felony to perform an abortion at any stage of pregnancy with no exceptions for pregnancies resulting from rape or incest. The only exception would be when the woman's health was at serious risk. A federal judge issued an injunction, under the precedent of *Roe v. Wade*, blocking the state from enforcing the law. In 2018, voters agreed to amend the Alabama Constitution to say the state recognizes the "rights of unborn children" and "does not protect the right to an abortion or require the funding of abortion." A 1951 law made it a crime, punishable by up to 12 months in prison, to induce an abortion, unless it is done to preserve the life or health of the mother.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Abortions became almost entirely illegal in Alabama on June 24. A 2019 state abortion ban took effect making it a felony to perform an abortion at any stage of pregnancy, with no exceptions for pregnancies caused by rape or incest. All three clinics stopped providing abortions that morning under fear of prosecution under the 1951 state law. U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson hours later granted Alabama's request to lift an injunction and allow the state to enforce the 2019 abortion ban. Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall said it is now a felony to provide an abortion in Alabama beyond the one exception allowed in the 2019 law, which is for the sake of the mother's health. Doctors who violate the law could face up to 99 years in prison. Marshall said the state would also move to lift other injunctions that blocked previous abortion restrictions, including a requirement for doctors who perform abortions to have hospital admitting privileges.

What's next: Some Republican lawmakers have said they would like to see the state replace the 2019

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ban with a slightly less stringent bill that would allow exceptions in cases of rape or incest. Proponents said the 2019 ban was deliberately strict in the hopes of sparking a court challenge to Roe.

ALASKA

Political control: Republicans currently hold a majority of seats in the Legislature, but the House is controlled by a bipartisan coalition composed largely of Democrats. Fifty-nine of the Legislature's 60 seats are up for election this year. Republican Gov. Mike Dunleavy, who believes life begins at conception, is seeking reelection.

Background: The Alaska Supreme Court has interpreted the right to privacy in the state constitution as encompassing abortion rights.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The decision has not immediately affected abortion rights in Alaska, given the existing precedent in the state.

What's next: Voters in the fall will be asked if they want to hold a constitutional convention, a question that comes up every 10 years. Many conservatives who want to overhaul how judges are selected and do away with the interpretation that the constitution's right to privacy clause allows for abortion rights see an opportunity in pushing for a convention. Recent efforts to advance a constitutional amendment through the Legislature have been unsuccessful.

ARIZONA

Political control: Both legislative chambers are controlled by Republicans. GOP Gov. Doug Ducey is to leave office in January because of term limits.

Background: Arizona law allows abortion through about 22 weeks, but the Legislature passed a 15-week abortion ban in March mirroring the Mississippi law that was contested before the Supreme Court. It takes effect Sept. 24. Current restrictions include bans on abortions because of gender and a 2021 law that makes it a felony for a doctor to terminate a pregnancy because the fetus has a survivable genetic abnormality. Arizona also has a pre-statehood law on the books that would ban all abortions, although it has not been enforced since Roe was decided.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Ducey has said the law he signed in late March takes precedence over the total ban that remains on the books. But that law specifically says it does not overrule the total abortion ban in place for more than 100 years. Abortion providers across the state stopped all procedures because of concerns that the pre-Roe ban could put doctors, nurses and other providers at risk of prosecution. Republican state Attorney General Mark Brnovich said on June 29 that the pre-statehood law could be enforced. Brnovich said he would seek to remove an injunction in place since shortly after the Roe decision. The next day, the U.S. Supreme Court allowed Arizona to enforce a ban on abortions done solely because the fetus has a genetic abnormality. A federal judge blocked that part of that 2021 Arizona law last year, saying it was unconstitutionally vague, but will now have to reconsider that decision. The same federal judge on July 12 blocked another part of that law, which grants all rights to fertilized eggs or fetuses. Abortion rights groups renewed a challenge to it after Roe fell, saying it could be used to charge providers with assault, child abuse or other crimes for providing otherwise-legal abortion services. The judge agreed it was likely unconstitutionally vague.

What's next: Brnovich has said he will ask a court to lift the injunction blocking his office and one county from enforcing the pre-statehood total abortion ban. Abortion-rights supporters in Arizona failed to collect enough signatures by the July 7 deadline to ask voters to enshrine the right to abortion in the state constitution this November. Their last-minute effort was a longshot because they needed to collect nearly 360,000 valid signatures in just over seven weeks.

ARKANSAS

Political control: Arkansas' Legislature is controlled by Republicans who have supported dozens of abortion bans and restrictions in recent years. Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson also has supported bans on abortion with some exceptions. He's term-limited and leaves office in January. Republican nominee Sarah

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Sanders, press secretary to former President Donald Trump, is widely favored in the November election to succeed him.

Background: Arkansas already had a law banning most abortions 20 weeks into a woman's pregnancy, with exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the mother. The state has several other bans that have been struck down or blocked by courts in recent years, including an outright abortion ban enacted last year that doesn't include rape or incest exceptions. That ban has been blocked by a federal judge, and the state has appealed.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Arkansas has a law it enacted in 2019 that bans nearly all abortions now that Roe is overturned. That ban, along with the outright ban that's been blocked by a federal judge, only allows exceptions to protect the life of the mother in a medical emergency. Hutchinson has said he thinks bans should include rape and incest exceptions, but he has not called on the Legislature to add those to either of the bans.

What's next: Hours after the Supreme Court ruling, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge signed certification that Roe had been overturned. That allowed the state's "trigger ban" to take effect immediately. The only exception is to protect the life of the mother in a medical emergency. The Legislature isn't scheduled to meet until January, but Hutchinson is considering calling a special session to take up tax relief proposals. He said he does not plan on asking lawmakers to consider adding rape and incest exceptions to the state's ban.

CALIFORNIA

Political control: Democrats who support access to abortion control all statewide elected offices and have large majorities in the Legislature.

Background: California outlawed abortion in 1850, except when the life of the mother was in danger. The law changed in 1967 to include abortions in the case of rape, incest or if a woman's mental health were in danger. In 1969, the California Supreme Court declared the state's original abortion law to be unconstitutional but left the 1967 law in place. In 1972, California voters added a "right to privacy" to the state constitution. Since then, the state Supreme Court has interpreted that "right to privacy" as a right to access abortion, allow minors to get an abortion without their parents' permission and use public funding for abortions in the state's Medicaid program. California now requires private health insurance plans to cover abortions and does not allow them to charge things such as co-pays or deductibles for the procedure.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Abortion remains legal in California prior to the viability of a fetus. Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has vowed to make California a sanctuary for women who live in states where abortion is outlawed or severely restricted. The number of women who travel to California for abortions is expected to rise significantly.

What's next: The Legislature is considering 13 bills that would strengthen or expand access to abortion. The bills are based on a report from the Future of Abortion Council, which Newsom formed last year to study reproductive rights in California. They include proposals that would help pay for women from other states to come to California for abortions, ban enforcement of out-of-state civil judgments on California abortion providers and volunteers, and increase the number of people who can offer abortions by authorizing some nurse practitioners to perform the procedure without the supervision of a doctor. Lawmakers also plan to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot in November that would explicitly guarantee the right to an abortion and contraceptives.

COLORADO

Political control: The Democrats who control the Colorado Legislature support access to abortion, as does the state's Democratic governor.

Background: A 1967 state law legalized abortion up to 16 weeks of pregnancy. Abortion has been accessible ever since, despite repeated legislative attempts and ballot initiatives to restrict or abolish the procedure. Colorado voters have consistently rejected such initiatives, the latest in 2020 that would have

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banned abortion during the third trimester of pregnancy. In 2022, Colorado Gov. Jared Polis signed a law placing the right to abortion in state statute. The law guarantees access to reproductive care before and after pregnancy and bans local governments from imposing their own restrictions. It also declares that fertilized eggs, embryos and fetuses have no independent rights. Abortion rights advocates plan a 2024 ballot initiative to add abortion rights to the state constitution and repeal a 1980s constitutional amendment that bans public funding for abortion.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The decision didn't have any immediate impact on Colorado law -- but providers are preparing for a surge of out-of-state patients. Democratic House Majority Leader Daneya Esgar says lawmakers must consider how to invest in a health care workforce to ensure Colorado has the capacity to meet that anticipated demand. Colorado's health department reports there were 11,580 abortions in the state in 2021; of those, 14% were for non-residents. More than 900 of those non-residents were from Texas, Wyoming and Nebraska.

What's next: It's impossible to predict how many more patients from surrounding states will seek care in Colorado. But the Texas law could induce more people to come. Oklahoma now has an early pregnancy abortion ban; Utah and Wyoming have trigger laws banning abortion; the Kansas Constitution protects abortion rights, but Republican lawmakers placed on an August primary ballot an initiative to overturn it.

CONNECTICUT

Political control: Democrats who control the Connecticut General Assembly support access to abortion, as does the state's Democratic governor.

Background: Connecticut passed a law in 1990 giving women the legal right to abortion. Having passed with strong bipartisan support, it was lauded at the time for being a rare compromise between abortion rights advocates and opponents. It affirmed a woman's unqualified right to an abortion "prior to viability of the fetus," as well as later-term abortions "necessary to preserve the life and health of the pregnant woman." It also repealed state laws predating Roe v. Wade that had made it a felony to have an abortion or to perform one and required that patients under 16 receive counseling about their options. This year, Gov. Ned Lamont signed legislation to protect medical providers and patients from out-of-state legal actions. The same law allows advanced practice registered nurses, nurse-midwives or physician assistants to perform aspiration abortions in the first 12 weeks of a pregnancy.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Connecticut Attorney General William Tong, a Democrat, has vowed to challenge any attempt to nullify Connecticut's abortion rights law. "Let's not mince words. They will come for us," Tong warned abortion rights supporters during a recent news conference. "We will fight that effort tooth-and-nail. Any court, any place, Connecticut will be there and will fight." The state is already involved in major abortion cases across the country. And while Connecticut is surrounded by mostly pro-abortion states, it's still bracing for out-of-state patients seeking abortions now that Roe has been overturned.

What's next: Connecticut's new law protecting abortion providers from other states' bans took effect on July 1. It created a legal cause of action for providers and others sued in another state, enabling them to recover certain legal costs. It also limits the governor's discretion to extradite someone accused of performing an abortion, as well as participation by Connecticut courts and agencies in those lawsuits. There's discussion of possibly amending the state's constitution to enshrine the right to abortion, making it more difficult to overturn, but that would be a multi-year process.

DELAWARE

Political control: Democrats control the governor's office and the General Assembly and have taken several steps to ensure access to abortion.

Background: In 2017, Delaware became the first state following the election of President Donald Trump to codify the right to an abortion. A bill signed by Gov. John Carney, a Catholic, guarantees the unfettered right to an abortion before a fetus is deemed "viable." The law defines viability as the point in a pregnancy when, in a physician's "good faith medical judgment," there is a reasonable likelihood that the fetus can

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survive outside the uterus without the application of extraordinary medical measures. The law also allows abortion after fetal viability if, in a doctor's "good faith medical judgment," abortion is necessary for the protection of the woman's life or health, or if there is a reasonable likelihood that the fetus cannot survive without extraordinary medical measures. The law eliminated existing code restrictions on abortions, much of which had already been declared unenforceable by Delaware's attorney general in 1973 following the Supreme Court rulings in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. In April of this year, Carney signed a bill allowing physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses to prescribe abortion-inducing medications including mifepristone and misoprostol.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: "In Delaware, the privacy protections of *Roe v. Wade* are codified in state law, guaranteeing residents have access to legal abortion services even if *Roe* were to be undone at the federal level," Democratic lawmakers noted in June while unveiling legislation further broadening access to abortions. The measure, which passed June 30, allows physician assistants, certified nurse practitioners and nurse midwives to perform abortions before viability. It also includes various legal protections for abortion providers and patients, including out-of-state residents receiving abortions in Delaware. Those provisions include protections from civil actions in other states relating to the termination of a pregnancy, and protecting individuals from extradition to other states for criminal charges related to terminating a pregnancy.

What's next: According to state health officials, 2,042 abortions were performed in Delaware in 2019, with 1,765 involving Delaware residents and 277 involving nonresidents. Delaware is not likely to see a huge influx of women traveling from out of state to get abortions if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, given that neighboring Maryland and New Jersey also have liberal abortion-access laws. In neighboring Pennsylvania, where Republicans control both chambers of the Legislature, future abortion access could hinge on the outcome of this year's gubernatorial contest.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Political control: The local government in the nation's capital is controlled by Democrats, with a Democratic mayor and the D.C. Council split between Democrats and nominal independent politicians, who are all, invariably, Democrats.

Background: Abortion is legal in the District of Columbia at all stages of pregnancy, a status that was upheld in the 1971 Supreme Court case *United States v. Vuitch*. However, Congress has oversight power over D.C. laws and Congress has already banned the city from using local funds to pay for abortions for women on Medicaid.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Elected officials in Washington, D.C., fear Congress could move to restrict abortion access, particularly if Republicans recapture the House of Representatives in midterm elections later this year. President Joe Biden could theoretically veto such a move, but that protection is subject to political calculations and is not guaranteed.

What's next: Local officials have pledged defiance against any sort of Congressional move to restrict local abortion access. The D.C. Council is considering legislation that would declare Washington, D.C., a "sanctuary city" for those coming from states where abortion is banned. According to federal data, most of the women getting abortions in Washington already are coming from out of state. Those numbers could increase, particularly if new Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin moves to restrict abortion access in neighboring Virginia.

FLORIDA

Political control: Republicans control both chambers of the Florida Legislature and this year passed a ban on abortions after 15 weeks, which was signed into law by the state's Republican governor.

Background: Abortion was legal in Florida until the 24th week of pregnancy, though lawmakers have been tightening access in recent years with bills requiring a one-day waiting period and requiring parents of a pregnant minor to be notified before an abortion can be provided. This year, in anticipation of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that overturned *Roe v. Wade*, the Legislature passed a ban on abortions after

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the 15th week, except to save the mother's life, prevent serious injury or if the fetus has a fatal abnormality. It does not allow for exemptions in cases where pregnancies were caused by rape or incest. Gov. Ron DeSantis called the legislation "the most significant protections for life that have been enacted in this state in a generation."

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The decision places Florida's 15-week ban on firm legal ground, at least under federal law. However, the legislation is being challenged in state court on arguments that it violates a guarantee of the right to privacy under the state constitution.

What's next: Florida's 15-week ban took effect July 1. It was briefly on hold July 5 due to a judge's order in a case brought by reproductive health providers who argued it "violates the privacy provision of the Florida Constitution." But the state's appeal automatically put the restrictions into effect. Although only about 2% of Florida's abortions take place after 15th week, abortion rights advocates have expressed concern over declining access to the procedure not only for Floridians but for residents from nearby Southern states where restrictions are stricter than in Florida.

GEORGIA

Political control: Georgia has a GOP-controlled General Assembly and a Republican governor who support abortion restrictions, but all are up for election this November. Republicans are likely to retain legislative control, but there's a possibility a Democrat could become governor.

Background: Georgia lawmakers in 2019 passed a law by one vote that would ban most abortions after about six weeks of pregnancy, when fetal cardiac activity can be detected. The measure is unlike other so-called heartbeat bills in that it also contains language designating a fetus as a person for certain state-law purposes such as income tax deductions and child support. A federal judge quickly put the law on hold and in 2020 struck it down, saying it was unconstitutional. The state appealed to the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The 11th Circuit said it would wait to rule on the appeal pending a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in the Mississippi case.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The day the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, Georgia's attorney general asked the 11th Circuit to reverse the lower court's ruling and allow the state's abortion law to take effect. That same day, the 11th Circuit directed the parties to file briefs within three weeks addressing what effect, if any, the Supreme Court decision has on the Georgia appeal. If the law takes effect, it would ban the large majority of abortions that currently take place in Georgia – about 87%, according to providers. The change could happen in the middle of tightly contested races in Georgia for governor and U.S. Senate. Democratic U.S. Sen. Raphael Warnock and challenger for governor Stacey Abrams say they want to secure abortion rights. Republican Senate challenger Herschel Walker and incumbent Republican Gov. Brian Kemp support restrictions.

What's next: Some Republican lawmakers and candidates want Georgia to go further and ban abortion entirely, but Kemp is unlikely to call a special session before this November's general election. Lawmakers are likely to consider further action when they return for their annual session in January. The General Assembly or courts will have to sort out whether the provisions designating a fetus as a person are workable.

HAWAII

Political control: Hawaii's governor is a Democrat and Democrats control more than 90% of the seats in the state House and Senate.

Background: Hawaii legalized abortion in 1970, when it became the first state in the nation to allow the procedure at a woman's request. The state allows abortion until a fetus would be viable outside the womb. After that, it's legal if a patient's life or health is in danger. For many years, only licensed physicians could perform the procedure. Last year, the state enacted a law allowing advanced practice care nurses to carry out in-clinic abortions during the first trimester. This helps women on more rural islands who have been flying to Honolulu to obtain abortions because of doctor shortages in their communities. The law allows the nurses to prescribe medication to end a pregnancy and to perform aspiration abortion, a type of minor surgery during which a vacuum is used to empty a woman's uterus.

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Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Existing Hawaii law allows abortions, but Gary Yamashiroya, a spokesperson for the state attorney general's office, has said the attorney general was carefully considering measures Hawaii might take to protect and strengthen reproductive rights.

What's next: Political support for abortion rights is strong. Anti-abortion bills are rarely heard at the state Legislature. When they have been, they haven't made it out of committee. Gov. David Ige issued a statement supporting abortion rights when the Supreme Court's draft opinion overturning Roe leaked. "No matter what the Supreme Court decides, I will fight to ensure a woman's right to choose in the State of Hawaii," he said. The Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women earlier this month said 72% of the state Senate and 53% of state House members signed a pledge supporting abortion rights.

IDAHO

Political control: Republicans hold supermajorities in the House and Senate and oppose access to abortion, as does the state's Republican governor.

Background: Following the U.S. Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade ruling, Idaho passed a law generally allowing abortions in the first and second trimester up to viability at about 23 to 24 weeks. The law allows abortions after viability only to protect the mother's life or in cases of nonviable fetuses. This year, lawmakers passed a Texas-style ban prohibiting abortions after about six weeks of pregnancy and authorizing family members to sue medical providers for performing an abortion. That law is on hold following a challenge by Planned Parenthood. The Idaho Supreme Court is scheduled to hear arguments in August.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: It triggers a 2020 Idaho law banning all abortions except in cases of reported rape or incest, or to protect the mother's life, to take effect 30 days after the Supreme Court ruling. Under the law, the person performing the abortion could face a felony prosecution punishable by up to five years in prison. In cases of rape or incest, the law requires pregnant women to file a police report and provide a copy of the report to the provider prior to an abortion. If the Idaho Supreme Court upholds the state's Texas-style abortion ban and Roe v. Wade is tossed aside, a medical provider who performs an abortion in Idaho could face a lawsuit and criminal charges.

What's Next: Pregnant women seeking abortions will have to travel out of state; the nearest abortion providers would be in Washington, Oregon, Nevada and Colorado. Planned Parenthood is renting space in the town of Ontario on the Idaho-Oregon border and says it's preparing for an influx of patients seeking abortions. Some Republican lawmakers in Idaho might propose new legislation in January to outlaw abortion pills and emergency contraception.

ILLINOIS

Political control: Illinois is overwhelmingly Democratic with laws providing greater access to abortion than most states. Democrats hold veto-proof supermajorities in the House and Senate, and the Democratic first-term governor seeking reelection this year, J.B. Pritzker, has promoted peaceful street protests to protect the constitutional right to an abortion.

Background: Abortion is legal in Illinois and can only be restricted after the point of viability, when a fetus is considered able to survive outside the womb. Medical science determines viability at 24 to 26 weeks, but the Illinois law does not specify a timeframe, saying a medical professional can determine viability in each case. Abortions are also allowed after viability to protect the patient's life or health.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: It did not change access to abortion in Illinois. The Illinois Abortion Act of 1975 legalized abortion but enacted a "trigger law" that would reinstate the ban if Roe were overturned. That trigger law was repealed in 2017 in legislation that also required Medicaid and state employees' group health insurance to cover abortions. The 2019 Reproductive Health Act replaced the 1975 law, large parts of which were never enforced because they were found to be unconstitutional.

What's next: Like other states providing access to abortions, Illinois has seen a steady influx of patients crossing the state line for abortions in recent months and those numbers are expected to increase. Planned Parenthood of Illinois says it expects to handle an additional 20,000 to 30,000 patients in Illinois in the

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first year following the reversal of Roe.

INDIANA

Political control: Indiana has a Republican-dominated Legislature and a Republican governor in favor of restricting abortion access.

Background: Abortion in Indiana is legal up to about 20 weeks, with some provisions for medical emergencies. Before an abortion, patients must undergo an 18-hour waiting period. Medical providers must tell patients about the risks involved in abortion and must say the fetus can feel pain around 20 weeks, which is disputed. Providers must report complications related to abortion; failure to report can result in a misdemeanor, 180 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine. Federal courts have blocked several restrictions in Indiana, including an attempt to ban a common second-trimester abortion procedure and a law that would have required doctors to tell pregnant women about a disputed treatment to potentially stop a drug-induced abortion.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: A federal judge on July 7 lifted an injunction that had blocked a 2019 law banning a second-trimester abortion procedure that the legislation called "dismemberment abortion," a move that allowed the law to take effect. Later in July, a federal judge lifted orders blocking a law aimed at prohibiting abortions based on gender, race or disability.

What's next: Republican legislative leaders said they expected lawmakers to act on tightening Indiana's abortion laws during a special legislative session starting July 25 but have given no details about what restrictions would be considered.

IOWA

Political control: Iowa's Legislature is controlled by Republicans who want to ban or restrict abortion access and a Republican governor who agrees and is up for reelection this year.

Background: Iowa allows most abortions until the 20th week of pregnancy, when they're banned except to save a patient's life or prevent a substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function. In 2018, the state Supreme Court declared access to abortion a "fundamental" right under the state constitution, granting stronger protections to abortion rights than the U.S. Constitution. The state's high court, now with a conservative majority, overturned that decision June 17, thus allowing a state law requiring a 24-hour waiting period to go into effect immediately. That requirement is being challenged in district court.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Nothing changed immediately in Iowa. The GOP-controlled Legislature has been working to get an amendment on the ballot in 2024 that would declare the state constitution does not grant a right to abortion but, with Roe overturned, Iowa lawmakers can ban abortion without completing that lengthy process.

What's next: Now that the Iowa Supreme Court has struck down its 2018 ruling, the state Legislature can convene a special session this summer and pass abortion restrictions. Republicans could still move to get the constitutional amendment on a public ballot in 2024.

KANSAS

Political control: Kansas has a Legislature controlled by Republicans who want to ban or restrict access to abortions but a Democratic governor who supports access and is up for reelection this year.

Background: Under current law, Kansas does not ban most abortions until the 22nd week of pregnancy, when they're allowed only to save a patient's life or to prevent "a substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function." The state Supreme Court in 2019 declared that access to abortion is a "fundamental" right under the state constitution, granting stronger protections to abortion rights than the U.S. Constitution does currently. State law, however, doesn't allow providers to dispense abortion medications through telemedicine consultations.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Nothing changed immediately in Kansas. The state Supreme Court blocked enforcement of a 2015 legislative ban on a common second-trimester procedure, and abortion opponents

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fear a host of other rules could fall to legal challenges in the near future. The GOP-controlled Legislature responded by putting a constitutional amendment on the ballot during the Aug. 2 primary, when turnout is expected to be much lower than in a general election and will likely see a higher proportion of Republicans voting. The amendment would declare that the state constitution does not grant a right to abortion. It would allow lawmakers to restrict abortion as much as the federal courts will allow .

What's next: If voters approve the amendment, the Legislature would still have to approve the new restrictions, and lawmakers are out of session until January 2023. They can call themselves in to special session with two-thirds majorities, but they're likely to wait until after voters decide in the November general election whether to give Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly a second term.

KENTUCKY

Political control: Republicans have a supermajority in the Kentucky Legislature and have been restricting abortion rights since the 2016 election over the vetoes of Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear, who supports abortion rights and will seek a second term in 2023.

Background: Kentucky bans abortions after 20 weeks, but all abortion services were temporarily halted in April after the Legislature imposed new restrictions and reporting requirements on the state's two abortion clinics. The clinics, both in Louisville, said they suspended abortions because state officials hadn't written guidelines on how to comply with the new law. Noncompliance could result in stiff fines, felony penalties and revocation of physician and facility licenses. Abortions were allowed to resume after a federal judge on June 30 temporarily blocked key parts of the law, including a provision banning abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Abortion services in Kentucky immediately became illegal under a "trigger law" enacted in 2019, but were then allowed to resume by a judge on June 30. The measure contains a narrow exception allowing abortion to prevent the death or permanent injury of a pregnant woman. Kentuckians will be able to vote this November on a proposed amendment declaring there is no right to an abortion in the state constitution.

What's next: Abortion-rights activists say the suspension of abortion services in April foreshadowed what would happen in Kentucky and other Republican-leaning states if Roe v. Wade was overturned. It likely ends several legal challenges pending against other Kentucky abortion laws including a 2018 measure that abortion-rights supporters say would effectively ban a standard abortion method in the second trimester of pregnancy. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in March that Kentucky's Republican attorney general, Daniel Cameron, can defend the measure that was struck down by lower courts.

LOUISIANA

Political control: Louisiana's Legislature is controlled by Republicans who want to ban or restrict abortion access. Its Democratic and Catholic governor also opposes abortions, though he supports exceptions for victims of rape or incest.

Background: Voters approved a constitutional amendment in 2020 stating that "a right to abortion and the funding of abortion shall not be found in the Louisiana Constitution." Of the about 2 million people who voted, 62% approved the amendment. Abortion had been legal in Louisiana through the 19th week of pregnancy. After that, it was legal only if the fetus would die anyway or if continuing the pregnancy would threaten the mother's life or health.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Louisiana has a trigger law that immediately outlaws abortions. There is no exception for rape or incest. The only exception is if there is substantial risk of death or impairment to the woman. In June, Gov. John Bel Edwards, a Democrat, signed a bill updating various aspects of the law and subjecting abortion providers to up to 10 years in prison and fines up to \$100,000. Edwards' office said the bill allows the use of emergency contraception "for victims of rape and incest prior to when a pregnancy can be clinically diagnosed."

Edwards signed another bill that would require the doctor to certify that a drug used for abortion was

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being prescribed for another medical reason. The bill makes it illegal to deliver abortion medication to a state resident "by mail-order, courier, or as a result of a sale made via the internet."

What's next: The latest in a series of court orders frees Louisiana's three abortion clinics — in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Shreveport — to provide abortions pending a court challenge of the state trigger law. A judge hears arguments on July 18.

MAINE

Political control: Both chambers of the Maine Legislature, which has adjourned, are controlled by Democrats. Democratic Gov. Janet Mills has vowed to protect the right to an abortion, saying she will "fight with everything I have to protect reproductive rights."

Background: A Republican governor in 1993 signed a Maine law affirming the right to abortion before a fetus is viable. After that, abortion is only allowed if the life or health of the mother is at risk, or if the pregnancy is no longer viable. In 2019, lawmakers eliminated a physician-only rule and Mills signed it into law, allowing nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other medical professionals to perform abortions.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Nothing has changed in Maine. Any attempt to restrict abortions when lawmakers reconvene next year would face fierce pushback. Abortion providers, meanwhile, said there could be an influx of patients seeking abortions from states that outlaw the procedure.

What's next: Any major changes are unlikely unless former Gov. Paul LePage, a Republican, unseats Mills and Republicans take control of both chambers of the Legislature in November. LePage, a Catholic who opposes abortion rights, has said it's up to lawmakers to address the abortion issue as they see fit.

MARYLAND

Political control: Maryland's General Assembly is controlled by Democrats who expanded abortion access this year by ending a restriction that only physicians can provide them and requiring most insurance plans to cover abortion care without cost. The legislature overrode Republican Gov. Larry Hogan's veto of the bill in April.

Background: The right to abortion is protected in Maryland law. The state approved legislation in 1991 to protect abortion rights if the Supreme Court should ever restrict access. Voters approved the right in 1992 with 62% of the vote. Maryland law prohibits restrictions on abortion prior to viability. Maryland does not have a gestational limit. After viability, clinicians make the determination, based on clinical standard of care.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Nothing changed immediately in Maryland law.

What's next: Maryland's new law to enable nurse practitioners, nurse midwives and physician assistants to provide abortions with training took effect July 1. However, \$3.5 million in state funding to provide training isn't mandated until fiscal year 2024. Hogan, who is term limited, has indicated he will not approve the money sooner. Some nurse practitioners, nurse midwives and physician assistants already have received training on medication abortion and will be able to provide those services starting next month.

MASSACHUSETTS

Political control: The Democrats who control the Massachusetts Legislature support access to abortion, as does the state's Republican governor, although they differ on specific policies.

Background: Massachusetts once had a contentious relationship with abortion in part due to the powerful influence of the Catholic Church, which opposes it. In recent years, that influence has waned and Massachusetts has become a strong supporter of abortion rights. In 2018, in anticipation of the conservative tilt on the U.S. Supreme Court, the state removed an 1845 abortion ban from its books that was not enforced. Two years later, Democratic state lawmakers clashed with Republican Gov. Charlie Baker — who says he supports access to abortion — over an effort to codify abortion rights into state law, allow abortions after 24 weeks of pregnancy in cases where the child would not survive after birth, and lower from 18 to 16 the age at which women could seek an abortion without consent from a parent or guardian. Lawmakers passed the bill — dubbed the Roe Act — over Baker's veto.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Baker has vowed to fight to keep abortion legal in Massachusetts, but

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it is his last year in office. Both Democratic candidates for governor — state Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz and Attorney General Maura Healey — support abortion rights. Republican candidate Geoff Diehl said he believes in “the need to protect human life wherever and whenever possible.” Fellow GOP candidate Chris Doughty said he would “not seek any changes to our state’s abortion laws.”

What’s next: There is little chance Massachusetts will restrict abortion rights. Baker signed an executive order June 24 barring state agencies from assisting another state’s investigation into people or businesses for receiving or delivering reproductive health services that are legal in Massachusetts. The state also won’t cooperate with extradition requests from states pursuing criminal charges against such individuals. The state House of Representatives has approved a bill later that is similar to the governor’s executive order. It would add protections into state law for individuals seeking abortions and providers so they would not be subject to actions taken by other states.

MICHIGAN

Political control: Both chambers of Michigan’s Legislature are controlled by Republicans who want to ban or restrict abortion access, but the state’s Democratic governor supports access.

Background: A dormant 1931 law bans nearly all abortions in Michigan but it hasn’t been enforced since Roe v. Wade. The law made it a felony to use an instrument or administer any substance with the intent to abort a fetus unless necessary to preserve the woman’s life. It has no exceptions in cases of rape and incest. Anticipating that Roe could be overturned, Planned Parenthood of Michigan filed a lawsuit challenging Michigan’s ban. A state judge suspended the law in May, saying it violates the state’s constitution. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Attorney General Dana Nessel, both Democrats, hailed the decision.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The injunction granted in the Planned Parenthood case ensures that abortion does not immediately become illegal. Planned Parenthood of Michigan and other supporters hope the injunction indicates abortion rights in the state will be preserved. But in a statement to The Associated Press, Nessel’s office said “given the ongoing lawsuits, we cannot speculate what the state of abortion rights will be in Michigan” after Roe.

What’s next: Whitmer also filed suit asking the state’s Supreme Court to declare the 91-year-old law unconstitutional. It has not acted yet. Michigan abortion rights supporters hope to put the issue on ballots this fall. Their proposed constitutional amendment would affirm the right to make pregnancy-related decisions without interference, including about abortion and other reproductive services such as birth control. The Reproductive Freedom for All committee needed to collect about 425,000 valid voter signatures and it turned in 753,759 signatures on July 11. The signatures must be validated by the Board of State Canvassers before the proposed amendment can appear on the Nov. 8 ballot. The measure would become law if voters approved it. The issue also is expected to shape legislative and statewide elections this fall, when the ballots will include Whitmer and Nessel’s reelection efforts.

MINNESOTA

Political control: The Minnesota Legislature is divided; Anti-abortion Republicans control the Senate and Democrats have the House, but the majorities are slim in both chambers, so control will be up for grabs in the November elections. Most legislative Democrats support abortion rights. Democratic Gov. Tim Walz has said “no abortion ban will ever become law” while he’s governor. But he faces a challenge this year from Republican Scott Jensen, who opposes abortion rights.

Background: Abortion has generally been regarded as legal in Minnesota up to the point of fetal viability, around the 24th week of pregnancy, although some legal scholars question whether any cutoff could be legally enforced, citing a decades-old federal court ruling. A judge on July 11 lifted most of the state’s other existing restrictions, including a 24-hour waiting period with state-mandated counseling, requirements that both parents generally be notified before a minor gets an abortion, that only physicians can perform abortions, and that abortions after the first trimester must be performed in hospitals.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Nothing changed immediately because the state Supreme Court ruled in

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1995 that the Minnesota Constitution protects abortion rights. If Republicans take control of both chambers, they could put a constitutional amendment on the ballot as soon as 2024 to reverse that ruling, but it's not clear yet if they would take that path. Minnesota governors can't block constitutional amendments with vetoes. But amendments are hard to enact because they require the backing of most of the citizens voting in that election, not just those voting on the amendment. Leaving the ballot blank counts as a "no."

