

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Thursday, Oct. 17

Senior Menu: Baked pork chop, sweet potatoes, capri blend, chocolate pudding with banana, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Pancake on stick.

School Lunch: Flat World on ye bun (hamburgers), fries.

Region 1A Cross Country at Webster, 3:30 p.m.

Volleyball at Deuel (C at 5 p.m., JV at 6 p.m., varsity to follow)

Emmanuel Lutheran: WELCA, 1:30 p.m. (final packing of LWR kits), potluck.

## Friday, Oct. 18

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, peas, Mandarin orange salad, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Egg bake.

School Lunch: Walk the plank crunchers, peas.

Football hosts Baltic, 7 p.m.

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



## Saturday, Oct. 19

Girls state soccer: Groton Area vs. SF Christian, 5 p.m. in Yankton

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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# 1440

**Why 1440? The printing press was invented around the year 1440, spreading knowledge to the masses and changing the course of history. More facts: In every day, there are 1,440 minutes. We're here to make each one count.**

## Big Tech Goes Nuclear

Amazon is investing \$500M toward nuclear power to meet the rising energy demands of its data centers and artificial intelligence initiatives. Yesterday's announcement comes two days after Google unveiled plans to purchase nuclear power and less than a month after Microsoft said it would reopen the Three Mile Island plant—home to the worst nuclear accident in US history—to fuel its AI efforts.

Nuclear power accounts for 19% of US electricity generation and comes from energy released when the nucleus of a heavy atom splits into lighter atoms. While expensive and potentially hazardous, proponents pitch nuclear power as a clean alternative to greenhouse gas-emitting energy sources like coal, oil, and gas. Energy-intensive generative AI applications and data centers are expected to account for roughly 9% of total US power consumption by 2030.

Amazon and Google are investing in small modular reactors, which are cheaper and easier to build than traditional nuclear reactors and generate up to 300 megawatts of power or about one-third the amount of power of a traditional reactor. Only two SMRs currently operate in the world, in China and Russia.

## Egyptian Museum Tests Opening

A portion of the Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza, Egypt, opened to visitors yesterday—part of the initial unveiling of an over \$1B project designed to be the largest museum devoted to a single civilization.

The museum—spanning over 5 million square feet or roughly the size of 80 football fields—will cover 700,000 years' worth of artifacts. The trial run, designed to test visitor flow and operations, includes 12 galleries devoted to four eras of Egyptian history dating as far back as 2649 BCE. Among the displays are the gold mask of Tutankhamun, the boy-king who ruled Egypt about 3,350 years ago; an 83-ton statue of legendary pharaoh Ramses the Great; and the world's first hanging obelisk, suspended to allow a view of hidden carvings beneath.

Over 100,000 artifacts will be stored when the museum opens fully to visitors, a date not yet determined.

## Menendez Family Convenes

Nearly two dozen family members of Erik and Lyle Menendez gathered outside a Los Angeles courthouse yesterday, calling for their early release from prison. District Attorney George Gascón (D), who is up for reelection, has indicated openness to pursuing their resentencing ahead of a November court deadline.

In 1996, the brothers from Beverly Hills, California, were sentenced to life in prison for the murder of their parents, José and Kitty Menendez. The sons, 18 and 21 years old at the time of the killings, inherited \$14M—which prosecutors said served as the motive. This year, Netflix sparked renewed public interest in the case with the releases of a miniseries and documentary.

The projects highlight the boys' allegations of sexual abuse by their father, some details of which were not permitted at trial. Last year, the brothers petitioned for early release, attaching a letter they say Erik wrote to his cousin before the killings. The brothers maintain they acted out of self-defense.

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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Liam Payne, member of boy band One Direction, dies at age 31 after three-story fall from hotel in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

New women's 3-on-3 basketball league Unrivaled signs TV rights deal with TNT; the 30-player league launches January 2025.

Caitlin Clark and A'ja Wilson highlight All-WNBA team.

NFL owners unanimously approve NFL legend Tom Brady's bid to buy minority stake in the Las Vegas Raiders.

## Science & Technology

STAT releases annual Wunderkind list, spotlighting the top early-career researchers in the biomedical and health sciences.

Mosquitoes have taste preferences, with some compounds either promoting or inhibiting biting and egg-laying behaviors; findings may lead to new methods to reduce insect-borne diseases.

Researchers find 70% of the meteorites found on Earth to date can be traced back to just three separate collisions in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +0.5%, Dow +0.8%, Nasdaq +0.3%); Dow reaches record close. United Airlines shares close up 12% to prepandemic high after company reports better-than-expected Q3 earnings.

Morgan Stanley shares close up 6% after firm tops Q3 earnings and revenue estimates.

Defense contractor Raytheon agrees to pay \$950M to settle federal charges, including defrauding US Department of Defense and bribing a Qatari official.

Federal Trade Commission finalizes rules requiring companies to make it easier for consumers to cancel unwanted subscriptions.

## Politics & World Affairs

Israel strikes in and near Beirut, including killing a city mayor and 15 others at a council meeting after most residents evacuated; Israel says it is striking Hezbollah targets, including an underground weapons cache.

Italy passes law barring citizens from pursuing surrogacy abroad, with violations punishable by up to \$1M in fines and two years in prison; around 250 Italian couples—90% of them heterosexual—pursue surrogacy each year, per legal experts.

Las-Vegas-area county official Robert Telles (D) sentenced to life in prison for the murder of investigative journalist Jeff German, with the possibility of parole after 28 years.

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## West Nile Virus Update -SD

SD WNV (as of October 16):

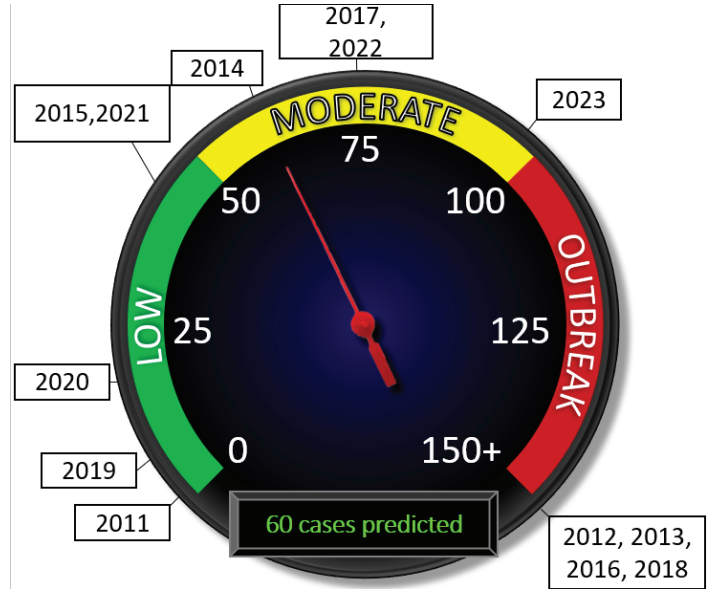
19 human cases (Beadle, Brookings, Codington, Davison, Dewey, Gregory, Hand, Hutchinson, Kingsbury, Lawrence, Pennington, Potter, Roberts, Walworth, Ziebach ) and 1 death

4 human viremic blood donors (Brule, Dewey, Pennington, Sanborn)

9 counties with positive mosquito pools (Beadle, Brookings, Brown, Codington, Davison, Hughes, Lincoln, Minnehaha, Pennington)

US WNV (as of October 15): 1060 cases (AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WI, WV, WY)

WNV Prediction Model – Total Number of Cases Projected for 2024, South Dakota (as of October 16)



Mosquito Surveillance Summary for 2024, South Dakota, Week Ending October 12, 2024 (MMWR Week 41)

There were no mosquito pools or collections reported for MMWR Week 41.

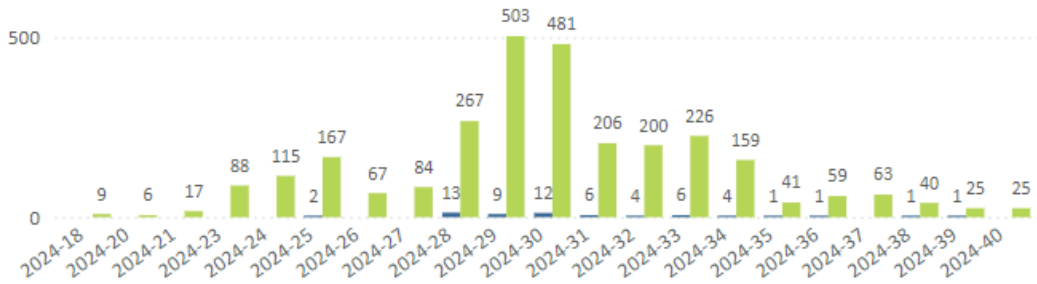
Total sites collecting mosquitoes: 77

Total mosquito pools tested: 2,908

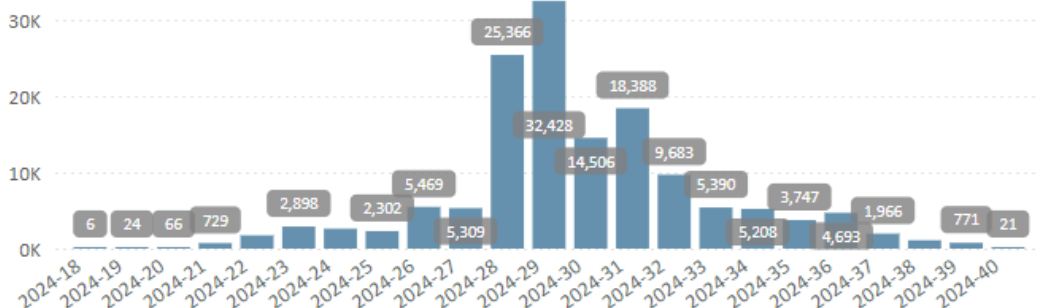
% positivity: 2.06%

Number of Mosquito Pools Tested by MMWR Week and Status

Test Status: ● Positive ● Negative



Culex Mosquitoes Collected by MMWR Week





## Push for football field improvements slows, new bus bid approved

by Elizabeth Varin

Groton Area School Board members expressed hesitancy with formally moving forward on improvements to the football field.

At Tuesday morning's meeting, Groton football advocate Tom Woods asked the board to create two committees if they want to move forward with transforming the current football field to a multi-sports complex. One committee, a building group, would decide what changes the community would like at the field west of the high school. The other would spearhead fundraising for improvements.

Woods, who has been looking into grant options with his wife Patti Woods, said he can't move forward anymore unless the school board decides what projects they want to include and gives formal approval to move forward.

Items that could be on the list include adding turf for a joint football and soccer field, sound system upgrades, chain link fence replacement, field light upgrades, practice field upgrades, repairing the track jump pit, scoreboard updates, concrete work and replacing the current crows nest.

Those items together could cost about \$1.8 million, Woods said. Six individuals have already reached out indicating they want to donate.

However, he said, to apply for grant funding there needs to be more concrete numbers and a project list.

This project could be a can of worms, Woods told the board.

"I just open the lid," he said. "And you guys get to decide if we move forward."

Board member Heather Lerseth-Fliehs said the board needs to decide if this project is a higher priority than other items on the list, including the music area, buses and more.

The priority might depend on how many donations come in, said board member Tigh Fliehs.

Lerseth-Fliehs responded, "I hope we get donations, but I think we have to be prepared to pay the balance."

Board Vice President Nick Strom agreed, saying he doesn't want the school district to "be caught with our pants down."

The district has to see how much money might be fundraised before committing to the project, said board member Marty Weismantel.

Woods disagreed, saying he couldn't ask for money on a project that hasn't been approved.

Board President Grant Rix asked the board to table discussion until the next meeting, 7 a.m. Nov. 12.

### New bus on the way

The board did approve spending a chunk of change on a new school bus, citing concerns about the age of the current fleet.

The board approved a \$165,532 bid to purchase a 2025 65-passenger CE IC International Bus.

Superintendent Joe Schwan said both he and Transportation Director Damian Bahr recommended the International bus over a \$164,400 Thomas bus because it would be delivered in July or August.

The bus would replace one of the district's activity buses, which will then be used on a district bus route.

- The board approved changing a student-contact day to a staff development day. From the most recent in-service day, it is clear that the district administration doesn't have enough time with staff, said Superintendent Joe Schwan. Another in-service day would allow the district more time to work with staff and keep up to date on things.

- Special education representatives went through what the program has been doing. The program just went through a state review earlier this month. It will be a lengthy process to know how the review went, said Julie Erdmann, special education teacher at the elementary school. She added things are going well at the elementary school. Middle and high school special education teacher Sydney Kurtz said the middle and high school currently monitors 60 students.

- Alexa Schuring and Lynette Grieve, title teachers at the elementary school, discussed the respond to intervention program, where they take small groups of younger students to work on reading and math

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skills. Grieve said they don't work with as many kids as they do in some years because they are short on the number of teacher aids that can work with students. Schuring added, "Title is a great place to be. We love the meetings, and we make plans to help the students succeed."

- A district activity bus is in the shop in Webster after breaking down last week on the way to a high school boys soccer playoff game.

- The district's food services had a surprise inspection – one of two that happen each year – and both the elementary and middle/high school facilities scored 100 out of 100.

- A recent Associated School Boards of South Dakota meeting highlighted some concerns that are coming up heading into the next legislative session. One of those concerns, said Superintendent Joe Schwan, is initiated measure 28, which, if passed, would cause budget issues for the state that would be passed along to the school district. The second area of discussion was discussion of diverting public funds to non-public schools.

- The board approved allowing James Valley Thunder to use district facilities in the summer of 2025. There haven't been any issues with the group in the past, said Superintendent Joe Schwan. They've been great stewards of the facility.

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- ✓ Pro Constitution
- ✓ Pro Family



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# MANHART

## STATE REPRESENTATIVE

### DISTRICT 1

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**General Election - Nov. 5**  
**Absentee Voting has begun**

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**We'll be publishing each ballot measure in the GDI.  
Today it's Constitutional Amendment E**

## 2024 Statewide Ballot Measures

Underscores indicate new language.

~~Overstrikes~~ indicate deleted language.

## Constitutional Amendment E

**Title:** An Amendment to the South Dakota Constitution Updating Gender References for Certain Officeholders and Persons.

**Attorney General Explanation:** The South Dakota Constitution became effective upon the State joining the United States in 1889. The generic male pronouns he, his, and him are used in the text of the State Constitution to reference certain officeholders or individuals.

This amendment changes the text of the State Constitution to remove the use of generic male pronouns when referencing certain officeholders or individuals. For example, when referencing the Governor, instead of saying "he shall be commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the state," the text will be changed to read "the Governor shall be commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the state." The amendment makes similar changes to other references to the Governor, as well as to references to other officeholders including Lieutenant Governor, Supreme Court Justices, and Circuit Court Judges. The amendment also makes similar changes to references in the Constitution to general classes of people such as persons, electors, and public officers.

Vote "Yes" to adopt the amendment.

Vote "No" to leave the Constitution as it is.

### **Full Text of Constitutional Amendment E:**

**A JOINT RESOLUTION, Proposing and submitting to the electors at the next general election an amendment to the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, updating references to certain officeholders and persons.**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

**Section 1.** That at the next general election held in the state, the following amendments to the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, as set forth in sections 2 through 25 of this Joint Resolution, which is hereby agreed to, shall be submitted to the electors of the state for approval.

**Section 2. That Article IV, § 3 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 3.** The Governor shall be responsible for the faithful execution of the law. He The Governor may, by appropriate action or proceeding brought in the name of the state, enforce compliance with any constitutional or legislative mandate, or restrain violation of any constitutional or legislative power, duty or right by any officer, department or agency of the state or any of its civil divisions. This authority shall not authorize any action or proceedings against the Legislature.

He The Governor shall be commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the state, except when they shall be called into the service of the United States, and may call them out to execute the laws, to preserve order, to suppress insurrection or to repel invasion.

The Governor shall commission all officers of the state. He The Governor may at any time require information, in writing or otherwise, from the officers of any administrative department, office or agency upon any subject relating to the respective offices.

The Governor shall at the beginning of each session, and may at other times, give the Legislature



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information concerning the affairs of the state and recommend the measures he the Governor considers necessary.

The Governor may convene the Legislature or either house thereof alone in special session by a proclamation stating the purposes of the session, and only business encompassed by such purposes shall be transacted.

Whenever a vacancy occurs in any office and no provision is made by the Constitution or laws for filling such vacancy, the Governor shall have the power to fill such vacancy by appointment.

The Governor may, except as to convictions on impeachment, grant pardons, commutations, and reprieves, and may suspend and remit fines and forfeitures.

**Section 3. That Article IV, § 5 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 5. The lieutenant governor shall be president of the senate but shall have no vote unless the senators be equally divided. The lieutenant governor shall perform the duties and exercise the powers that may be delegated to him the lieutenant governor by the Governor.