What's next: Providers are preparing for a surge in women coming from other states to get abortions. Sarah Stoesz, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood North Central States, said before the ruling that her organization was "fortifying" its delivery systems, including telemedicine. Dr. Sarah Traxler, the group's medical director, has said demand in Minnesota is expected to rise by up to 25%.

MISSISSIPPI

Political control: Republican Gov. Tate Reeves and leaders of the Republican-controlled Mississippi Legislature have been working for years to chip away at abortion access.

Background: Mississippi already had a law banning most abortions at 20 weeks, although the state's lone abortion clinic offered the procedure only through 16 weeks. The state tried to enact a law in 2018 to ban most abortions after 15 weeks. That law is the basis for the case that the Supreme Court used to overturn *Roe v. Wade* in a ruling issued June 24. Reeves was lieutenant governor in 2018 when Mississippi tried to enact the 15-week ban, and in 2019 when the state tried to enact a six-week ban. Mississippi law does not allow providers to dispense abortion medications through telemedicine consultations.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Mississippi's only abortion clinic, Jackson Women's Health Organization, stopped doing abortions on July 6 and said about two weeks later that it would not reopen in Mississippi because it was relocating to New Mexico. Also in July, the clinic ended its legal challenge of a law that bans most abortions once *Roe v. Wade* is overturned. A judge rejected the clinic's request to block the law from taking effect. As of July 7, abortions are allowed only if the woman's life is endangered by the pregnancy or if the pregnancy was caused by a rape that was reported to law enforcement. Any person who knowingly performs or attempts to induce an abortion, except the pregnant woman, could be punished by up to 10 years in prison.

What's next: Clinic attorneys filed papers July 7 asking the Mississippi Supreme Court to block the new ban on most abortions. Justices set a July 25 deadline for the state attorney general to respond.

MISSOURI

Political control: Both GOP Gov. Mike Parson and the Republican-led General Assembly support laws against abortion.

Background: Missouri law previously allowed abortions up until 22 weeks of pregnancy. But a 2019 state law banned abortions "except in cases of medical emergency," contingent upon the U.S. Supreme Court overturning its 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. Under that Missouri law, performing an illegal abortion is a felony punishable by 5 to 15 years in prison, though women receiving abortions cannot be prosecuted.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The 2019 law banning most abortions kicked in the day the Supreme Court ruled in June.

What's next: Some Missouri residents wanting abortions are likely to travel to neighboring states, including Illinois and Kansas. A new Illinois logistics center near St. Louis helps women from out of state find travel, lodging and childcare if they need help getting to the area for an abortion, and it connects them with funding sources. The Kansas Supreme Court in 2019 declared that access to abortion is a "fundamental" right under the state constitution. Even without the ban in Missouri, the number of Missouri patients seeking abortions in Kansas has gone up in recent years, increasing about 8% from 2020 to 2021.

MONTANA

Political control: The Republicans who control the Montana Legislature and Republican Gov. Greg Gianforte want to limit access to abortion.

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Background: Abortion used to be legal in Montana up until viability, or about 24 weeks of pregnancy, but the state Legislature passed a bill in 2021 to reduce that to 20 weeks, arguing that is when the fetus can feel pain. That law, along with one that requires chemical abortions to be done with in-person medical supervision, are being challenged in court. A state judge temporarily blocked enforcement in October 2021 while the challenges move through the courts. The state has asked the Montana Supreme Court to vacate that injunction and overturn a 1999 Montana Supreme Court opinion that found the state's constitutional right to privacy guarantees a woman's access to abortion care.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The effect is unclear because of the unresolved legal challenges to the 2021 state legislation. Montana does not have an abortion ban that was triggered when *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, but the Legislature could seek to further restrict access in the next session.

What's next: The Montana Supreme Court will issue a decision on the preliminary injunction. The Montana Legislature also passed a referendum to ask voters this November whether they support a state law to require abortion providers to give lifesaving treatment to a fetus that is born alive after a botched abortion. Opponents argue federal law already offers those protections.

NEBRASKA

Political control: Nebraska has an officially nonpartisan Legislature with a Republican majority, but not a super-majority that would let the party unilaterally pass an abortion ban. Democrats appear to have enough votes to block such a bill, but just one defector could swing the vote. Nebraska's Republican governor vehemently opposes abortion.

Background: Nebraska allows most abortions until the 22nd week of pregnancy, although a few small towns have voted to outlaw the procedure within their borders. The state requires doctors to be physically present when patients take the first of two drugs that are used in medication abortions. Lawmakers have rejected attempts to allow abortion medications to be administered remotely, which would provide easier abortion access in rural areas.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: A ruling that lets states set their own abortion laws will trigger an immediate push by Nebraska conservatives to ban the procedure, but it's not clear whether they could do it this year. Unlike other conservative states, Nebraska doesn't have a trigger law that automatically outlaws abortion. Gov. Pete Ricketts and other top Republicans have said they'll seek a special legislative session, but it's not clear whether they have enough votes to pass anything.

What's next: If Ricketts calls a special session, attention will likely shift to state Sen. Justin Wayne, an Omaha Democrat who has declined to specify where he stands on abortion. Wayne was notably absent from a vote on the issue this year; his support would give Republicans the super-majority they need to enact a ban. He has struck deals with senators from both parties in the past. If a proposed abortion ban fails during a special session or if no special session is called, the issue will likely become a factor in the November election.

NEVADA

Political control: Nevada's governor and state attorney general are Democrats who are up for reelection this year. Democrats control the state Senate and Assembly.

Background: Nevada voters enshrined the right to abortion into state law in 1990. The law says a pregnancy can be terminated during the first 24 weeks, and after that to preserve the life or health of the pregnant person. It would take another statewide vote to change or repeal the law. Most Republican candidates for Congress, governor, state attorney general and other statewide posts say they oppose abortions.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: "Here in Nevada, overturning *Roe* would not be felt immediately," state Attorney General Aaron Ford said in a position paper released after the draft U.S. Supreme Court opinion became public. Ford noted that a federal ban on abortion would supersede state law and said it would be naive not to recognize that some people want to ban abortions or make them more difficult to obtain. But he said his office will fight "attacks on abortion rights, rights to birth control access and rights for LGBTQ

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people." Gov. Steve Sisolak on June 28 signed an executive order protecting abortion patients and providers from prosecution by other states. State agencies are barred from assisting other states in investigations of people who come to Nevada from other states for abortions. The order also protects providers from discipline and having their license revoked.

What's next: Anti-abortion advocates are not expected to focus on trying to repeal Nevada's abortion law. But they will seek laws affecting waiting periods, mandatory counseling or requiring parental notification or consent. Melissa Clement, executive director of Nevada Right to Life, said she believes there is strong support for parental involvement.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Political control: New Hampshire has a Republican governor and the GOP controls the 424-member Legislature. All face reelection this fall.

Background: Any abortion restrictions New Hampshire had on the books before Roe v. Wade were not enforced after the landmark 1973 ruling, and they were repealed altogether in 1997. The state had no restrictions until January, when a ban on abortion after 24 weeks of pregnancy was enacted. In June, an exemption was added for cases in which the fetus has been diagnosed with "abnormalities incompatible with life." Anticipating the Supreme Court action, Democrats this year tried unsuccessfully to enshrine abortion rights into state law and the state constitution. Gov. Chris Sununu calls himself pro-choice and says he is committed to upholding Roe v. Wade, but he also has boasted "I've done more on the pro-life issue than anyone."

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Nothing changed immediately in New Hampshire. The Legislature won't return until fall, when there will be a one-day session to take up vetoed bills, and it would take a two-thirds majority vote to introduce new legislation then.

What's next: The majority leader of the New Hampshire House has said the public should not expect Republicans in the Legislature to further tighten state abortion laws. But anti-abortion lawmakers who have filed bills in the past are expected to try again. Democrats are urging Sununu to call a special session of the Legislature to codify abortion rights into state law, but both he and Republican legislative leaders say there is no need.

NEW JERSEY

Political control: Democrats control both houses of the state Legislature and the governorship. Gov. Phil Murphy started his second consecutive term this year.

Background: Murphy ran for reelection on the promise that he would sign legislation to enshrine abortion rights into state law, and he fulfilled that promise in January. The measure also guaranteed the right to contraception and the right to carry a pregnancy to term. It stopped short of requiring insurance coverage for abortions, something advocates had sought. Instead, it authorizes the state Banking and Insurance Department to study the issue and possibly adopt regulations if a need is discovered. Under Murphy's predecessor, Republican Chris Christie, state funds to women's clinics, including Planned Parenthood, were slashed. Murphy restored those and has been a strong supporter of abortion rights. New Jersey doesn't have any significant restrictions on abortion, such as parental consent or a mandatory waiting period.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Officials, including the governor, have said the end of Roe would not lead to any rollback of abortion services in the state. "Instead of hoping for the best, we prepared ourselves for the worst," Murphy said in May, addressing reports of a leaked draft of a Supreme Court ruling.

What's next: A week after the Supreme Court's ruling, Murphy signed two bills aimed at protecting the right to abortion for out-of-state residents and barring extradition of providers and patients to states that have prohibited the procedure. Another bill that would require health insurance companies to cover abortion services and set aside \$20 million for access to the procedure remains pending in the Legislature. The bill would set aside \$5 million for an abortion training program, \$5 million for a "health security" grant and \$10 million for health care facilities.

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NEW MEXICO

Political control: The Democrats who control the New Mexico Legislature support access to abortion, as does the state's Democratic governor. Several conservative Democratic state senators who voted against the repeal of the abortion ban in 2019 were ousted from office in 2020 by more socially progressive primary challengers.

Background: In 2021, state lawmakers repealed a dormant 1969 statute that outlawed most abortion procedures as felonies, thus ensuring access to abortion even after the federal court rolled back guarantees. Albuquerque is home to one of only a few independent clinics in the country that perform abortions in the third trimester without conditions. An abortion clinic in Santa Teresa, New Mexico, is just a mile from the state line with Texas and caters to patients from El Paso, western Texas and Arizona.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: There was no immediate change in New Mexico after the high court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. It is unclear if Democrats, who control the state Legislature, will pursue additional guarantees to abortion access when lawmakers convene in January. Possible avenues of legislative reform include enshrining abortion rights in the state constitution, which requires approval by voters. Abortion rights activists say the state's equal rights amendment could be harnessed to guide more public funding for abortion-related programs. Raúl Torrez, the district attorney in Albuquerque and the Democratic nominee for attorney general, is urging lawmakers to take further steps to protect access to abortions, including protections for women coming from other states. The state Republican Party said it's time to elect more anti-abortion candidates to the Legislature.

What's next: The state can expect to continue to see a steady influx of people seeking abortions from neighboring states with more restrictive abortion laws. It already hosts patients from Texas and Oklahoma where among the strictest abortion bans in the country were introduced this year.

NEW YORK

Political control: The Democrats who control the New York Legislature support access to abortion, as does the state's Democratic governor.

Background: Abortion has been legal in New York state since a 1970 law was passed by the Republican-controlled Legislature and signed by Republican Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller. The law allows abortions within the first 24 weeks of pregnancy or to preserve the mother's life. The 2019 Reproductive Health Act removed abortion from the state's criminal code, codified *Roe v. Wade* and allowed abortions after 24 weeks if a fetus isn't viable or to protect the mother's life or health. Lawmakers have passed laws extending legal protections for people seeking and providing abortions in New York.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: *Roe v. Wade* protections are enshrined in state law. New York is planning to give abortion providers \$35 million this year to expand services and boost security in anticipation of an influx of out-of-state people seeking abortions once any ruling comes down. It's unclear how many more people from neighboring states could travel to New York to receive abortion care. New York had 252 facilities providing abortions as of 2017, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research organization that supports abortion rights.

What's next: Planned Parenthood and civil liberty groups are urging lawmakers to start the process of passing a constitutional amendment protecting access to abortion care in case a future Legislature repeals the state law.

NORTH CAROLINA

Political control: Republicans hold majorities in the state House and Senate, but the party lacks the margins to defeat a veto by Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper, a strong abortion-rights supporter. Since 2017, Cooper has vetoed a "born-alive" abortion measure and a bill prohibiting abortion based on race or a Down syndrome diagnosis. He can't seek reelection in 2024 due to term limits.

Background: A 1973 North Carolina law that banned most abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy is currently unenforceable after federal judges struck it down as unconstitutional in 2019 and 2021. Instead,

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abortions can be performed until fetal viability. A state law approved in 2015 provides for post-viability abortions only in a "medical emergency," which means the woman would die or face a "serious risk" of substantial and irreversible physical impairment without the procedure.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Now that *Roe v. Wade* has been overturned, the 20-week ban could be restored. Legal experts say formal action would have to be taken to cancel the earlier court rulings striking it down. On the day of the ruling, Republican legislative leaders asked state Attorney General Josh Stein, a Democrat and abortion rights supporter whose agency's lawyers defended the 20-week law, to demand the ban's injunction be lifted. Otherwise, they said they would seek to intervene. Stein hasn't committed to going to court, telling lawmakers on July 1 that a "thorough legal review" of the matter may take weeks to complete. Separately, Cooper signed an executive order on July 6 that shields out-of-state abortion patients from extradition and prohibits agencies under his control from assisting other states' prosecutions of abortion patients who travel to North Carolina for the procedure.

What's next: Republican General Assembly leaders didn't consider additional abortion restrictions in their legislative session that ended July 1. The party will likely intensify its efforts in this year's elections to gain the five additional seats it needs for veto-proof margins. Cooper and other Democrats already are making abortion rights a key campaign issue. Abortion politics also are expected to figure into two state Supreme Court elections in November. Republicans would gain a majority on the court if they win at least one of them.

NORTH DAKOTA

Political control: North Dakota has a Legislative Assembly dominated by Republicans who want to ban abortion, and the GOP governor had hoped to see *Roe v. Wade* wiped off the books in favor of state's rights.

Background: The state has passed some of the nation's strictest abortion laws, including one that would have banned abortions once fetal cardiac activity can be detected, which can happen before a woman knows she is pregnant. The law never took effect because the state's lone abortion clinic successfully challenged it in court. One failed Republican proposal would have charged abortion providers with murder with a maximum sentence of life in prison.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: North Dakota has a trigger law that will shut down the state's sole abortion clinic in Fargo after 30 days, though the state's sole abortion clinic filed a lawsuit in early July seeking to ban the law from taking effect. That 2007 state law makes it a felony to perform an abortion unless necessary to prevent the pregnant woman's death or in cases of rape or incest. Violators could be punished with a five-year prison sentence and a \$10,000 fine. The Red River Women's Clinic argues that the ban violates the rights to life, safety and happiness guaranteed by the state constitution that protect the right to abortion. The suit also questions Attorney General Drew Wrigley's statement that the ban would take effect July 28. The clinic argued that the Supreme Court released its opinion on June 24 but has not yet issued its judgment, which it said is a necessary step to trigger the state ban.

What's next: The owner and operator of the Red River Women's Clinic in Fargo has said she would explore all legal options to ensure abortion services are available in North Dakota. Should that fail, clinic leader Tammi Kromenaker plans to move across the river to Moorhead, Minnesota, where abortion has not been outlawed. Planned Parenthood says it can provide abortions in Moorhead until Kromenaker gets up and running.

OHIO

Political control: The Ohio Legislature is controlled by Republicans who support restricting or banning abortions, and the Republican governor backs those efforts. He is up for reelection this year against a former mayor who supports abortion rights.

Background: Before the Supreme Court's ruling, Ohio did not ban most abortions until the 22nd week of pregnancy; after that they're allowed only to save a patient's life or when their health is seriously compromised. But the state imposes a host of other restrictions, including parental consent for minors, a required

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ultrasound, and in-person counseling followed by a 24-hour waiting period. Abortions are prohibited for the reason of a fetal Down syndrome diagnosis. Ohio also limits the public funding of abortions to cases of rape, incest or endangerment of the patient's life. It limits public employees' abortion-related insurance coverage and coverage through health plans offered in the Affordable Care Act health exchange to those same scenarios. Clinics providing abortions must comply with a host of regulations.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: A ban on most abortions at the first detectable fetal cardiac activity became the law in Ohio hours after the ruling. Enforcement of Ohio's 2019 "heartbeat" ban had been on hold for nearly three years under a federal court injunction. The state attorney general, Republican Dave Yost, asked for that to be dissolved because of the high court's ruling, and U.S. Judge Michael Barrett agreed hours later.

Two trigger bills are on hold in the Legislature, but a key legislative leader has said he anticipates needing to write new legislation after the decision is reversed that more carefully reflects the actual ruling. That all but certainly would not happen until lawmakers return to the capital after the November election.

OKLAHOMA

Political control: Republicans in Oklahoma have a supermajority in both chambers of the Legislature and a Republican governor up for reelection this year who has vowed to sign "every pro-life legislation that came across my desk."

Background: Abortion services were halted in Oklahoma in May after Gov. Kevin Stitt signed a bill that prohibits all abortions with few exceptions. The ban is enforced by civil lawsuits rather than criminal prosecution. Republican lawmakers have been pushing to restrict abortion in the state for decades, passing 81 different restrictions since *Roe v. Wade* was decided in 1973, according to the Guttmacher Institute.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: It will have little practical effect given that abortions are no longer being provided in Oklahoma. Oklahoma also has a "trigger law" that outlawed abortion as soon as *Roe* was overturned.

What's next: Given the fierce opposition to abortion from the governor and Legislature, Oklahoma will continue to prohibit the practice if states are given the option to do so. Meanwhile, abortion providers who had been operating in the state are taking steps to help patients seek abortions out of state, including coordinating funding for these women and developing a referral network of therapists to help address complications before or after a woman receives an abortion.

OREGON

Political control: The Democrats who control the Oregon Legislature support access to abortion, as does the state's Democratic governor.

Background: The Oregon Legislature passed a bill legalizing abortion in 1969. In 2017, Gov. Kate Brown signed into law a bill expanding health care coverage for reproductive services, including abortions, to thousands of Oregonians, regardless of income, citizenship status or gender identity. Oregon does not have any major abortion restrictions and it is legal at all stages of pregnancy.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The Guttmacher Institute has estimated that Oregon will experience a 234% increase in women seeking abortions arriving from out of state, especially from Idaho. In March, Oregon lawmakers approved \$15 million to expand abortion availability and pay for abortions and support services such as travel and lodgings for residents and out-of-state patients.

What's next: Brown said after the draft Supreme Court decision was leaked that access to abortion is a fundamental right and that she will fight to ensure access to abortion continues to be protected by state law in Oregon. Democratic state lawmakers recently formed the Reproductive Health and Access to Care Work Group of providers, clinics, community organizations and legislators that will make recommendations for the 2023 legislative session and beyond. Recommendations may include proposals to protect, strengthen, and expand equitable access to all forms of reproductive care.

PENNSYLVANIA

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Political control: Republicans who control the Pennsylvania Legislature are hostile to abortion rights, but the state's Democratic governor is a strong supporter and has vetoed three GOP-penned bills in five years that would have added restrictions beyond the state's 24-week limit. The race for governor this year could tilt that balance.

Background: Abortion is legal in Pennsylvania under decades of state law, including a 1989 law that was challenged all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. That produced the landmark *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* ruling that affirmed the high court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion nationwide, but also allowed states to put certain limits on abortion access.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Gov. Tom Wolf has vowed to protect access to abortion for the remainder of his time in office, through January. Running to replace him is the state's Democratic attorney general, Josh Shapiro, who supports abortion rights, and Republican state Sen. Doug Mastriano, who has said he supports banning abortion altogether, with no exceptions. The Legislature is expected to remain in Republican hands next year. Abortion clinics in some parts of the state already are experiencing fallout from the ruling. Less than a week after it came out, a clinic in Pittsburgh was flooded with patients who suddenly lost appointments in Ohio, the clinic director said. Clinic representatives are warning that Pennsylvanians will have a harder time finding appointments because of rising demand from out-of-state residents.

What's next: Legislation to outlaw abortion after the detection of fetal cardiac activity—which can happen at six weeks, before many women even know they are pregnant—has passed a House committee and is awaiting a floor vote. The state Supreme Court is considering a lawsuit filed by Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers aiming to overturn a 1982 law that bans the use of state dollars for abortion, except in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother. In response, Republican lawmakers are advancing a proposed amendment that would declare there is no constitutional right to an abortion in Pennsylvania or to public funding for an abortion.

RHODE ISLAND

Political control: Democrats who control Rhode Island's General Assembly support access to abortion, as does the Democratic governor.

Background: Rhode Island's governor signed legislation in 2019 to enshrine abortion protections in case the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. The law says the state will not restrict the right to an abortion prior to fetal viability or after if necessary to protect the health or life of the pregnant woman. It repealed older laws deemed unconstitutional by the courts. The Rhode Island Supreme Court upheld the 2019 law in May, two days after the U.S. Supreme Court draft opinion was leaked suggesting that a majority of the justices were prepared to overturn *Roe*. Abortion opponents had argued the law violates the state constitution. In 2020, 2,611 abortions were performed in Rhode Island, according to the state health department.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Rhode Island's attorney general believes the 2019 Reproductive Privacy Act will continue to protect access to abortion. Planned Parenthood Votes! Rhode Island also said abortion remains legal because the right was codified in state law.

What's next: Democratic Gov. Daniel McKee signed an executive order July 5 prohibiting state agencies from cooperating with other states' investigations into people who travel to Rhode Island to seek abortions or health care providers that perform them. Two of McKee's opponents in September's Democratic primary for governor, Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea and Matt Brown, want state lawmakers to return for a special session to add abortion coverage to Rhode Island's Medicaid program and to the insurance coverage for state employees. Legislative leaders said they will address abortion coverage next year.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Political control: South Carolina has a Republican governor, and its General Assembly is dominated by the GOP. However, the party doesn't quite have the two-thirds majority in either chamber needed to overcome procedural hurdles or a veto if a Democrat wins the 2022 gubernatorial election.

Background: In 2021, South Carolina passed the "Fetal Heartbeat and Protection from Abortion Act"

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that requires doctors to use an ultrasound to try to detect fetal cardiac activity if they think a pregnant woman is at least eight weeks along. If they find cardiac activity, they can only perform an abortion if the woman's life is in danger, or if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest. The law is currently tied up in a federal lawsuit.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: After the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, a federal judge allowed the state to begin enforcing the 2021 law. Planned Parenthood said it would continue to perform abortions in South Carolina under the parameters of the new law. The group has also sued over the new restrictions, arguing they violate state constitutional rights to privacy and equal protection.

What's next: The South Carolina General Assembly's regular session ended in May, but Republican leaders had agreed they could return for a special session to take up more restrictive abortion bills if the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade. They have yet to announce a special session. Some Republican lawmakers have opposed a complete abortion ban, especially without exceptions for victims of rape and incest.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Political control: Republicans hold super-majorities in both Statehouse chambers. Republican Gov. Kristi Noem is up for reelection this year and has been an ardent opponent of abortion rights.

Background: South Dakota law bans abortions except if the life of the woman is at risk. The state had only one clinic that regularly provided abortions, a Planned Parenthood facility in Sioux Falls. The Legislature has worked over the years to make it more difficult for women to get abortions, passing mandatory waiting periods and requiring them to review and sign paperwork that discourages them from ending their pregnancies.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: South Dakota's trigger law immediately banned abortions except if the life of the pregnant woman is at risk.

What's next: Noem has called for a special session to craft laws under the new legal landscape now that Roe v. Wade is overturned. She hasn't commented on specific legislation, but lawmakers have floated proposals that would make it more difficult for women to seek an abortion out of state. However, South Dakota voters rejected outright bans in 2006 and 2008, and abortion rights advocates are preparing for a similar referendum on abortion access. The ban on abortions could eventually be challenged through a citizen-initiated ballot measure.

TENNESSEE

Political control: Tennessee has a Republican governor who is consistently vocal about his opposition to abortion. The GOP holds a supermajority in the General Assembly and has steadily chipped away at abortion access.

Background: In 2020, Tennessee passed a law banning most abortions when the fetal cardiac activity can be detected at about six weeks, before many women know they're pregnant. The measure has never been enforced because it was promptly blocked by a federal court. On June 28, a federal appeals court let it take effect. Tennessee voters approved an amendment in 2014 declaring that the state's constitution doesn't protect or secure the right to abortion or require the funding of an abortion, and empowering state lawmakers to "enact, amend, or repeal statutes regarding abortion." State law also doesn't allow providers to dispense abortion medications through telemedicine consultations. There are six abortion providers in Tennessee.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The state's attorney general, a Republican, has said a trigger law will go into effect in mid-August that bans all abortions in Tennessee except when necessary to prevent death or "serious risk of substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function." Doctors could be charged with a felony for providing an abortion under the law.

What's next: Tennessee's attorney general has said the trigger law will take precedence over the 2020 law banning most abortions at about six weeks. Meanwhile, Republicans are expected to continue to have supermajority control after this year's midterm elections. Reproductive rights activists say they will direct

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patients seeking abortion to clinics in Illinois if Roe v. Wade is overturned, or to Florida, which would ban abortions at 15 weeks. North Carolina and Virginia also could be options for women in eastern Tennessee.

TEXAS

Political control: The GOP has commanding majorities in the Texas Legislature and has controlled every statewide office for nearly 30 years. Republican Gov. Greg Abbott is up for reelection in November and is favored to win a third term.

Background: Texas has given the nation a preview of the landscape of abortion access without the protections enshrined in Roe v. Wade. A new Texas law banning most abortions after about six weeks — before many women know they are pregnant — took effect in September and makes no exceptions in cases of rape or incest. Because of how Republicans wrote the law, which is enforceable only through lawsuits filed by private citizens against doctors or anyone who helps a woman obtain an abortion, Texas has essentially outmaneuvered decades of Supreme Court precedent governing a women's constitutional right to an abortion. State data shows the number of abortions performed in Texas' roughly two dozen clinics fell by half in the five months after the law came into effect compared to the same period a year earlier.

Effect of the Supreme Court ruling: The fall of Roe put in motion Texas' trigger law that will ban virtually all abortions in the coming weeks. Clinics have tried to continue serving patients in the meantime, but a new round of court battles over whether a dormant 1925 abortion ban can be enforced for now has already stopped most doctors from performing abortions. Abortions soon will be allowed in Texas only when a mother's life is in danger or if she is at risk of "substantial impairment of a major bodily function."

What's next: Many Texas women have already traveled out of state for abortions since the law took effect, but they would likely have to travel much farther now that Roe is overturned as more states outlaw abortion. Some Republican lawmakers also want to punish companies that help their Texas-based employees get abortions elsewhere, although it's unclear how much support that idea will have when the Legislature returns in 2023.

UTAH

Political control: Utah is deeply conservative and the Legislature is controlled by a Republican supermajority.

Background: The state has been restricting abortion for years and, after the Supreme Court ruling, moved to implement two new restrictions — a "trigger law" outlawing nearly all abortions upon Roe v. Wade being overturned and a ban on abortions after 18 weeks that was passed a year earlier.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The trigger law banning nearly all abortions became enforceable the evening of the Supreme Court ruling, after the legislative general counsel certified the ruling to lawmakers. It does have narrow exceptions for rape and incest if those crimes are reported to law enforcement, and for serious risk to the life or health of the mother, as well as confirmed lethal birth defects. The Planned Parenthood Association of Utah subsequently filed a lawsuit in state court arguing it violated the Utah Constitution. Meanwhile, legal challenges blocking the 18-week law based on Roe v. Wade were dismissed. That law took effect while courts weigh state constitutional challenges to its trigger law.

What's next: A judge on July 11 put Utah's trigger law banning most abortions on hold until Planned Parenthood's lawsuit is decided. If it takes effect, performing an abortion would be a felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. While the law is aimed primarily at providers, lawmakers have acknowledged that a woman who self-administers an abortion, including through medication, could face charges.

VERMONT

Political control: The Vermont Legislature is controlled by Democrats, but Republican Gov. Phil Scott is a firm supporter of abortion rights.

Background: Vermont has a 2019 law guaranteeing the right to an abortion and voters will consider a proposal in November to amend the state constitution to protect abortion rights. Also in 2019, the Ver-

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mont Legislature began the process of amending the constitution to protect abortion rights, known as the Reproductive Liberty Amendment or Proposition 5. Vermont's proposed amendment does not contain the word "abortion." Proponents say that's because it's not meant to authorize only abortion but also would guarantee other reproductive rights such as the right to get pregnant or access birth control. Opponents say vague wording could have unintended consequences that could play out for years. Lawmakers approved the proposed amendment in February, leading the way for a statewide vote.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Nothing changed immediately in Vermont.

What's next: Vermont voters will cast ballots in November to decide if the state will amend its constitution to protect abortion rights.

VIRGINIA

Political control: Virginia has a Republican governor who says he would support new state-level restrictions on abortion. Gov. Glenn Youngkin said that he will seek legislation to ban most abortions after 15 weeks. Youngkin told The Washington Post he has asked four antiabortion Republican lawmakers to draft the legislation. He told the Post that a cutoff at 20 weeks might be necessary to build consensus in the divided Virginia General Assembly, where Republicans control the House and Democrats control the Senate. Youngkin generally supports exceptions to abortion restrictions in cases of rape, incest or when the life of the mother is in danger.

Background: In recent years, when Democrats were in full control of state government, lawmakers rolled back abortion restrictions. They ended strict building code requirements on facilities where abortions are performed and did away with requirements that a patient seeking an abortion undergo a 24-hour waiting period and ultrasound. Advocates said the changes would make Virginia a haven for abortion access in the South. Republican victories in the November elections shook up the state's political landscape, but Senate Democrats defeated several measures that would have limited abortion access during the 2022 legislative session.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: There was no immediate change to abortion laws in Virginia now that Roe v. Wade has been overturned. Some abortion providers expect to see an uptick in patients seeking care in Virginia from neighboring states with "trigger laws" that would ban abortion.

What's next: The future of abortion access in Virginia is murky. Senate Democrats say they intend to continue blocking attempts to roll back abortion access, though they control the chamber by the narrowest possible margin and have one caucus member who personally opposes abortion and says he is open to new restrictions. Republicans also have a narrow hold on the House, with several moderate members. Every seat in the General Assembly will be on the ballot in 2023.

WASHINGTON

Political control: The Democrats who control the Washington Legislature support access to abortion, as does the state's Democratic governor.

Background: Abortion has been legal in Washington state since a 1970 statewide ballot referendum. Another ballot measure approved by voters in 1991 declared a woman's right to choose physician-performed abortion prior to fetal viability and further expanded and protected access to abortion in the state if Roe v. Wade was overturned. And in 2018, the Legislature passed a measure that would require Washington insurers offering maternity care to also cover elective abortions and contraception. Earlier this year, Gov. Jay Inslee signed a measure that grants specific statutory authorization for physician assistants, advanced registered nurse practitioners and other providers acting within their scope of practice to perform abortions. Supporters say the move is designed to help meet the demand from the potential influx of out-of-state patients. That same measure also prohibits legal action by Washington state against people seeking an abortion and those who aid them.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The state "will use every available tool to protect and preserve Washingtonians' fundamental right to choose, and protect the rights of anyone who wants to come here to access reproductive health care," said Attorney General Bob Ferguson, a Democrat. Data from the Washington

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state Department of Health from 2020 shows that of the 16,909 abortions performed in the state that year, 852 involved non-residents. The majority of those people came from neighboring states such as Idaho and Oregon.

What's next: It's impossible to predict how many more non-resident patients will potentially seek care in Washington now that Roe v. Wade has been overturned, but the increase will likely be in the thousands, said Jennifer Allen, CEO of Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates. The state has more than 30 in-person abortion clinics, though the vast majority are in western Washington along the Interstate 5 corridor.

WEST VIRGINIA

Political control: West Virginia's Legislature is controlled by Republicans who want to ban or restrict access to abortions. Gov. Jim Justice, a Republican, opposes abortion access and has signed two anti-abortion laws since taking office in 2017.

Background: Before the Supreme Court ruling, West Virginia law banned abortion after the 20th week of pregnancy unless a patient's life is in danger or they face "substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function." The state has several other abortion restrictions that include: requiring patients seeking abortions to wait 24 hours after undergoing legislatively mandated counseling that is designed to discourage a woman from ending a pregnancy; requiring minors to get parental permission; banning the use of telemedicine to administer a medication abortion; and prohibiting abortions on the grounds that the child will be born with a disability.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: West Virginia's only abortion clinic announced after the Supreme Court's ruling that it would immediately halt abortion services out of concern that staff could be prosecuted under a state law banning abortion that dates back to the 1800s. But Charleston-based Women's Health Center of West Virginia changed course on July 19 and began making appointments for abortions again as litigation over the old law continued. Under that law, providers who perform abortions can face felony charges and three to 10 years in prison, unless the abortion is conducted to save a patient's life. The law makes no exceptions for rape or incest. In 2018, West Virginia voters approved a constitutional amendment to declare patients do not have the right to abortion and banning state funding for abortions.

What's next: State officials have not said formally how the 19th century abortion ban will be enforced. Abortion is addressed in numerous West Virginia statutes, including the 20-week ban passed in 2015 that acknowledges the right to abortion access in the state. State Senate President Craig Blair and Speaker of the House Roger Hanshaw, both Republicans, said legislative attorneys are reviewing each statute on the books "to determine how they apply" in light of the high court's decision. No lawmakers have commented on whether they intend to outlaw medication-induced abortion. The governor has said he will not hesitate to call the Legislature into a special session if the state's abortion law needs to be clarified.

WISCONSIN

Political control: Wisconsin's Legislature is controlled by Republicans who want to ban or restrict access to abortions, but the Democratic governor supports access and is up for reelection this year.

Background: Wisconsin has allowed most abortions until the 22nd week of pregnancy to save the health or life of the mother. A woman seeking an abortion must meet with a counselor and doctor before obtaining an abortion and wait at least 24 hours before having it done. Anyone under age 18 must have an adult relative over age 25 with them to obtain an abortion.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: Now that Roe v. Wade has been overturned, it is presumed that a state law passed in 1849 making an abortion a felony offense could go into effect, and doctors have halted procedures. However, Wisconsin's Democratic attorney general argues that the law is so old that it's unenforceable. The language allows a woman to legally destroy her own fetus or embryo and grants immunity if an abortion is needed to save a woman's life and is performed at a hospital. Another state law, passed in 1985, prohibits abortions performed after a fetus reaches viability -- when it could survive outside the womb -- conflicting with the 1849 ban.

What's next: Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul filed a lawsuit June 28 against Republican leaders of

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the Legislature, arguing that the 1849 abortion ban conflicts with a 1985 law that prohibits abortion either after 20 weeks or at the point of fetal viability. His lawsuit says the 1985 law should take precedence. Republican lawmakers are expected to attempt to clarify the 19th century law during next year's legislative session to ensure a ban is in place, even as that issue is being argued in the courts. Lawmakers' efforts would be stymied if Democratic Gov. Tony Evers wins reelection. Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, a Republican, said he supports a rape exception to an abortion ban, but also said the overturning of Roe could prompt Republican lawmakers to consider other reproductive issues, such as contraception.

WYOMING

Political control: Wyoming has one of the most Republican legislatures in the U.S. and a long tradition of libertarian-type if not always social or religious conservatism. That may be changing. In March, Republican Gov. Mark Gordon signed into law a bill that would ban abortion in nearly all instances should the Supreme Court overturn Roe v. Wade.

Background: Current Wyoming law allows abortions up to when a fetus might be able to survive on its own outside its mother's body. The law does not specify when that happens, but it is generally considered to be at around 23 weeks into pregnancy. Wyoming currently doesn't allow abortions after then except to protect the mother from substantial risk to her life or health. Wyoming Republicans have traditionally taken a hands-off approach to abortion but have proven more willing to limit the practice lately. The number of Democrats in the Legislature has dwindled from 26 in 2010 to just nine out of 90 total seats now. A 2021 law requires physicians to provide lifesaving care to any aborted fetus born alive.

Effect of Supreme Court ruling: The new state law that bans abortion only provides exceptions in cases of rape or incest or to protect the mother's life or health, not including psychological conditions. Though Wyoming has no abortion clinics, abortions still occur. Ninety-eight took place in Wyoming in 2021, according to state officials.

What's next: A planned women's health clinic in Casper that would have been the only one offering abortions in the state was on track to open in mid-June but an arson fire May 25 delayed those plans by around six months. Clinic founder Julie Burkhart that despite the ruling she still plans to open the clinic and will continue to seek legal means to keep abortion legal in Wyoming. Police continue to look for a suspect in the arson investigation, and have offered a \$5,000 reward for information leading to an arrest.

States get relief money for small businesses

Nine more states have been approved for a piece of nearly \$10 billion in relief money being distributed by the federal government to promote small business growth.

The Treasury Department on Monday announced the approval of plans from Arizona, Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota and Vermont. It previously announced funding for programs in Hawaii, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan and West Virginia.

The money is part of the State Small Business Credit Initiative, established in 2010 and reauthorized under the American Rescue Plan to support state programs that help small businesses access capital as they emerge from the pandemic.

Here is some information to help you localize the story:

HAS MY STATE APPLIED FOR FUNDS?

States and territories submitted dozens of proposals for venture capital, loan participation, loan guarantee, collateral support and capital access programs. See the full list here: https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/256/List_Proposed_Programs_Contacts.pdf

WHERE IS THE MONEY GOING?

The Treasury Department so far has allocated more than \$1.5 billion for programs in 14 states.

— These are latest states approved and the maximum amounts they'll receive. Find more details on their programs here: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USTREAS/bulletins/3221c46?reqfrom=share>
Arizona: \$111.0 million

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Connecticut: \$119.4 million

Indiana: \$99.1 million

Maine: \$62.2 million

New Hampshire: \$61.5 million

Pennsylvania: \$267.8 million

South Carolina: \$101.3 million

South Dakota: \$60.0 million

Vermont: \$57.9 million

— These states previously had their plans approved. Learn more about them here: <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0795>

Hawaii: \$62 million

Kansas: \$69.6 million

Maryland: \$198.4 million

Michigan: \$237 million

West Virginia: \$72 million

PUBLISHABLE CONTEXT

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 reauthorized and expanded the State Small Business Credit Initiative, providing \$10 billion to distribute to states, the District of Columbia, territories and tribes to expand access to capital and promote entrepreneurship, particularly in underserved communities.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen called it a “historic investment” that will promote equitable economic growth across the U.S.

A White House report released last month found more Americans are starting businesses than ever. In 2021, they applied to launch 5.4 million new businesses — 20% more than any other year on record. They’re also creating more jobs.

Yet the financial landscape has been challenging.

A survey earlier this year from the Federal Reserve showed about 85% of small businesses experienced financial difficulties in 2021, up nearly 20 percentage points from 2019. Back then, more than half of owners who sought a loan were looking to expand; last year, the majority of applicants needed funds just to cover everyday operating expenses.

Meanwhile, inflation is the highest in decades, with prices soaring for raw materials and finished goods and workers demanding higher wages. The Federal Reserve has raised interest rates, which means the cost of borrowing money is going up.

Even in normal times, it can be tough for small businesses to get loans from traditional banks because they lack the assets and credit histories of bigger companies. During the pandemic, banks have been stingier, outside COVID-related programs. Two years in, loan applicants are more likely to get turned down or receive less than they asked for compared to before COVID-19.

Stormy year in South Dakota so far, warnings set record

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The National Weather Service says severe weather so far this year in South Dakota has been an anomaly.

The weather service issued 561 severe thunderstorm warnings in the state as of July 5. That’s 131 more than 2007, when the previous record for that timeframe was set.

“But you know, this is just the first half of the season, so you got to kind of take that into account comparing that to the previous seasons,” said Ryan Vipond, NWS meteorologist in Aberdeen.

While there does appear to be an increasing trend in the number of severe thunderstorms, the National Weather Service says it’s important to note that the way storms are predicted has become more precise and that the standards have changed over time, South Dakota Public Broadcasting reported.

State climatologist Laura Edwards said it’s too early to say what’s causing the increase in storms this year.

“The research I’ve read and followed in the last several years has not led to any distinct tie between frequency or intensity of summer severe weather with climate change,” Edwards said. “Most of the re-

search, so far, up into this point has been inconclusive as far as summer severe weather and relation to climate change in our region.”

The National Weather Service agrees that there’s currently no clear cause for this year’s increase in severe weather.

Italy’s premier sets conditions to remain in office

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Italian Premier Mario Draghi said spontaneous displays of support for his government were “unprecedented and impossible to ignore” as he weighed Wednesday whether to rescind his resignation offer.

Draghi challenged the partner parties in his governing coalition to come back together after a key party withheld its support, triggering his offer to step down last week. He suggested he would continue to lead if the coalition members recommitted to a pact of unity that created his government a year ago.

“Are you ready? Are you ready to rebuild this pact? Are you ready?” Draghi thundered at the end of a speech to Italy’s Senate. “You don’t have to give the response to me. You have to give it to all Italians.”

In recent days, political leaders, mayors, doctors’ associations and ordinary citizens have urged Draghi to stay in office as Italy copes with soaring inflation and energy prices, Russia’s war in Ukraine and implementing a plan to use some 200 billion euros in European Union pandemic recovery funds.

Draghi offered to resign after senators from the 5-Star Movement, the biggest vote-getter in Italy’s 2018 national election, boycotted a confidence vote on a bill to deal with the economic crisis. They opposed a bill that included funding a trash incinerator for Rome, but their beef with the premier went well beyond that, including the government’s military support for Ukraine in its war with Russia.

Draghi, who was drafted to head the government last year, had long insisted he would never head a second government or one without the 5-Stars. He said flatly last week that he wouldn’t govern by ultimatum, a reference to 5-Star demands.

But it appeared the waves of appeals for him to reconsider, from inside and out of Italy, had an effect.

He told the Senate he was personally moved by the spontaneous shows of support, citing in particular the petitions by Italian mayors and medical personnel, the “heroes of the pandemic.”

“The mobilization in these days by citizens, associations and regions for the government to continue is unprecedented and impossible to ignore,” Draghi said. “This demand for stability requires all of us to decide if it’s possible to recreate the conditions in which the government can truly govern.”

Draghi laid out priorities for Parliament to consider in rebuilding “from the top” the majority needed for the government to work efficiently. Despite his indicating he was open to trying to forge a way forward, there was no clarity on how the day would play out.

The 5-Stars have badly fractured over the crisis, and other coalition partners have staked their ground, with the center-right partners vowing they would never govern again with the populist movement.

After Draghi’s speech, senators offered replies and gave Draghi a chance to respond. A vote was possible later in the day with another day of debate scheduled Thursday in the lower chamber of Parliament.

Watching over the scene was President Sergio Mattarella, who rejected Draghi’s offer to resign last week but ultimately can decide whether to accept it if it is offered again, ask him or someone else to try to govern until scheduled spring Parliamentary elections vote or dissolve Parliament now and trigger early elections as soon as September.

Mattarella tapped Draghi in 2021 to form a government of national unity, grouping parties from the right, left and the 5-Stars to guide Italy through its economic reboot following the pandemic and enact reforms necessary to implement the EU recovery program.

The uneasy coalition worked for a while - Draghi called it a “civic miracle” on Wednesday- but he lamented that the sense of compromise and working for the common good had evaporated in recent months as parties sought to distinguish themselves and sparked divisions.

“I believe that a premier who never went before electors must have the biggest support possible in Parliament,” Draghi said. “This is even more important in a context of an emergency, in which the govern-

ment must take decisions that profoundly impact the lives of Italians.”

Five-Star leader Giuseppe Conte, who complained his forces had been humiliated and ignored by other coalition parties, delivered a nine-point set of demands for Draghi to embrace, including the 5-Stars’ flagship pledge of a basic income and minimum salary.

Draghi addressed some of the 5-Star concerns in his speech, including assurances that the basic income and minimum salary were very much on the agenda. “A true social agenda is needed” to confront soaring energy costs and the surge of inflation, he said.

He laid out key priorities for the near-term to ensure the next tranche of EU funds arrive and cited reforms concerning the justice system, bidding for public contracts, as well as Italy’s gradual independence from Russian gas as priorities.

EU draws up energy plan in case of Russian gas cutoff

By RAF CASERT Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union’s head office on Wednesday proposed that member states cut their gas use by 15% over the coming months to ensure that any full Russian cutoff of natural gas supplies to the bloc will not fundamentally disrupt industries next winter.

While the initial cuts would be voluntary cuts, the Commission also asked for the power to impose mandatory reductions across the bloc in the event of an EU-wide alert “when there is a substantial risk of a severe gas shortage or an exceptionally high demand of gas occurs, which results in a significant deterioration of the gas supply situation.”

The need is high, said EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

“Russia is blackmailing us. Russia is using energy as a weapon. And therefore, in any event, whether it’s a partial major cutoff of Russian gas or total cutoff of Russian gas, Europe needs to be ready,” von der Leyen said.

EU member states will discuss the measures at an emergency meeting of energy ministers next Tuesday. For them to be approved, national capitals would have to consider yielding their powers over energy policy to Brussels.

Wednesday’s proposal comes at a time when a blog post from the International Monetary Fund has warned about the power Russian President Vladimir Putin could wield by weaponizing energy exports and choking off the 27-nation bloc.

“The partial shutoff of gas deliveries is already affecting European growth, and a full shutdown could be substantially more severe,” the IMFBlog warned. It added that gross domestic product in member nations like Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic could shrink by up to 6%.

Italy, a country already facing serious economic problems, “would also face significant impacts.”

EU economic forecasts last week showed that Russia’s war in Ukraine is expected to wreak havoc with economic recovery for the foreseeable future, with lower annual growth and record-high inflation. The disruptions in Russian energy trade threaten to trigger a recession in the bloc just as it is recovering from a pandemic-induced slump

Since Russia invaded Ukraine, the EU has approved bans on Russian coal and most oil to take effect later this year, but it did not include natural gas because the 27-nation bloc depends on gas to power factories, generate electricity and heat homes. Now, it fears that Putin will cut off gas anyway to try to wreak economic and political havoc in Europe this winter.

Such threats have forced the bloc’s head office to make a plan centered on energy cuts and savings that might make for a much colder winter, but one without massive disruptions.

“We have to be proactive. We have to prepare for a potential full disruption of Russian gas. And this is a likely scenario. That’s what we’ve seen in the past,” von der Leyen said.

The aim is to ensure essential industries and services like hospitals functioning, while others would have to cut back. That could include lowering heat in public buildings and enticing families to use less energy at home.

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"Assuming there is a full disruption of Russian gas, we need to save gas, to fill our gas storage faster, and to do so we have to reduce our gas consumption. I know this is a big ask," von der Leyen said.

EU nations and the Commission have gone on a buying spree to diversify its natural gas sources away from Russia, but they are still expected to fall far short of providing businesses and homes with enough energy in the cold months.

Even if the EU has enough gas to keep the lights on and factories running right now, it does so at painfully high prices that have fueled runaway inflation and caused public uproar.

Russia has cut off or reduced gas to some EU countries, and there are fears that the energy crisis will get worse if Moscow does not restart a key pipeline to Germany after scheduled maintenance ends Thursday.

Already a dozen nations from one day to the next have experienced supply disruptions from Gazprom.

The energy squeeze is also reviving decades-old political challenges for Europe. While the EU has gained centralized authority over monetary, trade, antitrust and farm policies, national capitals have jealously guarded their powers over energy matters.

The European Commission has spent decades chipping away at this bastion of national sovereignty, using previous supply disruptions to secure gradual gains in EU clout. The five-month-old Russian invasion of Ukraine is now the starkest test of whether member countries are willing to cede more of their energy powers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, member states did join in common action to help develop and buy vaccines in massive quantities in an unprecedented show of common resolve in the health sector.

"This is a moment for Europe to build upon the decisive action and solidarity displayed during the pandemic to address the challenging moment it faces today," the IMFBlog said.

Unpopular Sri Lankan PM elected president; risks new turmoil

By KRISHAN FRANCIS Associated Press

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — Sri Lanka's unpopular prime minister was elected president Wednesday, in a secret parliamentary ballot that risked reigniting turmoil among a public outraged by the South Asian nation's economic collapse.

Sri Lankans have taken to the street for months to demand their president and his prime minister step down as the country spiraled into economic chaos that left its 22 million people struggling with shortages of essentials, including medicine, fuel and food. After they stormed the presidential palace and several other government buildings last week, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled and then resigned.

Much of the protesters' ire is focused on Rajapaksa and his family's political dynasty, which ruled Sri Lanka for most of the past two decades, but many also blame Ranil Wickremesinghe, a six-time prime minister, for protecting him and see him as a part of the same problematic rule. Wickremesinghe was also Rajapaksa's finance minister and became acting president after Rajapaksa fled the country.

During demonstrations last week, crowds set Wickremesinghe's personal residence on fire and occupied his office.

Wednesday's vote means Wickremesinghe will finish the presidential term ending in 2024 and now has the discretion to appoint a new prime minister.

"I need not tell you the status our country is in. Now that the election is over we have to end this division," Wickremesinghe, 73, told fellow lawmakers after his victory was announced.

But it's not clear that would happen. Protesters quickly gathered outside the president's residence, chanting, "Ranil, go home."

"We are very sad, very disappointed with the 225 parliament members who we elected to speak for us, which they have not done," said Visaka Jayawware, a performance artist, in the crowd. "We will keep fighting for the people of Sri Lanka. We have to ask for a general election."

Wickremesinghe has wide experience in diplomatic and international affairs — he noted Wednesday that he had spent 45 years of his life in Parliament — and has led the talks on a bailout package for the bankrupt country with the International Monetary Fund.

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But many voters view him with suspicion since he was appointed prime minister by Rajapaksa in May, in hopes he would restore stability.

"The struggle will continue until our demands are met. He doesn't have a mandate to rule the country," said Nemel Jayaweera, a human resources professional. "We will continue our struggle. We will oppose him."

Still, the ruling party's majority in Parliament swept Wickremesinghe to victory in Wednesday's vote, with 134 votes. Populist former government minister Dullas Alahapperuma secured 82, while a Marxist candidate netted three.

In addition to the protests, some supporters celebrated Wickremesinghe's win. He will be sworn in on Thursday.

Only a few lawmakers had publicly said they would vote for Wickremesinghe given the widespread hostility against him. But before the vote, dozens of lawmakers loyal to Rajapaksa were expected to back Wickremesinghe because he had assured them he would severely punish protesters who burned politicians' homes in the unrest.

On Monday, in his role as acting president, Wickremesinghe declared a state of emergency that gave him broad authority to act in the interest of public security and order. Authorities can carry out searches and detain people, and Wickremesinghe can also change or suspend any law.

The political turmoil in Sri Lanka has worsened the economic crisis. But Wickremesinghe said Monday that negotiations with the IMF were nearing a conclusion, while talks on help from other countries had also progressed. He also said that the government has taken steps to resolve shortages of fuel and cooking gas.

There has been no comment from the IMF on Wickremesinghe's assessment of the bailout talks.

As prime minister, Wickremesinghe delivered weekly addresses in Parliament cautioning that the path out of the crisis would be difficult, while also pledging to overhaul a government that increasingly has concentrated power under the presidency.

The vote, shown on national television, was a decorous, solemn affair. As the results were announced, the lawmakers thumped their tables in support for their own candidates.

Presidents in Sri Lanka are normally elected by the public. The responsibility falls on Parliament only if the office of president becomes vacant before a term officially ends.

That has happened only once before in Sri Lanka when then-Prime Minister Dingiri Banda Wijetunga was chosen by Parliament uncontested in 1993 after former President Ranasinghe Premadasa, father of the current opposition leader, was assassinated.

Luria, Kinzinger put careers on line in Jan. 6 investigation

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Reps. Elaine Luria and Adam Kinzinger, who will lead questioning in the closing summer hearing of the Jan. 6 committee on Thursday night, are from different parties but agree emphatically on one thing: The investigation into the deadly insurrection at the U.S. Capitol is worth sacrificing their political careers.

Luria, a Democrat first elected in 2018, is facing a difficult reelection in a Virginia swing district that was redrawn to be more Republican. Kinzinger, a Republican who's a pariah to some in his party because of his condemnation of former President Donald Trump, decided not to seek another term in his Illinois district.

The two also are military veterans and have invoked their service oaths as part of their reason for pressing the inquiry. Luria is a Naval Academy graduate who served 20 years, including as a nuclear-trained surface warfare officer who commanded 400 crewmembers in the Persian Gulf. Kinzinger flew combat missions in Afghanistan and Iraq and remains a lieutenant colonel in the Air National Guard.

"You're going to see the fulfillment of the meaning of the sacred oath that all of us take that have served in government, to preserve and protect the Constitution and the United States," said Norm Eisen, who served as special counsel to the House Judiciary Committee from 2019 to 2020, during Trump's first impeachment trial.

"But it's one that — particularly those who serve in the military, like the two of them, and put their lives

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on the line — take to heart,” Eisen said.

The most prominent and imperiled committee member is Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., the vice chair, who has been unsparing in her criticism of Trump. She was removed by her own party as the No. 3 House Republican and now faces a potentially uphill primary battle for reelection in her deeply red home state.

Cheney’s immediate political fortune, as well as that of Kinzinger and Luria, may provide the most direct answers to larger questions about whether the hearings into the mob attack on Jan. 6, 2021, will chip away at Trump’s continued hold of the national Republican Party. They could also offer clues about whether efforts to fully make public the former president’s responsibility in helping spark the mob attack can be a boon to front-line Democrats during November midterm elections that could otherwise be brutal for their party.

“Mr. Kinzinger and I, who are both veterans leading this committee, I think, as veterans of the military, understand what action looks like in a time of crisis,” Luria told CNN last weekend. She added of Trump’s actions: “I look at it as a dereliction of duty. He didn’t act. He had a duty to act.”

The hearing on Thursday will focus on Trump’s actions as rioters overran the Capitol. Witnesses will describe what occurred during the 187 minutes between when the then-president addressed supporters who had gathered in Washington by imploring, “We fight like hell. And if you don’t fight like hell, you’re not going to have a country anymore,” and his releasing a video in which he praised the rioters as “very special” while also asking them to disperse.

Luria has said repeatedly that the committee’s work defending American democracy is more important than her prospects for reelection in a district that includes Naval Station Norfolk, the world’s largest naval base. During an interview last summer, shortly after she was appointed to the committee, Luria also argued that her serving on it bolstered her credibility as a pragmatic moderate in a centrist district.

“I think it’s incredibly important for the American people to understand what happened, why it happened and what we can do to prevent something like that from happening in the future,” Luria said then. While campaigning around her district, she has referred to the insurrection as a dry run, saying such an attack might happen again unless the root causes of the first one are fully exposed — and that voters have expressed gratitude about that effort.

Republican Virginia state Sen. Jen Kiggans, who is trying to unseat Luria in November, said the election won’t be decided by the Jan. 6 committee.

“I have never had a single voter, or person (whose) door I’ve knocked on, or civic league I’ve visited or event I’ve attended, I’ve never had a single person come up to me and say that this is the main issue they’re focused on,” Kiggans said. “On a daily basis, I hear over and over and over again about gas prices and grocery prices and grocery shortages and how much everything is costing them from their home repair projects to their kids’ school supplies to going out to eat at a restaurant.”

Kinzinger has represented his Illinois district since 2013. He voted to impeach Trump and announced last fall that he wasn’t seeking another term in Congress after the Democrat-controlled Illinois Legislature approved new congressional maps that would have forced Kinzinger and another Republican incumbent who has more reliably defended Trump, Rep. Darin LaHood, into a primary matchup.

Still, Kinzinger hasn’t ruled out seeking elective office in the future.

“When you fight for your nation and you fight for people, it makes you believe in something bigger,” Kinzinger said in an interview last summer.

Eisen, a former Obama administration ambassador to the Czech Republic and senior governance studies fellow at the Brookings Institution, said that the political stakes are real for Luria and Kinzinger, adding that “losing an election is never pleasant” but “they all understand that might be a consequence.”

“In some ways, their willingness to take that risk actually enhances the power of the example that they set,” Eisen said. “History’s going to be kind to them. I don’t think any of them will have regrets.”

UK weather turmoil disrupts train travel for 3rd day

By DANICA KIRKA and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

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LONDON (AP) — Britain's record-breaking heat wave disrupted travel for a third day and firefighters remained on alert Wednesday even as cloudy skies and showers brought relief after two days of scorching temperatures.

Forecasters predict London will reach a high of 26 Celsius (79 Fahrenheit) on Wednesday, down from the record 40.3C (104.4F) set Tuesday at Coningsby in eastern England.

Still, the main train line from London to Edinburgh will remain closed until noon as crews work to repair power lines and signaling equipment damaged by a heat-related fire on Tuesday, according to the London North Eastern Railway.

The London Fire Brigade had its busiest day since World War II on Tuesday as firefighters received more than 2,600 calls and at one point were fighting 12 fires simultaneously, Mayor Sadiq Khan said. At least 41 properties in the city were destroyed, he said. Sixteen firefighters were treated for smoke inhalation and other injuries.

Even as temperatures began to cool overnight, smoke hung in the air across the city of almost 9 million people.

One of the biggest fires was in Wennington, a village on London's eastern outskirts, where a row of houses was destroyed by a blaze that also raced through tinder-dry fields nearby.

Resident Tim Stock said he and his wife fled after the house next door caught fire and the blaze rapidly spread.

"I didn't pick (my) driver's license up, or birth certificates, anything, so I lost everything," he told the newspaper. "Photographs, records, everything's gone, but the only good thing is we're all OK."

Dozens of places in Britain saw temperatures approach 40 C (104 F) on Tuesday, smashing the U.K.'s previous record of 38.7 C (101.7 F), set in 2019. The weather walloped a country completely unprepared for such heat, where few homes, schools or small businesses have air conditioning.

Despite lower temperatures on Wednesday, the fire danger remains high because hot, dry weather has parched grassland around the city, Khan said.

"Once it catches fire it spreads incredibly fast, like wildfires like you see in movies or in fires in California or in parts of France..." Khan told the BBC. "I've just spoken to the fire commissioner. He's still concerned about the ground being dry and the speed of fire spreading."

Biden to announce climate actions at ex-coal plant in Mass.

By SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden will announce new actions on climate change that he can take on his own just days after an influential Democratic senator quashed hopes for a sweeping legislative package of new environmental programs this year.

Biden is to unveil the latest efforts during a visit on Wednesday to a former coal-fired power plant in Somerset, Massachusetts, that is shifting to offshore wind manufacturing. It's the embodiment of the transition to clean energy that Biden is seeking but has struggled to realize in the first 18 months of his presidency.

Wednesday's executive actions include new initiatives to bolster the domestic offshore wind industry as well as efforts to help communities cope with soaring temperatures through programs administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Health and Human Services, according to a White House official.

But the actions that Biden announces on Wednesday will not include a national emergency declaration to address the climate crisis — something that has been sought by activists and Democratic lawmakers after Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., last week scuttled talks on a legislative package.

White House officials have said the option remains under consideration, although press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre on Tuesday declined to outline a timetable for a decision aside from saying no such order would be issued this week.

Sen. Ed Markey, D-Mass., said he was "confident that the president is ultimately ready to do whatever

it takes in order to deal with this crisis.”

“I think that he’s made that clear in his statement last Friday, and I think coming to Massachusetts is a further articulation of that goal,” Markey told reporters on Tuesday.

Biden has come under considerable pressure to issue an emergency declaration on climate, which would allow him to redirect federal resources to bolster renewable energy programs that would help accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels.

Jean-Pierre declined to detail internal deliberations on such a declaration, which would be similar to the one issued by Biden’s Republican predecessor, Donald Trump, who declared a national emergency to build a wall on the southern border when lawmakers refused to allocate money for that effort.

Biden pledged last week to take significant executive actions on climate after monthslong discussions between Manchin and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., came to a standstill. The West Virginia senator cited stubbornly high inflation as the reason for his hesitation.

For now, Manchin has said he will only agree to a legislative package that shores up subsidies to help people buy insurance under the 2010 health care law as well as allowing Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices that will ultimately lower the cost of pharmaceuticals for consumers.

The White House has indicated it wants Congress to take that deal, and the president will address the climate issue on his own.

“I’m going to use every power I have as president to continue to fulfill my pledge to move toward dealing with global warming,” Biden told reporters over the weekend in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, after the talks between Schumer and Manchin were derailed.

Biden on Wednesday will be visiting the former Brayton Point power plant, which closed in 2017 after burning coal for more than five decades. The plant will now become an offshore wind manufacturing site.

Trump-backed Cox wins Md. governor primary over Hogan’s pick

By BRIAN WITTE Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Dan Cox, a far-right state legislator endorsed by former President Donald Trump, won the Republican primary for Maryland governor on Tuesday, defeating a moderate rival backed by outgoing Gov. Larry Hogan.

Cox will face the winner of the highly competitive Democratic primary in the November general election. Wes Moore, a bestselling author backed by Oprah Winfrey, had an early lead Tuesday night, with the focus starting to turn to mail ballots that won’t be counted until later in the week.

Despite being a win for Trump, Cox’s victory over former Hogan Cabinet member Kelly Schulz could be a blow to Republican chances to hold on to the governor’s mansion in November. Hogan, who was prohibited from running for a third consecutive term, was a rare two-term Republican governor in a heavily Democratic state, and he had endorsed Schulz as the successor to his bipartisan style of leadership.

Cox has been a thorn in Hogan’s side over the last few years, suing over the governor’s stay-at-home orders and regulations in the early days of the pandemic and seeking unsuccessfully to impeach him for COVID-19 orders Cox called “restrictive and protracted.”

Cox alluded to his fight with Hogan in his victory speech Tuesday night, telling a cheering crowd: “We will never again give over our bodies, our churches and our businesses to a lockdown state.”

The Republican primary was viewed as a proxy battle between Trump and Hogan, who offered vastly different visions of the party’s future as they consider 2024 campaigns for the White House. Hogan, one of Trump’s most prominent GOP critics, urged the party to move on from his divisive brand of politics, while Trump spent much of his post-presidency elevating candidates who promote his lies about a stolen 2020 election.

One of those candidates was Cox, who organized busloads of protesters to Washington for the “Stop the Steal” rally that preceded the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Cox has also said President Joe Biden’s victory shouldn’t have been certified and tweeted that former Vice President Mike Pence was a “traitor.” Cox later deleted the tweet and apologized.

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Democrats were likely giddy over Cox's win in the Republican primary. The Democratic Governors Association plowed more than \$1 million behind an ad intended to boost Cox, seeing him as an easier opponent in November.

Trump, too, was gleeful, saying in a statement shortly before the race was called: "RINO Larry Hogan's Endorsement doesn't seem to be working out so well for his heavily favored candidate. Next, I'd love to see Larry run for President!"

Cox joins Doug Mastriano in Pennsylvania and Darren Bailey in Illinois as ultraconservative state legislators endorsed by Trump who have gone on to win their Republican nominations for governor. All three fought against their governors' COVID-19 policies, staunchly oppose abortion rights and raised questions about the legitimacy of the 2020 election.

In Maryland, it could potentially take days, or even longer, to determine the winners in the most closely contested races, including the Democratic primary for governor. Maryland law prohibits counties from opening mail ballots until the Thursday after election day.

In one of the earliest called races of the night, Democratic Sen. Chris Van Hollen beat back a primary challenge just months after suffering a minor stroke. He is favored in November to win a second term against Republican Chris Chaffee, who launched a failed congressional bid in 2014.

Baltimore State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby, who is awaiting trial on federal criminal charges, was trailing in early returns in her three-way Democratic primary as she seeks a third term.

Mosby is charged with perjury and making false statements on loan applications to purchase properties in Florida. She rose to national prominence in 2015 when she pursued criminal charges against six police officers in the death of Freddie Gray, a Black man who suffered a spinal injury after police handcuffed, shackled and placed him head-first into a van. None of the officers was convicted.

In the Democratic primary for governor, the top candidates included Moore, the former CEO of the Robin Hood Foundation, an anti-poverty organization; Tom Perez, a former U.S. labor secretary and former Democratic Party chair; and Peter Franchot, the state's four-term state comptroller.

Laura Kretchman, a 41-year-old high school teacher, said she voted for Moore, swayed in part by his endorsement from the state's teachers union. She said she's impressed by Moore's accomplishments after rising above childhood challenges and being raised by a single mom.

"I teach children at a school that also come from difficult upbringings, so I'd like to see maybe what he can bring to helping those students that are struggling and challenged," said Kretchman, an Annapolis resident.

Other voters said they preferred a long resume of government service. That's why Curtis Fatig, 67, voted for Perez. "He's not a newcomer," Fatig said.

Cox's victory on Tuesday serves as a win for Trump, who has a mixed endorsement record in this year's midterm elections. But in such a heavily Democratic state, his candidate faces an uphill battle heading into the fall.

Some Republican voters said Trump's endorsement persuaded them to vote for Cox. Others said it didn't matter.

David Gateau, 63, said he voted for Cox because he believes "Maryland is extremely liberal and we need to get back to some values." Trump's endorsement, he said, wasn't really a factor.

"I think Hogan was more of a RINO than he was a Republican governor, and I think our state reflects that," Gateau said.

Cameron Martin, 22, said Trump's endorsement was the "main reason" he voted for Cox, but added that he feels like Cox shares his Republican values and that "he will best represent me."

Maryland's only open congressional seat was in the 4th Congressional District, a heavily Democratic Black-majority district. Former county prosecutor Glenn Ivey won the Democratic primary, defeating former Rep. Donna Edwards, who previously held the seat.

The incumbent in the 4th District, Rep. Anthony Brown, left his seat to run for attorney general. He won the Democratic primary on Tuesday night, defeating Katie Curran O'Malley, the former first lady, a former

Baltimore judge and the daughter of former Attorney General J. Joseph Curran Jr. Brown was Gov. Martin O'Malley's lieutenant governor.

Candidates were on the ballot for all 188 seats in the Maryland General Assembly, which is controlled by Democrats.

The Maryland primary was delayed by three weeks because of lawsuits challenging the state's congressional and state legislative maps.