**Section 4. That Article IV, § 8 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 8. All executive and administrative offices, boards, agencies, commissions and instrumentalities of the state government and their respective functions, powers and duties, except for the office of Governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state, auditor, treasurer, and commissioner of school and public lands, shall be allocated by law among and within not more than twenty-five principal departments, organized as far as practicable according to major purposes, by no later than July 1, 1974. Subsequently, all new powers or functions shall be assigned to administrative offices, agencies and instrumentalities in such manner as will tend to provide an orderly arrangement in the administrative organization of state government. Temporary commissions may be established by law and need not be allocated within a principal department.

Except as to elected constitutional officers, the Governor may make such changes in the organization of offices, boards, commissions, agencies and instrumentalities, and in allocation of their functions, powers and duties, as he the Governor considers necessary for efficient administration. If such changes affect existing law, they shall be set forth in executive orders, which shall be submitted to the Legislature within five legislative days after it convenes, and shall become effective, and shall have the force of law, within ninety days after submission, unless disapproved by a resolution concurred in by a majority of all the members of either house.

**Section 5. That Article V, § 5 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 5. The Supreme Court shall have such appellate jurisdiction as may be provided by the Legislature, and the Supreme Court or any justice thereof may issue any original or remedial writ which shall then be heard and determined by that court. The Governor has authority to require opinions of the Supreme Court upon important questions of law involved in the exercise of his the Governor's executive power and upon solemn occasions.

The circuit courts have original jurisdiction in all cases except as to any limited original jurisdiction granted to other courts by the Legislature. The circuit courts and judges thereof have the power to issue, hear and determine all original and remedial writs. The circuit courts have such appellate jurisdiction as may be provided by law.

Imposition or execution of a sentence may be suspended by the court empowered to impose the sentence unless otherwise provided by law.

**Section 6. That Article V, § 6 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 6. Justices of the Supreme Court, judges of the circuit courts and persons presiding over courts of limited jurisdiction must be citizens of the United States, residents of the state of South Dakota and

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voting residents within the district, circuit or jurisdiction from which they are elected or appointed. No Supreme Court justice shall ~~be deemed to have lost his~~ lose voting residence in a district ~~by reason of his removal because the justice moved~~ to the seat of government in the discharge of his ~~the justice's~~ official duties. Justices of the Supreme Court and judges of circuit courts must be licensed to practice law in the state of South Dakota.

**Section 7. That Article V, § 7 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 7. Circuit court judges shall be elected in a nonpolitical election by the electorate of the circuit each represents for an eight-year term.

A vacancy, as defined by law, in the office of a Supreme Court justice or circuit court judge, shall be filled by appointment of the Governor from one of two or more persons nominated by the judicial qualifications commission. The appointment to fill a vacancy of a circuit court judge shall be for the balance of the unexpired term; and the appointment to fill a vacancy of a Supreme Court justice shall be subject to approval or rejection as hereinafter set forth.

Retention of each Supreme Court justice shall, in the manner provided by law, be subject to approval or rejection on a nonpolitical ballot at the first general election following the expiration of three years from the date of his ~~the~~ appointment. Thereafter, each Supreme Court justice shall be subject to approval or rejection in like manner every eighth year. All incumbent Supreme Court justices at the time of the effective date of this amendment shall be subject to a retention election in the general election in the year in which their respective existing terms expire.

**Section 8. That Article V, § 8 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 8. The chief justice shall be selected from among the justices of the Supreme Court for a term and in a manner to be provided by law. The chief justice may resign ~~his office~~ the office of chief justice without resigning from the Supreme Court.

**Section 9. That Article V, § 9 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 9. The Legislature shall provide by law for the establishment of a judicial qualifications commission which have such powers as the Legislature may provide, including the power to investigate complaints against any justice or judge and to conduct confidential hearings concerning the removal or involuntary retirement of a justice or judge. The Supreme Court shall prescribe by rule the means to implement and enforce the powers of the commission. On recommendation of the judicial qualifications commission the Supreme Court, after hearing, may censure, remove or retire a justice or judge for action which constitutes willful misconduct in office, willful and persistent failure to perform his official duties, habitual intemperance, disability that seriously interferes with the performance of the duties or conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice which brings a judicial office into disrepute. No justice or judge shall sit in judgment in any hearing involving his the justice's or judge's own removal or retirement.

**Section 10. That Article V, § 10 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 10. ~~During his term of office~~ While in office, no Supreme Court justice or circuit court judge shall engage in the practice of law. Any Supreme Court justice or circuit court judge who becomes a candidate for an elective nonjudicial office shall thereby forfeit his the justice's or judge's judicial office.

**Section 11. That Article V, § 11 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 11. The chief justice is the administrative head of the unified judicial system. The chief justice shall submit an annual consolidated budget for the entire unified judicial system, and the total cost of the system shall be paid by the state. The Legislature may provide by law for the reimbursement to the state of appropriate portions of such cost by governmental subdivisions. The Supreme Court shall appoint such court personnel as it deems necessary to serve at its pleasure.

The chief justice shall appoint a presiding circuit judge for each judicial circuit to serve at the pleasure

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of the chief justice. Each presiding circuit judge shall have such administrative power as the Supreme Court designates by rule and may, unless it be otherwise provided by law, appoint judicial personnel to courts of limited jurisdiction to serve at ~~his~~ the pleasure of the presiding circuit judge. Each presiding circuit judge shall appoint clerks and other court personnel for the counties in ~~his~~ the presiding judge's circuit who shall serve at ~~his~~ the pleasure of the presiding judge at a compensation fixed by law. Duties of clerks shall be defined by Supreme Court rule.

The chief justice shall have power to assign any circuit judge to sit on another circuit court, or on the Supreme Court in case of a vacancy or in place of a justice who is disqualified or unable to act. The chief justice may authorize a justice to sit as a judge in any circuit court.

The chief justice may authorize retired justices and judges to perform any judicial duties to the extent provided by law and as directed by the Supreme Court.

**Section 12. That Article VI, § 3 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 3.** The right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience shall never be infringed. No person shall be denied any civil or political right, privilege or position on account of ~~his~~ the person's religious opinions; but the liberty of conscience hereby secured shall not be so construed as to excuse licentiousness, the invasion of the rights of others, or justify practices inconsistent with the peace or safety of the state.

No person shall be compelled to attend or support any ministry or place of worship against ~~his~~ the person's consent nor shall any preference be given by law to any religious establishment or mode of worship. No money or property of the state shall be given or appropriated for the benefit of any sectarian or religious society or institution.

**Section 13. That Article VI, § 7 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 7.** In all criminal prosecutions the accused shall have the right to defend in person and by counsel; to demand the nature and cause of the accusation against ~~him~~ the accused; to have a copy thereof; to meet the witnesses against ~~him~~ the accused face to face; to have compulsory process served for obtaining witnesses ~~in his~~ on the accused's behalf, and to a speedy public trial by an impartial jury of the county or district in which the offense is alleged to have been committed.

**Section 14. That Article VI, § 9 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 9.** No person shall be compelled in any criminal case to give evidence against ~~himself~~ the person or be twice put in jeopardy for the same offense.

**Section 15. That Article VI, § 20 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 20.** All courts shall be open, and every ~~man~~ person for an injury done ~~him in his~~ to the person's property, person or reputation, shall have remedy by due course of law, and right and justice, administered without denial or delay.

**Section 16. That Article VII, § 2 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 2.** Every United States citizen eighteen years of age or older who has met all residency and registration requirements shall be entitled to vote in all elections and upon all questions submitted to the voters of the state unless disqualified by law for mental incompetence or the conviction of a felony. The Legislature may by law establish reasonable requirements to ~~insure~~ ensure the integrity of the vote.

Each elector who qualified to vote within a precinct shall be entitled to vote in that precinct until ~~he~~ the elector establishes another voting residence. An elector shall never lose ~~his~~ residency for voting solely by reason of ~~his~~ the elector's absence from the state.

**Section 17. That Article VIII, § 9 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 9.** The lands mentioned in this article shall be leased for pasturage, meadow, farming, the growing

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of crops of grain and general agricultural purposes, and at public auction after notice as herein-before provided in case of sale and shall be offered in tracts not greater than one section. All rents shall be payable annually in advance, and no term of lease shall exceed five years, nor shall any lease be valid until it receives the approval of the Governor.

Provided, that any lessee of school and public lands shall, at the expiration of a five-year lease, be entitled, at his the lessee's option, to a new lease for the land included in his the lessee's original lease, for a period of time not exceeding five years, without public advertising, at the current rental prevailing in the county in which such land is situated, at the time of the issuance of the new lease. The commissioner of school and public lands shall notify by registered mail each lessee or assignee on or before the first day of November first preceding the expiration of his the lessee's lease that such lease will expire.

Such option shall be exercised by the lessee by notifying the commissioner of school and public lands by registered mail, on or before the first day of December first preceding the expiration of his the lessee's lease describing the lands for which he the lessee desires a new lease, in the same manner as the same is described in his the lessee's original lease.

The Legislature may provide by appropriate legislation for the payment of local property taxes by the lessees of school and public lands.

**Section 18. That Article XII, § 3 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 3. The Legislature shall never grant any extra compensation to any public officer, employee, agent or contractor after the services shall have been rendered or the contract entered into, nor authorize the payment of any claims or part thereof created against the state, under any agreement or contract made without express authority of law, and all such unauthorized agreements or contracts shall be null and void; nor shall the compensation of any public officer be increased or diminished during his the officer's term of office: provided, however, that the Legislature may make appropriations for expenditures incurred in suppressing insurrection or repelling invasion.

**Section 19. That Article XII, § 4 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 4. An itemized statement of all receipts and expenditures of the public moneys shall be published annually in such manner as the Legislature shall provide, and such statement shall be submitted to the Legislature at the beginning of each regular session by the Governor with his the Governor's message.

**Section 20. That Article XVI, § 5 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 5. No officer shall exercise the duties of his the office after he ~~shall have been~~ the officer is impeached and before his the officer's acquittal.

**Section 21. That Article XVI, § 7 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 7. No person shall be tried on impeachment before he ~~shall have been~~ being served with a copy thereof at least twenty days previous to the day set for trial.

**Section 22. That Article XVII, § 5 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 5. In all elections for directors or managers of a corporation, each member or shareholder may cast the whole number of his the member's or shareholder's votes for one candidate, or distribute them upon two or more candidates, ~~as he may prefer~~.

**Section 23. That Article XX, § 3 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

§ 3. Should no place voted for at said election have a majority of all votes cast upon this question, the Governor shall issue his a proclamation for an election to be held in the same manner at the next general election to choose between the two places having received the highest number of votes cast at the first election on this question. This election shall be conducted in the same manner as the first election for the permanent seat of government, and the place receiving the majority of all votes cast upon this question shall be the permanent seat of government.



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**Section 24. That Article XXI, § 2 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 2.** The Legislature by two-thirds vote of each branch thereof at any regular session may fix the salary of any or all constitutional officers including members of the Legislature. In fixing any such salary the Legislature shall determine the effective date thereof and may in its discretion decrease or increase the salary of any officer during his the officer's term.

**Section 25. That Article XXI, § 3 of the Constitution of the State of South Dakota, be AMENDED:**

**§ 3.** Every person elected or appointed to any office in this state, except such inferior offices as may be by law exempted, shall, before entering upon the duties thereof, take an oath or affirmation to support the Constitution of the United States and of this state, and faithfully to discharge the duties of his the office.



## The Super Moon

The full Moon will be Thursday morning, Oct. 17, 2024, at 7:26 a.m. EDT. The Moon will appear full for about three days around this time, from Tuesday evening through Friday morning. As the full Moon after the Harvest Moon, this will be the Hunter's Moon. The earliest written use of the term "Hunter's Moon" identified in the Oxford English Dictionary is from 1710. According to the Farmer's Almanac, with the leaves falling and the deer fattened, it is time to hunt. Since the harvesters have reaped the fields, hunters can easily see the animals that have come out to glean (and the foxes that have come out to prey upon them).



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Downtown Groton

Call/Text Paul: 605-397-7460

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Senior Citizens 65+  
Physical Therapy.

**\$20 a month**



### Equipment Spotlight

The StairMaster has many advantages, including:

#### Low impact

Stair climbing is considered low impact because both feet remain on a step at all times. This makes it a good option for people with arthritis or other musculoskeletal conditions, or for fitness beginners.

#### Strengthens muscles

The StairMaster works many muscles in your lower body, including your glutes, hamstrings, quadriceps, and calves.

#### Improves bone health

Weight-bearing exercises like using the StairMaster can increase bone density and strength.

#### Burns calories

You burn more calories using a StairMaster because you lift your entire body weight with each step.

#### Improves cardiovascular health

Stair climbing can improve your body's ability to carry oxygen to your muscles, which can help you run faster and farther.

Type	Month-to-month	Annual Agreements	
	Paid Monthly	Paid Monthly	Paid Yearly
Student	<input type="radio"/> \$35.15	<input type="radio"/> \$29.82	<input type="radio"/> \$255.60
Single	<input type="radio"/> \$40.48	<input type="radio"/> \$35.15	<input type="radio"/> \$319.50
2-Person	<input type="radio"/> \$59.78	<input type="radio"/> \$54.45	<input type="radio"/> \$575.10
Family	<input type="radio"/> \$72.43	<input type="radio"/> \$67.10	<input type="radio"/> \$702.26
Daily Fee	<input type="radio"/> \$5.00		



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Jackley opposes attempt to move lawsuit against NCAA to federal court

**BY: JOHN HULT - OCTOBER 16, 2024 3:39 PM**

Attorney General Marty Jackley is resisting an attempt to move South Dakota's lawsuit against the NCAA into federal court.

Jackley and the South Dakota Board of Regents sued the NCAA last month, alleging that a proposed \$2.8 billion settlement meant to compensate college athletes would unfairly burden smaller colleges, including schools like South Dakota State University and the University of South Dakota.

The proposed settlement would require NCAA member schools to contribute to the settlement fund over the course of a decade. The South Dakota lawsuit says its schools would shoulder an unfair share of the burden, and that larger schools in big-name athletic conferences ought to pay more.

The South Dakota lawsuit also alleges that the settlement unfairly funnels a majority of the settlement dollars to male athletes.

The settlement is an outgrowth of a 2021 U.S. Supreme Court case that the NCAA's previous practice of banning payments for student athletes violated antitrust laws.

Last week, the NCAA filed a motion in the U.S. District Court of South Dakota to move the case on to that federal court docket. The NCAA says federal court is the proper venue, as the settlement's provisions and its implications stretch across state lines.

On Tuesday, however, Jackley filed a motion to resist that move. The Attorney General says the case belongs in Brookings county, home to one of the schools potentially affected by the NCAA's settlement proposal.

The case does not make claims about the NCAA breaking federal law, Jackley said in a press release on the matter, and does not involve "significant federal issues."

"We believe this case should remain in state court," Jackley wrote in the press release.

*John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.*

### South Dakota scores above neighboring states, national average on ACT

**BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - OCTOBER 16, 2024 2:38 PM**

South Dakota students' average ACT score in 2024 was unchanged from last year — a low point in ACT scores over the past five years. But it remains higher than the national average.

The national nonprofit that administers the college readiness exam released results from the class of 2024 this fall. South Dakota students earned an average composite score of 21.1. The highest possible score on the ACT is 36.

That continued a decline from the state's recent high of 21.7 in 2020, followed by scores of 21.6 in 2021, 21.5 in 2022 and 21.1 in 2023. The minimum score for acceptance at the state's public universities is 18.

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The national average composite score this year is 19.4, which is down for the seventh straight year after peaking at 21 in 2017.

"These numbers indicate that schools in South Dakota are doing a solid job of preparing students to attend college," said Secretary of Education Joe Graves in a news release.

Fifty-eight percent of South Dakota's high school graduates took the ACT this year, according to the department. Twenty-eight percent of South Dakota test-takers met college readiness in all four academic skill areas: English, mathematics, reading and science.

Of students who took the test, 74% said they plan to attend higher education institutions in South Dakota. "The fact that an overwhelming majority of our graduating seniors are electing to attend college in the state speaks to the quality of postsecondary education in South Dakota," Graves added, "and to the opportunities available to students after they graduate."

Comparing states based on their average ACT scores is difficult, because not all states require the test, and the percentage of students taking it in each state varies widely. Graves announced earlier this year that the department will require all South Dakota juniors to take the test beginning the spring of 2026, replacing the currently mandated state assessment test administered to high school juniors..

South Dakota will join nine other states that require all students to take the ACT. Among those states, the average score is 18.1.

The state's average score of 21.1 for the roughly 58% of students who took the test is better than states with the most similar participation rates, according to the ACT. Missouri, with 65% participation, reported 19.8; Hawaii, with 62% participation, reported 17.7; Florida, with 44% participation, reported 19; and Iowa, with 48% participation, reported 20.8.

*Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.*

## **COMMENTARY**

### **Make the effort, register by the deadline, and vote in this vital election**

**by DANA HESS**

Nov. 5, Election Day, is an important date for South Dakota. Almost as important is Monday, Oct. 21. That's the last day that eligible South Dakotans can register to vote in this election.

The importance of this election can't be overstated. Voters will make decisions on ballot issues that will have a direct impact on the way they live their lives.

Like many states, South Dakota will be voting on an abortion measure this year. Amendment G will, depending on who you listen to, restore the rights women lost when Roe v. Wade was overturned or subject the unborn to a veritable wild west of abortion lawlessness. Matters of such important morality aren't often on the ballot and voters owe it to themselves, and to their state, to mark their ballots on Amendment G.

Another ballot issue with wide-ranging ramifications is Initiated Measure 28, which is intended to eliminate the state sales tax on groceries. While a smaller grocery bill would be welcomed by families, that has to be weighed against the ability of the state budget to absorb another sales tax cut. The Legislature cut the state sales tax in 2023 from 4.5% to 4.2% with a sunset in 2027. That left an estimated \$100 million shortfall in state revenue. Estimates show that eliminating the state sales tax on groceries would mean that the state budget would do without another \$134 million, at the least.

Also at issue is the way the initiated measure is written, with backers saying it's narrowly focused on groceries and critics saying it could eliminate the sales tax on many more items that are consumed by humans, creating an even larger hole in the state budget.

Constitutional Amendment H would make a big change to the way South Dakotans vote, by instituting a single primary ballot that would include all candidates for governor, the state Legislature, U.S. House and

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Senate and county offices. The top two candidates to emerge from the primary, regardless of party, would move on to the November election. (In the case of the State House, where districts elect two members, the top four candidates would move on to the general election.)

Backers see the amendment as a way to allow everyone who pays for a primary to be able to take part in it. Both major political parties in the state have come out against Amendment H. Republican Party officials are adamant about choosing their own candidates, and Democratic Party officials foresee a general election ballot that doesn't include any Democrats.

Another major change for South Dakota is wrapped up in Initiated Measure 29 which would legalize a limited form of adult recreational use, possession and distribution of marijuana. Voters will need to decide if passage of IM 29 will lead to the law enforcement nightmare its critics claim, or the freedom and savings from fewer drug prosecutions that its backers foresee.

Voters also need to decide the fate of Referred Law 21. Passed by the last legislative session as a Landowner Bill of Rights, the law has been referred to a vote of the people by critics who say it tramples on their rights. The law governing carbon dioxide pipelines sets standards for tax relief for landowners and compensation for counties while setting specifications for the building of the pipelines. Critics say it doesn't really protect landowners or individual property rights.

No matter the fate of Referred Law 21, chances are those property rights will be a continuing topic of discussion in the Legislature. Many of the Republican lawmakers who voted for the law were defeated in the primary by opponents who focused on the Landowner Bill of Rights as their main issue.

With a handful of seasoned lawmakers choosing not to run for reelection in 2024 and the loss of experienced lawmakers in the primary, the Legislature is looking at a possible influx of new, conservative lawmakers. That means enlarging an ultra-conservative wing of the Republican Party that has often acted as if it is more interested in agitation than legislation.

That's why it's important for voters to not only take a hard look at the ballot issues, but also the candidates who are on this year's ballot. Voters need to decide if those candidates are just one-issue wonders or thoughtful candidates who will be able to legislate on a wide range of issues.

Make no mistake, from the ballot issues to the candidates, this year's election is of extreme importance. If you're not registered to vote, find your local county auditor's office and sign up. Then, on Election Day, show up to cast your ballot. Good citizenship takes some effort, but it's worth it.

*Dana Hess spent more than 25 years in South Dakota journalism, editing newspapers in Redfield, Milbank and Pierre. He's retired and lives in Brookings, working occasionally as a freelance writer.*

## Republican attorneys general seek to block rule providing health insurance for DACA recipients

**BY: MARY STEURER, NORTH DAKOTA MONITOR - OCTOBER 16, 2024 8:27 AM**

Three Republican attorneys general argued in a federal courtroom in North Dakota on Tuesday that a federal rule allowing some undocumented immigrants to receive subsidized health insurance should be stopped – or at the very least, delayed.

The attorneys general for Kansas, North Dakota and South Dakota led the hearing on behalf of 19 states challenging the rule, which would allow undocumented immigrants protected under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program to access health care plans under the Affordable Care Act.

The immigration program, also known as DACA, temporarily delays the deportation of people who immigrated to the United States without documentation when they were children.

Health benefits under the Affordable Care Act are limited to U.S. citizens, nationals or immigrants "lawfully present" in the country.

Previously, DACA recipients were not explicitly defined as meeting this definition in administrative regulations implementing the law.



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The federal agency this year adopted a rule that clarifies, among other things, that “lawfully present” immigrants does include participants in DACA. The rule also extends the definition to include undocumented immigrants with certain employment authorization documents.

In August, a group of state governments filed suit over the rule, arguing the Department of Health and Human Services has no statutory basis for changing the definition and that the new rule will force states to spend more money on undocumented immigrants and their families.

The states claim that providing the benefit incentivizes DACA recipients to remain in the United States longer than they otherwise would have, “and thereby causes plaintiff states to expend additional education, healthcare, law enforcement, public assistance, and other limited resources,” according to their complaint.

The United States already has a law defining which undocumented immigrants can qualify for limited federal benefits, and DACA recipients are not among them, the complaint states.

The group of states has asked U.S. District Court Judge Daniel Traynor to either halt enforcement of the rule or push back its effective date. They want Traynor to take action before Nov. 1, when Affordable Care Act open enrollment begins.

Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach said during the hearing that the rule is an attempt by the federal government to redefine national immigration policy “through regulatory fiat.”

If the rule is left in place, an estimated 200,000 people would become eligible for federally subsidized health insurance through the Affordable Care Act, the plaintiffs claim in court filings.

Three DACA recipients and CASA Inc., an immigration advocacy group, have filed to intervene in the case and also argue the lawsuit should be moved to federal court in the District of Columbia. Traynor has not ruled on those motions.

“DACA recipients are contributors to their communities,” Matthew Rozen, an attorney representing the group, said in a statement to the North Dakota Monitor. “They pay taxes, serve in the military, build families, attend school, and thrive in workplaces.”

According to data from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, there were approximately 130 DACA recipients in North Dakota as of June 30, 2024.

Christopher Eiswerth, an attorney representing the U.S. government in the lawsuit, argued during the hearing that Congress did intend for DACA recipients to be eligible for Affordable Care Act insurance.

The agency issued the rule because it “determined it should treat all deferred action recipients equally,” Eiswerth said.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has also said that the rule change “aligns with the goals” of the Affordable Care Act because it would reduce the number of uninsured people in the United States.

The plaintiff states have not provided sufficient evidence that the rule would actually increase costs for them, Eiswerth argued.

Traynor noted the language of the rule acknowledges the change would impose a financial burden on certain states.

Some states — including a portion participating in the lawsuit — run their own Affordable Care Act insurance marketplaces, as opposed to using the federal platform. North Dakota is not one of them.

Traynor said the case might be better suited for a district court in a state with its own insurance marketplace. He said those states are more likely to suffer direct harm under the rule, since their taxpayers could be on the hook to subsidize health care for DACA recipients.

Traynor said if the plaintiffs want the case to remain in his court, he would need to see more data demonstrating that North Dakota’s government would be financially impacted by the rule.

North Dakota Attorney General Drew Wrigley said his office would prepare data on how the rule would correlate to increased public expenses for the North Dakota state government in areas including education and public safety costs.

Kobach said it would be easier to crunch the data if the U.S. government would provide the plaintiffs with the names of DACA recipients. Eiswerth replied that information is protected from release.



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The 19 states bringing the case are Kansas, North Dakota, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Kansas is leading the case. Kobach after Tuesday's hearing said that one of the reasons the lawsuit was filed in North Dakota is because its federal courts are less backlogged than other districts.

Traynor said he would take the matter under advisement.

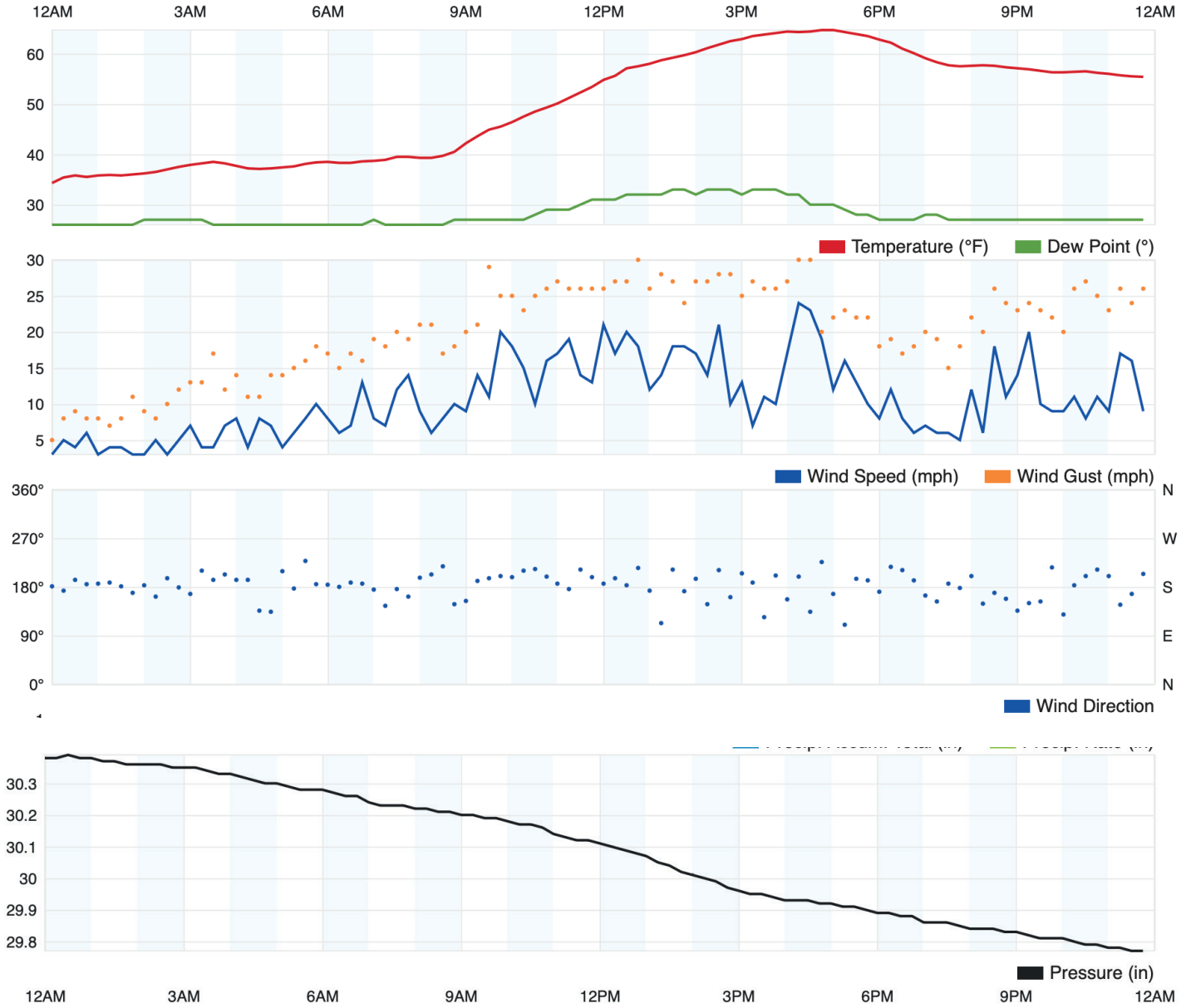
A federal judge in Texas last year struck down DACA, finding that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security exceeded its authority in creating the program. Under that judge's order, individuals granted DACA status before July 16, 2021 can remain in the program, though no new people can apply for it. The court's decision is still being appealed.

*Mary Steurer is a reporter based in Bismarck for the North Dakota Monitor. A native of St. Louis, Steurer previously worked as the local government reporter for the Casper Star-Tribune newspaper in Wyoming.*

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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**Today**



**High: 77 °F**

Sunny and Breezy


**Tonight**



**Low: 48 °F**

Increasing Clouds


**Friday**



**High: 61 °F**

Showers Likely


**Friday Night**



**Low: 42 °F**

Chance Showers

**Saturday**



**High: 62 °F**

Partly Sunny



## Fire Danger Continues Today

October 17, 2024  
3:36 AM

High Winds, Mild Temps & Dry Conditions Wind Gust Forecast

- 

**Hazards & Impacts**

  - The combination of dry grasses, southerly winds gusting to 30-45 mph and relative humidity values between 20-30%, means **Very High Grassland Fire Danger** across most of South Dakota and western Minnesota for today.
  
- 

**Location & Timing**

  - A **Red Flag Warning** is in effect for South Central and Eastern South Dakota as well as Western Minnesota from 11 AM until 7 PM CDT tonight.
  - A **Wind Advisory** is in effect for Northeastern South Dakota now through 3 PM CDT tonight.
  
- 

**Preparedness Messaging**

  - Avoid burning, don't carelessly discard cigarettes, and use caution with farm equipment.

	Thu														Maximum		
	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm		6pm	7pm
Aberdeen	33↑	35↑	36↑	36↑	38↑	39↑	39↑	39↑	39↑	37↑	38↑	38↑	36↑	33↑	29↑	23↑	39
Britton	31↑	32↑	36↑	39↑	41↑	41↑	40↑	41↑	41↑	40↑	41↑	41↑	41↑	39↑	36↑	31↑	41
Brookings	31↑	32↑	32↑	32↑	33↑	37↑	39↑	39↑	39↑	40↑	40↑	41↑	41↑	40↑	39↑	37↑	41
Chamberlain	32↑	32↑	31↑	30↑	29↑	29↑	30↑	30↑	31↑	32↑	32↑	32↑	32↑	31↑	29↑	26↑	32
Clark	33↑	35↑	36↑	36↑	38↑	38↑	38↑	39↑	39↑	39↑	40↑	39↑	38↑	38↑	37↑	33↑	40
Eagle Butte	20↑	18↑	20↑	23↑	23↑	24↑	25↑	28↑	29↑	30↑	29↑	28↑	25↑	25↑	23↑	22↑	30
Ellendale	25↑	26↑	30↑	33↑	36↑	36↑	37↑	39↑	39↑	38↑	38↑	38↑	36↑	32↑	28↑	22↑	39
Eureka	20↑	21↑	24↑	29↑	30↑	31↑	32↑	35↑	35↑	35↑	35↑	35↑	32↑	29↑	25↑	20↑	35
Gettysburg	15↑	16↑	21↑	29↑	31↑	31↑	32↑	35↑	33↑	32↑	32↑	30↑	29↑	25↑	22↑	18↑	35
Huron	32↑	32↑	33↑	35↑	36↑	37↑	37↑	37↑	36↑	36↑	35↑	36↑	36↑	35↑	32↑	30↑	37
Kennebec	29↑	29↑	30↑	31↑	31↑	32↑	32↑	33↑	33↑	32↑	32↑	32↑	30↑	29↑	28↑	25↑	33
McIntosh	18↑	17↑	20↑	23↑	24↑	25↑	26↑	29↑	30↑	31↑	30↑	30↑	29↑	28↑	25↑	22↑	31
Milbank	31↑	31↑	31↑	31↑	32↑	33↑	33↑	35↑	35↑	36↑	36↑	36↑	35↑	35↑	32↑	30↑	36
Miller	35↑	36↑	36↑	36↑	37↑	37↑	37↑	38↑	37↑	36↑	36↑	36↑	35↑	32↑	29↑	25↑	38
Mobridge	22↑	22↑	25↑	30↑	30↑	29↑	30↑	30↑	29↑	28↑	29↑	28↑	25↑	24↑	22↑	20↑	30
Murdo	21↑	20↑	23↑	30↑	31↑	31↑	31↑	33↑	33↑	33↑	32↑	30↑	29↑	26↑	24↑	23↑	33
Pierre	15↑	15↑	18↑	24↑	25↑	25↑	25↑	28↑	28↑	28↑	28↑	26↑	25↑	24↑	22↑	20↑	28
Redfield	25↑	26↑	30↑	36↑	36↑	36↑	36↑	37↑	37↑	36↑	36↑	36↑	36↑	33↑	30↑	26↑	37
Sisseton	41↑	43↑	43↑	40↑	40↑	41↑	40↑	40↑	39↑	39↑	39↑	40↑	39↑	38↑	38↑	30↑	43
Watertown	38↑	39↑	39↑	39↑	41↑	41↑	41↑	43↑	41↑	41↑	43↑	43↑	41↑	40↑	38↑	36↑	43
Webster	30↑	31↑	35↑	39↑	41↑	43↑	43↑	44↑	44↑	44↑	45↑	45↑	44↑	43↑	40↑	36↑	45
Wheaton	22↑	23↑	25↑	28↑	29↑	29↑	30↑	30↑	31↑	31↑	32↑	32↑	31↑	31↑	30↑	26↑	32

The threat for fires continues with a strong south wind, mild temperatures and low humidity. These conditions are expected to persist through this afternoon.