Report: Brazil authorities turn blind eye to deforestation

by FABIANO MAISONNAVE undefined

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Environmental criminals in the Brazilian Amazon destroyed public forests equal the size of El Salvador over the past six years, yet the Federal Police — the Brazilian version of the FBI — carried out only seven operations aimed at this massive loss, according to a new study.

The destruction took place in state and federal forests that are "unallocated," meaning they do not have a designated use the way national parks and Indigenous territories do. According to official data, the Brazilian Amazon has about 580,000 square kilometers (224,000 square miles) of forests in this category, or an area almost the size of Ukraine.

As Brazil has repeatedly legalized such invasions, these public forests have become the main target for criminals who illegally seize land.

The study, from Igarapé Institute, a Brazilian think tank, analyzed 302 environmental crime raids carried out by the Federal Police in the Amazon between 2016 and 2021. Only 2% targeted people illegally seizing undesignated public lands.

The report says the lack of enforcement likely stems from the weak legal protection of these areas, in other words, the same problem that draws the illegal activity. Environmentalists have long pressed the federal government to turn these unallocated public forests into protected areas.

Since Brazil's return to democratic rule in 1985 after two decades of military rule, most successive governments have made moves to extend the legal protection, and today about 47% of the Amazon lies within protected areas, according to official data. Far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, however, has repeatedly said the country has too many protected areas and stalled this decades-long policy.

In 2016, some 2240 square kilometers (865 square miles) of unallocated public land were illegally deforested. Last year, it reached almost double that amount. Over six years, the accumulated loss has reached some 18,500 square kilometers (7,100 square miles), according to Amazon Environmental Research Institute, or IPAM, based on official data.

Deforestation is increasingly taking place on these lands in particular. In 2016, they made up 31% of all illegally-felled forest. Last year, they reached 36%.

Almost half of Brazil's climate pollution comes from deforestation, according to an annual study from the Brazilian nonprofit network Climate Observatory. The destruction is so vast that the eastern Amazon has ceased to be a carbon sink, or absorber, for the Earth and has converted into a carbon source, according to a study published in 2021 in the journal Nature.

Igarapé divides environmental crime in the Amazon into four major illicit or tainted activities: theft of public land; illegal logging; illegal mining; and deforestation linked to agriculture and cattle farming.

The enforcement operations were spread over many locations, 846, because most investigated deep into illegal supply chains. Nearly half were in protected areas, such as the Yanomami Indigenous Territory, which, despite a heavier police presence, suffers a growing invasion by thousands of illegal gold miners.

The Igarapé study also pointed to an extensive "regional ecosystem of crime," since the police operations took place in 24 of Brazil's 27 states plus 8 cities in neighboring countries. "Environmental crime stems from illicit economies that access consumer markets and financing outside the Amazon," the report says.

The Federal Police didn't respond to an Associated Press email seeking comment about its strategy in the Amazon.

Ukrainian forces strike key bridge in Russian-occupied south

By SUSIE BLANN Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian forces have struck and seriously damaged a bridge that is key for supplying Russian troops in southern Ukraine, a regional official said Wednesday.

Kirill Stremousov, deputy head of the Moscow-backed temporary administration for the Russia-controlled southern Kherson region, said the Ukrainian military struck the Antonivskiy Bridge, which crosses the Dnipro River, with missiles Wednesday, scoring 11 hits.

He said in remarks carried by the Interfax news agency that the bridge sustained serious damage but it wasn't closed for traffic.

"The bridge is in poor condition now," Stremousov said, according to Interfax. "The bridge wasn't closed, traffic across it is still continuing, but the situation is serious."

The 1.4-kilometer (0.9-mile) bridge is the main crossing across the Dnieper River in the Kherson region, and if it's made unusable it would be hard for the Russian military to keep supplying its forces in the region amid repeated Ukrainian attacks.

Stremousov said that the Ukrainian forces used the U.S.-supplied HIMARS multiple rocket launchers to strike the bridge, adding that some of them were intercepted by Russian air defenses.

The head of the Moscow-appointed Kherson administration, Vladimir Saldo, said in a video message that passenger vehicles were allowed to continue driving across the bridge, but truck traffic was halted to allow quick repairs. He noted that trucks could cross the river using a dam about 80 kilometers (50 miles) away.

Wednesday's shelling of the bridge was the second in as many days. It was lightly damaged by Ukrainian shelling a day earlier, according to the Moscow-backed authorities in Kherson.

Early in the war, Russian troops quickly overran the Kherson region just north of the Crimean Peninsula that Russia annexed in 2014. They have faced Ukrainian counterattacks, but have largely held their ground.

The British Defense Ministry said Wednesday that the bridge in Kherson was likely still usable after the Ukrainian strikes, but it is a "key vulnerability for Russian Forces."

"It is one of only two road crossing points over the Dnieper by which Russia can supply or withdraw its forces in the territory it has occupied west of the river," it added. "Control of Dnieper crossings is likely to become a key factor in the outcome of fighting in the region."

The Ukrainian attacks on the bridge in Kherson come as the bulk of the Russian forces are stuck in the fighting in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland of Donbas where they have made slow gains facing fierce Ukrainian resistance.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu inspected the troops in the east, ordering them to act more aggressively to down Ukrainian drones and prevent Ukraine's army from shelling the areas that have been taken by Russian forces.

Russia's ground advance has slowed, in part because Ukraine is using more effective U.S. weapons and in part because of what Russian President Vladimir Putin has called an "operational pause." Russia has been focusing more on aerial bombardment using long-range missiles.

Ukrainian officials voiced hope that Kyiv could drain the Russian military resources in the fight for Donbas and then launch a counteroffensive to reclaim control of the Kherson region and parts of the Zaporizhzhia region that the Russians seized early in the war.

With indications that Ukraine is planning counterattacks to retake occupied areas, the Russian military in recent weeks has targeted the Black Sea port of Odesa and parts of southern Ukraine where its troops captured cities earlier in the war.

Kherson — site of a major ship-building industry at the confluence of the Dnieper River and the Black Sea near Russian-annexed Crimea — is one of several areas a U.S. government spokesman said Russia is trying to annex. Following months of local rumors and announcements about a Russian referendum, White House national security council spokesman John Kirby said Tuesday that U.S. intelligence officials have amassed "ample" new evidence that Russia is looking formally to annex additional Ukraine territory and could hold a "sham" public vote as soon as September. Russia is eyeing Kherson as well as the entirety

of the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts.

"Russia is laying the groundwork to annex Ukrainian territory that it controls in direct violation of Ukraine sovereignty," Kirby said in Washington.

Kirby also said the White House is expected to announce more military aid for Ukraine later this week. The aid is expected to include more HIMARS systems, a critical weapon Ukrainian forces have been using with success in their fight to repel Russian troops.

While pressing their offensive in the Donbas, Russian forces also pummeled wide areas in the east and elsewhere across Ukraine with missile strikes and artillery barrages.

Ukraine's presidential office said that at least 13 civilians were killed and a further 40 wounded by the Russian shelling across the country.

At least five of the deaths were in the Donetsk region of the Donbas.

"There is no safe place left in the region," Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said in televised remarks. "Residents should evacuate while they still can."

The Russian barrage also hit the Kharkiv region in northeastern Ukraine, where five people have been killed in the last 24 hours.

"These strikes targeting peaceful civilians make no sense, but the Russian army is continuing this senseless shelling," Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said.

US rabbi reviving Jewish roots in her family's Italian town

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

SERRASTRETTA, Italy (AP) — From a rustic, tiny synagogue she fashioned from her family's ancestral home in this mountain village, an American rabbi is keeping a promise made to her Italian-born father: reconnect people in this southern region of Calabria to their Jewish roots, links nearly severed five centuries ago when the Inquisition forced Jews to convert to Christianity.

In the process, Rabbi Barbara Aiello is also helping to revive Serrastretta, one of many small southern towns struggling with dwindling population, as young people leave in droves to find work and where each year deaths far outnumber births.

Besides the chatter of visitors who come to her synagogue, curious to learn about Judaism in predominantly Catholic Italy, the laughter of newly arrived children resounds in the town. This spring, the rabbi helped bring Ukrainian refugees, including some with Jewish roots, to live here for now, and — Serrastretta's mayor hopes — maybe permanently.

On a small wooden table near the synagogue's entrance sits a yellowed family portrait. In the photograph, is the rabbi's father, Antonio Abramo Aiello, as a child. Born in Serrastretta, he was studying for his bar mitzvah, the rabbi said, but before that religious coming-of-age ritual could take place, the young Aiello left with his family for the United States in 1923.

His daughter, Barbara, would be born in Pittsburgh and ordained a rabbi when she was 51, in a small branch of American Judaism known as Reconstructionist movement.

Before studying to become a rabbi, Aiello taught special needs children for many years, creating a puppet show to help teach kids about tolerance. Ordained at the Rabbinical Seminary International in New York, she served at a synagogue in Florida for a few years before moving to Italy, where she first worked as a rabbi in Milan from 2004-2005. Then she realized her passion in serving as a rabbi in her late father's native town.

When visitors arrive from abroad for ceremonies at her synagogue, Rabbi Aiello, who is 74, shows them the house in what had been the Jewish quarter in the nearby city of Lamezia Terme, where her father had been learning about his Jewish faith.

She points out a plaque which reads: "In this quarter was active an industrious community" of Jews from the 13th till the 16th centuries.

One recent summer evening, as Aiello, who wears a yarmulke and necklace with a small Star of David, walked by en route to the ancient neighborhood, a local resident, Emilio Fulvo, 73, leaped up from a

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bench to greet her. When he was 15, Fulvo recounted, genealogical research discovered that his family has Jewish roots.

Learning about his background "made me feel free," Fulvo said. "I knew something was missing" while raised as a Catholic in southern Italy.

Families like his are known as B'nai Anusim, descendants, of "those who were forced to accept Christian baptism and to publicly renounce their Judaism," the rabbi said.

In her family, "legends were passed along that we were Jews, and we were expelled from Spain in 1492," as the Inquisition gathered steam, Aiello said. Eventually, the Aiellos made their way to the southern end of the Apennine mountains, where Serrastretta sits, perched atop a road winding through slopes thickly forested with beech, pine and chestnut trees.

The remoteness of many villages in Calabria, coupled with Italians' tendencies to live in the same places for generations and the strength of oral traditions, helped keep alive what Roque Pugliese, a Jew in Calabria, calls the "spark of Judaism" even among those who don't realize they have Jewish heritage.

A physician who emigrated from Argentina, Pugliese recalled once hearing residents of a care home in Calabria sing an ancient song about Passover, softly, as if afraid to be overheard.

On a stone wall along a walkway that leads to Aiello's home and synagogue is a Star of David.

On a recent Friday afternoon, she set out a bowl of cherries and a tray of miniature pastries for those coming for a bat mitzvah sought by the Blum family of Parkland, Florida. They chose Aiello despite the great distance because, before becoming a rabbi, she had worked as a special needs educator, and their daughter, Mia, has autism.

Pushing a child's stroller up the steep street that leads to the synagogue was Vira, one of five Ukrainian mothers, who, with nine children among them, were brought to Serrastretta thanks to efforts by Aiello and logistical help from a Serrastretta native. Transportation and housing costs have been paid by donors, most of them Jewish, in Britain, the United States, Australia and Canada, the rabbi said.

Two of the women have since returned to Ukraine, including the wife of an Orthodox Christian priest. But Vira, who asked that her surname not be published because her husband, still in Ukraine, works for a government ministry, said she is considering settling in Serrastretta.

"The first thing is my son, my only son, his life, his future, his safety," Vira said of 2½-year-old Platon. "Barbara invited us to a safe place. It was like really a miracle."

Vira is also grateful for the opportunity to learn about Judaism. Her grandmother, born in Crimea, is Jewish. But her father, a Russian, would take her to church, so she had never gone to a Jewish house of worship, she said. Aiello "invited me to a bar mitzvah. It was a very beautiful experience that she opened her house to me."

The rabbi said she tells those curious about their past to "embrace those (traditions) that make sense to you — embrace all, embrace some, but understand that you were once Jewish (in your family) and we can connect you, reconnect you, if you so choose."

Mayor Antonio Muracca hopes at least some Ukrainians stay. "These guests have created in a certain sense more vitality in our town," he said. Serrastretta has seen "a shocking depopulation," the mayor said. "There are so many old people, few children."

The town's population shrank from 4,000 in 2001 to 2,900 in 2020.

Serrastretta was long called "the city of chairs," because generations of artisans handcrafted furniture from beech wood with seats fashioned from woven reeds. But demand for cheaper, mass-produced furniture decimated the trade.

Serrastretta's parish pastor, the Rev. Luigi Iuliano, invited Aiello to read a Psalm at Easter vigil services in April. With the rabbi there is no "competition, jealousy."

"We brought the First Communion kids to show them the Torah, the synagogue, to become aware that our faith in a certain way comes from the Hebrew faith," said Iuliano, a Serrastretta native.

Aiello, who describes herself as the only female rabbi in Italy and who runs Calabria's only synagogue, relies on destination weddings and bat and bar mitzvahs to boost her synagogue's finances.

She is cut off from funding that derives from taxpayer donations in Italy. The Italian government only

recognizes the Orthodox Jewish communities in Italy, whose official members number about 23,000, nearly half of those living in Rome and barely 200 living in southern Italy.

“The mouth of a bear”: Ukrainian refugees sent to Russia

By LORI HINNANT, CARA ANNA, VASILISA STEPANENKO and SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press NARVA, Estonia (AP) — For weeks Natalya Zadoyanova had lost contact with her younger brother Dmitriy, who was trapped in the besieged Ukrainian port city of Mariupol.

Russian forces had bombed the orphanage where he worked, and he was huddling with dozens of others in the freezing basement of a building without doors and windows. When she next heard from him, he was in tears.

“I’m alive,” he told her. “I’m in Russia.”

Dmitriy Zadoyanov was facing the next chapter of devastation for the people of Mariupol and other occupied cities: Forcible transfers to Russia, the very nation that killed their neighbors and shelled their hometowns almost into oblivion.

Nearly 2 million Ukrainians refugees have been sent to Russia, according to both Ukrainian and Russian officials. Ukraine portrays these journeys as forced transfers to enemy soil, which is considered a war crime. Russia calls them humanitarian evacuations of war victims who already speak Russian and are grateful for a new home.

An Associated Press investigation based on dozens of interviews has found that while the picture is more nuanced than the Ukrainian government suggests, many refugees are indeed forced to embark on a surreal trip into Russia, subjected along the way to human rights abuses, stripped of documents and left confused and lost about where they are.

The abuses start not with a gun to the head, but with a poisoned choice: Die in Ukraine or live in Russia. Those who leave go through a series of what are known as filtration points, where treatment ranges from interrogation and strip searches to being yanked aside and never seen again. Refugees told the AP of an old woman who died in the cold, her body swollen, and an evacuee beaten so severely that her back was covered in bruises.

Those who “pass” the filtrations are invited to live in Russia, and often promised a payment of about 10,000 rubles (\$170) that they may or may not get. Sometimes their Ukrainian passports are taken away, and the chance of Russian citizenship is offered instead. And sometimes, they are pressured to sign documents denouncing the Ukrainian government and military.

Those with no money or contacts in Russia — the majority, by most accounts — can only go where they are sent, eastward, even to the sub-Arctic. More than 1,000 are as far away as Khabarovsk and Vladivostok, a 10-day train journey to the edge of the Pacific Ocean, according to people the AP spoke with who saw multiple trains arrive over the weeks of the war.

However, the AP investigation also found signs of clear dissent within Russia to the government narrative that Ukrainians are being rescued from Nazis. Almost all the refugees the AP interviewed spoke gratefully about Russians who quietly helped them escape through a clandestine network, retrieving documents, finding shelter, buying train and bus fare, exchanging Ukrainian hryvnia for Russian rubles and even lugging the makeshift baggage that holds all that remains of their pre-war lives.

The investigation is the most extensive to date on the transfers, based on interviews with 36 Ukrainians mostly from Mariupol who left for Russia, including 11 still there and others in Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Georgia, Ireland, Germany and Norway. The AP also drew on interviews with Russian underground volunteers, video footage, Russian legal documents and Russian state media.

The story of Zadoyanov, 32, is typical. Exhausted and hungry in the basement in Mariupol, he finally accepted the idea of evacuation. The Russians told him he could board a bus to either Zaporizhzhia in Ukraine or Rostov-on-Don in Russia.

They lied. The buses went only to Russia.

Along the way, Russian authorities searched his phone and interrogated him on why he was baptized and whether he had sexual feelings toward a boy in the camp. A man from Russian state television wanted

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to bring him to Moscow and pay him to denigrate the Ukrainians, an offer he declined. People with video cameras also asked arriving children to talk about how Ukraine was bombarding its own citizens.

"It was 100 percent a tactical pressure," Zadoyanov said. "Why children? Because it is much easier to manipulate them."

Then he, five children and four women were taken to the train station and told their destination would be Nizhny Novgorod, even deeper into Russia, 1,300 kilometers (800 miles) from the Ukrainian border. From the train, Zadoyanov called his sister Natalya in Poland. Her panic rose.

Get off the train, she told him. Now.

A DELIBERATE STRATEGY

The transfer of hundreds of thousands of people from Ukraine is part of a deliberate and systemic strategy, laid out in Russian government documents.

An "emergency mass order" describes the "distribution" of 100,000 Ukrainians to some of the most remote and impoverished regions of Russia. None was to be sent to the capital, Moscow.

The AP verified through interviews with refugees, media reports and official statements that Ukrainians have received temporary accommodation in more than two dozen Russian cities and localities, and were even taken to an unused chemical plant in the Bashkortistan region, 150 kilometres (100 miles) from the nearest major town. One refugee, Bohdan Honcharov, told the AP that about 50 Ukrainians he traveled with were sent to Siberia, so far away that they effectively disappeared with little chance of escape.

A Ukrainian woman also said her elderly parents from Mariupol were sent to Russia and told to move to Vladivostok, at the other end of the country. Russian border authorities did not let her father out of Russia because he still had Soviet citizenship from the old times, along with Ukrainian residency documents.

Many Ukrainians stay in Russia because while they are technically free to leave, they have nowhere to go, no money, no documents or no way to cross the distances in a sprawling country twice the size of the United States. Some fear that if they return, Ukraine will prosecute them for going to the enemy — a fear encouraged by Russian officials.

Others speak Russian, with family there and ties that they feel are stronger even than their links to Ukraine. One woman told the AP that her husband was Russian and she felt more welcome in Russia.

Lyudmila Bolbad's family walked out of Mariupol and ended up in Taganrog in Russia. The family speaks Russian, and the city of Khabarovsk, nearly 10,000 kilometers from Ukraine, was offering jobs, special payments for moving to the Far East and eventual Russian citizenship. With nothing left to lose, they took the 9-day train trip across some of the world's most deserted territory to a city far closer to Japan than Ukraine.

Bolbad and her husband found work in a local factory, much as she was doing in the Azovstal steel mill back in Mariupol. Little else has gone as they'd hoped.

They handed over their Ukrainian passports in exchange for promises of Russian citizenship without hesitation, only to discover that landlords would not rent to Ukrainians without a valid identity document. The promised payments to buy a home are slow to come, and they are stranded with hundreds of others from Mariupol in a rundown hotel with barely edible food. But Bolbad plans to stay in Russia, and thinks Ukraine would label her a traitor if she went back.

"Now we are here ... we're trying to return to a normal life somehow, to encourage ourselves to start our life from scratch," she said. "If you survived (the war), you deserve it and need to move forward, not stop."

Russia's reasons for deporting Ukrainians are not entirely clear, according to Oleksandra Matviichuk, the head of the Center for Civil Liberties in Ukraine. One goal appears to be to use the refugees in propaganda to sell Russians on the Ukraine war by pressuring them to testify against Ukraine.

"(Ukrainians in) the Russian Federation are extremely vulnerable," she said. "Russia tries to use these people in a quasi-legal war against Ukraine to collect some testimonies from people who have no right to say no because they are afraid for their safety."

The deportation of local civilians from occupied territories also clears the way for Russians to replace

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them with loyalists, as was the case in Crimea, Matviichuk said. And Russia may want Russian-speaking Ukrainians to populate its own isolated regions with depressed economies.

Ivan Zavrazhnov describes the terror of being in Russia and not knowing where he would wind up. A producer for a pro-Ukrainian television network in Mariupol, he made it through filtration only because officials never bothered to plug in his dead cell phone. He managed to escape, and ended up on the docked ferry Isabelle in the city of Narva in Estonia with about 2,000 other Ukrainians, nearly all of whom left Russia.

"This is some kind of incomprehensible lottery – who decides where and what," he said. "You understand that you are going, as it were, into the mouth of a bear ... an aggressor state, and you end up on this territory. ... I did not have the feeling that I was safe in Russia."

STOPPED FOR FILTRATION

Refugees on the way to Russia are interrogated at multiple stops, in what both Russians and Ukrainians call "filtration." Each time, some are weeded out.

They are fingerprinted and photographed, which the Ukrainian government calls the collection of biological information. Some are stripped of their clothing, and those with tattoos, wounds or bruises from munitions come under special scrutiny. Phones are confiscated and sometimes connected to computers, raising fears that tracking software is installed.

The Kovalevskiy family left Mariupol after eating cold scraps of food in an unlit basement and watching sores fester on their unwashed skin. At their first filtration, they held their breaths and thought fearfully of the photo and video the eldest daughter had transferred from her phone to a flash drive hidden among their belongings.

It never crossed her mind to delete her contacts. When a Russian soldier searched her phone, he stopped at the one listed as "Commander" and pulled her aside.

She explained that the "commander" was not a military connection but the head of the youth camp where she worked for two years. The explanation was satisfactory — this time. But they did not know how many more times they would be interrogated — Human Rights Watch has identified 14 filtration points in Ukrainian territory controlled by Russian forces.

The next stop was Vynohradne, named for its vineyards but now one of the mass grave sites established by Russia for Mariupol's thousands of dead. The tent there was freezing and suffocatingly crowded, and the smell of rotting flesh clung to their nostrils. An old woman died overnight in the minus 9-degree (15 degrees Fahrenheit) temperatures, her body swelling.

The mother, Viktoria Kovalevska, peered outside to the tent next door and saw a wooden crate that a soldier had dropped to the ground. Inside were severed limbs.

Finally, the family reached the Russian city of Taganrog. When questioned by Russian officials about why they had left their hometown, the mother could no longer restrain herself.

"We did not leave; we were deported," she replied testily. "We were loaded into cars by the military and taken away."

Dozens of people from Mariupol were then given free train passage to two Russian cities: Volgograd, about 600 kilometers (370 miles) to the east, or Penza, twice as far.

"You go where you're told," they heard.

The Kovalevskiy family was among the lucky ones – they made it through the filtrations.

At an interrogation in Donetsk, a Mariupol policewoman was blindfolded and taken to Yolonevska, she told the AP. There, she saw military personnel and civilians taken for reasons that ranged from taking photographs of military equipment to running down the street in a panic. Some were beaten, and one woman's back was covered with bruises. She heard others died.

She was blindfolded again, handcuffed and taken to the Rostov region in Russia. She asked where they were going. "Somewhere," they said, and ordered her to be silent.

She was told that evacuees in Russia would be seen as traitors and get a prison term of 10 years if they returned to Ukraine. She was finally set free in a prisoner exchange, and found her way back to Ukraine

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anyway.

"They psychologically influence people," she said. "Many of the detainees who are released are simply afraid to return to Ukraine after hearing such stories."

IDENTITIES IN QUESTION

The Ukrainian refugees in Russia sometimes lose their identities along with their homes.

Some leave their Ukrainian documents behind. Others have their Ukrainian passports confiscated and are offered Russian citizenship or refugee status. Many end up in limbo without paperwork, and only 55,502 have received temporary asylum, according to Russia's human rights ombudsman, Tatiana Moskalkova. The others have uncertain legal standing in a country where they are often seen as the enemy.

Along with giving up their own documents, Ukrainian refugees are sometimes pressured to sign papers holding the Ukrainian government or military responsible for the war.

Eighty-year-old Valentina Bondarenko still doesn't know what she signed. When soldiers in white armbands burst into the Mariupol basement, she climbed out of the window, kicking over the cup holding her dentures.

She was taken with a few other elderly women on a bus through filtration in three Ukrainian towns, and then to Taganrog in Russia. Her next stop, she was told, would be Perm, 2,100 kilometers (1,300 miles) away.

There were only enough Ukrainian passengers that day to fill four of the train's 10 cars. So the train was cancelled. She ended up in a town near the Georgia border that her family had never heard of, in a dormitory with 50 others from Mariupol.

She called her adult children still in Ukraine, coughing every few minutes. They were frantic. Increasingly distraught, Bondarenko asked migration officials how she could get out.

"There's only one way open, which is to apply for Russian citizenship, submit an application, receive all the documents and when you get your passport you can go wherever you want," they told her.

They asked everyone with Ukrainian passports to hand them over to start the process. So she did. Then came a residency application and a document that an official would not let her examine.

"There's nothing to read here, and we're running late," he told her.

"What is written here?" Bondarenko persisted.

"Everything we talked about," came the reply. She signed. Her passport was returned to her a few days later.

Many evacuees don't realize they have the right to refuse to sign documents and the right to leave Russia, according to Tanya Lokshina, author of an upcoming Human Rights Watch report on forced deportations. HRW and the Ukrainian Center for Civil Liberties documented multiple cases where Ukrainians like Bondarenko were pressured into signing paperwork, including documents accusing Ukraine's military of war crimes.

"When you are there and they have the power and you're basically in their hands, you don't know what's going to happen," Lokshina said. "So many people sign just because they are afraid."

ANGELS WHO CAME FROM HEAVEN

For Ukrainians trying to escape, help often comes from an unexpected source: Russians.

On a recent day in Estonia, a Russian tattoo artist easily hefted the suitcases of a Mariupol family into the trunk of a waiting car. The matriarch sat in front, seemingly oblivious to the car's Russian license plates or unsurprised at underground help from another Russian.

The tattoo artist, who asked that his name be withheld because he still lives in Russia, was the last in a chain of volunteers that stretched 1,900 kilometers (1,100 miles) from Taganrog and Rostov to Narva, the Estonian border town. He boards in St. Petersburg a couple of times a week to accompany refugees to Finland and sometimes Estonia. There is always at least one Ukrainian family that needs an extra pair of strong arms, if nothing else.

"They are disoriented. ... You need to meet them at one station and take them to another station, be-

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cause otherwise people get lost," he said. "It's clear they're not psychologically equipped."

He said Russians involved in helping Ukrainians leave know each other only through Telegram, nearly all keeping anonymous "because everyone is afraid of some kind of persecution." Some of the loose groups are set up with chatbots to protect identities.

"I can't stop it," he said of the war and the forcible transfers of Ukrainians to Russia. "This is what I can do. ... Shooting at people, this is normal in the 21st century, with old Soviet pieces of iron? This is utter nonsense."

The volunteers face a slew of challenges. Those in Penza in Russia shut down their efforts because of anonymous threats that included slashed tires, the Russian symbol Z painted in white on a windshield and graffiti on doors and gates calling them the likes of "Ukro-Nazi" helpers.

Another Russian volunteer, who also communicated with The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said they faced logistical and bureaucratic hurdles thrown up by the Russian government, such as travel documents lost or taken by administrators.

"They had organizational problems, but they created an amazing chain to help Ukrainian refugees," she wrote in a message to AP.

Leaving Russia is still often dependent on luck and an official's whims. Some Russian border guards let people through with just their Ukrainian national identity; others insist upon an international passport. In at least one case, a family wasn't allowed to travel without a Russian passport. Armed men search the refugees in a final "filtration" and disembark a passenger or two.

For Zadoyanov, Bondarenko, Kovalevska and many others, the lifeline out of Russia was Russians.

After talking with his sister Natalya, Zadoyanov got off the train to Nizhny Novgorod. Natalya Zadoyanova found local people through church contacts inside Russia to take her brother and the others away from the station. They ended up at a church where they got food, shelter and eventually the first steps in finding a way out of Russia. Zadoyanov is now in the country of Georgia.

For Bondarenko, the elderly woman from Mariupol who signed unknown papers, her children in Ukraine found volunteers to help. One arrived at Bondarenko's dormitory and demanded her release, saying the law protected a refugee's freedom of movement. He took her to a hotel, with the room pre-paid for two nights. The third night, she stayed at the home he shared with his Ukrainian wife.

The couple bought her sneakers, clothes and food for the trip to come.

"We are against the war, against Putin," they told her.

In St. Petersburg, another volunteer met her at the train, took her to his apartment for the night and helped her get to the bus station.

"At the Russian border, no matter what, do not tell them you want to return to Ukraine," he warned her. "Say you are going to Estonia to visit family."

It took about 90 minutes to pass the Russian side of the border. At one point, guards checked passports. Bondarenko's noted Mariupol as her hometown, and they pulled her aside and asked what her destination was.

"I won't lie. I want to return to Ukraine, to my children," she answered, torn between defiance and fear. She was asked to wait and imagined the worst.

She didn't know it, but she was already in Estonia. The guard returned with a giant smile and an even bigger box filled with food and water.

Bondarenko finally joined her children in the western Ukrainian city of Uzhhorod on May 20, having paid nothing for a 4,300-kilometer (2,600-mile) journey organized from start to finish by volunteers.

Viktoriya Kovalevska persuaded a bus driver at a detention center in Russia to hide the family on board.

"We sat like mice. ... I closed the curtains," she said.

After about an hour, the driver said, "Let's go." When the family emerged from their hiding spot in Rostov, two taxis arrived for them and their bags. They were given hot soup and a way to finally wash their stained, charred clothes, and stayed up until 3 a.m. doing laundry.

Train tickets materialized to St. Petersburg, where other volunteers bought a suitcase to replace their

fraying bags. Then it was a near-seamless trip to Estonia. Kovalevska warned her daughters to say nothing when they were roughly asked at the crossing why they wanted to leave Russia.

"You can get a bullet in the forehead and not tell the whole truth about what happened, or you can wait and later say everything as it was," she told the girls.

The whole journey took four days.

Her memories of Mariupol are a nightmare — the torso of a woman in the street, her daughter stepping in human brains smeared on the ground, the hunger and cold that she feared would kill them more painfully than bombs. But her memories of Russia are laced with the unexpected, surreptitious kindness they received from Russian volunteers.

"I would love to say their names," said Kovalevska, her face lighting up. "And I would tell them all, you are like angels who came from heaven and sheltered us with your wings. ... Because there was no hope. None."

Stanton, Buxton lead AL over NL in 9th straight All-Star win

By BETH HARRIS AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Giancarlo Stanton homered into an especially sweet spot in his Dodger Stadium homecoming at the All-Star Game, putting his name alongside some of the sluggers he loved watching from the left field seats as a kid.

Byron Buxton followed with another drive and the American League won its ninth straight Midsummer Classic, beating the National League 3-2 on Tuesday night.

AL manager Dusty Baker reminded his team of the winning streak before the game.

"We had to hold it down for him and keep it going," Stanton said.

Fans rooting for a tie score after nine innings so they could see a first-time home run derby decide the winner instead of extra innings didn't get their wish.

Instead, the back-to-back homers in the fourth inning were the difference as the AL boosted its overall edge to 47-43-2.

Facing 11-game winner Tony Gonsolin of the Dodgers, Stanton's impressive 457-foot, two-run shot landed in the left-field pavilion.

"He smokes them," NL manager Brian Snitker said. "Big, strong kid."

Stanton and his father, Mike, would sit out there after buying tickets off scalpers for whatever price they could afford.

"My Pops took me to my first Dodger game, showed me how to have love for this game and now we're here," the New York Yankees slugger said. "Look at us, it's just incredible."

Despite his love for the home team, Stanton thrilled at seeing the visiting sluggers.

"It was really the big boppers when they came into town," he said. "I wanted to see (Mark) McGwire, (Sammy) Sosa and (Barry) Bonds, even if it was two at-bats. All that wraps around full circle."

Stanton was chosen the game's MVP, receiving a glass bat engraved with his name from two-time MVP Steve Garvey and Billie Jean King, part of the Dodgers ownership.

"It hasn't fully sank in," he said. "It's going to be an amazing memory for all of our lives."

The homer ended Stanton's career 0 for 7 skid in the game and at 111.2 mph, it was the hardest-hit homer in an All-Star Game tracked by Statcast. Also scoring was José Ramírez, tying the game 2-all.

Four pitches later, Buxton went deep to give the AL a 3-2 lead against a clearly frustrated Gonsolin, who took the loss.

Nine-time All-Star Clayton Kershaw got the first start of his career for the NL in his home ballpark, with the Dodgers hosting for the first time since 1980. Los Angeles Angels two-way star Shohei Ohtani got the game's first hit on Kershaw's first pitch.

Framber Valdez of Houston got the win, tossing a scoreless third inning.

AL starter Shane Bieber of Cleveland gave up two runs and four hits. The first-time All-Star, who owns an MLB-leading 1.71 ERA, had allowed four hits or fewer in his last seven starts.

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McClanahan combined with 10 other pitchers on the five-hitter. Cleveland closer Emmanuel Clase put on quite a show, striking out the side in the ninth to earn the save.

Austin Riley's single in the eighth was the NL's only hit after the first inning.