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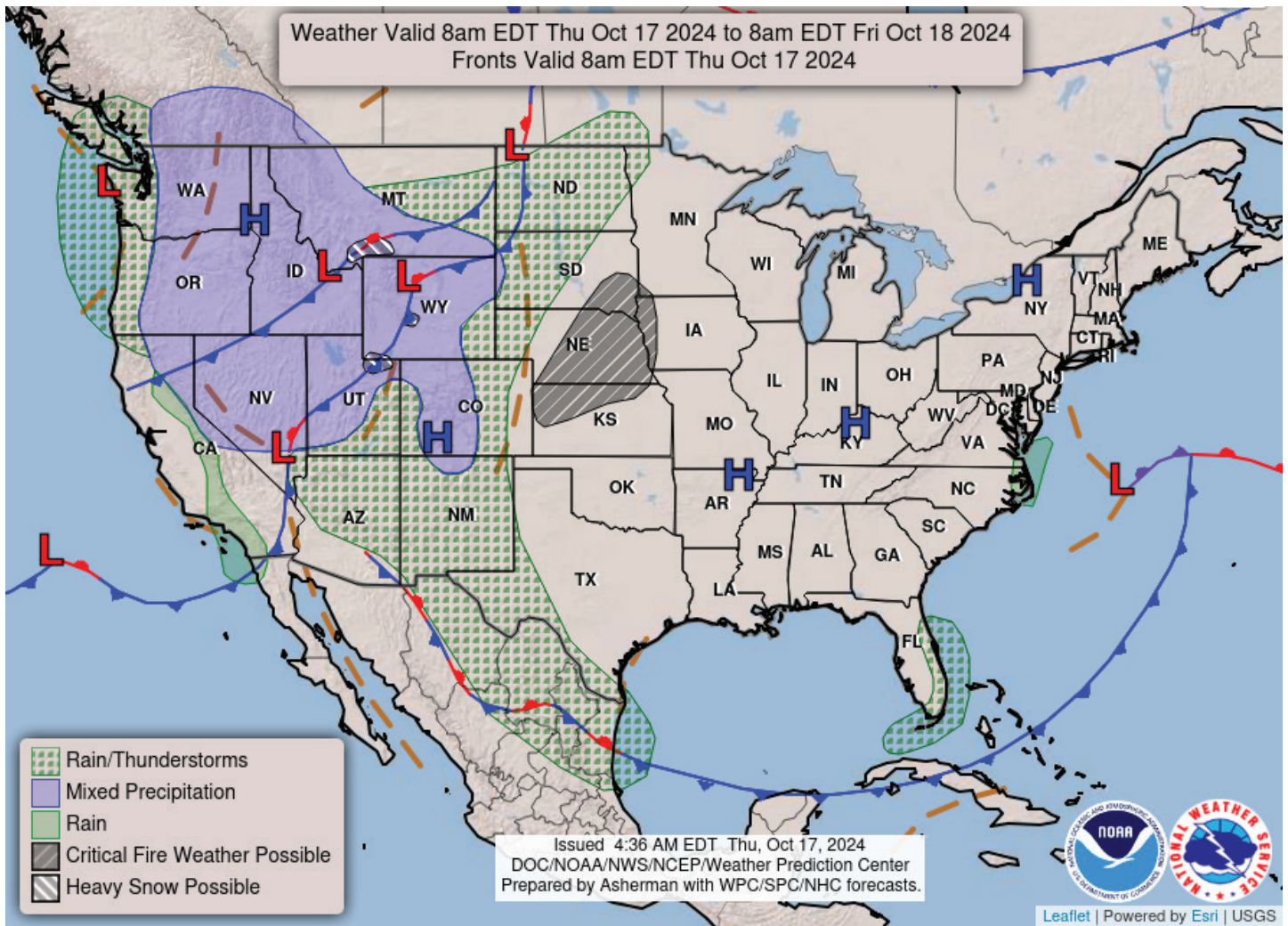
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 65 °F at 4:46 PM**  
**Low Temp: 34 °F at 12:00 AM**  
**Wind: 30 mph at 12:42 PM**  
**Precip: : 0.00 (Last date we had rain: Aug. 13)**

Day length: 10 hours, 53 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 92 in 1910  
Record Low: 15 in 1976  
Average High: 59  
Average Low: 33  
Average Precip in Oct.: 1.29  
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00  
Average Precip to date: 19.62  
Precip Year to Date: 19.75  
Sunset Tonight: 6:44:19 pm  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:52:11 am



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## Today in Weather History

October 17, 1910: The temperature in Aberdeen, South Dakota, warmed to 90 degrees on this day. This reading is the latest day in the calendar year in which the high temperature reached 90 degrees.

October 17, 2011: A strong low-pressure system to the northwest and a strong high-pressure system to the southeast brought stiff southerly winds across central and north-central South Dakota from the late morning until the early evening. South winds of 30 to 40 mph with gusts over 60 mph caused spotty damage across the region. The high winds created large waves on Lake Oahe near Pierre, which damaged several docks along with some boats at a marina. There were also some tree branches downed across the region, along with some damage to a few structures. With the high winds, warm temperatures, and low humidity, several grassland fires also broke out across parts of the region. The maximum wind gust of 68 mph occurred in Corson County.

1781 - General Cornwallis attempted to escape encirclement by crossing York River, "but a violent storm arose" dispersing his boats causing him to ask for an armistice. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1910: A category 4 hurricane moved north-northeast, passing just east of the Dry Tortugas. The maximum storm surge observed in Key West was 8 feet, with 15-foot waves at what is now Fort Zachary Taylor State Park.

1950 - Small but powerful Hurricane King struck Miami, FL. The hurricane packs winded to 122 mph, with gusts to 150 mph. Hurricane King then moved up the Florida peninsula to Georgia. Four persons were killed and damage was 28 million dollars. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1971: Great balls of fire were observed just ahead of a tornado moving down the main street of Wray, Colorado. However, little other electrical activity accompanied the storm. Nine people were injured in the storm, all at a trailer court at the edge of town.

1984: A snowstorm struck northern Utah producing a record 18 inches in 24 hours at Salt Lake City and 40 inches at the nearby Alta Ski Resort. The town of Magna, located ten miles west of Salt Lake City, did not receive any snow at all. The storm was responsible for a fifty-vehicle pile-up along Interstate 15 near Farmington, Utah.

1987 - It was a great day for an Oktoberfest, or to enjoy the colors of autumn, as much of the nation enjoyed sunny and mild weather. Columbia SC dipped to 34 degrees, marking their third morning in a row of record cold. Bakersfield CA reached 80 degrees for the 143rd day in a row to break a record established in 1940. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Middle Mississippi Valley and the Lower Ohio Valley. Severe thunderstorms spawned three tornadoes in Indiana, including one which injured four persons. Strong thunderstorm winds at Connerville IND caused three million dollars damage. Thunderstorms in Illinois produced hail two inches in diameter Colfax. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Showers and thunderstorms representing the remnants of Hurricane Jerry deluged southeast Kentucky with four to six inches of rain in 18 to 24 hours, resulting in widespread flash flooding. Flooding resulted in more than five million dollars damage. Temperatures again warmed into the 80s and lower 90s in the southeastern U.S. Lakeland FL and Orlando FL reported record highs of 95 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1997: Late on October 17, Super Typhoon Ivan attained its peak intensity with winds of 185 mph and an official barometric pressure of 905 mbar. On the same day, while near peak intensity, Typhoon Joan was located about 1300 miles east of Typhoon Ivan. 1998: During the weekend of October 17-18, 1998, torrential rains fell over southern and southeast Texas. Up to 22 inches of rain fell, which first resulted in deadly flash flooding from San Antonio to Austin followed by record-breaking river floods along several South Texas rivers the following week. Based on provisional data from the USGS, which is subject to revision, the flood peak for this event was the highest known peak stage at 15 locations. Tragically, a total of 31 people died during the event (26 drownings, two tornado deaths, two heart attacks, and one electrocution/drowning). At least 17 of the drowning victims were in vehicles that were either driven into water or were swept away by rapidly rising water. Preliminary property damage estimates approached three-quarters of a billion dollars.





## LIMITED BY CHOICE

James Corbett was a one-time bank teller who became a world champion heavyweight boxer. One day while strolling through the woods he came upon a man fishing for trout. Intrigued, he paused to watch him.

Eventually he pulled out a very large trout, examined it carefully and threw it back into the stream. After a short time, he caught another large trout, measured it and then threw it back into the stream as he had with the first one. Finally he caught a trout half the size of the first two and kept it. Puzzled "Gentleman Jim" Corbett asked, "Why did you throw the two large trout back into the stream and keep the small one?"

"Small frying pan," said the fisherman casting his line back into the stream.

Our vision can keep us in bondage. If we have small ideas about what we want to accomplish for God, that is exactly what we will do. If we attempt nothing, we will accomplish nothing, and our lives will amount to nothing.

If, on the other hand, we look to God for ideas that are worthy of Him, He will give them to us. And not only will He give us the ideas, but the inspiration and confirmation that we can do all things through Him if we do all things for Him. "By His mighty power," Paul said, "He can accomplish more than we can ask or hope."

Prayer: Heavenly Father, it is obvious that You want us to do great things for You. Give us an unlimited view of what we can do for You and inspire us to do great things for You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us. Ephesians 3:20

*We all need the encouragement, comfort, and peace that comes through God's grace. Our daily devotionals, known as Seeds of Hope, have been a means through which thousands of people have experienced this grace. Each devotional comes from God's Word and we pray this good "seed" finds good soil in your heart. Our aim is that the Seeds of Hope will be a great source of daily encouragement to you and that God will use them to draw you near to Him*

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
10.15.24

22 34 44 54 62 3

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$185,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 6  
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
10.16.24

2 16 21 33 52 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$12,050,000**

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 21  
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
10.16.24

5 29 32 45 46 7

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 15 Hrs 36 Mins  
DRAW: 59 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
10.16.24

3 5 14 24 30

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$64,000**

NEXT 2 Days 15 Hrs 36  
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
10.16.24

29 35 41 53 68 9

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 5  
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
10.16.24

4 30 39 44 60 11

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$437,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 16 Hrs 5  
DRAW: Mins 59 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

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## Upcoming Groton Events

07/04/2024 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
07/09/2024 FREE SNAP Application Assistance 1-6pm at the Community Center  
07/14/2024 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm  
07/17/2024 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm  
07/17/2024 Pro Am Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
07/25/2024 Dairy Queen Miracle Treat Day  
07/25/2024 Summer Downtown Sip & Shop 5-8pm  
07/25/2024 Treasures Amidst The Trials 6pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
07/26/2024 Ferney Open Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start  
07/27/2024 1st Annual Celebration in the Park 1-9:30pm  
08/05/2024 School Supply Drive 4-7pm at the Community Center  
**Cancelled:** Wine on 9 at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm  
08/08/2024 Family Fun Fest 5:30-7:30pm  
08/9-11/2024 Jr. Legion State Baseball Tournament  
08/12/2024 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 1:15-7pm  
09/07/2024 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm  
09/07-08/2024 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport  
09/08/2024 Sunflower Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am  
10/05/2024 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm  
10/11/2024 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am  
10/31/2024 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm  
10/31/2024 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm  
11/16/2024 Groton American Legion "Turkey Raffle" 6:30-11:30pm  
11/28/2024 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm  
12/01/2024 Groton Snow Queen Contest, 4:30 p.m.  
12/07/2024 Olive Grove 8th Annual Holiday Party with Live & Silent Auctions 6pm-close  
04/12/2025 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park 10am Sharp  
05/03/2025 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm  
05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm  
07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary Salad Luncheon  
07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm  
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm  
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm  
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm



## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### **Uphill battles that put abortion rights on ballots are unlikely to end even if the measures pass**

By GEOFF MULVVIHILL Associated Press

Voters in nine states are deciding next month whether to add the right to abortion to their constitutions, but the measures are unlikely to dramatically change access — at least not immediately.

Instead, voter approval would launch more lawsuits on a subject that's been in the courts constantly — and more than ever since the U.S. Supreme Court in 2022 overturned *Roe v. Wade* and opened the door to state abortion laws. In some states where the issue is on the ballot, it's already widely available.

If Missouri's amendment passes and takes effect in December, the measure would not repeal a state ban at all stages of pregnancy or the layers of other regulations — including a 72-hour waiting period and 44-inch (112-centimeter) doorway rule for clinics — that forced Planned Parenthood to stop abortions in two offices years before *Roe* was overturned.

"A yes vote for this is not a vote to overturn anything. It is a vote to ensure that the courts will have to fight this out for a long time," said Republican state Sen. Mary Elizabeth Coleman.

Coleman, who is also a conservative constitutional lawyer, said the Republican-dominated Legislature could also go back to voters to ask them to undo the amendment if it passes.

Still, the measure would mean that "the wind will be at our back" in court fights to overturn restrictions, said Emily Wales, the president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Great Plains, which operates in four states and is the only group in recent years to provide abortions in Missouri. They stopped completely just before *Roe* was overturned.

"It will feel tremendously different to us to say, 'Missourians have a constitutional right. If you're going to interfere with it, you've got to have a pretty good cause,'" she said.

There's some precedent for an amendment not settling everything right away. An Ohio measure passed last year all but undid a law that banned abortion after cardiac activity can be detected, at about six weeks and before women often realize they're pregnant. Enforcement had already been blocked by a court. Ohio advocates have been prevailing in preliminary litigation against other regulations but those battles aren't finished yet, and they worry lawmakers will block the use of taxpayer funds to support access.

"Having fewer legal restrictions is not necessarily meaningful to someone if they can't afford the financial cost," said Lexis Dotson-Dufault, executive director of the Abortion Fund of Ohio.

The most populous state with an abortion ballot measure this year is Florida. It would take approval of 60% of voters to win. And Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis's administration has alleged fraud in the signature-gathering process that got it on the ballot. That could be the basis for a court challenge on whether the amendment would take effect on Jan. 7. Meanwhile, the measure's supporters are suing current and former state health department officials over their efforts to get TV stations to stop running one pro-amendment ad.

The office of state Attorney General Ashley Moody, a Republican who sought to keep the measure off the ballot, did not respond to an interview request.

A Nevada measure wouldn't make an immediate splash because it would be required by law to not only pass in November, but in 2026 as well.

In Colorado, Maryland and New York — where the measure doesn't say "abortion" specifically but bans discrimination based on "pregnancy outcomes" — abortion is already allowed at least until viability — generally considered to be after 20 weeks, with some exceptions.

Colorado's measure would also repeal a ban on using taxpayer funds for abortion. A new law would be needed for abortion to be added to health insurance for government employees and people with Medicaid coverage.

Arizona's amendment would go into effect with a governor's proclamation if voters approve it. The state

bars abortion after 15 weeks — and most occur before then. Earlier this year, some Republican lawmakers in the political battleground state joined with Democrats to repeal a much more restrictive 1864 ban before it could be enforced.

In Nebraska, the ballot includes competing measures: One would bar abortion after 12 weeks of pregnancy, with some exceptions, echoing the current ban but leaving open the possibility of tighter restrictions. The other would allow abortion until viability.

To take effect, an amendment would need not only majority support, but more votes than the other measure.

In South Dakota, where abortion is banned throughout pregnancy, opponents and advocates have been fighting over a measure that would prohibit the state from regulating abortion in the first trimester and allow regulations for the second and third trimesters only under certain health circumstances.

If the measure is adopted and survives the challenge, it would take effect July 1, 2025.

Life Defense Fund is focused on its campaign to defeat the measure at the ballot box rather than what might come next, said group spokesperson Caroline Woods.

Dakotans for Health sponsored the amendment and expects the Republican-dominated Legislature to try to “thread that needle” and impose restrictions during the second trimester if the amendment passes, said group cofounder Rick Weiland.

And that would probably mean more lawsuits.

“This is an issue that’s never going to go away,” Weiland said.

## Death of ex-One Direction member Liam Payne at 31 sends shockwaves around the world

By ISABEL DEBRE and KAITLYN HUAMANI Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Shockwaves spread around the world Thursday at the death of Liam Payne, who shot to stardom as a member of British boy band One Direction and had to deal with intense global fame while still in his teens.

Fans, music-industry figures and fellow musicians paid tribute to Payne, 31, who died after falling from a hotel balcony in Argentina.

Buenos Aires police said Payne fell from the third floor of the Casa Sur Hotel in the trendy Palermo neighborhood of Argentina’s capital on Wednesday, resulting in “extremely serious injuries.” Medics confirmed his death on the spot, the police said in a statement.

Pablo Policicchio, the communications director for the Buenos Aires Security Ministry, said in a statement to The Associated Press that Payne “had jumped from the balcony of his room.” Police rushed to the hotel in response to an emergency call just after 5 p.m. local time, he said, warning of an “aggressive man who could be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.”

The Associated Press could not confirm details of the incident, as an investigation is ongoing, Alberto Crescenti, head of the state emergency medical system, told Argentina’s Todo Noticias TV channel that authorities were investigating the circumstances of his death and conducting an autopsy.

A hotel manager can be heard on a 911 call obtained by the AP saying the hotel had “a guest who is overwhelmed with drugs and alcohol ... He’s destroying the entire room and, well, we need you to send someone, please.” The manager’s voice became more anxious as the call went on, noting the room had a balcony.

Payne was known as the tousle-headed, sensible one of the quintet that went from a TV talent show to a pop phenomenon with a huge international following of swooning fans. In recent years he had acknowledged struggling with alcoholism, saying in a YouTube video posted in July 2023 that he had been sober for six months after receiving treatment. Representatives for Payne did not immediately return emails and calls.

Rolling Stone Ronnie Wood, who performed with One Direction in 2014, said he was “shocked and saddened.”

“God bless Liam, thinking of all his loved ones. He will be dearly missed,” Wood wrote on X.

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Paris Hilton also sent condolences on X, saying the news was "so upsetting." The Backstreet Boys said in a social media post that their hearts go out to "Directioners around the world."

Dozens of One Direction fans flocked to the Casa Sur Hotel after the news broke, forming lines that spilled into the cordoned-off street outside, where police stood sentinel. Forensic investigators were seen leaving the building, from where Payne's body was removed around three hours after the fall. Young women filming with their cellphones expressed shock and heartbreak as a makeshift memorial with rows of candles and bouquets quickly grew.

"I didn't think he was going to die so young," 21-year-old Isabella Milesi told the AP.

Payne was one of five members of One Direction, which formed after each auditioned for the British singing competition "The X Factor" in 2010, two years after Payne's first attempt to get on the show. At 16 the second time around, Payne sang Michael Bublé's version of "Cry Me a River," appearing nervous at the start but warming up with the audience's cheers and applause.

After each singer failed to make it through the competition as solo acts, Simon Cowell and his fellow judges combined Payne, Zayn Malik, Harry Styles, Niall Horan and Louis Tomlinson into what would become one of the most successful boy bands — even though they lost the competition.

Each member had their own persona, with Payne — who hailed from Wolverhampton in England's West Midlands region — known as the responsible one. The band became known for their pop sound and romantic hits including "What Makes You Beautiful," "Night Changes" and "Story of My Life."

Payne had prominent solos on songs including "Stole My Heart" and "Change Your Ticket," co-writing several of the band's hits. One Direction had six Top 10 hits on the Billboard charts by the time they disbanded in 2016 and a highly loyal fan base, known as "Directioners," many of them teen girls.

"I've always loved One Direction since I was little," said 18-year-old Juana Relh, another fan outside Payne's hotel. "To see that he died and that there will never be another reunion of the boys is unbelievable, it kills me."

With his meteoric rise to fame, Payne had said that it took some time to adjust to the public eye.

"I don't think you can ever deal with that, it's all a bit crazy for us to see that people get in that sort of state of mind about us and what we do," he said in a 2013 interview with the AP after recounting an experience where a fan was in a state of shock upon meeting him.

One Direction announced an indefinite "hiatus" in 2016, and Payne — like each of his erstwhile bandmates — pursued a solo career, shifting toward EDM and hip-hop.

While Styles became a huge solo star, the others had more modest success. Payne's 2017 single "Strip That Down," featuring Quavo, reached the Billboard Top 10, and stayed on the charts for several months. He put out an album "LP1" in 2019, and his last release — a single called "Teardrops" — was released in March.

In 2020, to mark the 10th anniversary of One Direction, Payne shared a screenshot of a text message he sent to his father on the day he joined the group, which read: "I'm in a boyband."

"What a journey ... I had no idea what we were in for when I sent this text to my dad years ago at this exact time the band was formed," he wrote.

Payne had a 7-year-old son, Bear Grey Payne, with his former girlfriend, the musician Cheryl, who was known as Cheryl Cole when she performed with Girls Aloud. She was an "X Factor" judge during One Direction's season, although their relationship began years later. Payne was previously engaged to Maya Henry, from August 2020 to early 2022. Henry released a novel earlier this year that she said was based on their relationship.

In addition to his son, he is survived by his parents, Geoff and Karen Payne, and his two older sisters, Ruth and Nicola.

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## McConnell called Trump 'stupid' and 'despicable' in private after the 2020 election, a new book says

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Mitch McConnell said after the 2020 election that then-President Donald Trump was "stupid as well as being ill-tempered," a "despicable human being" and a "narcissist," according to excerpts from a new biography of the Senate Republican leader that will be released this month.

McConnell made the remarks in private as part of a series of personal oral histories that he made available to Michael Tackett, deputy Washington bureau chief of The Associated Press. Tackett's book, "The Price of Power," draws from almost three decades of McConnell's recorded diaries and from years of interviews with the normally reticent Kentucky Republican.

The animosity between Trump and McConnell is well known — Trump once called McConnell "a dour, sullen, and unsmiling political hack." But McConnell's private comments are by far his most brutal assessment of the former president and could be seized on by Democrats before the Nov. 5 election. The biography will be released Oct. 29, one week before Election Day that will decide if Trump returns to the White House.

Despite those strong words, McConnell has endorsed Trump's 2024 run, saying earlier this year "it should come as no surprise" that he would support the Republican party's nominee. He shook Trump's hand in June when Trump visited GOP senators on Capitol Hill.

McConnell, 82, announced this year that he will step aside as Republican leader after the election but stay in the Senate through the end of his term in 2026.

McConnell was 'counting the days' until Trump left office

The comments about Trump quoted in the book came in the weeks before the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol. Trump was then actively trying to overturn his loss to Democrat Joe Biden. McConnell feared this would hurt Republicans in two Georgia runoffs and cost them the Senate majority. Democrats won both races.

Publicly, McConnell had congratulated Biden after the Electoral College certified the presidential vote and the senator warned his fellow Republicans not to challenge the results. But he did not say much else. Privately, he said in his oral history that "it's not just the Democrats who are counting the days" until Trump left office, and that Trump's behavior "only underscores the good judgment of the American people. They've had just enough of the misrepresentations, the outright lies almost on a daily basis, and they fired him."

"And for a narcissist like him," McConnell continued, "that's been really hard to take, and so his behavior since the election has been even worse, by far, than it was before, because he has no filter now at all."

Before those Georgia runoffs, McConnell said Trump is "stupid as well as being ill-tempered and can't even figure out where his own best interests lie."

Trump was also holding up a coronavirus aid package at the time, despite bipartisan support. "This despicable human being," McConnell said in his oral history, "is sitting on this package of relief that the American people desperately need."

On Jan. 6, soon after he made those comments, McConnell was holed up in a secure location with other congressional leaders, calling Vice President Mike Pence and military officials for reinforcements as Trump supporters stormed the Capitol. Once the Senate resumed debate over the certification of Biden's victory, McConnell said in a speech on the floor that "this failed attempt to obstruct the Congress, this failed insurrection, only underscores how crucial the task before us is for our republic."

McConnell then went to his office to address his staff, some of whom had barricaded themselves in the office as rioters banged on their doors. He started to sob softly as he thanked them, Tackett writes.

"You are my family, and I hate the fact that you had to go through this," he told them.

The next month, McConnell gave his harshest public criticism of Trump on the Senate floor, saying he was "practically and morally responsible" for the Jan. 6 attack. Still, McConnell voted to acquit Trump after House Democrats impeached him for inciting the riot.

Years of doubts and criticism

In a statement to the AP on Thursday, McConnell referenced two fellow Republican senators — JD Vance



of Ohio, the vice presidential nominee, and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, both of whom are strong Trump allies after harshly criticizing him during his first run in 2016.

"Whatever I may have said about President Trump pales in comparison to what JD Vance, Lindsey Graham, and others have said about him, but we are all on the same team now," McConnell said.

McConnell also had doubts about Trump from the start. Just after Trump was elected in 2016, as Congress was certifying the election, McConnell told Biden, then the outgoing vice president, that he thought Trump could be trouble, Tackett writes.

The book channels McConnell's inner thoughts during some of the biggest moments after Trump took office, as McConnell held his tongue and as the two men repeatedly fought and made up.

In 2017, as Trump publicly criticized McConnell for the Senate's failure to repeal the Affordable Care Act, Trump and McConnell had a heated argument on the phone. Weeks went by with no contact. Then Trump invited McConnell to the White House and called a joint news conference without telling him first. McConnell said the event went fine, and "it's not hard to look more knowledgeable than Donald Trump at a press conference."

After the passage of a \$1.5 billion tax overhaul that same year, McConnell said, "All of a sudden, I'm Trump's new best friend."

He blamed Trump after House Republicans lost their majority in the 2018 midterm elections, Tackett writes. Trump "has every characteristic you would not want a president to have," McConnell said in an oral history at the time, and was "not very smart, irascible, nasty."

In 2022, as Trump continued to criticize McConnell and made racist comments about his wife, former Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, McConnell told Tackett that "I can't think of anybody I'd rather be criticized by than this sleazeball."

"Every time he takes a shot at me, I think it's good for my reputation," McConnell said.

Also in 2022, McConnell said in his oral history that Trump's behavior since losing the election had been "beyond erratic" as he kept pushing false allegations of voter fraud. "Unfortunately, about half the Republicans in the country believe whatever he says," McConnell said.

By 2024, McConnell had again endorsed Trump. He felt he had to if he were to continue to play a role in shaping the nation's agenda.

"It was the price he paid for power," Tackett writes.

## **Middle East latest: An Israeli strike wounds 2 civilians, Syrian military says**

By The Associated Press undefined

Syria's military says Israel wounded two civilians and damaged a military post a strike early Thursday in the coastal city of Latakia, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) north of the Lebanese border.

Israel regularly targets military sites in Syria linked to Iran and to Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group and has escalated its campaign against Hezbollah in recent weeks, after a year of near-daily exchanges of cross-border fire.

Lebanon says more than 2,300 people have been killed in the past year and 77% of public schools are out of service, either due to their use as shelters or their location in areas directly affected by the war.

On Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas-led militants blew holes in Israel's security fence and stormed in, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting another 250. Israel's offensive in Gaza has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities, who do not distinguish combatants from civilians. The war has destroyed large areas of Gaza and displaced about 90% of its population of 2.3 million people.

Israel's military says it has allowed 50 trucks of humanitarian aid into northern Gaza on Wednesday, after the United States warned it to boost aid efforts or risk losing weapons funding. The region has suffered heavy destruction and has been completely encircled by Israeli forces for nearly a year.

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Here's the latest:

Iranian foreign minister makes rare visit to Egypt to discuss tensions

CAIRO -- Iran's foreign minister has paid a rare visit to Egypt to discuss regional tensions linked to Israel's war with Iran-allied groups in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip.

Abbas Araghchi met with Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sissi and other top officials on Thursday to discuss ways of de-escalating tensions, according to an Egyptian statement.

Egypt was the first Arab country to make peace with Israel and is a close U.S. ally. Araghchi visited Jordan, another close U.S. ally, on Wednesday.

Israel has vowed to respond to an Iranian ballistic missile attack earlier this month, raising fears of a nationwide war that could draw in the U.S. and its allies.

Egypt and Jordan have repeatedly called for a cease-fire in Gaza, and Egypt has been a key mediator between Israel and Hamas.

Israel says it has killed local Hezbollah commander

JERUSALEM — The Israeli military says it has killed a local Hezbollah commander in a southern Lebanese town near the border.

The military said Thursday that an airstrike on Bint Jbeil killed Hussein Awada, who it said was in charge of firing projectiles into Israel from areas near the town.

Israeli strikes in recent weeks have killed Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, and most of his senior commanders.

Also on Thursday, the Israeli military warned people to stay away from two buildings in the eastern villages of Saraaine and Tamnine, in the Bekaa Valley, where Israel has carried out scores of airstrikes over the past two weeks.

Iranian commander repeats threats to Israel

TEHRAN, Iran — The chief of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard threatened Israel on Thursday with more missile barrages if it strikes Iran.

"Do not repeat your mistake — if you misbehave, if you strike anything of ours either in the region or in Iran, we will again hit you painfully," said Gen. Hossein Salami in a funeral ceremony for Iranian Guard commander Abbas Nilforoushan, who was killed alongside the head of the Hezbollah militant group in Beirut in September.

Salami said a missile barrage by Iran on Israel earlier in October in retaliation of killing Nasrallah and Nilforoushan was the "tiniest" action by Iran. He said an air defense battery deployed to Israel by the U.S. will not prevent Iranian retaliation.

"We do know about your weakness, and you know too," said Salami.

Earlier this month, Iran launched some 180 missiles at Israel in retaliation for the death of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, killed in Iran in July, as well as Nilforoushan and Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, who were killed in Israel strikes on Beirut in September.

Iran is the main backer of Hezbollah and supports militant groups opposed to Israel across the region including Hamas.

An Israeli strike wounds 2 in Syria, its military says

DAMASCUS, Syria — Syria's military says Israel carried out a strike early Thursday in the coastal city of Latakia, wounding two civilians and damaging a military post.

The military statement that was carried by state media did not give further details.

Israel regularly targets military sites in Syria linked to Iran and to Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group. Those strikes have become more frequent after exchanges of fire along the Lebanon-Israel border began in October 2023, with Hezbollah attacking Israeli posts in support of the Palestinians and its ally, Hamas.

The exchanges intensified over the past three weeks, and on Oct. 1, Israel began a ground invasion of southern Lebanon.

US B-2 stealth bombers strike bunkers of Yemen's Houthi rebels

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Long-range American B-2 stealth bombers launched airstrikes early Thursday morning targeting underground bunkers used by Yemen's Houthi rebels, officials said.

It wasn't immediately clear what damage was done in the strikes.

However, there are no previous reports of the B-2 Spirit being used in the strikes targeting the Houthis, who have been attacking ships for months in the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

The Houthis' al-Masirah satellite news channel reported airstrikes around Yemen's capital, Sanaa, which the group has held since 2014. They also reported strikes around the Houthi stronghold of Saada. They offered no immediate information on damage or casualties.

United States Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a statement that the B-2 bombers targeted "five hardened underground weapons storage locations in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen."

The strike also appeared to be an indirect warning to Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor, which has targeted Israel with ballistic missile attacks twice over the past year. The nuclear-capable B-2, which first saw action in 1999 in the Kosovo War, is rarely used by the U.S. military in combat as each aircraft is worth some \$1 billion.

## Ukrainian president Zelenskyy heads to EU and NATO to seek backing for his 'victory plan'

By LORNE COOK, MIKE CORDER and RAF CASERT Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Thursday that support from his embattled nation's Western allies is key to his "victory plan" to end the country's devastating war with Russia as he laid out details of the plan to European Union leaders.

He told reporters the plan aims "to strengthen Ukraine" and pave the way for a diplomatic solution to end the conflict on Europe's eastern flank.

"I think that this plan doesn't depend on Russian will, only on the will of our partners," he said before addressing leaders at an EU summit.

Zelenskyy was later shuttling across Brussels to meet with NATO defense ministers. The EU is a key supporter of Ukraine, a candidate member of the 27-nation bloc, as it fights Russia's invasion that began more than 2 1/2 years ago.

Zelenskyy outlined the five-point plan to Ukraine's parliament on Wednesday without disclosing confidential elements that have been presented in private to key allies, including the United States.

The Institute for the Study of War in Washington said that Russian President Vladimir Putin is seeking to draw out the war and he believes "that Russian forces can outlast Western support for Ukraine and collapse Ukrainian resistance by winning a war of attrition."

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte was muted in his response to the plan on Wednesday.

On Thursday he said that Kyiv can rest "absolutely assured that 32 allies are united in making sure that collectively, we will do whatever is needed to make sure that Ukraine can prevail, that (Russian President Vladimir) Putin will not get his way."

Rutte reiterated that Ukraine's place is among NATO's ranks, but he would not say when it might join. Zelenskyy insists that a membership invitation is central to his "victory plan" and would provide his country with the ultimate security guarantee to protect it from Russia.

"Ukraine will be a member of NATO in the future," Rutte said. "The question is exactly about the 'when.' I cannot answer that now."

However, Rutte said, Putin must understand that "we are in this, if necessary, for the long haul. And obviously we want to be in a place where Zelenskyy and Ukraine, from a position of strength, is able to start talks with Russia."