Ohtani led off for the AL as the designated hitter. Interviewed moments before the start, the Japanese superstar said, in English, he was going to swing. He cracked a 91-mph fastball into center field on the first pitch.

"I was definitely swinging a hundred percent," Ohtani later said through a translator. "Kershaw has really good command."

His hit snapped an 0 for 8 streak as a hitter against Kershaw. Last year, Ohtani was the starting pitcher and led off as the DH in the AL's 5-2 win at Denver. He didn't pitch this year so he can start Friday in the Angels' first game after the break at Atlanta.

"I mean, you can't throw the first pitch of an All-Star Game as a breaking ball," Kershaw said. "You kind of had to give him a heater there, I think just for everything. Had to do it."

But the three-time NL Cy Young Award winner had the last word. Kershaw fired a pickoff throw to first that caught Ohtani off the bag.

"Honestly, I didn't know quite know what to throw yet. Sometimes I throw over there for a second to be convicted with the pitch," Kershaw said. "I wasn't trying to pick him off. I was trying to delay the game for a bit, but it worked out."

Then the Yankees' Aaron Judge, who leads the majors in home runs, went down swinging. After Rafael Devers walked, Vladimir Guerrero Jr. grounded into a fielder's choice, and Kershaw walked off to applause from the appreciative crowd.

"I tried to take a minute at the beginning to take it all in and look around, which I usually never do," Kershaw said. "It kind of calmed everything down for me and then I had a lot of fun."

The NL wasted no time in taking its first 2-0 lead in 10 years. Styling in yellow spikes and alternate yellow and red sleeves, Ronald Acuña Jr. led off the bottom of the first with a ground-rule double to left and scored on Mookie Betts' single. Paul Goldschmidt hit a solo homer with two outs.

In between runs, Guardians second baseman Andrés Giménez made a defensive stop on Manny Machado and followed with a dazzling behind-the-back toss to shortstop Tim Anderson, who threw to first to complete the double play.

A sellout crowd of 52,518 filled Dodger Stadium two years after the third-oldest ballpark in the majors was supposed to host before the game was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

HERE'S TO YOU, MS. ROBINSON

Dodgers outfielder Mookie Betts, with all of the other All-Stars bunched behind him, led the crowd in sending out 100th birthday wishes to Rachel Robinson. On his 1-2-3 count, the crowd and players shouted "Happy birthday, Rachel!" The widow of Jackie Robinson didn't travel from her home in Connecticut. She visited Dodger Stadium in April on Jackie Robinson Day to mark the 75th anniversary of her husband breaking baseball's color barrier with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. Jackie Robinson's achievement was honored with on-field comments by Oscar-winning actor Denzel Washington and a presentation on the video boards.

FIRST PITCH

Backed by a mariachi band, Dodgers great Fernando Valenzuela tossed out the ceremonial first pitch. Fittingly, first-time All-Star Alejandro Kirk of Toronto served as catcher. Kirk and Valenzuela were both born in Mexico. Fernandomania gripped the Dodgers in 1981, when the left-hander won Rookie of the Year and the Cy Young Award in helping LA win the World Series.

FASHION CRITICS

The reviews were mostly negative for the second straight year on the All-Star uniforms. The AL wore dark gray uniforms that blended into the plate umpire's black shirt and dark gray pants. The NL wore all-white uniforms. Both had gold lettering. Fans were critical on social media, with "atrocious" a frequent critique. Last year, MLB went away from wearing traditional jerseys, which met with heavy online criticism.

MIC'ED UP MANOAH

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Alek Manoah, Toronto's expressive right-hander, wore a microphone and earpiece while pitching the second inning, engaging in an entertaining conversation with Fox analyst and Hall of Famer John Smoltz. "How hard am I throwing?" Manoah asked early. He also sought scouting reports on Joc Pederson and Acuña Jr. Manoah did fine, striking out three and also plunking Jeff McNeil with a pitch. A lot of players were mic'ed up. Fans heard Judge and Stanton talking back and forth while playing the outfield, and Yankees batterymates Nestor Cortes and Jose Trevino talking while working together.

THE SHIFT IS STILL ON

Dodgers first baseman Freddie Freeman batted in the third to the now familiar chants of "Freddie! Freddie!" Even in the exhibition game, an extreme shift was on and he was thrown out from right field. Home Run Derby champion Juan Soto got thrown out by the third baseman playing much closer to second base to end the fifth. Next season, the shift is likely going away in the majors.

TAKING IT EASY

Hall of Fame announcer Vin Scully, the voice of the Dodgers for 67 years before retiring in 2016, watched the game from his Los Angeles home. The Bronx-born 94-year-old began calling games when the franchise was located in Brooklyn and followed the team out West ahead of the 1958 season.

UP NEXT

The regular season resumes with six games on Thursday, including Stanton, Judge and the Yankees playing a doubleheader at Houston. The Yankees own the best record in the majors at 64-28. Jose Altuve, Yordan Alvarez and Baker's Astros have the second-best mark in the AL at 59-32.

"I just regret that we have to play him a doubleheader on Thursday," Baker said. "But for today, we're on the same side."

Also, it will be Freeman, Betts, Trea Turner and the Dodgers, topping the NL at 60-30, hosting the Giants.

Ukraine graft concerns resurface as Russia war goes on

By MATTHEW LEE and NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's dismissal of senior officials is casting an inconvenient light on an issue that the Biden administration has largely ignored since the outbreak of war with Russia: Ukraine's history of rampant corruption and shaky governance.

As it presses ahead with providing tens of billions of dollars in military, economic and direct financial support aid to Ukraine and encourages its allies to do the same, the Biden administration is now once again grappling with longstanding worries about Ukraine's suitability as a recipient of massive infusions of American aid.

Those issues, which date back decades and were not an insignificant part of former President Donald Trump's first impeachment, had been largely pushed to the back burner in the immediate run-up to Russia's invasion and during the first months of the conflict as the U.S. and its partners rallied to Ukraine's defense.

But Zelenskyy's weekend firings of his top prosecutor, intelligence chief and other senior officials have resurfaced those concerns and may have inadvertently given fresh attention to allegations of high-level corruption in Kyiv made by one outspoken U.S. lawmaker.

It's a delicate issue for the Biden administration. With billions in aid flowing to Ukraine, the White House continues to make the case for supporting Zelenskyy's government to an American public increasingly focused on domestic issues like high gas prices and inflation. High-profile supporters of Ukraine in both parties also want to avoid a backlash that could make it more difficult to pass future aid packages.

U.S. officials are quick to say that Zelenskyy is well within his right to appoint whomever he wants to senior positions, including the prosecutor general, and remove anyone who he sees as collaborating with Russia.

Yet even as Russian troops were massing near the Ukrainian border last fall, the Biden administration was pushing Zelenskyy to do more to act on corruption — a perennial U.S. demand going back to Ukraine's early days of independence.

"In all of our relationships, and including in this relationship, we invest not in personalities; we invest in

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institutions, and, of course, President Zelenskyy has spoken to his rationale for making these personnel shifts," State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters on Monday.

Price declined to comment further on Zelenskyy's reasoning for the dismissals or address the specifics but said there was no question that Russia has been trying to interfere in Ukraine.

"Moscow has long sought to subvert, to destabilize the Ukrainian government," Price said. "Ever since Ukraine chose the path of democracy and a Western orientation this has been something that Moscow has sought to subvert."

Still, in October and then again in December 2021, as the U.S. and others were warning of the increasing potential for a Russian invasion, the Biden administration was calling out Zelenskyy's government for inaction on corruption that had little or nothing to do with Russia.

"The EU and the US are greatly disappointed by unexplained and unjustifiable delays in the selection of the Head of the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor Office, a crucial body in the fight against high-level corruption," the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv said on Oct. 9.

"We urge the selection commission to resume its work without further delays. Failure to move forward in the selection process undermines the work of anti-corruption agencies, established by Ukraine and its international partners," it said. That special prosecutor was finally chosen in late December but was never actually appointed to the position. Although there are indications the appointment will happen soon, the dismissal of the prosecutor general could complicate the matter.

The administration and high-profile lawmakers have avoided public criticism of Ukraine since Russia invaded in February. The U.S. has ramped up the weapons and intelligence it's providing to Ukraine despite early concerns about Russia's penetration of the Ukrainian government and existing concerns about corruption.

A Ukrainian-born congresswoman who came to prominence early in the war recently broke that unofficial silence.

Rep. Victoria Spartz, a first-term Republican from Indiana, has made half a dozen visits to Ukraine since the war began. And she was invited to the White House in May and received a pen used by President Joe Biden to sign an aid package for Ukraine even after she angrily criticized Biden for not doing more to help.

But in recent weeks, Spartz has accused Zelenskyy of "playing politics" and alleged his top aide Andriy Yermak had sabotaged Ukraine's defense against Russia.

She's also repeatedly called on Ukraine to name the anti-corruption prosecutor, blaming Yermak for the delay.

Ukrainian officials have hit back. A statement from Ukraine's Foreign Ministry accused Spartz of spreading "Russian propaganda" and warned her to "stop trying to earn extra political capital on baseless speculation."

U.S. officials gave Spartz a two-hour classified briefing on Friday in hopes of addressing her concerns and encouraging her to limit her public criticism. She declined to discuss the briefing afterward but told The Associated Press that "healthy dialogue and deliberation is good for Congress."

"We're not here to please people," she said. "It's good to deliberate."

Hours later, Spartz gave a Ukrainian-language interview broadcast on YouTube in which she called again for the appointment of an independent prosecutor.

"This issue should be resolved as soon as possible," she said in the interview. "This is a huge problem for the West, so I think your president should address this issue soon."

Rep. Jason Crow, a Colorado Democrat who sits on the House Armed Services and Intelligence committees, said he had seen no evidence to support allegations that Zelenskyy's inner circle was trying to help Russia. But as the war continues, part of the long-term American strategy in Ukraine will have to include addressing waste and mismanagement of resources, he said.

"There is no war in the history of the world that is immune from corruption and people trying to take advantage of it," Crow said. "If there are concerns raised, we will address them."

Igor Novikov, a Kyiv-based former adviser to Zelenskyy, called many of Spartz's claims a mix of "hearsay and urban legends and myths." Allegations against Yermak in particular have circulated for years going back to his interactions with Trump allies who sought derogatory information against Biden's son Hunter.

"Given that we're in a state of war, we need to give President Zelenskyy and his team the benefit of the doubt," Novikov said. "Until we win this war, we have to trust the president who stayed and fought with the people."

Trump, Pence rivalry intensifies as they consider 2024 runs

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former Vice President Mike Pence is becoming increasingly brazen in his willingness to counter former President Donald Trump.

The two will hold dueling rallies in Arizona on Friday as they stump for rival candidates who offer dramatically different visions of the Republican Party in a critical battleground state. Days later, they will once again cross paths as they deliver major speeches on the same day in Washington.

The encounters mark a more confrontational phase in the fraught relationship between the former running mates and once close confidantes who could soon find themselves competing against one another in the 2024 GOP presidential primary if they both ultimately choose to run.

"I think this is a continuation of the larger message that Pence is trying to embody here, which is the Republican Party should look to the future," said Scott Jennings, a longtime party strategist. "This is going to be the existential question for the Republican Party: Are we going to listen to a slightly different view than Donald Trump's? Right now, the standard-bearer for this is Mike Pence."

That description marks a striking turnaround for Pence, who spent his four years in the White House as Trump's most loyal defender. But Trump turned on his vice president when Pence refused to go along with his unconstitutional efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election, putting Pence in the crosshairs of a violent mob on Jan. 6.

Now Pence, who has repeatedly defended his actions that day, is taking a more active effort to shape the future of the party. This week, Pence endorsed Karrin Taylor Robson in Arizona's Republican gubernatorial primary, pitting himself against Trump, who has endorsed Kari Lake, a former newscaster who has embraced Trump's election lies.

"As Arizona Democrats pursue the reckless Biden-Harris agenda, Karrin Taylor Robson is the only candidate for Governor that will keep Arizona's border secure and streets safe, empower parents and create great schools, and promote conservative values," Pence said in a statement announcing his decision.

Pence backed Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp, a top Trump target who easily defeated the former president's hand-picked challenger this spring. But Pence's Arizona move showed a willingness to weigh in on a closer and open race in alliance with the state's outgoing GOP governor, Doug Ducey, who also rebuffed Trump's efforts to overturn the election.

Pence is planning to campaign with Robson in Phoenix and southern Arizona Friday — the same day that Trump is set to headline a rally for Lake that was rescheduled after the death of his first wife, Ivana Trump.

A Trump spokesperson did not respond to requests for comment on the events.

Trump and Pence will again cross paths next week as the former president returns to the nation's capital for the first time since leaving the White House. Pence will address the conservative Heritage Foundation on Monday evening and will speak at the Young America's Foundation's annual National Conservative Student Conference on Tuesday morning. That afternoon, Trump will headline a two-day summit organized by the America First Policy Institute.

Pence will use his speech before the Heritage Foundation to highlight the policy agenda he released earlier and talk about the future of the party, according to aides. The remarks are expected to offer an implicit contrast with Trump, who has spent much of his energy since leaving office on relitigating the 2020 election.

Pence has urged Republicans to move on, even as he continues to tout the accomplishments of what he often describes as the Trump-Pence administration.

Pence's efforts come as Trump is preparing to launch a third campaign for the White House as soon as this summer while he faces a flurry of investigations into his efforts to cling to power. That includes the

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House Jan. 6 committee, which on Thursday will hold another prime-time hearing, this time spotlighting Trump's refusal to call off the angry mob that stormed the Capitol and sent Pence and other lawmakers into hiding.

While polls show Trump remains the overwhelming favorite in a hypothetical GOP primary, Marc Short, Pence's former chief of staff and a top adviser, argued that even if Trump does announce a run, that doesn't necessarily mean he'll be on the ballot two years from now.

"As the committee winds down, I'm sure he's looking for a reset that brings attention back on him. And an announcement does not necessarily mean a commitment at the end of that process to continue forward," said Short. "I don't think there's any doubt that the president enjoys being the center of attention. And the announcement puts even additional media focus on him."

Trump, meanwhile, has continued to slam Pence for refusing to go along with his scheme to remain in power. At a gathering of Evangelical Christians in Nashville, Tennessee, last month, Trump again said Pence "did not have the courage to act," drawing applause.

When it comes to a potential race, Trump does not see Pence as a threat, according to allies, who are much more consumed with Ron DeSantis. The Florida governor is increasingly seen by conservatives as a natural and younger successor to Trump's MAGA movement who can channel the same anger, but with less baggage.

Jennings, meanwhile, praised Pence for being willing to stand up to Trump when so many others in the party still refuse to cross him.

"What Mike Pence is doing is extremely valuable. And whether he is a viable candidate for present, I don't know. But he's certainly earned the right to make the case for a post-Trump future," said Jennings.

"He may end up being John the Baptist to someone else," he added. "Headless but remembered well."

'Forgotten' US victims of Mexican drug lord want justice

By MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — When fugitive 1980s Mexican drug lord Rafael Caro Quintero was arrested in Mexico last week, it stirred up old, terrible memories for Lannie Walker, the daughter of American writer John Clay Walker.

While Caro Quintero was only ever sentenced in Mexico for the killing of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena and Mexican pilot Alfredo Zavala Avelar in 1985, his gang apparently killed as many as six U.S. citizens in the western city of Guadalajara around the same time.

John Clay Walker, then 36 and a writer who had moved to Guadalajara to finish a book, was one of them.

"We were both very glad to hear that (Caro Quintero) had been captured, and it also brought back a lot of trauma for us," said Lannie Walker. "My sister and I have lost almost 40 years with our father, there is nothing that can make up for that."

The U.S. writer and his friend Alberto Radelat, a dental student from Fort Worth, Texas, had walked into "The Lobster," a high-end Guadalajara seafood restaurant, to celebrate Walker's planned return to the United States.

They did not know that Caro Quintero and his companions were holding a private party in a back room of the restaurant.

"Our father was an American citizen with no involvement in the Mexico-United States drug war, he was an innocent bystander that unwittingly became caught in the crosshairs of a dangerous drug cartel," said Lannie Walker. "They began questioning my father and Al, asking them what they knew about the drug enforcement agents in Mexico, what they knew about the investigation. My father knew nothing, he was an innocent writer. They tortured him with an icepick for an hour."

Mike Vigil, the DEA's former chief of international operations, said "Caro Quintero was one of those individuals that because he now had power, he had wealth, he crossed the line many times in terms of the people that he killed."

Describing what occurred at the restaurant, Vigil said "they looked out and they saw the two Americans and they immediately through their paranoia as well thought that they were DEA agents. They took him

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into the back and stabbed to death.”

The bodies of Radelat and Walker were found wrapped in carpet in June 1985, nearly five months after they disappeared.

In December 1984, two young American couples were walking door to door in Guadalajara, trying to spread their faith as Jehovah’s Witnesses. The four were abducted and never seen again.

Two state police officials later said that they helped kidnap and kill the couples on the order of Caro Quintero and fellow capo Ernesto Fonseca Carrillo. They apparently inadvertently knocked on Fonseca Carrillo’s door as they proselytized.

Vigil, who was in Mexico and worked on Camarena’s case at the time, explained why the investigation focused on the killing of the DEA agent.

“I think that the DEA concentrated on the Kiki Camarena case and then the drug trafficking charges. I don’t think that the DEA, it was not that they weren’t interested in the other murders, but, you know, that probably would have fallen into the jurisdiction of maybe another agency,” Vigil said.

“One of the things that we were really focused on was bringing these individuals to justice simply because the DEA is committed that if one of the agents is murdered, we will hunt these people down to the end of the earth and not spare any expenditure, any resources or any activity that we have to do to get the job done,” he said.

Lannie Walker says that “if Caro Quintero is extradited to the U.S. and is convicted and punished here, that would be a small amount of justice.”

They likely will not come quickly. Caro Quintero’s lawyers filed measures with the court - and the judge agreed - that would ensure he goes through the full extradition process and will have the possibility of the corresponding appeals if necessary. Extradition for former Sinaloa cartel leader Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman took a year.

“We do have hope,” she said. “But we are very aware of how the Mexican government and the Mexican judicial system has worked, you know, as far as our fathers’ case is concerned up until now. So we do have hope but we are nervous that what happened in 2013 could happen again.”

Frequent lockdowns may have contributed to Uvalde tragedy

By JAKE BLEIBERG and ACACIA CORONADO Associated Press

UVALDE, Texas (AP) — Teachers and students at Robb Elementary School knew the safety protocols when an 18-year-old with an AR-15 style rifle entered the building in May. Dozens of times in the previous four months alone, the campus had gone into lockdown or issued security alerts.

Not because of active shooter scares — because of nearby, often high-speed pursuits of migrants coming from the U.S.-Mexico border.

An entire generation of students in America has grown up simulating lockdowns for active shooters, or worse, experiencing the real thing. But in South Texas, another unique kind of classroom lockdown occurs along the state’s 1,200-mile southern border: hunkering down because Border Patrol agents or state police are chasing migrants who are trying to evade apprehension.

The frequency of lockdowns and security alerts in Uvalde — nearly 50 between February and May alone, according to school officials — are now viewed by investigators as one of the tragic contributors to how a gunman was able to walk into a fourth-grade classroom unobstructed and slaughter 19 children and two teachers. Although a slow and bungled police response remains the main failure, a damning new report by the Texas House says recurring lockdowns in Uvalde created a “diminished sense of vigilance.”

With a new school year now just weeks away in heavily patrolled South Texas, there are worries the lockdowns will resume and deepen the trauma for scarred students in Uvalde, as migrant crossings remain high and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott continues expanding a massive border security operation.

“That’s what it probably was, just complacency, because it does happen on a frequent basis,” said Uvalde County Justice of the Peace Eulalio “Lalo” Diaz Jr., who had to identify the bodies of the dead at Robb Elementary.

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The new findings that a culture of lockdowns in Uvalde played some role in the failures on May 24 reflects how one of the worst school shootings in U.S. history intersected with immigration policies and thousands of Border Patrol agents, National Guard members and state police assigned to apprehend migrants and stop drug traffickers. Of the nearly 400 law enforcement officers at the scene of Robb Elementary, more than half were Border Patrol agents or state police, according to the report.

On Tuesday, over the span of just 20 minutes, eight state police vehicles and Border Patrol SUVs cruised through Uvalde's central square, less than a mile from Robb Elementary.

Uvalde is about an hour's drive from the border with Mexico, located at the crossroads of two major state highways. Nearby are the cities of Pearsall, Dilley and Karnes – all of which have immigration detention centers with some of the nation's highest populations. More than 4,500 detainees in total were at the three facilities as of June 2022, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University.

Jazmin Cazares, whose 9-year-old sister Jacklyn was among the students killed, told Texas lawmakers in June that no one in the school district took lockdowns seriously "until that day." She said she is now terrified to return for her senior year in the fall.

"Am I going to survive it? Unbelievable," Cazares said.

Even the first officers on scene at Robb Elementary wondered whether the threat was a so-called "bailout" — the term used by law enforcement along the border to describe suspected migrants or drug traffickers who have fled. Pete Arrendondo, the embattled Uvalde school police chief who has become the target of angry demands by parents to resign or be fired, told the House committee the thought crossed his mind since it happens so often.

The gunman entered Robb Elementary at 11:33 a.m. One minute earlier, according to the report, a fourth-grade teacher in Room 105 received a lockdown alert and made sure her classroom door was locked. That teacher also told the committee she saw a teacher across the hall locking the door in Room 112, one of two adjoining rooms where the shooting occurred.

The shooter is believed to have entered the classroom through Room 111, which was known to have trouble locking properly.

The signal the school's alert system sends out does not specify the potential threat. And because of the prevalence of lockdowns in recent months, according to the report, many teachers and administrators "assumed it was another bailout."

"Bailouts" has become an increasingly common part of Uvalde's vernacular in the last year as the area has become extraordinarily busy with migrants crossing illegally, largely from countries outside Mexico and northern Central America.

The Border Patrol sector based in Del Rio, Texas – one of nine along the Mexican border – was the most transited corridor for illegal crossings in June, replacing Texas' Rio Grande Valley. For much of the year, the two South Texas sectors have posted similar numbers of border encounters, well ahead of the others in California, Arizona, New Mexico and West Texas.

While many migrants turn themselves in to the Border Patrol in the border towns of Del Rio and Eagle Pass – each about an hour's drive from Uvalde – many seek to elude capture for hours or days, hiding in "stash houses" or in tall fields of corn and other crops for smugglers to pick them up at a previously agreed location for the drive to San Antonio.

The committee report said there had been no incidents of "bailout-related" violence on Uvalde school campuses before the shooting. High-speed driving sometimes crossed school parking lots, according to the report, which also said some pursuits involved firearms in surrounding neighborhoods.

Diaz, the Uvalde justice of the peace, serves as a magistrate when police make arrests in the area as part of the governor's massive border mobilization known as Operation Lone Star. He sets bail for people taken into custody for alleged human or drug smuggling, but also for crimes unrelated to national security, like minor drug charges.

He said Abbott's operation hasn't made Uvalde safer.

"These people who are coming through don't want to be in Uvalde," said Diaz. "They are looking to get

away from the border and we're too close."

Over the last decade, many police departments have shifted away from having officers engage in car chases because they are a danger to the public. A 2017 report from the Justice Department found that between 1996 and 2015 police pursuits killed an average of 355 people annually, with nearly a third of those killed in vehicles not involved in the chases.

Uvalde Mayor Don McLaughlin, who said he has not spoken to Abbott for nearly a month, has called on the governor to do even more on the border to curb migrant crossings. With classes set to re-start in less than two months, he worries about "the bailouts by the schools and so forth" and said "it needs to stop."

Angie Villescaz, who grew up in Uvalde and after the shooting founded the Latina mothers advocacy group Fierce Madres with local moms, said the border rhetoric is a distraction from the most pressing issue. "They've always wanted to keep the narrative about securing the border," Villescaz said, "and now they can't because it's about securing our schools."

Abortion doctor signals she'll sue Indiana AG over comments

By ARLEIGH RODGERS Associated Press/Report for America

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — An Indianapolis doctor who performed an abortion on a 10-year-old rape victim from Ohio took the first step Tuesday toward suing Indiana's attorney general for defamation.

Dr. Caitlin Bernard, an Indianapolis obstetrician-gynecologist who gave the girl a medication-induced abortion on June 30, filed a tort claim notice over what she says are false statements that Attorney General Todd Rokita has made about her and her work.

Bernard received widespread attention after she gave an interview to the Indianapolis Star about the child, who traveled to Indiana from Ohio for the abortion. A so-called fetal heartbeat law took effect in Ohio last month after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade. Such laws ban abortions from the time a fetus' cardiac activity can be detected, which is typically around the sixth week of pregnancy.

A 27-year-old man was charged last week in Columbus, Ohio, with raping the girl, confirming the existence of a case that was initially met with skepticism by some news outlets and Republican politicians.

Bernard's lawyer, Kathleen DeLaney, filed the "tort claim notice" against Rokita just days after she sent a cease and desist letter. The claim starts a 90-day period for the state to settle it. If it's not settled, Bernard could file a lawsuit. The claim didn't say how much money Bernard is seeking, noting that "the harm is ongoing."

"Mr. Rokita's false and misleading statements about alleged misconduct by Dr. Bernard in her profession constitute defamation," the claim reads. "The statements have been and continue to be published by or on behalf of Mr. Rokita and the Office of the Attorney General."

After the news of the 10-year-old's abortion broke, Rokita told Fox News that he would investigate whether Bernard violated child abuse notification or abortion reporting laws. He also said his office would look into whether anything Bernard said to the Indianapolis Star about the girl's case violated federal medical privacy laws. Rokita offered no specific allegations of wrongdoing.

Records obtained by The Associated Press and local news outlets show that Bernard submitted her report about the girl's abortion on July 2, which is within Indiana's required three-day reporting period for an abortion performed on a girl younger than 16.

A spokesperson for Rokita said Bernard's claim is "baseless" and attempts to "distract from the important work of the office."

"Attorney General Rokita and the Office of Attorney General are leaders in the pro-life movement," spokesperson Kelly Stevenson said via email. "His historic work has further distinguished Indiana as a protector of unborn life and women."

The Indiana Democratic Party criticized Rokita for the impact the lawsuit would have on taxpayers.

"Hoosier taxpayers will now have to pay for Attorney General Todd Rokita's national smear campaign against a doctor who helped a 10-year-old rape survivor attain a legal and safe abortion," party spokesperson Drew Anderson wrote in an email.

House passes same-sex marriage bill in retort to high court

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. House overwhelmingly approved legislation Tuesday to protect same-sex and interracial marriages amid concerns that the Supreme Court ruling overturning Roe v. Wade abortion access could jeopardize other rights criticized by many conservatives.

In a robust but lopsided debate, Democrats argued intensely and often personally in favor of enshrining marriage equality in federal law, while Republicans steered clear of openly rejecting gay marriage. Instead leading Republicans portrayed the bill as unnecessary amid other issues facing the nation.

Tuesday's election-year roll call, 267-157, was partly political strategy, forcing all House members, Republicans and Democrats, to go on the record. It also reflected the legislative branch pushing back against an aggressive court that has raised questions about revisiting other apparently settled U.S. laws.

Wary of political fallout, GOP leaders did not press their members to hold the party line against the bill, aides said. In all, 47 Republicans joined all Democrats in voting for passage.

"For me, this is personal," said Rep. Mondaire Jones, D-N.Y., who said he was among the openly gay members of the House.

"Imagine telling the next generation of Americans, my generation, we no longer have the right to marry who we love," he said. "Congress can't allow that to happen."

While the Respect for Marriage Act easily passed the House with a Democratic majority, it is likely to stall in the evenly split Senate, where most Republicans would probably join a filibuster to block it. It's one of several bills, including those enshrining abortion access, that Democrats are proposing to confront the court's conservative majority. Another bill, guaranteeing access to contraceptive services, is set for a vote later this week.

House GOP leaders split over the issue, with Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Whip Rep. Steve Scalise voting against the marriage rights bill, but the No. 3 Republican Rep. Elise Stefanik of New York voting in favor.

In a notable silence, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell declined to express his view on the bill, leaving an open question over how strongly his party would fight it, if it should come up for a vote in the upper chamber.

Key Republicans in the House have shifted in recent years on the same-sex marriage issue, including Rep. Liz Cheney of Wyoming, who joined those voting in favor on Tuesday.

Said another Republican, Rep. Nancy Mace of South Carolina, in a statement about her yes vote: "If gay couples want to be as happily or miserably married as straight couples, more power to them."

Polling shows a majority of Americans favor preserving rights to marry, regardless of sex, gender, race or ethnicity, a long-building shift in modern mores toward inclusion.

A Gallup poll in June showed broad and increasing support for same-sex marriage, with 70% of U.S. adults saying they think such unions should be recognized by law as valid. The poll showed majority support among both Democrats (83%) and Republicans (55%).

Approval of interracial marriage in the U.S. hit a six-decade high at 94% in September, according to Gallup. Ahead of Tuesday's voting, a number of lawmakers joined protesters demonstrating against the abortion ruling outside the Supreme Court, which sits across from the Capitol and remains fenced off for security during tumultuous political times. Capitol Police said among those arrested were 16 members of Congress.

"The extremist right-wing majority on the Supreme Court has put our country down a perilous path," said Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon, D-Pa., in a floor speech setting Tuesday's debate in motion.

"It's time for our colleagues across the aisle to stand up and be counted. Will they vote to protect these fundamental freedoms? Or will they vote to let states take those freedoms away?"

But Republicans insisted the court was only focused on abortion access in June when it struck down the nearly 50-year-old Roe v. Wade ruling, and they argued that same-sex marriage and other rights were not threatened.

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In fact, almost none of the Republicans who rose to speak during the debate directly broached the subject of same-sex or interracial marriage.

"We are here for a political charade, we are here for political messaging," said Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio, the top Republican on the Judiciary Committee.

That same tack could be expected in the Senate.

Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., said, "The predicate of this is just wrong. I don't think the Supreme Court is going to overturn any of that stuff."

As several Democrats spoke of inequalities they said they or their loved ones had faced in same-sex marriages, the Republicans talked about rising gas prices, inflation and crime, including recent threats to justices in connection with the abortion ruling.

For Republicans in Congress the Trump-era confirmation of conservative justices to the Supreme Court has fulfilled a long-term GOP goal of revisiting many social, environmental and regulatory issues the party has been unable to tackle on its own by passing bills that could be signed into law.

The Respect for Marriage Act would repeal a law from the Clinton era that defines marriage as a heterogeneous relationship between a man and a woman. It would also provide legal protections for interracial marriages by prohibiting any state from denying out-of-state marriage licenses and benefits on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity or national origin.

The 1996 law, the Defense of Marriage Act, had basically been sidelined by Obama-era court rulings, including *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which established the rights of same-sex couples to marry nationwide, a landmark case for gay rights.

But last month, writing for the majority in overturning *Roe v. Wade*, Justice Samuel Alito argued for a more narrow interpretation of the rights guaranteed to Americans, noting that the right to an abortion was not spelled out in the Constitution.

In a concurring opinion, Justice Clarence Thomas went further, saying other rulings similar to *Roe*, including those around same-sex marriage and the right for couples to use contraception, should be reconsidered.

While Alito insisted in the majority opinion that "this decision concerns the constitutional right to abortion and no other right," others have taken notice.

"The MAGA radicals that are taking over the Republican Party have made it abundantly clear they are not satisfied with repealing *Roe*," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., referring to Trump's backers.

He pointed to comments from Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, who said over the weekend that the Supreme Court's decision protecting marriage equality was "clearly wrong" and state legislatures should visit the issue.

But Schumer did not commit to holding a vote on the marriage bill.

FDA weighs oversight changes after formula, Juul troubles

By MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The head of the Food and Drug Administration has asked for a review of the agency's food and tobacco programs following months of criticism over their handling of the baby formula shortage and e-cigarette reviews.

Tuesday's announcement comes as FDA Commissioner Robert Califf attempts to push past several controversies that have dominated his second stint running the agency, including the delayed response to contamination problems at the country's largest infant formula plant.

"Fundamental questions about the structure, function, funding and leadership need to be addressed" in the agency's food program, Califf said in a statement. The agency's tobacco center, which regulates traditional cigarettes and vaping products, is facing challenges navigating policy and enforcement issues from "an increasing number of novel products that could potentially have significant consequences for public health," he said.

Califf said the Reagan-Udall Foundation — a non-governmental research group created by Congress to support FDA's work — would convene experts to deliver evaluations within 60 business days of both

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the food and tobacco operations. The experts are expected to consult with FDA staff along with outside groups to gather a broad range of opinions. Califf and his team have already begun meeting with outside stakeholders, the FDA noted.

The review announcement comes one day before Califf is scheduled to testify before the Senate agriculture committee about FDA's oversight of food safety.

More than two dozen consumer groups have called on Califf to appoint one official to oversee all FDA food operations, which are dispersed across multiple centers responsible for nutrition standards, plant inspections and animal food. But Califf told The Associated Press in an interview that he believes more fundamental changes are needed.

"I don't think structure alone is really the fix, or that leadership alone is the fix," Califf said. "There's a consistent concern out there that we need to really fix the fundamentals, which includes all those elements."

Califf said he agreed with critiques that the food program has been underfunded compared with FDA's drug program, which receives more than \$1 billion annually in industry user fees. The agency recently sought more food funding and authority to help track supply chains in order to head off future shortages.

Parents and politicians also have expressed frustration over the agency's handling of a recent decision to ban all e-cigarettes from Juul, the leading U.S. vaping company. A federal court quickly blocked the agency's order. FDA then backtracked further in court, saying it needed more time to review Juul's application due to its "unique scientific issues."

The FDA has also struggled to review millions of other applications from vaping companies, prompting multiple missed regulatory deadlines over the last two years.

Califf again cited funding challenges, pointing out that the FDA cannot collect user fees from vaping companies who submit their products. The agency has asked Congress for that authority.

"I don't think anyone anticipated that there would be 6.7 million vaping product applications that came rolling in during a pandemic that was stressing the entire agency," Califf said.

Last week, the FDA announced it would miss another deadline to remove thousands of illegal e-cigarettes that use synthetic nicotine. FDA officials specifically asked Congress to give the agency authority over those products, which had used a legal loophole to skirt regulation.

Sen. Dick Durbin, an Illinois Democrat, suggested Califf should resign if the agency can't swiftly remove such products.

President Joe Biden tapped Califf for the FDA job largely because of his prior experience at the agency, which he briefly led during the Obama administration. A cardiologist and respected researcher, Califf planned to focus his time at FDA on fighting medical misinformation and streamlining the agency's data systems.

But those efforts have been eclipsed by newer controversies, including political outrage over the formula shortage, which has forced the U.S. to airlift millions of containers of formula from Europe. Recently, the FDA said it would help foreign manufacturers stay on the U.S. market for the long term, in an effort to diversify the formula supply here.

Califf previously predicted the formula shortage could last until July. He said Tuesday that retail data show that supplies have improved with increases in both U.S. production and imports.

"What you're going to see is a gradual climbing out of the current situation as more and more formula becomes available," Califf said.

In May, Califf testified before Congress about missteps that slowed the agency's response to contamination problems at the Michigan formula plant that triggered the shortage. While many of the problems happened before Califf started on the job, he struggled to explain who was ultimately responsible for food safety within FDA's bureaucracy.

FDA's food program has a byzantine leadership structure in which there is a director for food and a separate deputy commissioner for "food policy and response." The deputy commissioner has more of a safety focus, but has no direct authority over food center staff nor regional personnel who inspect plants.

"You have serious structural leadership issues," Rep. Rosa DeLauro told Califf during the hearing.

DeLauro, a Connecticut Democrat, said Tuesday the FDA's evaluation must contain input from non-FDA

experts and interest groups to be credible.

"A report that includes recommendations to preserve the status quo is unacceptable," she said in an emailed statement.

Responding to multiple crises is a standard part of leading the FDA, which regulates industries that account for an estimated one-fifth of all U.S. consumer spending.

Despite the recent controversies, some experts say Califf has done a good job, considering the increasing polarization surrounding the issues and products FDA oversees.

"Leading the FDA is becoming as complicated as, maybe more complicated than, leading a cabinet-level executive department," said Daniel Carpenter, a professor of government at Harvard University. "I think Califf has navigated a pretty politically fraught environment and he has done it with remarkable skill."

Georgia fake electors may face charges in election probe

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The Georgia prosecutor who's investigating whether former President Donald Trump and others illegally interfered in the 2020 general election in the state has informed 16 Republicans who served as fake electors that they could face criminal charges.

They all signed a certificate declaring falsely that then-President Trump had won the 2020 presidential election and declaring themselves the state's "duly elected and qualified" electors even though Joe Biden had won the state and a slate of Democratic electors was certified. Eleven of them filed a motion Tuesday to quash their subpoenas, calling them "unreasonable and oppressive."

Also Tuesday, U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a South Carolina Republican, agreed to file any challenges to a subpoena in the investigation in either state superior court or federal court in Georgia, according to a court filing. He had previously filed a motion in federal court in South Carolina trying to stop any subpoena from being issued to him there on behalf of the prosecutor in Georgia.

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis last year opened a criminal investigation "into attempts to influence the administration of the 2020 Georgia General Election." A special grand jury with subpoena power was seated in May at her request. In court filings earlier this month, she alleged "a multi-state, coordinated plan by the Trump Campaign to influence the results of the November 2020 election in Georgia and elsewhere."

Willis' office declined to comment Tuesday on the motion to quash the subpoenas.

A lawyer for Willis's office said in a court filing Tuesday that each of the 16 people who signed the false elector certificate has received a letter saying they are targets of the investigation and that their testimony before the special grand jury is required.

In the motion to quash the subpoenas, lawyers for 11 of the fake electors said that from mid-April through the end of June, Willis's office had told them that they were considered witnesses, not subjects or targets of the investigation. For that reason, they had agreed to voluntary interviews with the investigative team, the motion says. Georgia Republican Party Chairman David Shafer and another of the fake electors appeared for interviews in late April.

On June 1, grand jury subpoenas were sent to all 11 of those fake electors. And on June 28, the district attorney's office told their lawyers for the first time that their clients were considered targets, rather than witnesses, the motion says.

On Dec. 14, 2020, when Georgia's official Democratic electors met to certify the state's electoral votes for Biden, the fake Republican electors also met to certify a slate of electoral votes for Trump. They did that because there was a lawsuit challenging the election results pending at the time, and if a judge found that Trump had actually won their electoral slate would become valid, the motion says.

The district attorney's office knew all that and properly labeled them witnesses, prompting them to agree to voluntary cooperation, the motion says.

"The abrupt, unsupportable, and public elevation of all eleven nominee electors' status wrongfully converted them from witnesses who were cooperating voluntarily and prepared to testify in the Grand Jury to

persecuted targets of it," the motion says. As a result, their lawyers advised them to invoke their federal and state rights protecting them against self-incrimination, and they "reluctantly" accepted that advice, the motion says.

Their lawyers assert that the change in status from witnesses to targets was based on "an improper desire to force them to publicly invoke their rights as, at best, a publicity stunt." Therefore, they should be excused from appearing before the special grand jury, the motion says.

The motion asks Fulton County Superior Court Judge Robert McBurney, who's overseeing the special grand jury to excuse the 11 electors from appearing before the panel. It also asks him to look into Willis' actions "indicating the improper politicization of this investigatory process."

And it asks him to grant a motion filed Friday by state Sen. Burt Jones seeking to remove Willis and her office from the investigation. Jones, who's the Republican nominee for lieutenant governor, alleged that the investigation is politically motivated because Willis is an active supporter of his Democratic opponent. McBurney on Tuesday set a Thursday hearing on that motion.

Willis' office has said Jones' claims are without merit and a lawyer representing the office wrote in a filing Tuesday that Jones has identified no actions that show political motivation.

Netflix Q2 subscriber loss widens, but not as much as feared

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Netflix shed almost 1 million subscribers during the spring amid tougher competition and soaring inflation that's squeezing household budgets, heightening the urgency behind the video streaming service's effort to launch a cheaper option with commercial interruptions.

The April-June contraction of 970,000 accounts, announced Tuesday as part of Netflix's second-quarter earnings report, is by far the largest quarterly subscriber loss in the company's 25-year history. It could have been far worse, though, considering Netflix management released an April forecast calling for a loss of 2 million subscribers during the second quarter.

Netflix was probably spared from deeper losses by the ongoing popularity of "Stranger Things," its science fiction/horror series that debuted in 2016. Following the release of the series' fourth season in late May, Netflix said, viewers watched a total of 1.3 billion hours of it over the next four weeks — more than any other English-language series in the service's history.

The less severe loss in subscribers, combined with an outlook calling for a return to growth in the July-September period, helped lift Netflix's battered stock by 7% in extended trading after the numbers came out.

Netflix co-CEO Reed Hastings didn't try to sugarcoat things during a Tuesday conference call about the results. "It's tough losing a million subscribers and calling it a success," he said.

The company's April-June regression follows a loss of 200,000 subscribers during the first three months of the year, marking the first time Netflix's subscriber totals have shrunk in consecutive quarters since its transition from offering DVD-by-mail rentals to video streaming began 15 years ago.

The loss of nearly 1.2 million subscribers during first half of this year also provides a stark contrast to the pandemic-driven growth that Netflix enjoyed during the first half of 2020 when its streaming service picked up nearly 26 million subscribers.

Despite the downturn, Netflix still earned \$1.4 billion, or \$3.20 per share during the quarter, a 6% increase from the same time last year. Revenue rose 9% from the same time last year to nearly \$8 billion.

Netflix ended June with 220.7 million worldwide subscribers, far more than any of its new competitors such as Walt Disney Co. and Apple. And in a hopeful sign, Netflix management predicted its service will add about 1 million subscribers during the July-September period, signaling the worst of its slump may be over.

Although Netflix's springtime subscriber losses weren't as bad as investors and management feared, the downturn served as a grim reminder of the challenges now facing the Los Gatos, California, company after a decade of unbridled growth.

Netflix's stock price has plunged by nearly 70% so far this year, wiping out about \$180 billion in share-

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holder wealth. Since then, other video streaming services have made big strides in attracting viewers, with Apple winning accolades for its award-winning line-up of TV series and films while Disney's popular line-up of family-friendly titles continues to gain traction.

At the same time, Netflix has been raising its prices to help pay for its own original programming, just as the highest inflation rates in 40 years have led consumers to curb spending on discretionary items such as entertainment.

"Netflix is still the leader in video streaming but unless it finds more franchises that resonate widely, it will eventually struggle to stay ahead of competitors that are after its crown," said Insider Intelligence analyst Ross Benes.

Sensing potential trouble brewing, Netflix began branching out last year by adding free video games to its streaming service.

But that obviously hasn't been enough to propel subscriber growth, prompting Netflix's April announcement that it will crack down on the rampant sharing of subscriber passwords and take another step it once scorned by offering a less expensive tier of its service that will include commercial interruptions. Without providing further specifics, Netflix said Tuesday that both the ad-supported plan and the crackdown on password sharing will begin early next year. The company didn't say how much the streaming option with commercials will cost.

Netflix took another step toward putting together the ad-supported option last week when it announced it will team up with Microsoft to deliver the commercials.

"We have some headwinds right now and we are navigating through them," Netflix co-CEO Ted Sarandos said at the end of Tuesday's conference call. "We've seen entertainment formats come and go, we've seen entertainment business models come and go, and we have managed to grow through all of them, though all kinds of economic conditions and through all levels of competition."

Elections officials urged to prepare for shortages, delays

By SCOTT BAUER Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Elections officials from across the country meeting under heightened security were urged Tuesday to prepare for supply chain issues that could lead to shortages in paper used for everything from ballots to "I voted" stickers for years to come.

The summer meeting of the National Association of State Election Directors brought together nearly 200 people, including elections directors from 33 states, experts in election security, interest groups that work with elections, vendors and others.

Election security experts told the directors to be prepared for possibly years of supply chain issues affecting paper, computer hardware and other things.

The supply chain as it affects elections may not return to normal until 2026, said Ed Smith, a longtime election technology and administration veteran who chairs a federal government-industry coordinating council that works on election security issues.

The lead time to obtain election hardware is two- to three-times longer than the norm, a delay not seen since 1999 or 2000, Smith said. Costs are also higher and elections officials should be prepared for spotty and unpredictable problems due to transportation and pandemic-related shutdowns, he said.

The supply chain issues are largely sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic and exacerbated by worldwide closures of factories and a drop in people in the workforce. They have been felt by a wide array of industries.

Elections officials preparing for the November midterm are also bracing for their own problems that could make it difficult to get paper needed to print ballots, informational inserts and other materials needed to run an election.

"Certainly, the paper supply has been the leanest it's ever been," said Jim Suver, co-chair of a federal election security working group that focuses on supply chain issues. The biggest crunch will start in September, when all states are working toward the same November election, he said.

Suver said that hoarding was not an issue.

"There's not enough paper to hoard," he said. "It is not happening."

Elections officials were urged to order their supplies early and be prepared for shortages and delays.

The biggest risk is having an urgent request, like the need for a large number of reprints, 10 days or 15 days before an election, Suver said. It will be crucial for jurisdictions to be extremely careful in proofreading ballots so they don't have to place reorders, Smith said.

Printing errors already have occurred during this year's primaries. In Oregon, election workers in Clackamas County had to transfer the votes from tens of thousands of ballots that had blurry bar codes and had been rejected by ballot-counting machines. In Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a printing company mailed thousands of ballots with the wrong ID code, which meant they couldn't be read by scanning machines.

The three-day meeting, which also covered issues such as insider threats to running elections and how to connect with hard-to-reach communities, comes as elections officials are facing increasing threats amid false claims by former President Donald Trump and his supporters that the 2020 election was stolen.

Amy Cohen, executive director of NASED, cautioned meeting attendees to wear their name tags when at the event so that security could see they belong there, but to take them off when out and about in the city.

"Don't advertise who you are and exactly why you're here," she said.

Cohen said meeting organizers coordinated with federal, state and local law enforcement for the event. The group was not live tweeting or livestreaming the event, but there was no prohibition on attendees posting about it on social media.

"Please do be thoughtful about what you post and remember that some of the people in this room are dealing with serious security concerns and we need to be respectful to keep everyone safe," Cohen said.

CDC endorses more traditional Novavax COVID shot for adults

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

U.S. adults who haven't gotten any COVID-19 shots yet should consider a new option from Novavax -- a more traditional kind of vaccine, health officials said Tuesday.

Regulators authorized the nation's first so-called protein vaccine against COVID-19 last week, but the final hurdle was a recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"If you have been waiting for a COVID-19 vaccine built on a different technology than those previously available, now is the time to join the millions of Americans who have been vaccinated," Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC's director, said in a statement, endorsing an earlier decision from an influential advisory panel.

Most Americans have gotten at least their primary COVID-19 vaccinations by now, but CDC officials said between 26 million and 37 million adults haven't had a single dose -- the population that Novavax, for now, will be targeting.

"We really need to focus on that population," said CDC adviser Dr. Oliver Brooks, past president of the National Medical Association. Hopefully, the vaccine "will change them over from being unvaccinated to vaccinated."

While it's unclear how many will be persuaded by a more conventional option, "I'm really positive about this vaccine," agreed fellow adviser Dr. Pablo Sanchez of Ohio State University.

THE NOVAVAX DIFFERENCE

All of the vaccines used in the U.S. train the body to fight the coronavirus by recognizing its outer coating, the spike protein -- and the first three options essentially turn people's cells into a temporary vaccine factory. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines deliver genetic instructions for the body to make copies of the spike protein. The lesser-used Johnson & Johnson option uses a cold virus to deliver those instructions.

In contrast, the Novavax vaccine injects copies of the spike protein that are grown in a lab and packaged into nanoparticles that to the immune system resemble a virus. Another difference: An ingredient called an adjuvant, that's made from the bark of a South American tree, is added to help rev up that immune response.

Protein vaccines have been used for years to prevent other diseases including hepatitis B and shingles.

HOW WELL IT WORKS

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Large studies in the U.S., Mexico and Britain found two doses of the Novavax vaccine were safe and about 90% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19. When the delta variant emerged last summer, Novavax reported a booster dose revved up virus-fighting antibodies that could tackle that mutant.

Typical vaccine reactions were mild, including arm pain and fatigue, but regulators did warn about the possibility of a rare risk, heart inflammation, that also has been seen with the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, mostly in teen boys or young men.

But early on, manufacturing problems delayed the Novavax vaccine — meaning the shots were studied long before the omicron variant hit, so it's not clear how well they hold up against the immune-evading mutant.

Still, Novavax points to lab testing that shows the first two shots do spur production of virus-fighting antibodies that are cross-protective against omicron, including the BA.5 subtype that's currently the nation's top threat. A booster dose further revved up cross-protective antibodies.

HOW TO USE NOVAVAX SHOTS

The CDC's advisers unanimously endorsed the two-shot primary series. But several noted that it was important for regulators to clear a booster by the time, five or so months after their last dose, that Novavax recipients will need one.

Also, the two doses typically are given three weeks apart. But CDC officials said that like with other COVID-19 vaccines, it's possible to wait up to eight weeks for the second dose — except for people at the highest risk, who need protection quickly.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Walensky signed off on recommendations for adults to get the first two Novavax doses. In its first purchase, the U.S. government bought 3.2 million doses and vaccinations are expected to begin in the next few weeks.

The Novavax vaccine also is used in Europe, Canada, Australia, South Korea and other countries. Many allow booster doses, and European regulators recently cleared the shots to be given as young as age 12.

The Maryland-based company likewise expects U.S. authorization of a booster dose and teen vaccinations to follow fairly soon.

And like other vaccine makers, Novavax is testing shots updated to better match the newest omicron subtypes -- in anticipation of another round of boosters this fall and winter.

Schumer: Dems will push ahead on pared down economic measure

By ALAN FRAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats will push ahead on restraining pharmaceutical prices and extending health insurance subsidies for millions of Americans, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer affirmed Tuesday, backing President Joe Biden's call for his party to settle for a pared-down economic package and effectively concede to a pivotal senator.

Aiming to craft the bill and approve it over likely unanimous Republican opposition by Congress' recess next month, Democrats were already hailing it as a victory. Passage would give the party an achievement ahead of November voting in which Republicans seem on track to win majorities in the House and perhaps the Senate.

"This is something we've waited for for a very long time," Schumer, D-N.Y., told reporters. "It's going to be a major, major accomplishment to help people bring down inflation."

But that glossed over an accompanying reality — Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., has again forced his party to narrow the measure's sweep, this time making it abandon hopes of using it to combat climate change.

Such initiatives are a passionate goal for younger and progressive voters, who are showing signs of souring on Democrats for their inability to pass strong legislation curbing carbon emissions that warm the planet. Biden has said he will take executive action to address the environmental crisis, and congressional Democrats are urging him to do that aggressively.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and other Democrats have said Manchin's views on climate are out of synch

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with the party. Heinrich questioned last week whether Manchin, one of Congress' most conservative and fossil-fuel friendly Democrats, should remain as chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

"It's not fair to string people along for a year and not come to a conclusion," Heinrich said Tuesday. Heinrich has criticized Manchin for repeatedly forcing Democrats to dramatically shrink the economic legislation. Manchin's backing is needed for his party to prevail in the 50-50 Senate, along with Vice President Kamala Harris' tie-breaking vote.

Manchin upended a roughly \$2 trillion, 10-year social and environment bill in December after the House approved it. He did not attend a weekly lunch Tuesday that Democratic senators hold.

Earlier, Manchin reiterated his concerns that a larger economic measure could further worsen inflation and was unapologetic. "I'm not stringing you along. Don't you believe inflation is the No. 1 thing in America right that's hurting every human being?" he told reporters.

Asked if he felt Manchin had negotiated honestly with him over the months, Schumer said, "Senator Manchin and I know each other a long time. We have many disagreements. I am very strenuous when I talk to him about my disagreements. But we always try to show each other respect."

It remains unclear exactly what the final measure will look like or when it will be ready for votes. As of now, the package would save \$288 billion over the coming decade, largely because its price controls would make government drug purchases cheaper. Some money would pay for health insurance subsidies for consumers, with the rest used to slightly reduce federal deficits.

Some Democrats want the bill to be expanded to include other initiatives, such as including billions Biden wants to strengthen federal efforts to contend with the COVID-19 pandemic. Many are skeptical Manchin will sign off on that.

Senate staffers from both parties plan to meet Thursday with the Senate parliamentarian, who must decide if any provisions should be dropped from the measure for violating the chamber's budget rules.

One item that might be vulnerable would require drug makers to pay the government rebates if they raise prices beyond inflation increases. If the parliamentarian, Elizabeth MacDonough, says those provisions should be removed, that could reduce the measure's savings by as much as \$100 billion, a big blow.

The still-developing legislation would authorize Medicare to negotiate how much it pays for some prescription drugs and require rebates if price increases exceed inflation. It would cap Medicare recipients' out-of-pocket drug costs at \$2,000 a year, give them free vaccines and expand prescription drug subsidies for some low-income people.

It would also extend federal payments, now expiring in January, that help around 13 million people who don't get employer-paid or government health coverage pay premiums for their private insurance.

Republicans are opposing Democrats' measure. They say it would discourage pharmaceutical research and object to shoring up federal health insurance subsidies created in former President Barack Obama's 2010 health care overhaul.

"It's pretty unclear where they're going," said Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. "But they're desperate to pass something on a party-line basis as rapidly as possible. That's in all likelihood bad news for the American people."

Manchin has said he would consider climate change legislation in September once he's seen updated inflation figures. Approving a measure in the heat of election campaigns would be extremely difficult.

Putin, in Tehran, gets strong support from Iran over Ukraine

By NASSER KARIMI and VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin won staunch support from Iran on Tuesday for his country's military campaign in Ukraine, with Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei saying the West opposes an "independent and strong" Russia.

Khamenei said that if Russia hadn't sent troops into Ukraine, it would have faced an attack from NATO later, a statement that echoed Putin's own rhetoric and reflected increasingly close ties between Moscow

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and Tehran as they both face crippling Western sanctions. NATO allies have bolstered their military presence in Eastern Europe and provided Ukraine with weapons to help counter the Russian attack.

"If the road would have been open to NATO, it will not recognize any limit and boundary," Khamenei told Putin. Had Moscow not acted first, he added, the Western alliance "would have waged a war" to return the Crimean Peninsula that Russia seized from Ukraine in 2014 back to Kyiv's control.

In only his second trip abroad since Russia launched the military action in February, Putin conferred with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the conflict in Syria, and he used the trip to discuss a U.N.-backed proposal to resume exports of Ukrainian grain to ease the global food crisis.

Turkey, a NATO member, has found itself opposite Russia in bloody conflicts in Syria and Libya. It has even sold lethal drones that Ukrainian forces have used to attack Russian troops. But Ankara hasn't imposed sanctions on the Kremlin, making it a sorely needed partner for Moscow. Grappling with runaway inflation and a rapidly depreciating currency, Turkey also relies on the Russian market.

Erdogan made Putin wait for nearly a minute before entering the room for talks and then praised what he described as Russia's "very, very positive approach" during last week's grain talks in Istanbul. He voiced hope a deal will be made, and "the result that will emerge will have a positive impact on the whole world."

Speaking to Erdogan as their meeting began, Putin thanked him for his mediation to help "move forward" a deal on Ukrainian grain exports. "Not all the issues have been resolved yet, but it's good that there has been some progress," Putin added.

He later told reporters that Moscow would accept a deal to facilitate Ukrainian grain shipments if the West lifts restrictions on Russian grain exports.

"We have reached a preliminary agreement on that with international organizations, which have taken the labor to turn it all into a package," Putin said. "Let's see how it all evolves in the nearest time."

He noted that "the Americans have effectively lifted the restrictions on Russian fertilizer supplies to global markets," adding that "if they sincerely want to improve the situation in the global food market, I hope they will do the same with Russian grain exports."

U.N., Russian, Ukrainian and Turkish officials had reached a tentative agreement on some aspects of a deal to ensure the export of 22 million tons of desperately needed grain and other agricultural products trapped in Ukraine's Black Sea ports by the fighting. Reaching the agreement would mark a major step toward alleviating a food crisis that has sent prices of vital commodities like wheat and barley soaring.

Asked whether the talks with Ukraine on a political settlement could resume, Putin said that Russia was grateful to Erdogan and other international mediators but noted that "we are seeing that Kyiv's authorities have no such desire."

The trip to Tehran has symbolic meaning for Putin's domestic audience as well, showing off Russia's international clout even as it grows increasingly isolated and plunges deeper into confrontation with the West. It comes just days after U.S. President Joe Biden's visited Israel and Saudi Arabia — Tehran's primary rivals.

From Jerusalem and Jeddah, Biden urged Israel and Arab countries to push back on Russian, Chinese and Iranian influence that has expanded with the perception of America's retreat from the region.

It was a tough sell. Israel maintains good relations with Putin, a necessity given Russian presence in Syria, Israel's northeastern neighbor and frequent target of its airstrikes. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have declined to pump more oil beyond a plan approved by their energy alliance with Moscow.

But all the countries — despite their long-standing rivalries — could agree on drawing closer to counter Iran, which has rapidly advanced its nuclear program since former U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned Tehran's atomic accord with world powers and reimposed crushing sanctions. Talks to restore the deal have hit a deadlock.

Backed into a corner by the West and its regional rivals, the Iranian government is ramping up uranium enrichment, cracking down on dissent and grabbing headlines with optimistic, hard-line stances intended to keep the Iranian currency, the rial, from crashing. Without sanctions relief in sight, Iran's tactical part-

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nership with Russia has become one of survival, even as Moscow appears to be undercutting Tehran in the black market oil trade.

"Iran is (the) center of dynamic diplomacy," Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian wrote on Twitter, adding the meetings will "develop economic cooperation, focus on security of the region ... and ensure food security."

Fadahosseini Maleki, a member of the Iranian parliament's influential committee on national security and foreign policy, described Russia as Iran's "most strategic partner" on Monday. His comments belied decades of animosity stemming from Russia's occupation of Iran during World War II — and its refusal to leave afterward.

In a sign of increasingly close military cooperation, Russian officials in recent weeks visited an airfield in central Iran at least twice to review Tehran's weapons-capable drones for possible use in Ukraine, the White House has alleged.

Putin hailed the importance of close ties between Moscow and Tehran at his meetings with the Iranian leaders.

"Our relations are developing at a good pace," Putin said at the start of the meeting with Raisi, adding that they two countries have worked to "strengthen their cooperation on international security and contribute significantly to the Syrian settlement."

In a closing statement, he offered strong support to Tehran over the deadlocked nuclear deal, calling for its full revival and a complete lifting of sanctions against Iran to allow a "free development of cooperation in any areas without any discrimination."

During their trilateral talks, the presidents discussed the decade-old conflict in Syria, where Iran and Russia have backed President Bashar Assad's government, while Turkey has supported armed opposition factions. Russia intervened in the conflict in 2015, pooling efforts with Iranian forces and using its air power to shore up Assad's fledgling military.

Erdogan focused on Turkey's action to push from its borders U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters, following up on previous threats of a new military offensive in northern Syria. The planned operation is part of Turkey's efforts to create a safe zone along its border with Syria that would encourage the voluntary return of Syrian refugees.

Erdogan said Turkey was determined to "drive out the centers of evil" that target Turkey's security.

He said Ankara expects Russia and Iran "to support Turkey in this fight," adding that the regions of Tel Rifaat and Manbij — where Turkey has said it planned to send its troops — had turned into a "terror bed."

"The greatest favor that would be made to the Syrian people would be the complete removal of the separatist terrorist organization from territories that it occupies," Erdogan said.

In an apparent reference to Turkey's concerns, the three presidents said in a joint statement that they "rejected all attempts to create new realities on the ground under the pretext of combating terrorism, including illegitimate self-rule initiatives, and expressed their determination to stand against separatist agendas."

At the same time, in an earlier, separate meeting with Erdogan, Khamenei sternly warned against the planned Turkish incursion.

"Any sort of military attack in northern Syria will definitely harm Turkey, Syria and the entire region, and will benefit terrorists," Iran's top leader said, stressing the need to "bring the issue to an end through talks."

Humanitarian issues in Syria have also come into focus since Russia used its veto power at the U.N. Security Council last week to restrict aid deliveries to 4.1 million people in Syria's rebel-held northwest after six months, instead of a year. Erdogan stressed that six months weren't enough.

Raisi said all parties urged expelling American forces from Syria. In a reference to the U.S. military, Putin denounced what he described as "attempts to cement unlawful foreign military presence and foment separatist sentiments," and emphasized that all areas east of the Euphrates River should return to Syrian government control.

Biden holds off — for now — on climate emergency declaration

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By SEUNG MIN KIM, CHRIS MEGERIAN and MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden will travel to Massachusetts on Wednesday to promote new efforts to combat climate change, although he will not declare an emergency that would unlock federal resources to deal with the issue despite increasing pressure from climate activists and Democratic lawmakers.

The White House said Tuesday it has not ruled out issuing such a declaration later, which would allow the president to reroute funds to climate efforts without congressional approval. On Wednesday, Biden will announce other new climate actions when he visits a former coal-fired power plant in Somerset, Massachusetts, which shuttered in 2017 but has since been reborn as an offshore wind power facility.

But since Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., hit pause on negotiations over climate spending and taxes last week, the public attention has shifted to a presidential emergency declaration and what the Biden administration could do with the newfound powers.

"It's not on the table for this week," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said of a climate emergency declaration. "We are still considering it. I don't have the upsides or the downsides of it."

The president has been trying to signal to Democratic voters that he's aggressively tackling global warming at a time when some of his supporters have despaired about the lack of progress. He has pledged to push forward on his own in the absence of congressional action.

Declaration of a climate emergency would be similar to one issued by former President Donald Trump boosting construction of a southern border wall. It would allow Biden to redirect spending to accelerate renewable energy such as wind and solar power and speed the nation's transition away from fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas. The declaration also could be used as a legal basis to block oil and gas drilling or other projects, although such actions would likely be challenged in court by energy companies or Republican-led states.

The focus on climate action comes amid a heat wave that has seared swaths of Europe, with Britain reaching the highest temperature ever registered in a country ill-prepared for such weather extremes.

The typically temperate nation was just the latest to be walloped by unusually hot, dry weather that has triggered wildfires from Portugal to the Balkans and led to hundreds of heat-related deaths. Images of flames racing toward a French beach and Britons sweltering — even at the seaside — have driven home concerns about climate change.

The president vowed late last week to take robust executive action on climate after Manchin — who has wielded outsized influence on Biden's legislative agenda because of Democrats' razor-thin majority in the Senate — hit the brakes on negotiations over proposals for new environmental programs and higher taxes on the wealthy and corporations.

One of the biggest backers of fossil fuels within the Democratic caucus, Manchin has blamed persistently high inflation for his hesitation to go along with another spending package. His resistance has enraged other congressional Democrats who have ramped up pressure on Biden to act on his own on climate.

"I think given the global crisis that we're facing, given the inability of Congress to address this existential threat, I think the White House has got to use all of the resources and tools that they can," said Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt. On a climate emergency, "that's something that I've called for, a long time ago."

Biden, who served in the Senate for more than three decades, "has been chained to the legislative process, thinking about his past as a senator," Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., said at a news conference Monday night. "Now he's unchained, and he has to go."

John Podesta, board chairman of the liberal Center for American Progress, said environmental leaders met with senior White House officials on Friday to discuss policy ideas. Some proposals included ramping up regulations on vehicle emissions and power plants, reinstating a ban on crude oil exports and suspending new leases for oil drilling on federal lands and waters.

"If he's going to make good on his commitments to do everything he can to bring emissions down, he's got to pay attention to those critical regulatory issues that are facing him," said Podesta, a former climate counselor for President Barack Obama.

Ben King, an associate director at the Rhodium Group, an independent research firm, said the United

States is “nowhere close” to meeting ambitious goals set by Biden for reducing emissions.

Biden escalated the country’s emissions reduction target to at least 50% below 2005 levels by 2030. Under current policies in place at the federal and state level, the U.S. is on track to reach a reduction of 24% to 35%, according to the Rhodium Group’s latest analysis.

“Absent meaningful policy action, we’re far off track from meeting the goals that the U.S. is committed to under the Paris accord,” King said, referring to a 2015 global conference on addressing climate change.

Even as Democrats and environmental groups pushed Biden to act on his own, some legal scholars questioned whether an emergency declaration on climate change is justified.

“Emergency powers are designed for events such as terrorist attacks, epidemics and natural disasters,” said Elizabeth Goitein, co-director of the liberty and national security program at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law.

Such powers “aren’t intended to address persistent problems, no matter how dire. And they aren’t meant to be an end-run around Congress,” Goitein wrote in a op-ed for The Washington Post last year.

TIMELINE: Texas elementary school shooting, minute by minute

By JAMIE STENGLE and JAKE BLEIBERG undefined

On May 24, a gunman fatally shot 19 children and two teachers in two adjoining classrooms at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. Over an hour passed from the time officers followed the 18-year-old gunman into the school and when they finally entered the fourth-grade classroom where he was holed up and killed him.

Meanwhile, students trapped inside repeatedly called 911 and parents outside the school begged officers to go in.

Questions continue to swirl about why police armed with rifles and bulletproof shields waited so long. Authorities have given shifting and sometimes contradictory information about what happened and how they responded. The fallout has driven recriminations and rifts between local and state authorities, and angered many who live in the small South Texas city.

On July 17, a damning report was released by an investigative committee from the Texas House of Representatives and the city released hours of officers’ body camera footage, further laying bare the chaotic response, which included 376 officers. The findings were the first to criticize both state and federal law enforcement, and not just local authorities, for the bewildering inaction by the heavily armed officers.

During a May 27 news conference, Texas Department of Public Safety Director Col. Steve McCraw put the blame on the commander at the scene — school district police Chief Pete Arredondo — saying he made the “wrong decision” not to send officers in sooner.

McCraw also gave a detailed timeline during a state Senate hearing on June 21, calling law enforcement’s response an “abject failure.” He said that three minutes after the gunman, Salvador Ramos, entered the school, enough officers and firepower had been deployed to stop him. McCraw also noted that while officers spent time searching for a key to the classroom, they would have found it unlocked if they had checked.