Major points of the plan include an invitation for Ukraine to join NATO and permission to use Western-supplied longer-range missiles to strike military targets deep inside Russia, steps that have been met with reluctance by Kyiv's allies so far.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz downplayed the chances of Berlin changing its opposition to the use of long-range weapons against Russian targets.

"You know Germany's position on the questions that are touched on here; nothing will change about this," he said.

Zelenskyy said he needs to "move some partners forward" on the issue. "And I think only with the unity in EU we can move and can move not only EU leaders, we can move other leaders."

A draft copy of EU summit conclusions — a text that will likely be tweaked before publication at the end of Thursday's meeting — reaffirms the bloc's "unwavering commitment to providing continued political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support to Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes and as intensely as needed. Russia must not prevail."

Thursday's talks in Brussels come as Ukrainian troops are struggling to hold off better-equipped Russian forces, especially in the eastern Donetsk region where they are gradually being pushed back. Kyiv is surviving with Western help, but Ukraine says it is coming too slowly.

Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda criticized slow Western decision-making over Ukraine and said it "would be a great mistake to think that our hesitance is the best way to de-escalation."

If Western allies bolstered support to Kyiv, leading to gains on the ground for Ukrainian forces, "then I think Putin would be pressed to go to negotiations table. Right now, he thinks he is prevailing," he said when entering the EU summit.

Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo said EU leaders "have to give a strong signal and unified signal that we continue to support Ukraine as much and as long as needed."

At their summit in Washington in July, the 32 NATO members declared Ukraine on an "irreversible" path to membership.

But for now, NATO is in a holding pattern. Its biggest and most powerful member, the United States, is facing a presidential election. European allies expect little movement on Ukraine until a new president takes office in January.

Beyond that, the United States and European heavyweight Germany remain deeply concerned about being dragged into a wider war with nuclear-armed Russia, and they lead a group of countries that oppose allowing Ukraine to join NATO until the conflict ends.

## **Biden making quick trip to Germany before US election to discuss Ukraine and democracy with allies**

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden has long believed diplomacy is about personal relationships — and he'll spend Friday in Berlin with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz as his time in office is on the cusp of ending.

There is also a planned meeting with other leaders in the "European Quad," a group that in addition to Biden and Scholz includes French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre described Biden as having a "close relationship" with Scholz, who early this year helped broker a multi-country prisoner swap that brought back to the United States the journalist Evan Gershkovich and former Marine Paul Whelan. The German leader told Biden before the deal in words to the effect, "For you, I will do this."

"We have worked together closely to strengthen our economies for both our people and provide critical support for Ukraine as it continues to defend itself against Russian aggression," Jean-Pierre said at Wednesday's White House briefing. "The president really wanted to make sure to go to Germany to thank Chancellor Scholz directly."

But Biden's whirlwind trip starting on Thursday is hardly just a social visit.

The United States and Germany have been the largest two sources of aid to Ukraine as it fights to repel a Russian invasion. And with less than three weeks before the U.S. presidential election, Biden also feels obligated to ready allies for the possible return to the White House of Republican Donald Trump, who has antagonized U.S. friends while displaying an appreciation for Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The administration said Biden has no plans while in Europe to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr



Zelenskyy, but the two spoke on Wednesday about additional military aid, with the White House announcing \$425 million in assistance, bringing the total support to more than \$64 billion over two and a half years.

In addition to Ukraine, Biden and Scholz plan to discuss European Union relations, democratic values, trade and technology issues, global supply chains, tensions in the Middle East and security issues in the Indo-Pacific region. While in Germany, Biden will also meet with its president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

Earlier this month, the U.S. president had delayed a trip planned to Germany and Angola in order to oversee relief efforts ahead of Hurricane Milton making landfall in Florida. He now plans to go to Angola in December.

His trip to Germany comes as Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee, has entered an aggressive sprint to persuade and turn out voters in an election that could ultimately determine the future of Biden's legacy of having strengthened NATO and built up relations in Asia to counter China's influence.

Trump has questioned America's commitment to defending NATO allies who are attacked, something that Biden called "un-American" in February.

"The whole world heard it and the worst thing is he means it," the president said.

Trump has talked about applying tariffs on imports from U.S. allies in Europe and Asia, which could potentially strain relations with countries that could counter Russia, China and other rivals.

"Our allies have taken advantage of us more so than our enemies," Trump said Tuesday at the Economic Club of Chicago.

Trump declined to say whether he's continued to speak with Putin since losing the 2020 election but added that it would not be a negative if he and the Russian leader had been in touch. Bob Woodward in his new book "War" reported that Trump and Putin have spoken seven times.

"But I will tell you that if I did, it's a smart thing," Trump said. "If I'm friendly with people, if I can have a relationship with people, that's a good thing and not a bad thing in terms of a country."

## **The Biden administration has now canceled loans for more than 1 million public workers**

By COLLIN BINKLEY AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A student loan cancellation program for public workers has granted relief to more than 1 million Americans — up from just 7,000 who were approved before it was updated by the Biden administration two years ago.

President Joe Biden announced the milestone on Thursday, saying his administration restored a promise to America's teachers, firefighters, nurses and other public servants. He celebrated it even as his broader student loan plans remain halted by courts following legal challenges by Republican-led states.

"For too long, the government failed to live up to its commitments," Biden said in a statement. "We vowed to fix that, and because of actions from our administration, now over 1 million public service workers have gotten the relief they are entitled to under the law."

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness program was created in 2007, promising college graduates that the remainder of their federal student loans would be zeroed out after 10 years working in government or nonprofit jobs. But starting in 2017, the vast majority of applicants were rejected because of complicated and little-known eligibility rules.

A 2018 report from the Government Accountability Office found that 99% of applicants were denied, often because they weren't in the right loan repayment plan or because their payments had temporarily been paused through deferment or forbearance — periods that weren't counted toward the 10 years of public work.

The GAO faulted the Education Department for failing to make the rules clear.

The program was the subject of legal and political battles, with Democrats in Congress calling on the Trump administration to loosen the rules and uphold the spirit of the program. Betsy DeVos, the education secretary at the time, countered that she was faithfully following the rules passed by Congress.

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Declaring that the program was "broken," the Biden administration in 2021 offered a temporary waiver allowing borrowers to get credit for past periods of deferment or forbearance, among other changes. A year later, the Education Department updated the rules to expand eligibility more permanently.

Since then, waves of borrowers have been approved for cancellation as they reach the 10-year finish line. On Thursday, 60,000 more hit the mark, pushing the total past 1 million. When Biden took office, just 7,000 borrowers had been granted relief over the previous four years.

In all, the program has erased \$74 billion in loans for public workers.

"I want to send a message to college students across America that pursuing a career in public service is not only a noble calling but a reliable pathway to becoming debt-free within a decade," Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said in a statement.

After facing legal challenges to Biden's own student loan plans, his administration has increasingly shifted attention to the record sums of loan cancellation granted through existing programs.

In total, the administration says it has now canceled \$175 billion for about 5 million borrowers. Public Service Loan Forgiveness accounts for the largest share of that relief, while others have had their loans canceled through income-driven payment plans and through a 1994 rule offering relief to students who were cheated by their schools.

Biden campaigned on a promise of widespread student loan cancellation, but last year the Supreme Court blocked his proposal to cancel up to \$20,000 for 40 million Americans. Biden ordered his Education Department to try again using a different legal justification, but a judge in Missouri temporarily halted the plan after several Republican states challenged it.

## North Korea says its revised constitution defines South Korea as 'hostile state' for first time

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea confirmed Thursday that its recently revised constitution defines South Korea as "a hostile state" for the first time, two days after it blew up front-line road and rail links that once connected the country with the South.

The back-to-back developments indicate North Korea is intent on escalating animosities against South Korea, increasing the danger of possible clashes at their tense border areas, though it's highly unlikely for the North to launch full-scale attacks in the face of more superior U.S. and South Korea forces.

The official Korean Central News Agency said Thursday that its recent demolition of parts of the northern sections of the inter-Korean road and rail links was "an inevitable and legitimate measure taken in keeping with the requirement of the DPRK constitution which clearly defines the ROK as a hostile state."

DPRK stands for Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name, while ROK stands for Republic of Korea, the South's formal name.

South Korea's Unification Ministry condemned North Korea's constitutional reference to South Korea as a hostile state, calling it "an anti-unification, anti-national act." It said the South Korean government will sternly respond to any provocations by North Korea and unwaveringly push for a peaceful Korean unification based on the basic principle of freedom and democracy.

North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament met for two days last week to rewrite the constitution but state media hadn't provided many details about the session. Leader Kim Jong Un had earlier called for the constitutional change at that parliamentary meeting to designate South Korea as the country's main enemy, remove the goal of a peaceful Korean unification and define North Korea's sovereign, territorial sphere.

Thursday's KCNA dispatch gave no further details of the new constitution, except the description of South Korea.

"There may still be an internal propaganda review underway about the appropriate way to disclose the constitutional revisions, but this confirmation was expected," said Ankit Panda, an expert with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Kim's order in January to rewrite the constitution caught many foreign experts by surprise because it was

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seen as eliminating the idea of shared statehood between the war-divided Koreas and breaking away with his predecessors' long-cherished dreams of peacefully achieving a unified Korea on the North's terms. In the past months, North Korea has torn down monuments symbolizing rapprochement with South Korea and abolished state agencies handling inter-Korean relations.

Some experts say Kim likely aims to guard against South Korean cultural influence and bolster his family's dynastic rule. Others say Kim wants legal room to use his nuclear weapons against South Korea by making it as a foreign enemy state, not a partner for potential unification which shares a sense of national homogeneity. They say Kim may also want to seek direct dealings with the U.S. in future diplomacy on its nuclear program, not via South Korea.

"North Korea has fallen so far behind the South that any social exchange or financial integration might look like paths to unification by absorption," said Leif-Eric Easley, professor of international studies at Ewha Womans University in Seoul.

"Pyongyang's rejection of peaceful Korean unification is thus a strategy for regime survival and maintaining domestic control. This not only bodes ill for diplomacy but could also become an ideology motivating military aggression against Seoul," Easley said.

KCNA, citing North Korea's Defense Ministry, reported that North Korea on Tuesday blew up the 60-meter (197 feet)-long sections of two pairs of the roads and railway routes — one pair on the western portion of the inter-Korean border and the other on the eastern side of the border.

Largely built with South Korean money, the road and rail links were once a major symbol of now-dormant inter-Korean reconciliation movements. In the 2000s, the two Koreas reconnected the road and rail routes for the first time since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, but their operations were halted later as the rivals bickered over North Korea's nuclear ambitions and other issues.

Last week, North Korea said it would permanently block its border with South Korea and build front-line defense structures. South Korean officials said North Korea had been adding anti-tank barriers and laying mines along the border since earlier this year.

Animosities between the Koreas increased in recent days, with North Korea accusing South Korea of flying drones over its capital Pyongyang three times this month and vowing strong military responses if similar incidents happen again. South Korea has refused to confirm whether it sent drones but warned that North Korea will face a regime demise if the safety of South Korean citizens is threatened.

Many observers say North Korea won't likely launch a full-blown war because it knows its military is out-gunned by the U.S. and South Korean forces, and that North Korea ultimately aims to use its advancing nuclear program as leverage to wrest sanctions relief from the U.S. But they say a miscalculation could still lead to border clashes.

Intense outside attention has been on whether the North Korean constitutional change includes new legal, territorial claims around the Koreas' disputed western sea boundary, the site where several deadly skirmishes and bloodsheds happened in the past 25 years.

"South Korea and the United States need not overreact to North Korean moves. The recent drone incident raises the possibility of miscalculation and escalation," Panda, the expert, said.

## With time running out, Harris keeps focus on 'blue wall' states

By CHRIS MEGERIAN and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

MILWAUKEE (AP) — With three weeks left in the presidential campaign, Democrat Kamala Harris is spending most of her days trying to shore up support in the "blue wall" states of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin as she tries to avoid a repeat of Hillary Clinton's collapse there eight years ago.

The vice president campaigned at a hockey rink on Monday in Erie, Pennsylvania, where she denounced Republican candidate Donald Trump as "unhinged." She visited an art gallery in Detroit with actors Don Cheadle, Delroy Lindo and Cornelius Smith. Jr. on Tuesday, then recorded a radio town hall with Charlamagne tha God.

On Wednesday, Harris was back in Pennsylvania to stress allegiance to the Constitution as she stood

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just steps from the banks of the Delaware River, where George Washington crossed with his troops in a pivotal moment of the Revolutionary War.

Her pace doesn't let up for the rest of the week. Harris is expected to hold three events in Wisconsin on Thursday, including a meet-and-greet with students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and three more in Michigan on Friday. She then campaigns in Detroit on Saturday.

A loss anywhere in the "blue wall," a name that reflects the region's traditional Democratic leaning, could doom Harris' path to the presidency.

"You don't take those states for granted. And she's not," said Joel Benenson, a Democratic pollster.

He previously served as chief strategist for Clinton, whose campaign was so overconfident that it stopped conducting its own polls in Midwest battlegrounds as the election approached.

"We've got a painful lesson in 2016 when we didn't go to the 'blue wall' states, and we lost," Benenson said.

Harris' campaign emphasized that she's not giving up on Sun Belt battlegrounds like North Carolina, Georgia, Arizona and Nevada. The vice president was in North Carolina over the weekend and she's expected to be back in Georgia on Sunday.

But any candidate's most precious resource is time, and Harris' schedule reflects the consensus about her most likely shot at winning the White House.

"It's not the only path, but it's the easiest path to victory," said Democratic pollster Celinda Lake.

She added, "If you can't win Pennsylvania or Michigan, do you really think you can win Georgia or North Carolina?"

Pennsylvania and Michigan are Harris' most popular destinations since Labor Day, with eight stops in each state, according to an Associated Press tracking of candidates' public events.

At Harris' event in Washington Crossing on Wednesday, one voter said Democrats had discovered the cost of complacency the hard way.

"In 2016, we thought we had it, you know, we thought we were okay," said Melanie Woods, a retired school principal who came all the way from Brooklyn. "And I don't think you can ever take anything for granted any more."

Dan Kanninen, the Harris campaign's battleground states director, said the vice president has "multiple pathways" to win.

"All seven battleground states are in play, and we know each will be incredibly close," he said. "That is why we will continue to engage and mobilize voters aggressively across all these states until Election Day."

During her campaign travels, Harris is trying to pick strategic areas to talk about key policies, such as promoting auto jobs and union membership in Detroit and going to Douglas, Arizona to unveil plans to tighten rules for immigrants seeking asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border after she walked along the towering wall separating the two countries.

The campaign is also increasingly relying on large organizational networks in key states, including coordinated offices with state Democratic parties, to fill in the gaps when Harris isn't there. It's deploying key surrogates — most notably Harris' running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz — to lessen the impact of choosing to travel to one part of the country versus the other.

Democrats have other benefits, too. There's a deep bench of high-profile politicians who are united behind Harris, including former President Barack Obama, who has been making campaign stops on her behalf. And there's a campaign war chest larger than Trump's, allowing Harris to keep up the pressure with advertising and expansive get-out-the-vote efforts.

Democrats' electoral odds have ebbed and flowed during this tumultuous election year. President Joe Biden had faced a dwindling path to reelection, with some purple states sliding out of reach. But when he dropped out of the race in July, Harris' team emphasized her potentially broader geographic appeal.

"Vice President Harris enters a tight race, but it is clear that she can bring together a coalition of voters to keep a wide set of states in play," Campaign Chair Jen O'Malley Dillon wrote in a memo in late July.

But that doesn't mean that some states aren't more important than others.

"You win Pennsylvania, and you're the next president," Sen. John Fetterman said at Harris' rally in Erie.



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Trump's travel is less tightly focused than Harris' this week. He was in Pennsylvania on Monday, Illinois and Georgia on Tuesday and Florida on Wednesday.

He attends the Al Smith charity dinner in New York on Thursday and returns to Detroit on Friday.

His previous visit there generated backlash because he criticized the city, which is rebounding after years of financial problems.

"Our whole country will end up being like Detroit if she's your president," Trump said during a speech to the Detroit Economic Club.

Tommey Walker, founder and owner of the clothing company Detroit vs. Everybody, derided Trump for disparaging his city while introducing Harris at an event on Tuesday.

"Now it's Detroit versus Donald Trump," Walker proclaimed.

Harris, by contrast, talked about the city in reverent tones. She recalled making friends with students from Detroit while attending Howard University.

"I just feel a kindred spirit whenever I come to Detroit," Harris said.

## Harris and Trump say America tanks if they lose. So why the exuberance at their rallies?

By CAROLYN THOMPSON, JEFF AMY and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

Shortly after taking the stage 91 minutes late for his Atlanta rally this week, Donald Trump did what he can't help doing — go off on a tangent. This was clearly going to be a night at the improv.