So far, only two responding officers are known to have been put on administrative leave pending investigation of their actions: Arredondo and Lt. Mariano Pargas, a Uvalde Police Department officer who was the city’s acting police chief during the massacre.

The state House report said that according to the school district’s active shooter policy, Arredondo should have assumed command at the scene, but Arredondo told the committee he didn’t consider himself in charge.

The report said that despite the “obvious deficiencies in command and control at the scene,” no law enforcement responders offered Arredondo command assistance.

Below is a minute-by-minute look at the tragic events that day.

Sometime after 11 a.m. — Ramos shoots his grandmother in the face. Gilbert Gallegos, 82, who was in his backyard across the street from Ramos’ and his grandmother’s home, heard the shot. He sees Ramos

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speed away in a pickup truck as Ramos' grandmother pleads for help. Covered in blood, "She says: 'Berto, this is what he did. He shot me,'" says Gallegos, whose wife calls the police.

11:21 a.m. — Ramos says in a text message to a teen in Germany that he just shot his grandmother and is going to go "shoot up" an elementary school, McCraw tells the state Senate hearing on June 21.

11:27 a.m. — Video shows a teacher, who authorities haven't publicly identified, propping open an exterior door of the school, McCraw says on May 27.

11:28 a.m. — Ramos crashes the pickup into a drainage ditch near the school, state police say in a timeline released June 21, citing footage from a funeral home opposite the school.

11:29 a.m. — Two men at the funeral home run out to see what happened, the footage shows. They see Ramos jump out of the passenger side carrying an AR-15-style rifle and a bag full of ammunition. Ramos shoots at the men three times but misses, McCraw says on June 21. One of the men falls but both make it back to the funeral home, McCraw says on May 27. The teacher calls 911 and reports a man with a gun, state police say in their June 21 timeline, citing phone recordings. DPS spokesman Travis Considine says on May 31 that after propping open the door, the teacher had run back inside to grab her phone to call 911 but when she came back out she realized Ramos had a gun. She removed the rock propping open the door and it closed behind her, but the door did not lock, Considine says.

At some point just after the crash, Robb Elementary coach Yvette Silva, who was outdoors with a group of third graders, saw Ramos toss his backpack over a school fence and climb over, then raise a gun and begin to shoot, the state House report says. Running from the field toward her classroom, she reports what she'd seen to the school office via a school radio. Principal Mandy Gutierrez tries to initiate lockdown using the school's alert software but has trouble with the school's Wi-Fi signal, the report says. She didn't announce a lockdown over the intercom but told the head custodian to ensure all doors were locked. The report says the custodian started locking doors from the outside but heard gunshots and went to the cafeteria, where he remained.

About 11:30 a.m. — Teachers start to lock down based mostly on word-of-mouth reports about the gunman, the state House committee says. Teachers told the committee of hearing Silva yelling and the sounds of gunshots. One teacher in room 105 says she did receive the school's lockdown alert, at 11:32 a.m.

11:31 a.m. — Ramos shoots at the school and a patrol car accelerates into the parking lot, driving by Ramos, the funeral home video shows. The Uvalde school district police officer on duty wasn't on campus, contrary to previous reports, McCraw says on May 27. The officer drives to the school after getting a report about the shooting and approaches someone at the back of the school who he thought was the gunman. As the officer sped toward the man, who turned out to be a teacher, McCraw says the officer "drove right by the suspect who was hunkered down behind" a vehicle.

11:32 a.m. — Ramos fires multiple shots outside the school, according to state police on June 21, citing school surveillance. In audio of the 911 call from the teacher obtained by the Austin American-Statesman, she can be heard shouting: "Get down! Get in your rooms! Get in your rooms!"

Around this time, the state House report, says, Uvalde police Staff Sgt. Eduardo Canales, commander of the SWAT team, arrived at the school and saw a man firing a gun. He grabbed his rifle, put in a magazine, grabbed an extra magazine and heard someone say the attacker was in or near the building. He entered an open gate and met up with city police Lt. Javier Martinez. Another city officer, Sgt. Daniel Coronado, soon arrived and heard gunfire while getting out of his patrol car.

Another officer, who was not identified, told the state House committee that he believed the shooter was firing in their direction. When he saw a person dressed in black that he thought was the gunman, he raised his rifle and asked Coronado for permission to shoot. Coronado said he heard the request but hesitated because there were children present. The officer who made the request said there was no opportunity for Coronado to respond before they heard on the radio that the attacker was running toward the school. The officers told the committee that it turned out the person in black wasn't the attacker, but elementary school coach Abraham Gonzales, who was headed to the parking lot for his lunch break.

The committee said this contradicts a report released July 6 by a training center at Texas State University for active shooter situations, which said that a city officer had watched Ramos walk toward campus but

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didn't fire while waiting for permission from a supervisor to shoot. On July 8, Uvalde Mayor Don McLaughlin disputed the training center report, saying no city police officer saw the gunman outside the school and none had an opportunity to shoot him. He said that while an officer did see someone outside, the officer could not tell who it was.

11:33 a.m. — Ramos enters the school through the unlocked door on the school's west side and begins shooting into adjoining fourth-grade classrooms 111 and 112, school surveillance footage shows. Ramos then enters, exits and re-enters classrooms 111 and 112. The state House report says Ramos spent about two and a half minutes rapidly firing over 100 rounds between the two rooms. The report says it is most likely Ramos entered through the door to room 111, finding it unlocked or unsecured. The report says there's evidence that one of the two teachers in room 112, Irma Garcia, who died in the attack, did lock her door. The report says there's substantial evidence that the door to room 111 didn't secure properly. The report says the teacher in room 111, Arnulfo Reyes, who was shot but survived, told the House committee he had no recollection of getting a lockdown alert or any memory that he took the "special effort" needed to get his door to lock before the attacker arrived. The state House report says problems with the room 111 door lock had been reported to the school administration, but no one placed a work order for a repair.

11:35 a.m. — Three city police officers enter the school through the west door, the same door Ramos entered, according to school surveillance footage. The state House report says that these officers were Martinez, Canales and city officer Louis Landry. The report says that Martinez said he heard gunfire from inside the building before entering and then heard "a few muffled shots."

11:36 a.m. — Arredondo, another school district officer and two more city police officers enter through the building's south door, according to school surveillance footage. The state House report says that city officer Donald Page and school district officer Adrian Gonzalez were the first to enter, followed by Arredondo and Coronado. The report says Page and Gonzales heard rounds, as did Coronado, who yelled, "shots fired." Surveillance footage shows three more city police officers and another officer from the school district then entered through the west door.

11:36 a.m. — Uvalde police dispatch gets a report that a woman, who turned out to be Ramos' grandmother, had been shot in the head, the state House report says. Uvalde County Sheriff Ruben Nolasco told the committee that while on his way to the school, he learned about the woman from a man who flagged him down. The committee said other information suggests he learned of the shooting by other means, possibly earlier, and are requesting additional records.

11:37 a.m. — The officers converge from both sides of the hallway on rooms 111 and 112, the state House report says. Ramos fires as officers approach the classroom doors, according to school surveillance footage. McCraw says on June 21 that Ramos fired 11 rounds at this time and two officers were "grazed." The state House report says Martinez was grazed on the top of his head by fragments of building material, while fragments also hit Canales on his ear. Both retreated, along with Landry. The report, without giving an exact time, says that after the initial shock of taking gunfire, Martinez returned down the hallway toward rooms 111 and 112 but no other officers followed him. He later helped evacuate children and was ultimately among the officers when the classroom was finally breached.

11:38 a.m. — An unidentified officer says, "He's contained in this office," according to state police, citing body camera footage on June 21. McCraw testified the same day that the school floor plan showed no office in the classroom. Canales can be heard saying on his body camera after retreating down the hall, and as he walked in and out of the building: "Dude, we've got to get in there. We've got to get in there, he just keeps shooting. We've got to get in there." Another officer can be heard saying: "DPS is sending their people." The state House report says Coronado's body camera shows him making a request by radio for ballistic shields and helicopter support.

11:40 a.m. — Arredondo calls a Uvalde police landline, state police say, citing phone records. Thirty-five seconds later, Ramos fires one round, according to school surveillance footage. According to a transcript of Arredondo's call released by state police, he says he's in the building and a man "has an AR-15, he shot a whole bunch of times." He says they're inside the building and the shooter is in a room, adding: "I need a lot of firepower, so I need this building surrounded. Surrounded with as many AR-15s as possible." He

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tells the dispatcher that he doesn't have a radio with him. Arredondo says he's in the hallway and that the shooter is in rooms 111 and 112. "We need this place surrounded and if you have SWAT I need them set up," Arredondo says. "We don't have enough firepower right now, it's all pistol and he has an AR-15." He says he needs a radio and a rifle.

The state House report says Arredondo arrived at the school with his radios but he dropped them by the school fence because they bothered him, and he knew Coronado had his.

11:41 a.m. — A city police officer says, "We believe that he is barricaded in one of the offices, there's still shooting," according to body camera footage. When dispatch asks if the door is locked, a city police officer replies by referring to a specialized crow bar, saying, "I am not sure but we have a hooligan to break it." School surveillance footage shows two constables, a fire marshal and a Uvalde city police officer. After arriving on the north end of the hallway, Constable Johnny Field began communicating by phone with Arredondo, who was on the south end, the state House report says. Arredondo told the committee that the only direction he gave, through Field, was to evacuate kids and to test keys. The report says the city's acting police chief that day, Pargas, dominated the north end of the building. Pargas told the committee he figured Arredondo was in command but he was never in communication with him and did not coordinate with any other responding agencies.

11:42 a.m. — A state trooper and two city police officers enter from the east hallway, according to school surveillance footage.

11:43 a.m. — After radio traffic indicates the attacker is in room 112 and the question is asked whether students are in there, Coronado asks for a mirror to look around corners. A voice on the radio says, "the class should be in session," the state House report says, citing Coronado's body camera footage. The report says that after the initial responders took fire, Coronado remained outside for about 30 minutes, advising officers about potential crossfire in the hall and helping evacuate students through windows on the west side of the building.

11:44 a.m. — Ramos fires one round, according to school surveillance footage. A city police officer says, "Have some officers that are available get everybody back," according to body camera footage.

11:48 a.m. — Body camera footage shows school district officer Ruben Ruiz, the husband of one of the teachers in the classrooms, enter the building through the west door and tell other officers, "She says she is shot." His wife, Eva Mireles, who was in room 112, later dies. McCraw says on June 21: "What happened to (Ruiz) is he tried to move forward into the hallway, he was detained and they took his gun away from him and they escorted him from the scene." He did not say exactly when that was.

11:50 a.m. — Body camera footage shows an unknown officer saying, "They need to get out of the hallway." The state House report says Coronado replies: "Chief is in there. Chief is in charge right now." The report says that suggests Arredondo was in control and in communication with the other side of the building.

11:51 a.m. — Seven Border Patrol agents enter through the west door, according to school surveillance footage.

11:52 a.m. — The first ballistic shield is bought into the building through the west door, according to school surveillance footage. Body camera footage captures a city police officer saying, "Units just showing up, can you help with crowd control?" McCraw says on June 21, "So, officers after 11:52 were being diverted to crowd control activities."

11:53 a.m. — Body camera footage shows an unknown officer telling a DPS special agent that all they currently need is perimeter. Someone asks whether there are still kids inside, and the DPS special agent responds: "If there is then they just need to go in."

11:54 a.m. — According to body camera footage, a DPS agent asks an unknown officer, "Are kids still in there?" The officer responds, "It's unknown at this time." A city police officer says: "He's in classroom 111 or 112. But chief is making contact with him. No one has made contact with him."

11:56 a.m. — According to body camera footage, an unidentified officer says, "Y'all don't know if there's kids in there?" The state House report says that DPS Special Agent Luke Williams replied, "If there's kids in there, we need to go in there." The unknown officer says: "What's that?" The DPS special agent says,

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"If there's kids in there, we need to go in there." The unknown officer says, "Whoever is in charge will determine that." The state House report says Williams then resumes clearing classrooms, which he'd started upon his arrival after disregarding a request to assist on the perimeter. The state House report notes that at this time, according to a timeline released by DPS, radio communication of unknown origin says it's "critical for everybody to let PD take point on this." The state House report says none of the witnesses interviewed indicated any knowledge of that communication, nor did they know what it meant. The report says the consensus of those interviewed was that officers on the scene either assumed Arredondo was in charge or couldn't tell that anyone was in charge.

11:58 a.m. — According to a phone recording, when an unidentified officer asks where the shooter is, another unidentified officer replies: "The school chief of police is in there with him." According to body camera footage, a DPS special agent says: "It sounds like a hostage rescue situation. Sounds like a rescue, they should probably go in."

12:01 a.m. — According to body camera, when a DPS special agent says he wants to clear more rooms, an unidentified officer says, "Don't you think we should have a supervisor approve that?" The DPS special agent replies, "He's not my supervisor."

12:03 p.m. — A 911 call from a student inside the classroom comes in, and that is relayed on police radio, the state House report says. The girl was in room 112, and was the only uninjured child in that room, according to McCraw. Eight children and two teachers were killed in the classroom and nine children were injured, he says on June 21. Surveillance shows a second ballistic shield being carried into the building through the west door, where as many as 19 officers were in the hallway outside the classrooms where Ramos was holed up.

12:04 p.m. — School surveillance shows a third ballistic shield being carried into the building.

12:06 p.m. — Anne Marie Espinoza, a school district spokeswoman, posts on the district's Facebook page: "All campuses are under a Lockdown Status. Uvalde CISD Parents: Please know at this time all campuses are under a Lockdown Status due to gunshots in the area. The students and staff are safe in the buildings. The buildings are secure in a Lockdown Status. Your cooperation is needed at this time by not visiting the campus. As soon as the Lockdown Status is lifted you will be notified. Thank you for your cooperation!"

12:09 p.m. — According to body camera footage, a city police officer says, "Go around and get the master key to the rooms."

12:10 p.m. — Members of a U.S. Border Patrol tactical team arrive, according to body camera footage. The first group of deputy U.S. marshals from Del Rio arrive from nearly 70 miles (115 kilometers) away to assist officers on the scene, according to the Marshals Service. The female student who called 911 at 12:03 p.m. calls 911 again and says there are multiple dead, McCraw says on May 27.

12:11 p.m. — Arredondo requests the master key, according to body camera footage.

12:13 p.m. — The female student calls 911 again, McCraw says on May 27.

12:14 p.m. — Arredondo tells officers to have a sniper on the east roof, according to body camera footage.

12:15 p.m. — A Border Patrol tactical team member enters the building, according to school surveillance footage.

12:16 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says, "I just need a key." The female student who called 911 earlier calls again and says there are eight to nine students alive, McCraw says on May 27.

12:17 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "Tell them to (obscenity) wait. No one comes in."

12:19 p.m. — A girl in room 111 calls 911 and ends the call when a fellow student tells her to hang up, McCraw says May 27.

12:20 p.m. — A fourth ballistic shield is brought into the building through the west door, according to school surveillance footage. It is the only shield that was rifle-rated, the state House report says.

12:21 p.m. — Ramos fires four rounds, according to school surveillance footage. According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "Can you go get a breaching tool? Like for a trailer house?" McCraw says during his June 21 testimony, "So if this is a barricaded subject, why is he still firing?"

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12:23 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "We've lost two kids. These walls are thin. If he starts shooting we're going to lose more kids. I hate to say we have to put those to the side right now."

12:24 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo tries to communicate with Ramos in English and Spanish. "The entire communications was always one way. The suspect never communicated. So it wasn't communication, we're talking at," McCraw said on June 21.

12:26 p.m. — According to body camera footage, an unknown officer says: "There's a teacher shot in there." A city police officer replies, "I know."

12:27 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "People are going to ask why we're taking so long. We're trying to preserve the rest of the life." He then said: "Do we have a team ready to go? Do we have a team ready to go? Have at it."

12:28 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "There is a window over there obviously. The door is probably going to be locked. That is the nature of this place. I am going to get some more keys to test." He then says: "These master keys aren't working here, bro. We have master keys and they're not working."

Just before 12:30 p.m. — The state House report reports a burst of activity on the north side, including officers apparently preparing to breach the classrooms, indicating the Border Patrol tactical team had assumed command.

12:30 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "OK. We've cleared out everything except for that room. We still have people down there just past the flag to the right. But, uh, we're ready to breach but that door is locked."

12:33 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "I say we breach through those windows and shoot his (obscenity) head off through the windows."

12:35 p.m. — A breaching tool is brought into the building through the west door, according to school surveillance footage. The state House committee says it received no evidence that the arrival of the breaching tool was ever communicated to Arredondo.

12:36 p.m. — A 911 call that lasts for about 21 seconds comes in. Around this time a student calls 911 and is told to stay on the line and stay very quiet, McCraw says on May 27. "He shot the door," the girl says.

12:38 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo tries again to communicate with Ramos in English and Spanish.

12:41 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "Just so you understand, we think there are some injuries in there. And so you know what we did, we cleared off the rest of the building so we wouldn't have anymore besides what's already in there, obviously."

12:42 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "We're having a (obscenity) problem getting into the room because it is locked. He's got an AR-15 and he's shooting everywhere like crazy. So, he's stopped."

12:43 p.m. — The girl who called 911 and was told to stay on the line urges the dispatcher to "please send the police now," McCraw says on May 27. According to body camera footage, Arredondo says: "They gotta get that (obscenity) door open, bro. They can't get that door open. We need more keys or something."

12:46 p.m. — According to body camera footage, Arredondo says, "If y'all are ready to do it, you do it but you should distract him out that window." McCraw says on May 27 that at this time, the girl who called 911 and was told to stay on the line says she can "hear the police next door."

12:47 p.m. — A sledgehammer is brought into the building through the east hallway, according to school surveillance footage. McCraw says on May 27 that the girl still on the line with the 911 dispatcher says, "Please send the police now."

12:50 p.m. — Officers breach the classroom and fatally shoot Ramos, according to surveillance footage. McCraw asserts on May 27 that they breached the door using keys they got from the janitor because the door was locked. But on June 21, he says the classroom door could not be locked from the inside and there was no indication officers tried to open it during the standoff. He also says a teacher reported before

the shooting that the lock was broken.

Arredondo tells the state House committee that he didn't send in the Border Patrol tactical team that eventually breached the classroom. Paul Guerrero, the acting commander of the Border Patrol team, tells the committee that after obtaining a master key, he had another agent use the rifle-rated shield to cover him as he placed a key in the door to room 111 and opened it. The committee notes there's reason to question if the door was actually locked. Guerrero says Ramos was standing in front of a closet in the corner of the room 111 when the officers rushed in. He said Ramos fired at the officers, who returned fire and killed him.

State police say an hour and 14 minutes went by from the time police entered the school to when Ramos was killed.

Deadly Minneapolis standoff stokes mistrust of police

By STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The shooting of a young Black man whose family says he was experiencing a mental health crisis has stoked some activists' mistrust of the Minneapolis Police Department and their perception that officers are quick to take Black lives while going to greater lengths to capture white suspects alive.

The department and the state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension hadn't said as of Tuesday what led two police snipers to shoot and kill 20-year-old Andrew Tekle Sundberg early Thursday after a six-hour standoff. And they had not released police video of the confrontation.

"We want to be treated the same way they treat white people in the same situation," said Trahern Crews, a leader of Black Lives Matter Minnesota and an organizer of a protest at the scene.

Police said they rushed to the scene after a 911 call from a woman who said a neighbor — Sundberg — was firing a gun into her apartment and endangering her 2- and 4-year-old sons. They said they evacuated the woman and other residents and worked for hours to persuade Sundberg to surrender.

"All were working together to try and reach a peaceful resolution amid dangerous circumstances while keeping nearby residents safe," Mayor Jacob Frey said at the time. He called it "not the outcome anyone wanted." City officials have been silent since then on exactly why officers fired, with the investigation now in the hands of the state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

Sundberg's death comes just over two years after the killing of George Floyd by Officer Derek Chauvin, and a few months after the killing of Amir Locke by a Minneapolis SWAT team member just seconds after they burst into an apartment to execute a no-knock search warrant. Prosecutors declined to charge the officer because Locke raised a gun, but Locke's family said the Black man was just startled.

The fact that the standoff lasted six hours doesn't matter in determining whether the shooting of Sundberg was justified, said John Baker, a professor of criminal justice studies at St. Cloud State University who trains aspiring law enforcement officers.

"What matters is, at the time the snipers fired, what was going on? Was there an imminent threat to themselves or others at that specific time?" Baker said. He said the fact that both officers fired suggested they were ordered to do so.

"I just cannot see a scenario in this day and age — as well as these cops are trained in de-escalation — anyone is going to give them the order to stop this unless there is an imminent threat to the lives of police officers or other people," he said.

A demonstration outside the building turned tense Saturday when Arabella Foss-Yarbrough, the neighbor who called 911, confronted Crews and other protesters. She said the situation was not comparable to the killing of Floyd, who was unarmed, and asked whether the protesters would have stood up for her if she had been killed.

"This is not OK," Yarbrough shouted at the protesters. "If I'm going to die, would he be a bad guy then?"

Sundberg often went by his middle name of Tekle. His parents, Mark and Cindy Sundberg, who are white and adopted him from Ethiopia when he was a young child, were at the protest. They expressed sympathy for Foss-Yarbrough but said they did not believe their son deserved to die.

Their attorney, Jeff Storms, who's also part of the Floyd family's legal team, did not immediately respond to messages Tuesday.

Crews, the Black Lives Matter activist, said in an interview that protesters "were in no way condoning what Tekle did."

But he said he and other protesters don't believe the police were justified in killing Sundberg. He pointed out that police shot Sundberg several hours after they evacuated people from the building and surrounding area. To Crews, it was just another example of a Black man getting killed in a confrontation with police, while suspects of other races are taken alive. He pointed out that on the same morning Sundberg was killed, police in the southern Minnesota city of Faribault captured a man alive after a five-hour standoff by using less-lethal munitions. Faribault police identified him as Hispanic, and he's now free on bail.

"He's alive, and this is in Minnesota on the same day Tekle was killed. He can talk about it. Tekle can't talk about it," he said. "That's why we're upset."

Crews also cited the capture of the white gunman charged in the slayings of seven people at a July 4 parade in the Chicago suburb of Highland Park, Illinois, and the white 18-year-old charged with fatally shooting 10 Black people at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York, in May. And he contrasted them with the police killings of Jayland Walker last month in Akron, Ohio, and Thurman Blevins in Minneapolis in 2018, two Black men who were fleeing officers when they were shot.

Most major nations lag in acting on climate-fighting goals

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — For most of the major carbon-polluting nations, promising to fight climate change is a lot easier than actually doing it. In the United States, President Joe Biden has learned that the hard way.

Among the 10 biggest carbon emitters, only the European Union has enacted policies close to or consistent with international goals of limiting warming to just a few more tenths of a degrees, according to scientists and experts who track climate action in countries.

But Europe, which is broiling through a record-smashing heat wave and hosting climate talks this week, also faces a short-term winter energy crunch, which could cause the continent to backtrack a tad and push other nations into longer, dirtier energy deals, experts said.

"Even if Europe meets all of its climate goals and the rest of us don't, we all lose," said Kate Larsen, head of international energy and climate for the research firm Rhodium Group. Emissions of heat-trapping gases don't stop at national borders, nor does the extreme weather that's being felt throughout the Northern Hemisphere.

"It's a grim outlook. There's no getting away from it, I'm afraid," said climate scientist Bill Hare, CEO of Climate Analytics. His group joined with the New Climate Institute to create the Climate Action Tracker, which analyzes nations' climate targets and policies compared to the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The tracker describes as "insufficient" the policies and actions of the world's top two carbon polluters, China and the U.S., as well as Japan, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. It calls Russia and South Korea's policies "highly insufficient," and Iran comes in as "critically insufficient." Hare says No. 3 emitter India "remains an enigma."

"We are losing ground against ambitious goals" such as keeping global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) or 1.5 Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times, said veteran international climate negotiator Nigel Purvis of Climate Advisers. The world has already warmed 1.1 degrees (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times.

Seven years ago, when almost all the nations of the world were preparing for what would become the Paris climate agreement, "it was all about ambition and setting ambitious targets," Larsen said. "Now we are transitioning into a new phase that's really about implementation ... I don't think the international community knows how to do implementation."

Other nations and the United Nations can pressure countries to set goals, but enacting laws and rules is

a tougher sell. While Europe has been successful with “a long history of implementing and ratcheting up existing policies,” Larsen said, that’s not the case in the United States. The U.S. is on path to cut emissions by 24% to 35% below 2005 levels by 2030, far shy of the nation’s pledge to reduce emissions by 50% to 52% in that time, according to a new analysis by Rhodium Group.

Biden is running low on options, said Larsen, a report co-author. Congress — specifically key Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia — is balking on the president’s climate-fighting legislation, and the Supreme Court curbed power plant regulations.

Congressional action “was a big window of opportunity that would have allowed us to be on track to our goal,” Larsen said. A second window is available in “the suite of federal regulations that the Biden administration plans to release.”

“These are the two big deciders of whether the U.S. will meet its target, and one we have largely failed on. So in that sense, it is a big miss because these opportunities don’t come along very often,” she said.

“The U.S. can get close” to reaching its goal, but it’s not close yet, Larsen said. Whether that happens “depends on the next three to 18 months of what the administration does.”

Other nations, particularly China, look at what the U.S. is doing to fight climate change and are reluctant to ratchet up their efforts if America isn’t doing much, Purvis and Hare said.

At the urging of activists and some Democrats, the Biden administration is considering declaring a national emergency because of climate change and using special powers to cut carbon pollution from power plants and vehicles. Calling it an emergency is not enough; what matters is the actions that follow, Purvis said.

Biden could put a moratorium on federal lands and water. He could reinstate a ban on U.S. oil exports. He could move up spending on wind and solar. But all are subject to a conservative Supreme Court.

“The big question is where can Biden go with executive orders and how convincing is that going to be to other leaders?” Hare said.

Elsewhere in the world, “the Russian energy crisis has definitely been a major setback,” Hare said. It’s a short-term problem for Europe, and it’s even loosened some of their rules, but “their long-term policy framework is very robust, and this might help them double down on alternative energy,” Larsen said.

But the panic over natural gas has other countries, specifically in Africa, jumping onto the bandwagon of liquified natural gas, which still emits carbon. The pivot to LNG has added 15% to 20% to the amount that the world uses, Hare said.

While there is a risk Europe might add infrastructure for natural gas that will be hard to abandon, it looks like the Russian invasion of Ukraine strengthened Europe’s resolve to reduce Russia’s energy influence and get off fossil fuels, Purvis said.

There are other places where weaning the world off carbon looks more possible. A new report from the International Renewable Energy Agency found the cost of electricity last year from onshore wind fell by 15%, offshore wind by 13% and solar panels by 13% compared to 2020.

Meanwhile, electric vehicle sales in America are rising, and the time when they could hit “escape velocity” and really make a difference is on the horizon, Larsen said.

Twitter-Musk takeover dispute heading for an October trial

By MATT O’BRIEN AP Technology Reporter

Tesla CEO Elon Musk lost his fight to delay Twitter’s lawsuit against him as a Delaware judge on Tuesday set an October trial, citing the “cloud of uncertainty” over the social media company after the billionaire backed out of a deal to buy it.

“Delay threatens irreparable harm,” said Chancellor Kathaleen St. Jude McCormick, the head judge of Delaware’s Court of Chancery, which handles many high-profile business disputes. “The longer the delay, the greater the risk.”

Twitter had asked for an expedited trial in September, while Musk’s team called for waiting until early next year because of the complexity of the case. McCormick said Musk’s team underestimated the Delaware court’s ability to “quickly process complex litigation.”

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Twitter is trying to force the billionaire to make good on his April promise to buy the social media giant for \$44 billion — and the company wants it to happen quickly because it says the ongoing dispute is harming its business.

"It's a very favorable ruling for Twitter in terms of moving things along," said Carl Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond. "She seemed very concerned about the argument that delay would seriously harm the company, and I think that's true."

Musk, the world's richest man, pledged to pay \$54.20 a share for Twitter, but informed the company in July that he wants to back out of the agreement.

"It's attempted sabotage. He's doing his best to run Twitter down," said attorney William Savitt, representing Twitter before McCormick on Tuesday. The hearing was held virtually after McCormick said she tested positive for COVID-19.

Musk has claimed the company has failed to provide adequate information about the number of fake, or "spam bot," Twitter accounts, and that it has breached its obligations under the deal by firing top managers and laying off a significant number of employees. Musk's team expects more information about the bot numbers to be revealed in the trial court discovery process, when both sides must hand over evidence.

Twitter argues that Musk's reasons for backing out are just a cover for buyer's remorse after agreeing to pay 38% above Twitter's stock price shortly before the stock market stumbled and shares of the electric-car maker Tesla, where most of Musk's personal wealth resides, lost more than \$100 billion of their value.

Savitt said the contested merger agreement and Musk's tweets disparaging the company were inflicting harm on the business and questioned Musk's request for a delayed trial, asking "whether the real plan is to run out the clock."

"He's banking on wriggling out of the deal he signed," Savitt said.

But the idea the Tesla CEO is trying to damage Twitter is "preposterous. He has no interest in damaging the company," said Musk attorney Andrew Rossman, noting he is Twitter's second largest shareholder with a "far larger stake" than the company's entire board of directors.

Savitt emphasized the importance of an expedited trial starting in September for Twitter to be able to make important business decisions affecting everything from employee retention to relationships with suppliers and customers.

Rossman said more time is needed because it is "one of the largest take-private deals in history" involving a "company that has a massive amount of data that has to be analyzed. Billions of actions on their platform have to be analyzed."

Tobias said it's still possible that Musk and Twitter will settle the case before it goes to trial, since both might find a drawn-out fight or the judge's final decisions costly to their businesses and reputations. One option is that Musk could pay the \$1 billion breakup fee both he and Twitter agreed to if either was deemed responsible for the deal falling through. Or Twitter could push for him to pay more to make up for damages — just not the full \$44 billion acquisition.

"Does Musk really want to run that company? Do they really want Musk to run that company?" Tobias said. "They could always settle somewhere in between."

UK breaks record for highest temperature as Europe sizzles

By DANICA KIRKA and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain shattered its record for highest temperature ever registered Tuesday amid a heat wave that has seared swaths of Europe, as the U.K.'s national weather forecaster said such highs are now a fact of life in a country ill-prepared for such extremes.

The typically temperate nation was just the latest to be walloped by unusually hot, dry weather that has triggered wildfires from Portugal to the Balkans and led to hundreds of heat-related deaths. Images of flames racing toward a French beach and Britons sweltering — even at the seaside — have driven home concerns about climate change.

The U.K. Met Office weather agency registered a provisional reading of 40.3 degrees Celsius (104.5

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degrees Fahrenheit) at Coningsby in eastern England — breaking the record set just hours earlier. Before Tuesday, the highest temperature recorded in Britain was 38.7 C (101.7 F), set in 2019. By later afternoon, 29 places in the UK had broken the record.

As the nation watched with a combination of horror and fascination, Met Office chief scientist Stephen Belcher said such temperatures in Britain were “virtually impossible” without human-driven climate change.

He warned that “we could see temperatures like this every three years” without serious action on carbon emissions.

The sweltering weather has disrupted travel, health care and schools. Many homes, small businesses and even public buildings, including hospitals, in Britain don’t have air conditioning, a reflection of how unusual such heat is in the country better known for rain and mild temperatures.

The intense heat since Monday has damaged the runway at London’s Luton airport, forcing it to shut for several hours, and warped a main road in eastern England, leaving it looking like a “skatepark,” police said. Major train stations were shut or near-empty Tuesday, as trains were canceled or ran at low speeds out of concern rails could buckle.

London faced what Mayor Sadiq Khan called a “huge surge” in fires because of the heat. The London Fire Brigade listed 10 major blazes it was fighting across the city Tuesday, half of them grass fires. Images showed several houses engulfed in flames as smoke billowed from burning fields in Wennington, a village on the eastern outskirts of London.

Sales of fans at one retailer, Asda, increased by 1,300%. Electric fans cooled the traditional mounted troops of the Household Cavalry as they stood guard in central London in heavy ceremonial uniforms. The length of the changing of the guard ceremony at Buckingham Palace was shortened. The capital’s Hyde Park, normally busy with walkers, was eerily quiet — except for the long lines to take a dip in the Serpentine lake.

“I’m going to my office because it is nice and cool,” said geologist Tom Elliott, 31, after taking a swim. “I’m cycling around instead of taking the Tube.”

Ever the stalwart, Queen Elizabeth II carried on working. The 96-year-old monarch held a virtual audience with new U.S. ambassador Jane Hartley from the safety of Windsor Castle.

A huge chunk of England, from London in the south to Manchester and Leeds in the north, remained under the country’s first “red” warning for extreme heat Tuesday, meaning there is danger of death even for healthy people.

Such dangers could be seen in Britain and across Europe. At least six people were reported to have drowned while trying to cool off in rivers, lakes and reservoirs across the U.K. In Spain and neighboring Portugal, hundreds of heat-related deaths have been reported in the heat wave.

Climate experts warn that global warming has increased the frequency of extreme weather events, with studies showing that the likelihood of temperatures in the U.K. reaching 40 C (104 F) is now 10 times higher than in the pre-industrial era.