He marveled at length about how Elon Musk's SpaceX rocket booster was snatched from the skies by mechanical arms on its return. All that fire and smoke. "Coolest thing I've seen in a long time," he told his crowd. "Was that crazy?" Talk about a rocket's red glare.

A day earlier in Erie, Pennsylvania, Kamala Harris was buzzing with energy and blinding smiles on stage, and so were the thousands there to see her. No tangents.

She delivered a lacerating putdown of her opponent, polishing the art of looking incredulous about the man half the country might be voting for. If she'd held up a sign, "WTF" would have nailed the expression on her face. Her crowd was on a sugar high.

If next month's election is the ultimate battle of good vs. evil, which we are told by both sides that it is, why are all these Georgia and Pennsylvania people dancing in the hall and having all this fun?

Harris' rhetoric is existential, the country's very foundation susceptible to crumbling away Nov. 5, in her reckoning. Trump's always provocative words have gone darker still, even with violent undertones at times.

Yet in a country sick of what American politics has become, here were thousands marinating in it. Enjoying it. Making a date night out of it. Cocooned in it.

The Harris rally Monday and the Trump one Tuesday were on different planets, to borrow Trump's phrase for the world each candidate is offering Nov. 5. Trump looked ahead by looking back, promising a return to the country "you were born in." Harris was fiercely future-focused.

Chants of "U.S.A., U.S.A." rang out at both events and love of America was in the air. But what America?

For U.S. Rep. Byron Donalds, who warmed up the crowd for the tardy Trump, it's the country where boys grow to be men — "manhood is needed" — and girls become strong women who get husbands. Added Trump when he spoke, "Transgender insanity will be out of our schools immediately" if he wins.

For Harris, it's the country where people have "the freedom to love who you love openly and with pride."

At the Trump rally, Jonathan Cordero, 31, a former Bernie Sanders supporter now backing the Republican, was asked whether he recognizes that Democrats are patriots, too. He said yes, and compared patriotism to religion — different faiths all devoted to a deity.

"Somebody who believes in, let's say, Islam or Hinduism, they fully are committed to that belief system," he said. "Same concept here — if somebody is for Harris and they're chanting 'U.S.A.,' that's because that's their vision for where the country should go."

Erie was electrified

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More than four hours before Harris took the stage, the line to get inside the Erie Insurance Arena wrapped around a city block. Once inside, people had more than two hours to kill before the first speaker addressed them.

Many were on their feet much of that time, dancing as a high-energy DJ spun a club mix heavy on female artists like Katy Perry, Whitney Houston, Beyonce, Madonna and Taylor Swift.

People danced the Cha Cha Slide at their seats when prompted by the DJ. "Woah, we're halfway there!" the crowd shouted when Bon Jovi's "Livin' on a Prayer" came on, with those lyrics.

Before the speakers started, Robert Cabaniss, a 28-year-old music artist from Pittsburgh, two hours away, and his companion on a fishing trip showed up to support a strongly Democratic friend at the rally.

If not a pure party loyalist himself, Cabaniss nevertheless supports Harris because "she fights for all of us" and, in his mind, she's the only grownup running.

"It's like, man, did he grow out of his shoe size yet?" he said about Trump and his "spoiled brat talk." He went on: "I'm still waiting. It's like Peter Pan hasn't grown up yet."

As for Trump's supporters, he said, "I think they love their country, but not the right way."

A few sections over sat Angela Cox and her adult daughter, Taylor Norton, who had driven from Buffalo, New York, about 90 minutes away, after learning about the rally online. They were in line two hours before settling in their seats, and Cox had no complaints about that.

"I've been having conversations with people all day long, and I love it," she said. "The camaraderie."

The hall was electrified when Harris walked out and launched into a half hour speech hitting on the touchstones of her campaign — her plans, biography, patriotism and the "brutally serious consequences" should Trump, whom she's come to call an "unserious man," win.

In a twist for her, she had the crowd watch a video on the jumbo screen of Trump musing about using the military to suppress "the enemy within" — the political opponents, investigators and resistant bureaucrats he branded as more dangerous than Russia or China.

"You heard his words coming from him," she said. "He's talking about the enemy within, Pennsylvania. ... He considers anyone who doesn't support him or who will not bend to his will an enemy of our country." Lusty boos washed over the hall.

Her rally-goers were jazzed throughout. Afterward, she snaked through the crowd on the floor, shaking hands and chatting for 20 minutes.

"I think she's superb," said Luther Manus, a 97-year-old World War II and Vietnam veteran as the arena started emptying out. "And it's something, because what we had we don't need again."

It was date night in Atlanta

The upper-crust suburban setting outside the 2,800-seat Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre put something of a damper on the carnival-hawker midway vibe that traditionally accompanies an outdoor Trump rally in a fairground setting.

But the usual merch was on display, like the T-shirts saying "I'm voting for the felon and the hillbilly," a reference to Trump's criminal conviction and running mate JD Vance's 2016 memoir, "Hillbilly Elegy."

"I just want to be around people that feel the same way I feel," said Lydia Ward, a 33-year-old makeup artist, mother of two and longtime Trump supporter. "I've never been to something like this. The weather's great, and we were able to get a babysitter and kind of made a date out of it."

The typical attendee invested as many as eight hours in Trump's event, from joining the lineup into the home of Atlanta's ballet and opera companies to seeing him leave the stage with Village People's 1978 song "Y.M.C.A." blasting.

A screen over the stage flashed slides that few seemed to heed. Some slides made dystopian threats about the consequences of a Harris victory that focus on an America overrun by violent migrants. "Kamala's border plan: Make America Haiti," proclaimed one, with a dog picking its way down a junk-strewn street. "Kamala is responsible for a broken economy, broken border and broken world," said another.

Whether because he was tired in his third event of the day or just feeling chill, Trump was a bit lower key and shorter in his remarks than in some recent speeches, clocking in at 70 minutes. But he covered

his bases.

He cracked up his crowd with one-liners. He made common cause with MAGA supporters by telling them his rich friends are "boring as hell," though one of the world's richest, Trump supporter Musk, plainly fascinates him.

He mocked Harris for being wed to a teleprompter and not knowing what inflation is ( she does ). He tapped the thrill of group transgression, as when he said that under Democrats, "Everything turns to ..." The crowd completed the sentence.

A hearty ovation greeted one of his newer lines about immigration: "The United States is now an occupied country, but Nov. 5 is liberation day."

"I love the excitement," said Kay Bomar, a retiree from Ringgold in northwest Georgia. "You can talk to these people about what you feel and they tell you what they feel. You can say what you think here and not have to be afraid of offending somebody because they feel something different."

Cordero, the former Bernie Sanders supporter, plans to vote for Trump for the first time. "There's similarity," he said. "Not in the literal sense, but in the sense of the energy that they provoke out of people. They are very about change."

Cordero, who lives in the Atlanta suburb of Marietta and works in technology and advertising, showed up to be part of history.

"I'm Hispanic," he said. "I'm Puerto Rican, and there's some people who would say that Latin people shouldn't like Trump, or that Hispanics shouldn't support somebody like Trump. But I disagree with that statement.

"I think that Trump, this time around, has really reached all kinds of people simply by saying that we're going to get the economy to a good place. We're going to get our country safe again."

Harris got under Trump's skin in their debate by noting how his crowds can thin out while he's still speaking. A few did bail Tuesday night, starting about 25 minutes into his much-delayed speech. Most hung in.

Among them were Julius Adams, a student collecting disability who is Black, and his wife, Tanya Young-Adams, who delivers pizzas for Papa Johns and is white.

He has faith that Trump will follow through on deporting those immigrants who are "causing trouble," even if he doesn't pull off the mass deportations he's promised. She is sold on Trump's plan to exempt tips and car loans from taxes.

"We're on disability," she said. "We can barely get by with trying to buy groceries. And I've got a car payment and gas is outrageous."

Trump and Harris gave their supporters a night away from that sort of grind. In Erie and Atlanta both, it was a welcome-to-the-tribe party, a performance and a chance to cut loose.

The election results will tell which rally's exuberance proved more rational.

## **A historically Black community grapples with lasting impacts after Baltimore bridge collapse**

By LEA SKENE Associated Press

TURNER STATION, Md. (AP) — As the dust settled after the deadly collapse of Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge, as the initial shock wore off and the breaking news coverage subsided, residents of this tiny peninsula found themselves facing an uncertain future.

Many had spent decades living in the shadow of the Key Bridge, an iconic landmark that placed the community of Turner Station firmly on the map. For their working-class, historically Black neighborhood, it was a lifeline to the outside world, a source of both pride and convenience.

Within seconds, it was gone. Six construction workers died after a massive container ship lost power and veered off course, striking one of the bridge's support piers in the overnight darkness of March 26.

Turner Station was already struggling with population loss and economic decline long before the bridge collapse — and its newest chapter promises even more challenges.

Plans are underway to rebuild the Key Bridge by 2028. But in the meantime, its absence will be felt most

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acutely by people like Loreasa Minor and her neighbors, people who routinely hopped over the bridge to run errands, visit family, attend church and get to work.

Minor has lived in Turner Station nearly all her life. Some of her earliest memories are of the bridge being built, a feat of modern engineering taking shape right in her family's backyard. When it opened to cars in 1977, the 1.6-mile (2.6-kilometer) span bypassed downtown traffic and provided a direct connection between industrial communities on either side of Baltimore's harbor.

It also made Turner Station easily accessible, allowing residents to enjoy the neighborhood's small-town feel without living in the middle of nowhere. As jobs at nearby industrial plants gradually dried up, residents started commuting farther afield and many came to rely heavily on the Key Bridge.

Without it, Minor said, her daily commute has more than doubled.

She doesn't want to leave Turner Station, where her grandparents put down roots many decades ago. She currently lives across the street from her aging parents and around the corner from her beloved church. But sometimes while she's sitting in traffic for hours on end, she ruefully watches the gas gauge and contemplates her new routine.

"Do I relocate? Do I get a new job?" said Minor, who works at a state-run veteran's cemetery south of Baltimore. "I don't want to do either of those. I love my job. Who wants to start from scratch?"

From the beginning, a home for Black steelworkers

Turner Station was originally built to house Black steelworkers at a time when segregation laws limited where they could settle.

During WWI, military leaders tapped Baltimore's robust shipbuilding industry, including a sprawling steel mill northeast of the city. The federal government provided nearby housing only for white workers, so Black families started their own community in nearby Turner Station. Federal housing projects came later during WWII.

Bought by Bethlehem Steel in 1918, the mill at Sparrows Point would become the largest steel producer in the world. It provided lucrative jobs to Black people moving north, often to escape unfair sharecropping arrangements and other low-paying jobs in Southern states.

By the 1950s, Turner Station was home to many stores and other amenities, including an air conditioned movie theater, an amusement park, a community beach, doctor's offices, restaurants and cocktail lounges. It became largely self-sufficient in its heyday, an enclave of Black entrepreneurship and achievement in majority-white Baltimore County.

The population peaked at nearly 9,000 in the 1950s, but started shrinking soon after. Part of the area was rezoned for industry, resulting in the demolition of two large housing complexes. Manufacturing jobs gradually dwindled and businesses shuttered. By 1980, the population was under 4,000, according to local historians.

After decades of downsizing, the Bethlehem Steel plant closed in 2012. Younger generations started leaving Turner Station while their parents and grandparents sought to preserve its legacy.

During a recent tour of the neighborhood, longtime resident Courtney Speed marched up and down its residential streets lined with brick rowhouses and modest single-family homes. She said it shouldn't be lost on anyone that Turner Station is the product of racist housing policies, that its residents were fighting an uphill battle from day one.

She listed off a number of notable figures with ties to the community, many of them featured in the Turner Station History Center, a tiny museum filled with stories and photos.

"We've always been innovative," said Speed, 84, who owns one of Turner Station's longest operating businesses, Speed's Barber and Beauty. "It's our culture to make something out of nothing."

Henrietta Lacks, a Black woman whose cervical cells became a cornerstone of modern medicine after Johns Hopkins doctors harvested them without her consent, lived in Turner Station for almost a decade. Her name appears on commemorative street signs throughout the neighborhood and a plaque marks her former home.

Robert Curbeam, a former NASA astronaut and retired Navy captain, spent some of his childhood there.

U.S. Rep. Kweisi Mfume, former president of the NAACP, also grew up in Turner Station where he be-



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friended NFL legend Calvin Hill. He said the community instilled in them certain core values.

"Work hard, play by the rules, love your country, cherish your faith, respect the elderly and always believe that you can succeed," he recited. "It's a fiercely proud community. We were told to be proud of who you were."

He said most of the families were relatively poor, but they took care of each other. It was a simpler life, somewhat protected from the crime and violence that plagued nearby parts of Baltimore.

Now, a new set of struggles

Mfume, a Democrat, now represents Turner Station as part of his district in Congress. Since the bridge collapse, he's been working with other members of Maryland's congressional delegation to secure 100% federal funding for the cleanup and rebuilding process.

He said Turner Station residents have expressed concern about potential damage to buildings from the seismic impact of the collapse. And they're already tired of 18-wheelers getting diverted through their neighborhood, spewing diesel fumes and wearing down the roads.

Residents are also frustrated by rising home prices, partly a function of their desirable water views. Some worry about outside investors buying up properties, jacking up rents and pricing them out. They want to guard against the negative effects of gentrification by helping longtime renters become homeowners.

"This is some of the most valuable property in Baltimore County," Mfume said. "We don't want real estate speculation taking place."

Residents have spent years pushing government officials to adequately address flooding in Turner Station, a longstanding problem that has only gotten worse in recent years as county officials have studied the issue but failed to take significant action.

That's coupled with decades of industrial pollution making the surrounding water dangerous for swimming and fishing.

"They need to start treating this place as beautiful as it is," said Marquis Neal, whose backyard often floods during heavy rainstorms.

His neighbor Linwood Jackson, a Vietnam veteran who worked at Bethlehem Steel for over 30 years, called on elected officials to finally give Turner Station the attention and resources it deserves. That could mean bringing a grocery store back to the neighborhood, which has become a food desert in recent years. Or removing brush from the drainage ditches and replacing a rickety old fishing pier in the public park behind his house. Not to mention flood mitigation measures and continued pollution monitoring.

Jackson said he hopes Turner Station will become less of an afterthought since tragedy struck so close by. "Now we're at a crossroads again," he said.

But one thing he's learned, in war and in life, is that no one's coming to save you.

Could the new bridge bring new opportunities?

Having watched construction of the original Key Bridge "from the ground up," Vernon Banks said he looks forward to seeing its replacement take shape over the next four years. But it won't hold the same memories.

Last month, state transportation leaders awarded a contract for the massive project, which is expected to cost around \$1.7 billion.

Turner Station residents hope some of that money will make its way into their neighborhood and help spur revitalization.

State officials have pledged to include surrounding communities in the planning process and make jobs available for local workers during construction, though they haven't provided many details about the arrangements.

Turner Station has already benefited from environmental cleanup and recent redevelopment of the old Bethlehem Steel site, which now houses an Amazon warehouse and a maritime shipping terminal. Trade-point Atlantic, the site's owner, plans to continue growing the business into a major transportation and logistics hub. That also bodes well for job creation, although the glory days of steelworkers' wages are likely long gone.

Meanwhile, Turner Station residents will be doing what they've done for generations: coming together and fighting for their community.

There's Gloria Nelson, president of the Turner Station Conservation Teams, who has spent decades working with government agencies to bring resources into the community, including for housing redevelopment and a recent federal Superfund designation to support environmental cleanup in historically polluted Bear Creek. She wants to help Turner Station "move into the future while still respecting its history."

There's Antuan "Sleep" McQuaige, who's selling home-cooked meals around town and raising money to bring back a neighborhood youth football team.

There's Quanny Avondale, 30, who mentors younger men in the community, focusing on conflict resolution and financial planning. He encourages them to take advantage of Turner Station's real estate market and invest in property.

And on Sunday mornings, there's Pastor Rashad Singletary inspiring dozens of parishioners at Mount Olive Baptist Church, about 500 feet away from where the Key Bridge once stood. In the hours after the bridge fell, he opened up the church for first responders to use the bathroom or take a nap and hosted a prayer vigil later that evening.

"Sometimes it's hard to go through and trust God when you don't see nothing working," Singletary told congregants during a recent Sunday sermon about persevering through challenges.

"I just believe that if God brought me from all the things I've been through before. He's not gonna leave me now."

His booming voice filled the sanctuary as church members nodded and clapped in affirmation, thinking back on the obstacles they've already faced and looking ahead to future possibilities.

## **Liam Payne, former One Direction member, dies at 31 in Argentina hotel fall**

By ISABEL DEBRE and KAITLYN HUAMANI Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Former One Direction singer Liam Payne, 31, whose chart-topping British boy band generated a global following of swooning fans, was found dead Wednesday after falling from a hotel balcony in Buenos Aires, local officials said.