The head of the U.N. weather agency expressed hope that the heat gripping Europe would serve as a “wake-up call” for governments to do more on climate change. Other scientists used the milestone moment to underscore that it was time to act.

“While still rare, 40C is now a reality of British summers,” said Friederike Otto, Senior Lecturer in Climate Science at Imperial College London’s Grantham Institute for Climate Change. “Whether it will become a very common occurrence or remains relatively infrequent is in our hands and is determined by when and at what global mean temperature we reach net zero.”

Extreme heat broiled other parts of Europe, too. In Paris, the thermometer in the French capital’s oldest weather station — opened in 1873 — topped 40 C (104 F) for just the third time. The 40.5 C (104.9 F) measured there by weather service Météo-France on Tuesday was the station’s second-highest reading ever, topped only by a blistering 42.6 C (108.7 F) in July 2019.

Drought and heat waves tied to climate change have also made wildfires more common and harder to fight.

In the Gironde region of southwestern France, ferocious wildfires continued to spread through tinder-dry pines forests, frustrating firefighting efforts by more than 2,000 firefighters and water-bombing planes.

Tens of thousands of people have been evacuated from homes and summer vacation spots since the fires broke out July 12, Gironde authorities said.

A smaller third fire broke out late Monday in the Medoc wine region north of Bordeaux, further taxing resources. Five camping sites went up in flames in the Atlantic coast beach zone where blazes raged around the Arcachon maritime basin famous for its oysters and resorts.

In Greece, a large forest fire broke out northeast of Athens, fanned by high winds. Fire Service officials said nine firefighting aircraft and four helicopters were deployed to try to stop the flames from reaching inhabited areas on the slopes of Mount Penteli, some 25 kilometers (16 miles) northeast of the capital. Smoke from the fire blanketed part of the city's skyline.

But weather forecasts offered some consolation, with temperatures expected to ease along the Atlantic seaboard Tuesday and the possibility of rains rolling in late in the day.

Emmett Till's house, Black sites to get landmarks funds

By DON BABWIN Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Emmett Till left his mother's house on Chicago's South Side in 1955 to visit relatives in Mississippi, where the Black teenager was abducted and brutally slain for reportedly whistling at a white woman.

A cultural preservation organization announced Tuesday that the house will receive a share of \$3 million in grants being distributed to 33 sites and organizations nationwide that are important pieces of African American history.

Some of the grant money from the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund will go to rehabilitate buildings, such as a bank in Mississippi founded by businessman Charles Banks, who won praise from Booker T. Washington; the first Black masonic lodge in North Carolina; and a school in rural Florida for the children of Black farm workers and laborers.

The money will also help restore the Virginia home where tennis coach Dr. Robert Walter "Whirlwind" Johnson helped turn Black athletes such as Arthur Ashe and Althea Gibson into champions, rehabilitate the Blue Bird Inn in Detroit that is considered the birthplace of bebop jazz, and protect and preserve African American cemeteries in Pennsylvania and a tiny island off the coast of South Carolina.

Brent Leggs, executive director of the organization that is in its fifth year of awarding the grants, said the effort is intended to fill "some gaps in the nation's understanding of the civil rights movement."

Till's brutal slaying helped galvanize the civil rights movement. The Chicago home where Mamie Till Mobley and her son lived will receive funding for a project director to oversee restoration efforts, including renovating the second floor to what it looked like when the Tills lived there.

"This house is a sacred treasure from our perspective and our goal is to restore it and reinvent it as an international heritage pilgrimage destination," said Naomi Davis, executive director of Blacks in Green, a local nonprofit group that bought the house in 2020. She said the plan is to time the 2025 opening with that of the Obama Presidential Library a few miles away.

Leggs said it is particularly important to do something that shines a light on Mamie Till Mobley. After her 14-year-old son's lynching, Till Mobley insisted that his body be displayed in an open casket as it looked when it was pulled from a river, to show the world what racism looked like.

It was a display that influenced thousands of mourners who filed by the casket and the millions more who saw the photographs in Jet Magazine — one of whom was Rosa Parks whose refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus to a white man about three months later remains one of the pivotal acts of defiance in American history.

"It was a catalytic moment in the civil rights movement and through this we lift and honor Black women in civil rights," Leggs said.

And the news follows a recent revelation about the discovery of an unserved arrest warrant of the woman

whose accusation put in motion the chain of events that led to the teen's lynching.

The house and the story of the casket highlight the risks that the remnants of such history can vanish if not protected. As recently as 2019 when it was sold to a developer, the red brick Victorian house built more than a century earlier was falling into disrepair before it was granted landmark status by the city of Chicago. And the glass-topped casket that held Till's remains was only donated to the Smithsonian Institution because it was discovered in 2009 rusting in a shed at a suburban Chicago cemetery where it was discarded after the teen's body was exhumed years earlier.

That discovery of the casket, which only happened because of a scandal at the cemetery, underscores how easily significant pieces of history can simply vanish, said Annie Wright, whose late husband, Simeon, was sleeping with his cousin, Emmett, the night he was abducted.

"We got to remember what happened and if we don't tell it, if people don't see (the house) they'll forget and we don't want to forget tragedy in these United States," said Wright, 76.

Caster Semenya is back, so is her sport's thorniest problem

By GERALD IMRAY AP Sports Writer

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — Champion runner Caster Semenya heads into this year's world championships with virtually no chance to win.

On Wednesday in Eugene, Oregon, the 31-year-old, three-time world champion at 800 meters will run instead in the 5,000-meter race. She is not considered a serious medal contender. It's the first time since she started dominating her favorite distance well over a decade ago that anybody has said that.

The South African chose to run in a race she doesn't really want to be in, and one she's not so good at, because she has declined to submit to rules in track and field that demand she take hormone-reducing treatments if she wants to enter the 800.

They are rules that Semenya, in a statement through her lawyer, calls "an affront to the spirit of the sport."

Semenya was assigned female at birth, was raised as a girl and identifies as a woman. She has an intersex condition called 46,XY differences in sex development that causes male and female traits and a testosterone level higher than the typical female range. She was banned from her best event after losing her appeal of a World Athletics regulation that made women with her condition ineligible for some races.

She is not transgender. Still, her case, and those involving others who have similar intersex conditions, carries strong implications for how transgender athletes are treated and classified.

Semenya's situation, and the similar plight of 200-meter Olympic silver medalist Christine Mboma, are the most relevant illustrations of how complex track's rules are regarding the participation of women who have high natural testosterone and what some say is an unfair athletic advantage over other women.

For instance, the rules, which will be revisited soon, bar Semenya and others from running distances between 400 meters and 1 mile unless they suppress their testosterone. They are free to run in other events. So, while Mboma has been eligible to run in the 200, Semenya must sit out of the 800.

Mboma is injured this summer and did not travel to Eugene. Semenya wasn't expected to come either, but out of nowhere, her name showed up on the start list for the longer race.

The related but separate issue of transgender women in sports again burst into the spotlight last month when international leaders in swimming made their own rules change. They banned transgender women from elite competitions if they hadn't begun medical treatment to suppress testosterone production before either the onset of puberty or by age 12, whichever comes later.

World Athletics President Sebastian Coe quickly showed his support for swimming's move and said track's governing body would review its rules by the end of the year, likely with a view to making them stricter.

"The balance between inclusivity and fairness will always, in my view, fall now on the side of fairness," Coe said on the eve of these worlds, indicating where track might be going when its rule-makers meet in November.

Such a recalibration of the rules would likely only hurt, not help, Semenya's cause.

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In a rare interview she gave on HBO's "Real Sports" earlier this year, she said she once told track officials: "It's fine. I'm a female, I don't care. If you want to see I'm a woman, I will show you my vagina. All right?"

Critics of World Athletics say its recent trend of essentially lumping together the transgender and intersex issues is problematic. Coe has often used the phrase "biology trumps identity" as a catch-all defense for restrictions in both, breezing over the nuance.

Track's two rule sets do have crossover in that both, broadly, require athletes to reduce their natural testosterone to compete.

While the DSD regulations, in place since 2019, have real-life impact on athletes and careers, transgender regulations don't at this point because there are no transgender women in top-level track and field. Neither are there in swimming.

That's left Roger Pielke Jr., a professor at the University of Colorado Boulder and a sports governance expert, concluding the leaders of those two key Olympic sports are in "a moral panic" over transgender athletes that just aren't there.

"We're just shadow boxing now," Pielke said. "As if there's not bigger issues sport could deal with."

Swimming's sweeping ban was a bad precedent, said Joanna Harper, a transgender woman and adviser to World Athletics on its transgender and DSD policies. She supports some regulations but FINA, the sport's international governing federation, left no room for compromise.

"Did they set the world stirring? You bet they did," Harper said. "But I don't think it was necessary and I don't think it was justified."

Harper said FINA's move was obviously influenced by American transgender swimmer Lia Thomas, who has broken barriers at the college level amid controversy and spoken of her desire to swim at the Olympics one day, putting FINA on alert. But if USA Swimming adopts FINA's ban, thereby actually impacting an athlete, Harper said it was "very likely" Thomas would go to court.

That legal risk is relevant when trying to evaluate if a wave of sports will follow swimming's transgender lead, and if across-the-board bans can last.

As much as the decision in swimming, a major catalyst for World Athletics' move to revisit its rules might have been the arrival of the young Namibian sprinter, Mboma. She won a silver medal in the 200 — a distance at which she remains eligible — at last year's Tokyo Olympics, her first major meet. The win came just months after Mboma was forced to switch from the 400 because of high natural testosterone.

The then-unknown teenager broke the world under-20 record three times in a week on the way to her silver and blew past some of the world's best runners with the rawest of running styles. She did what Semenya has so far been unable to do by exploiting the distance loopholes in the DSD rules to win a medal. It went counter to what World Athletics was seeking when it adopted the rules.

Supporters of testosterone regulations have used Mboma's sudden success as some level of evidence for the advantages of testosterone in races outside the 400-meter through 1-mile distances that are currently regulated.

Harper thinks there needs to be compromise by both sides over the transgender and DSD rules that leads to "a reasonable outcome that maybe makes no one entirely happy."

Automakers targeting average households with new crop of EVs

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

WARREN, Mich. (AP) — In their first rollouts of electric vehicles, America's automakers targeted people who value short-range economy cars. Then came EVs for luxury buyers and drivers of pickups and delivery vans.

Now, the companies are zeroing in at the heart of the U.S. auto market: The compact SUV. In their drive to have EVs dominate vehicle sales in coming years, the automakers are promoting their new models as having the range, price and features to rival their gas-powered competitors.

Some are so far proving quite popular. Ford's \$45,000-plus Mustang Mach E is sold out for the model year. On Monday night, General Motors' Chevrolet brand introduced an electric version of its Blazer, also

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starting around \$45,000, when it goes on sale next summer.

Also coming next year: An electric Chevy Equinox, with a base price of about \$30,000, whose price could give it particular appeal with modest-income households. There's also the Hyundai Ioniq 5 and Volkswagen's ID.4 in the \$40,000s and Nissan's upcoming Ariya around \$47,000 with a lower-priced version coming.

All start off considerably less expensive than Tesla's Model Y small SUV, the current top EV seller, with a starting price well into the \$60,000s.

The new models, which can get about 300 miles per electric charge, are aimed at the largest segment of the U.S. market: Modest-size SUVs, representing about 20% of new-vehicle sales. Industry experts say entering the smaller SUV segment, with its reach into a broader demographic of buyers, is sure to boost electric vehicle sales nationally.

"Going to the smaller utility segment gives you the opportunity to access the most customers in one (market) segment," said Stephanie Brinley, principal analyst for S&P Global Mobility. "To make a transition from (internal combustion engines) to electric, you have to be in more space. You have to be in more price points. You have to be in more sizes."

Brinley noted that the small and midsize SUV segments meet many people's needs, something that previous electric vehicles did not.

"If it's a price you can reach but it's a product that you can't put your kids and your dog in, you're not going to buy it," she said.

Chevrolet says the Blazer will get a minimum of 247 miles (398 kilometers) per charge. Pricier high-end versions could go up to 320 miles (515 kilometers). The Blazer will be available with Chevrolet's SS performance package with a zero-to-60 mph (97 kilometers per hour) time of under four seconds. There will be a police version, too.

"Early on, the demographic composition of an EV buyer was certainly someone that perhaps had higher education, higher household income," said Steve Majoros, Chevrolet's marketing director. "That's very indicative of early adopters. But as we move up that curve, the intention and where we're pricing this product is to certainly make it more available for more mainstream buyers."

To attract buyers of modest means, EVs need to be priced even lower, in the \$30,000-to-\$35,000 range, GM CEO Mary Barra said in an interview this week with The Associated Press. Electric vehicles, she said, also have to have the range and charging network so they can be the sole vehicle that some people own.

"Most electric vehicle owners today own multiple vehicles, so they have an internal combustion vehicle to jump into depending on their needs," Barra said.

Automakers have been pushing to fully restore a \$7,500 tax credit for people who buy EVs to jump-start sales. But the measure is stalled in Congress. It's especially important for GM, Tesla and Toyota, which have maxxed out the number of credits they are allowed and can no longer offer them to buyers. Other automakers are approaching the limit, too.

Money for the credits, as well as funding for additional EV charging stations, was in President Joe Biden's \$1.8 trillion "Build Back Better" social and environment bill, which is all but dead because of the objections of Sen. Joe Manchin, a West Virginia Democrat.

Last week, Manchin also rejected a slimmed-down version that included provisions to combat climate change. He indicated his support for just two items from Biden's broader agenda: Reducing prescription drug costs and bolstering subsidies for families to buy health insurance. His vote in an evenly split Senate would be needed for anything to pass.

Even without the tax credit, the industry's march toward electric vehicles is moving apace. Edmunds.com says electric vehicles now account for about 5% of U.S. new vehicle sales with 46 models on sale. S&P's Brinley foresees the market share rising to 8% next year, 15% by 2025 and 37% by 2030.

"It seems like the number of choices are growing exponentially for electric vehicles as we move forward," said Erich Merkle, Ford's top U.S. sales analyst.

Demand for battery-powered vehicles and gas-electric hybrids has grown as gasoline prices skyrocketed this year. Dealers report that every vehicle delivered is typically already sold or gone soon after it arrives.

Jonathan Chariff, CEO of South Motors, an 11-dealer group in South Florida, said it's impossible to assess just how big the demand for electric vehicles is. There's huge interest, especially in electric SUVs, and vehicles are selling fast. But the supply is constrained because automakers don't have enough computer chips to build as many vehicles as they want.

Given the enormous consumer interest in EVs, Chariff said he expects the vehicles to continue to sell even if their prices don't fall.

"The real question," he said, "is if and when the supply chain can meet the market demand, what is the true price point?"

Scars of COVID persist for sickest survivors, their families

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

Freddy Fernandez almost wasn't here, on his couch in his Missouri home, his baby on his lap, gnawing on the pulse oximeter that he uses to check his oxygen levels after a months-long bout with COVID-19.

Months after being warned that her partner might never hold his daughter, Vanessa smiles as the girl works to cut two teeth on the device that Freddy wears like a necklace, a blue ribbon tied around it.

Freddy spent five months hospitalized a four-hour drive away from the couple's home in the southwest Missouri town of Carthage on the most intense life support available. The 41-year-old father of six nearly died repeatedly and now he — like so many who survived COVID-19 hospitalizations — has returned home changed.

While more than 1 million died from COVID in the U.S., many more survived ICU stays that have left them with anxiety, PTSD and a host of health issues. Research has shown that intensive therapy starting in the ICU can help, but it was often hard to provide as hospitals teemed with patients.

"There is a human cost for ICU survivorship," says Dr. Vinaya Sermadevi, who helped care for Freddy throughout his stay at Mercy Hospital St. Louis. "It is almost like going to war and having the aftermath."

Freddy's memories from those long months come in snatches — moments where he regained consciousness, hooked up to machines to breathe for him, clinging to life. Sometimes he asked for his mother, who died of COVID-19 in September 2020.

He missed the birth of his daughter, Mariana, and the first four months of her life. He may never be able to return to his construction job. His other young daughter is terrified he'll go away again.

As the world moves on and mask mandates fall away, COVID-19 is not gone for them.

"We're left with dealing with the leftovers of what it caused," Vanessa says.

Vanessa, 28, was still pregnant with Mariana last summer when the delta variant struck poorly vaccinated southwest Missouri. She was skeptical about the vaccine, but her obstetrician reassured her it was safe and she decided to go ahead and get it.

Freddy was warming up to the idea, too. The native of Mexico City, had come to the U.S. around 20 years ago to work construction — cement jobs mostly — and was now a permanent resident. Sometimes he would work from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m., and often at least one day on the weekend.

On the very day in late August that they planned to schedule an appointment to be vaccinated, his throat began to ache. It was COVID.

Days later, with Freddy coughing and struggling to breathe, Vanessa rushed him to the emergency room at the local community hospital. Freddy, although worried about his family, recalls thinking that "it's only a little bit."

But pneumonia was running through both of his lungs. The next day, he was taken to a larger Springfield hospital that was overflowing with patients and placed on a ventilator. That too wasn't enough.

He wound up in St. Louis, nearly 270 miles away from his two young daughters; Vanessa's 10-year-old son, Miguel, who considers Freddy his father; and three other children with his ex-wife — 10-, 8- and 7-year-old boys.

It was a dark period when many people hoped the pandemic was ending, but the delta variant once

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again flooded the healthcare system. Filling shifts was a daily battle, and death was everywhere, recalls Dr. Sermadevi. She said that at the beginning of the pandemic, everyone was "stunned and astounded that this was even happening." But grief, she says, has a "cumulative effect" and by the time the delta surge came "there wasn't even room for those emotions."

Freddy was lucky, though. For all the talk of ventilator capacity, what was in shortest supply during the delta surge was something called ECMO, or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation. It is used when a ventilator isn't enough, pumping blood out of the body, oxygenating it, and then returning it.

Mercy Hospital St. Louis only had the equipment and staff to care for three ECMO patients at a time. And on Sept. 3, Freddy became one of them.

There were risks, though, to the long hospital stay he was embarking upon, says Dr. Ann Parker, a pulmonologist who co-directs the Post-Acute COVID-19 Team clinic at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Survival rates for ECMO patients slipped during the pandemic to around 50%, according to a 2021 report by the medical journal *The Lancet*.

That meant even being on the machine, his chances at surviving were far from guaranteed.

Vanessa delivered Mariana on Oct 13. Freddy had been in the hospital for 48 days, and he didn't even know he was the father of a healthy, 6-pound, 11-ounce daughter.

Far away from her fiancé, Vanessa logged into video calls with Freddy's doctors the same day she brought the newborn home. The news wasn't good — Freddy was suffering from infections and wasn't recovering well.

A lung transplant, Sermadevi said, appeared to be his best option, but was a long shot, she warned them. "I don't want to give you false hope," Sermadevi recalls telling the family. "And there is a chance that Mariana might grow up without a father."

Vanessa, helping the hospital interpreter translate for Freddy's family, glanced at the baby snuggled on a bouncy chair by her side. She was wearing the same hand knitted yellow and white sweater and booties that the couple's oldest daughter, now 4-year-old Melanii, had also worn home from the hospital.

She wanted to keep fighting.

So when the baby was just a week old, Vanessa began making the weekly drive from Carthage to St. Louis, where she stayed in a hotel from Mondays through Fridays. Freddy's sister joined her, and her parents watched the children. It meant giving up the early months with the newborn.

"I have to split myself into two," Vanessa remembers deciding. "I knew she needed me, but he also needed me. And so I knew that if I was there with him, there is a chance for him to come home and then we would all be able to be home with her. So I had to take that risk."

Some of the most important keys to recovery in critical care aren't medical. Visits from relatives, along with physical, occupational and speech therapists, have long been shown to be a difference maker for the sickest of patients.

COVID-19 upended those practices at many hospitals, as families were kept away to keep the virus from spreading.

"When our health care system starts to get overwhelmed and our hospitals start to get overwhelmed, some of those things are not prioritized as much as we would like them to be," says Sermadevi, who is the medical director of the Mercy ECMO program. "And this impacts patient care and patient outcomes."

Fears of infection, plus short staffing, also often meant less physical therapy, proven to speed recovery. When Freddy's family came, it made all the difference.

His room was transformed, photos of his family thumbtacked to the ceiling. Freddy's family held his hand when he had respiratory distress, talking him through it. He needed less sedation and pain medication because, she says, "they were that for him."

"We would just hear such love at the bedside," she says. "And I feel like there's only so much you can

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do in medicine, and then there is the rest.”

Money grew tight, though, with both Freddy and Vanessa no longer working. People showed up on the family’s doorstep. “Here,” they told her, “we know you need it.” A devout Catholic, she prayed sometimes 10 times a day, begging God, “Please, give them a miracle; heal him. He has all these kids he has to watch grow up.”

As the weeks wore on, staying on the ECMO was becoming unsustainable. There was bleeding and infections.

What followed was a careful dance that involved weaning down the ECMO settings and increasing the ventilator settings to get his lungs to do more of the work.

Dec. 2 was the day he came off the machine, and Vanessa was warned there were no guarantees that it would be a success.

“But in my mind and in my heart, I guess spiritually, I didn’t have that mentality,” Vanessa says. “I had the mentality that he was going to make it.”

That first night was fitful. After he made it through, his sister embraced the doctors. He had a chance.

With his lungs slowly improving, soon Freddy was up and trying to walk. Three people helped as he took his first steps on legs that were so numb just a few weeks earlier that he asked a cousin whether he still had them. The staff was overjoyed — a manager pulled out pom-poms, and there were streamers.

Ultimately, lung transplant talk was tabled.

By Feb. 9, he was heading home, 167 days after he first arrived at the hospital in his hometown.

Outside, the glass door of Freddy’s room, the nurses had drawn two lungs, coloring them blue and red. Next to the lungs, they wrote “We’ll be the-air for you.”

All Vanessa could think was “finally.” Freddy had never met his baby. Nor had he seen any of his other children. Their interactions had been limited to Facetime and pictures.

Freddy arrives home. Melanii is shy, hugging him briefly along with older brother Miguel, before clinging to her mother.

“I told you daddy was going to come home, right?” Vanessa tells a smiling Melanii before pulling the baby from the car seat.

“Can your daddy hold your sister?”

Vanessa kisses the baby and then lays him in Freddy’s arms. Now just days away from turning 4 months old, Mariana smiles at him.

Melanii had been his shadow before the pandemic, “Daddy’s Princess,” following him around the house and outside as he cleaned his truck. In the months that he was gone, she consoled herself by watching a video of her parents dancing to Latin country music. Her father spins her mother around; both are smiling.

Now, she is still afraid, Vanessa says, “because every time he has an appointment, she’ll say, ‘Don’t go.’ She doesn’t cry. She just says, ‘Don’t go.’”

Freddy relied on a walker and a wheelchair at first. He couldn’t sit or eat on his own.

But now the wheelchair is abandoned on the home’s back steps. He walks around the entire block, pulling a portable oxygen canister behind him on a dolly. He’s on the cusp of being able to carry his oxygen around in a backpack, which would give him more freedom.

The family spends hours outside in the late afternoon and evening, Freddy watching the children jump on the trampoline. His German Shepard sticks by his side.

“At the beginning he would be anxious,” Vanessa says. “Now I think with him seeing his own change progressing, I notice he’s been doing a lot better. I think he’s more upbeat than anybody right now. He’ll have his moments where he’s like, ‘Oh, I feel good.’”

Vanessa is returning to work, life returning “back to normal a little bit.”

They want to wait until Freddy gets better to get married.

Yet they don’t know how much better he will get — or how quickly.

Such is the story of so many, who are alive yet forever changed, says Sermadevi, who has followed his

progress from afar. Some of the nurses even became Facebook friends with Vanessa.

"It's sad and happy at the same time," she acknowledges. "And that's very hard to reconcile."

Texas school shooter left trail of ominous warning signs

By BERNARD CONDON Associated Press

The Uvalde, Texas, gunman gave off so many warning signs that he was obsessed with violence and notoriety in the months leading up to the attack that teens who knew him began calling him "school shooter."

He was once bullied as a fourth-grader in one of the same classrooms where he killed 19 children and two teachers. And in the planning for the May 24 massacre, he collected articles about the Buffalo, New York, supermarket shooting and played video games with a young student while quizzing him about the school schedule.

A state investigative report that highlighted law enforcement's bungled response to the mass shooting at Robb Elementary School has also provided the most in-depth account to date about missed red flags and possible motivations surrounding 18-year-old Salvador Ramos. Despite many warning signs, he still managed to legally amass more than \$5,000 in guns, ammunition and gear in the weeks leading up to the killings.

Just days before the attack, Ramos spoke out on social media of his plans to do something that would "put him all over the news." He wrote of a desire to kill himself, shared online videos of beheadings and violent sex, and sent footage of himself driving around with "someone he met on the internet" holding a plastic bag containing a dead cat and pointing BB guns at people out the window.

"The attacker became focused on achieving notoriety," according to the interim report released Sunday by an investigative panel of the Texas House of Representatives. "He believed his TikTok and YouTube channels would be successful. The small number of views he received led him to tell those with whom he interacted that he was 'famous,' that they were mere 'randoms' by comparison."

The 77-page report — based on interviews with family members, testimony and data from Ramos' phone — lays out a long trail of missed signals prior to the massacre but notes these clues were known only to "private individuals" and not reported to authorities. It also found Ramos had no known ideological or political views that would have made his rantings more widely known.

The report traces the descent of a shy, quiet boy once thought by a teacher as a "wonderful student" with a "positive attitude" into a mass murderer who gave plenty of signs online and to family members that he was prone to violence as he amassed an arsenal of rifles, body armor and ammunition.

A former girlfriend told the FBI that she believed Ramos had been sexually assaulted by one of his mother's boyfriends at an early age, the report said, but when Ramos told his mother at the time, she didn't believe him.

Without assigning a specific motive, the report noted that Ramos talked about painful fourth-grade memories to an acquaintance weeks before the shooting.

Family members told investigators how Ramos had been bullied as a fourth-grader in one of the same linked classrooms where he carried out the attack. They said he faced ridicule over his stutter, short hair and for wearing the same clothing nearly every day.

At one point, the report said, a fellow student tied his shoelaces together and Ramos fell on his face, injuring himself. The report noted that Ramos was flagged by school officials as "at risk," but never received any special education services.

Failing grades soon were accompanied by frequent absences — more than 100 a year beginning in 2018. The report noted it was unclear if a school resource officer ever visited Ramos' home. Uvalde High School officials involuntarily withdrew him last fall, when he had only completed the ninth grade. That was about the same time he moved out of his mother's house and began living with his grandmother, just blocks from the elementary school.

Months before the shooting, Ramos began contacting acquaintances with "vague but ominous messages" about doing something soon.

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In March 2022, two months before the shooting, a student on Instagram told him that "people at school talk (expletive) about you and call you school shooter."

The next month Ramos asked in a direct message on Instagram, "Are you still gonna remember me in 50 something days?" After the answer — "probably not" — Ramos replied, "Hmm alright we'll see in may."

Crystal Foutz, who attended school with Ramos, told The Associated Press he was frequently angry and gave off "vibes" like he could shoot up the place, though it was taken more as joke than serious.

"You heard people joke and say, 'He looks like a school shooter,'" said Foutz, though she quickly added, "I've heard it said about other people."

Ramos took jobs at two fast-food restaurants to save money for what he told acquaintances was "something big," which family members assumed was his own apartment or car. Instead it was guns and bullets, which he tried to get two people to buy for him while he was 17 and unable to obtain legally.

But on May 16, the gunman turned 18, and began purchasing firearms and ammunition, persuading an uncle to drive him to a gun store. He eventually spent more than \$5,000 on two AR-style rifles, ammunition and other gear. And with no criminal history or even arrest, Ramos passed all background checks.

He had earlier written online "10 more days," eliciting speculation from readers that he was planning to "shoot up a school or something" or commit "mass murder." A friend told him that an acquaintance was "telling everyone u shooting up the school."

He also spent time playing the children's videogame Roblox with his cousin's son, a student at the Robb Elementary, and "elicited from him details about his schedule and how lunch periods worked at the school."

"I got a lil secret," Ramos wrote on Snapchat to a German teenager he had befriended days before the May 24 shooting, adding that first he was waiting for something "being delivered" on Monday. His order of 1,740 hollow-point bullets that expand in bodies upon impact, more easily killing, arrived later that day.

"None of his online behavior was ever reported to law enforcement," the report said, "and if it was reported by other users to any social media platform, it does not appear that actions were taken to restrict his access or to report him to authorities as a threat."

Shortly before entering Robb Elementary, the gunman reached out to the German teenager he had befriended earlier, posting a message that he had just shot his grandmother in the face and was about to "shoot up" an elementary school.

Not sure he was serious, the German teenager replied: "Cool."

Today in History: July 20, Armstrong and Aldrin on the moon

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, July 20, the 201st day of 2022. There are 164 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 20, 1969, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin became the first men to walk on the moon after reaching the surface in their Apollo 11 lunar module.

On this date:

In 1917, America's World War I draft lottery began as Secretary of War Newton Baker, wearing a blindfold, reached into a glass bowl and pulled out a capsule containing the number 258 during a ceremony inside the Senate office building.

In 1944, an attempt by a group of German officials to assassinate Adolf Hitler with a bomb failed as the explosion only wounded the Nazi leader. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was nominated for a fourth term of office at the Democratic convention in Chicago.

In 1951, Jordan's King Abdullah I was assassinated in Jerusalem by a Palestinian gunman who was shot dead on the spot by security.

In 1976, America's Viking 1 robot spacecraft made a successful, first-ever landing on Mars.

In 1977, a flash flood hit Johnstown, Pennsylvania, killing more than 80 people and causing \$350 million worth of damage. The U.N. Security Council voted to admit Vietnam to the world body.

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In 1990, Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, one of the court's most liberal voices, announced he was stepping down.

In 1993, White House deputy counsel Vincent Foster Jr., 48, was found shot to death in a park near Washington, D.C.; his death was ruled a suicide.

In 2006, the Senate voted 98-0 to renew the landmark 1965 Voting Rights Act for another quarter-century.

In 2007, President George W. Bush signed an executive order prohibiting cruel and inhuman treatment, including humiliation or denigration of religious beliefs, in the detention and interrogation of terrorism suspects.

In 2010, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted almost totally along party lines, 13-6, to approve Elena Kagan to be the Supreme Court's fourth female justice.

In 2013, longtime White House correspondent Helen Thomas, 92, died in Washington.

In 2015, the United States and Cuba restored full diplomatic relations after more than five decades of frosty relations rooted in the Cold War. The U.N. Security Council unanimously endorsed a landmark deal to rein in Iran's nuclear program.

Ten years ago: Gunman James Holmes opened fire inside a crowded movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, during a midnight showing of "The Dark Knight Rises," killing 12 people and wounding 70 others. (Holmes was later convicted of murder and attempted murder, and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.) After years of preparation and months of buildup, London's Olympic moment finally arrived as Royal Marine Martyn Williams carried the Olympic torch from a Royal Navy Sea King helicopter into the Tower of London on the shore of the River Thames (tehmz).

Five years ago: O.J. Simpson was granted parole after more than eight years in prison for a hotel room heist in Las Vegas. (He was released on October 1.)

One year ago: New York prison officials handed convicted rapist Harvey Weinstein over to authorities in California, where the former movie mogul faced additional sexual assault charges. Giannis Antetokounmpo (YAH'-nihs an-teh-toh-KOON'-poh) scored 50 points as the Milwaukee Bucks beat the Phoenix Suns 105-98 to win the NBA finals, 4-2; it was the first championship for the Bucks in 50 years. Jeff Bezos (BAY'-zohs) blasted into space from West Texas on his rocket company's first flight with people on board, becoming the second billionaire in just over a week to ride his own spacecraft. (Virgin Galactic's Richard Branson had moved up the launch of his own flight from New Mexico and beat Bezos to space by nine days.)

Today's Birthdays: Author Cormac McCarthy is 89. Former Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md., is 86. Artist Judy Chicago is 83. Rock musician John Lodge (The Moody Blues) is 79. Country singer T.G. Sheppard is 78. Singer Kim Carnes is 77. Rock musician Carlos Santana is 75. Rock musician Jay Jay French (Twisted Sister) is 70. Rock musician Paul Cook (The Sex Pistols, Man Raze) is 66. Actor Donna Dixon is 65. Rock musician Mick MacNeil (Simple Minds) is 64. Country singer Rodney Foster is 63. Actor Frank Whaley is 59. Actor Dean Cain is 58. Rock musician Stone Gossard (Pearl Jam) is 56. Actor Reed Diamond is 55. Actor Josh Holloway is 53. Singer Vitamin C is 53. Actor Sandra Oh is 51. Actor Omar Epps is 49. Actor Simon Rex is 48. Actor Judy Greer is 47. Actor Charlie Korsmo is 44. Singer Elliott Yamin (yah-MEEN') (American Idol) is 44. Supermodel Gisele Bündchen is 42. Rock musician Mike Kennerty (The All-American Rejects) is 42. Actor Percy Daggs III is 40. Actor John Francis Daley is 37. Dancer-singer-actor Julianne Hough is 34. Washington Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg is 34.