Buenos Aires police said in a statement that Payne fell from the third floor of the Casa Sur Hotel in the trendy Palermo neighborhood of Argentina's capital, resulting in "extremely serious injuries." Medics confirmed his death on the spot, the statement said.

Pablo Policicchio, the communications director for the Buenos Aires Security Ministry, said in a statement to The Associated Press that Payne "had jumped from the balcony of his room." Police rushed to the hotel in response to an emergency call just after 5 p.m. local time, he said, warning of an "aggressive man who could be under the influence of drugs or alcohol."

The hotel manager can be heard on a 911 call obtained by the AP saying they had "a guest who is overwhelmed with drugs and alcohol ... He's destroying the entire room and, well, we need you to send someone, please." The manager's voice became more anxious as the call went on, noting the room had a balcony.

Alberto Crescenti, head of the state emergency medical system, told Argentina's Todo Noticias TV channel that authorities were investigating the circumstances of his death and conducting an autopsy.

Payne had been vocal about struggling with alcoholism, posting a video in July 2023 to his YouTube channel where he said he had been sober for six months after receiving treatment. Representatives for Payne did not immediately return emails and calls.

Dozens of One Direction fans flocked from across Buenos Aires to the Casa Sur Hotel after the news broke, forming lines that spilled into the cordoned-off street outside the hotel where police stood sentinel. Forensic investigators were seen exiting the hotel, from where Payne's body was removed around three hours after the fall. Young women filming with their cellphones expressed shock and heartbreak as a makeshift memorial with rows of candles and bouquets quickly grew outside the hotel.

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"I didn't think he was going to die so young," 21-year-old Isabella Milesi told the AP.

Payne was one of five members of One Direction, which formed when they each auditioned for the British singing competition series "The X Factor" in 2010, two years after Payne's first attempt to get on the show. At 16 the second time around, Payne sang Michael Bublé's version of "Cry Me a River," appearing nervous at the start but warming up with the audience's cheers and applause.

After each singer failed to make it through the competition as solo acts, Simon Cowell and his fellow judges combined Payne, Zayn Malik, Harry Styles, Niall Horan and Louis Tomlinson into what would become one of the most successful boy bands — even though they lost the competition.

Each member had their own persona, with Payne — who hailed from Wolverhampton, a city in the West Midlands region of England — being known as the responsible one. The band became known for their pop sound and romantic hits like "What Makes You Beautiful," "Night Changes" and "Story of My Life." Payne had prominent solos on songs including "Stole My Heart" and "Change Your Ticket," co-writing several of the band's hits. They had six Top 10 hits on the Billboard charts by the time they disbanded in 2016 and a highly loyal fan base, known as "Directioners," many of whom were teen girls.

"I've always loved One Direction since I was little," said 18-year-old Juana Relh, another fan outside Payne's hotel. "To see that he died and that there will never be another reunion of the boys is unbelievable, it kills me."

With his meteoric rise to fame, Payne had said that it took some time to adjust to the public eye.

"I don't think you can ever deal with that, it's all a bit crazy for us to see that people get in that sort of state of mind about us and what we do," he said in a 2013 interview with the AP after recounting an experience where a fan was in a state of shock upon meeting him.

After the group's dissolution, Payne — like each of his erstwhile bandmates — pursued a solo career, shifting toward EDM and hip-hop. His 2017 single "Strip That Down," featuring Quavo, reached the Billboard Top 10, and stayed on the charts for several months. He put out an album "LP1" in 2019, and his last release — a single called "Teardrops" — was released in March.

Payne had a 7-year-old son, Bear Grey Payne, with his former girlfriend, the musician Cheryl who was known as Cheryl Cole when she performed with Girls Aloud. She was an "X Factor" judge during One Direction's season, although their relationship began years later. Payne was previously engaged to Maya Henry, from August 2020 to early 2022. Henry released a novel earlier this year that she said was based on their relationship.

In addition to his son, he is survived by his parents, Geoff and Karen Payne, and his two older sisters, Ruth and Nicola.

## 3 dead and 4 injured in collapse of Mississippi bridge being prepped for demolition

MENDENHALL, Miss. (AP) — Three people were killed and four were seriously injured Wednesday when a bridge in Mississippi that was closed nearly a month ago collapsed while a work crew was prepping it for demolition, authorities said.

The bridge over the Strong River on State Route 149 in Simpson County, about 40 miles (64 kilometers) south of Jackson, had been closed to traffic since Sept. 18 as part of a bridge replacement project, the Mississippi Department of Transportation said in a news release.

Gov. Tate Reeves said in a post on social media late Wednesday that first responders from the county and "other state assets have been on the scene at the tragedy" where they'd confirmed at least three fatalities and multiple injuries.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said in a social media post late Wednesday that the Federal Highway Administration was "engaging state officials concerning" the "premature collapse during demolition of a bridge on State Route 149 in Mississippi."

Simpson County Sheriff Paul Mullins told WLBT-TV three people were killed and four critically injured.

Terry Tutor, the Simpson County coroner, told the New York Times that seven men were working on

the bridge, using heavy machinery to tear it down, when it gave way and plummeted nearly 40 feet (12 meters). He said three of the men died, and four were injured, the Times reported.

Mullins and Tutor didn't immediately respond to messages Wednesday night from The Associated Press. A call to the construction company, T.L. Wallace Construction, was unanswered Wednesday evening, and it was not possible to leave a message.

Department of Transportation spokesperson Anna Ehr Gott said the agency "would share more information with the public as it becomes available."

The department said one of its inspectors was at the work site when the bridge collapsed, and that person was unharmed.

## **Aging farmers face extreme temperatures as they struggle to maintain Japan's rice crop**

By AYAKA MCGILL Associated Press

KAMIMOMI, Japan (AP) — In the remote village of Kamimomi in Japan's western Okayama prefecture, a small group of rice farmers began their most recent harvest in sweltering heat, two weeks sooner than usual.

The prefecture is called "the Land of Sunshine" because of its pleasant climate, but farmers working among the paddy fields and ancient rice terraces say that climate change is hurting the harvest of rice, long a cornerstone of Japan's diet.

"Last year, an exceptional heat wave took the water out of the rice, which became small and thin," rice farmer Joji Terasaka said. "So I am worried about that this year because it will be just as hot."

This year Japan experienced its hottest July on record, with temperatures reaching 2.16 C (3.9 F) higher than average, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency. The globe has seen a 1.2 C (2.2 F) rise in average temperature since preindustrial times, and scientists agree that warming needs to be capped at 1.5 C (2.7 F) to stave off the worst effects of climate change. That includes even more powerful heat, storms and irreversible ice melt.

Last year, Japan recorded a poor rice harvest nationwide because of exceptionally hot weather. Ministry data showed the country's private-sector rice inventory fell to 1.56 million tons in June, the lowest level since records began in 1999. Last year was the hottest on record globally, though it's feared that this year may top it.

The drop in harvest in Japan was partly to blame for this year's widespread summer rice shortage, according to officials. There were empty shelves in supermarkets, and some retailers are still enforcing purchase limits of one rice bag per customer.

"Perhaps people think that an increase of one degree Celsius in average temperature isn't much. But it's quite a big change for plants and crops," says Yuji Masutomi, a researcher at the National Institute for Environmental Studies in Tsukuba, north of Tokyo.

Masutomi said the rising temperatures not only influence the growth cycle and yield of rice, but also hurt the quality of the grain.

When temperatures rise above 27 C, the buildup of starch inside rice grains is reduced. That causes the crop to take on a chalky appearance, and its value is reduced.

At least a fifth of rice farms have reported a drop in quality from rising temperatures, according to a farming ministry report last year.

"Not only is the appearance not good; people say the taste drops too," Masutomi said.

For farmers in Kamimomi, there's another problem with working under exceptional heat. The average age of agricultural workers in Japan is nearly 69, among the oldest in the world, and older people are especially vulnerable to heatstroke.

Toshimi Kaiami led a community project in Kamimomi that involved reviving some of the paddy fields abandoned because of the aging population.



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"There are no longer any successors," says Kaiami. "We are heading toward extinction."

The community project divides labor among Kamimomi's farmers. But preparations for the harvest coincided with the hottest months of the year — April to September.

"It takes a half year to produce rice. The heat and the work that we have to endure during that time is really tough," said rice farmer Mitsumasa Sugimoto, 77.

To deal with climate change, the government is promoting the adoption of heat-resistant rice variants, including Sai no Kizuna, which was developed by a research center in Saitama prefecture, near Tokyo.

Research organizations around the world have worked to produce more resilient strains of essential food like rice while introducing more heat and drought resistant grains like sorghum or millet.

"Last year and this year have been extremely hot, but even in those conditions, Sai no Kizuna maintained a certain level of quality," said Naoto Ohoka, who manages rice breeding at Saitama's Agricultural Technology Research Center.

"Its other characteristic is that it is very delicious."

The center cultivates more than a thousand types of rice strains, and through cross-pollination officials assess and select the best performers to develop new varieties.

Sai no Kizuna was developed in 2012 to better withstand heat, a trait that has become more widely recognized recently as Japan sees hotter summers. The strain also stands up well against typhoon wind and certain pests and diseases.

Researchers want to develop more resilient strains against heat as temperatures are projected to continue rising. Masutomi recommends that variants tolerant of temperatures up to 3 degrees Celsius higher should be introduced across Japan by the 2040s.

But it's a long process. It can take up to 10 years to develop a new variant. Once it's approved for the market, farmers must then be convinced to switch to the new strain.

The most widely grown variety is Koshihikari, which is less heat resistant. Even so, older farmers have shown a reluctance to switch to other varieties. Farming ministry data show that only around 15% of Japanese paddy fields have adopted heat resistance variants.

## Israel pressured by UN and US to step up action to tackle Gaza's escalating humanitarian crisis

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The top U.N. humanitarian official accused Israel on Wednesday of blocking the delivery of desperately needed aid to Gaza, and the U.S. ambassador demanded that its government step up efforts to tackle the Palestinian territory's "intolerable and catastrophic humanitarian crisis."

Acting humanitarian chief Joyce Msuya and U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield stepped up the pressure on Israel at an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council on the escalating humanitarian emergency, especially in northern Gaza.

The council meeting, called by Algeria, the Arab representative on the council, followed a U.S. warning to Israel to boost aid efforts dramatically or risk losing funding for weapons from its main supplier. The Biden administration gave Israel 30 days to take a number of actions, including sending 350 trucks with food and other aid into Gaza every day.

Israel's U.N. Ambassador Danny Danon insisted that his country's humanitarian efforts remain "as comprehensive as ever" and criticized the council for focusing on the humanitarian situation in Gaza while Israeli civilians "are being targeted daily by those who seek our destruction."

He said Israel has delivered over 1 million tons of aid, including 700,000 tons of food, to Gaza since it launched its military operation after Hamas' surprise attack in southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023.

Danon accused the international community of missing the real issue — which he said was Hamas' hijacking of aid shipments while fellow Palestinians suffer.

"This makes it incredibly difficult to ensure that the aid reaches its intended recipients," he said. But Israel remains committed to working with its partners to deliver aid, "even under these dangerous and

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morally reprehensible conditions.”

Msuya, the top U.N. aid official, painted a grim picture, telling the council that there is barely any food left in northern Gaza where an Israeli offensive is under way. No food entered the north from Oct. 2 to Oct. 15 “when a trickle was allowed in,” she said, and “most bakeries will be forced to shut down again in the next several days without additional fuel.”

Throughout Gaza, Msuya said, less than one-third of the 286 humanitarian missions coordinated with Israeli authorities in the first two weeks of October “were facilitated without major incidents or delays.”

The level of suffering in Gaza worsens every day, she said, as Israeli bombs continue to fall, fierce fighting continues, and “supplies essential for people’s survival and humanitarian assistance are blocked at every turn.”

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian U.N. ambassador, accused Israel of besieging, bombing and starving 400,000 Palestinians in northern Gaza as part of its all-out war against the Palestinian people.

“These are crimes,” he said. “This is genocide. They must be stopped -- and they must be stopped now.”

Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador, pointed to some new Israeli commitments since the U.S. warning and two dozen trucks entering northern Gaza for the first time in several weeks.

But she said Israel’s progress since last week is “insufficient” and stressed that it must follow through on its commitments, including opening more border crossings and routes and taking steps “to help secure delivery routes against armed gangs involved in violent looting.”

“A ‘policy of starvation’ in northern Gaza would be horrific and unacceptable and would have implications under international law and U.S. law,” the U.S. ambassador warned. “The government of Israel has said that this is not their policy, that food and other essential supplies will not be cut off, and we will be watching to see that Israel’s actions on the ground match this commitment.”

At the council meeting, there were repeated calls by members for action by the U.N.’s most powerful body to end the more than yearlong war in Gaza.

Guyana’s U.N. Ambassador Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett lamented that 47 Security Council meetings and four legally binding resolutions in the past year, including demands for a cease-fire, “have not had the expected results, and the situation in Gaza continues to worsen with each passing day.”

“We must not allow the shredding of the moral and legal thread that holds our organization together,” she said. “The most fundamental question then that this council faces is, what will we do to stop this tide?”

Thomas-Greenfield urged all council members to support the U.N. as it works with Israel to step up aid deliveries. She said the U.S. focus in the coming months will be “getting humanitarian aid in, getting hostages out, and ending the conflict.”

## Vance says ‘no’ when asked whether Trump lost 2020 election

By THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

In the months since he became Donald Trump’s running mate, Ohio Sen. JD Vance has repeatedly deflected questions about whether the Republican presidential nominee lost the 2020 election, saying he was focused on the future.

During a rally in Pennsylvania on Wednesday, where Vance was asked by a reporter about his lack of straight answers so far, he was more declarative.

“What message do you think it sends to independent voters when you do not directly answer the question ‘Did Donald Trump lose in 2020?’” the reporter asked, eliciting boos from the crowd before Vance responded, saying he has answered the question “a million times.”

“No. I think there were serious problems in 2020,” Vance said. “So, did Donald Trump lose the election? Not by the words that I would use, OK?”

The answer was the most specific Vance has been on the subject, and a departure from the series of evasions he has offered about the election Trump continues to say without evidence was decided fraudulently in favor of Democrat Joe Biden.

During a debate with Democratic vice presidential nominee Tim Walz this month, Vance was asked about

the 2020 election but responded that he was “focused on the future.”

Vance’s refusal to say whether Trump lost was widely considered his weakest debate moment with Walz, the governor of Minnesota, who called the response “a damning non-answer.” The campaign for Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris quickly turned the exchange into a television ad.

During an interview with The New York Times, Vance refused five times to acknowledge Biden won.

Trump’s continued denial that he lost the election to Biden is a widely held opinion among the Republican’s base of supporters. He warned an audience in Nevada last week, “We never want to have happen what happened in 2020.”

Trump has continued to say without evidence that he expects his opponents to “cheat” in the 2024 election and has urged his supporters to turn out in numbers to make his vote tally “too big to rig.”

## **Archdiocese of Los Angeles agrees to pay \$880 million to victims of clergy sexual abuse**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has agreed to pay \$880 million to victims of clergy sexual abuse dating back decades, in what an attorney said was the largest single child sex abuse settlement with a Catholic archdiocese, it was announced Wednesday.

After the announcement of the agreement in principle, Archbishop José H. Gomez said in a statement, “I am sorry for every one of these incidents, from the bottom of my heart.”

“My hope is that this settlement will provide some measure of healing for what these men and women have suffered,” the archbishop added. “I believe that we have come to a resolution of these claims that will provide just compensation to the survivor-victims of these past abuses.”

Attorneys for 1,353 people who allege that they suffered horrific abuse at the hands of local Catholic priests reached the settlement after months of negotiations with the archdiocese, the Los Angeles Times reported.

The agreement caps a quarter-century of litigation against the most populous archdiocese in the United States.

Attorneys in the Plaintiffs’ Liaison Committee said in a joint statement, “While there is no amount of money that can replace what was taken from these 1,353 brave individuals who have suffered in silence for decades, there is justice in accountability.”

Under the settlement, the plaintiffs will engage in a process— that will not involve the archdiocese — to allocate the settlement amount among the participants.

The archdiocese has previously paid \$740 million to victims in various settlements and had pledged to better protect its church members, so this settlement would put the total payout at more than \$1.5 billion, the Times said.

Attorney Morgan Stewart, who led the negotiations, said in a statement that the settlement is the largest single child sex abuse settlement with a Catholic archdiocese.

“These survivors have suffered for decades in the aftermath of the abuse. Dozens of the survivors have died. They are aging, and many of those with knowledge of the abuse within the church are too. It was time to get this resolved,” Stewart told the Times.

The settlement will be funded by archdiocese investments, accumulated reserves, bank financing, and other assets. According to the archdiocese, certain religious orders and others named in the litigation will also cover some of the cost of the settlement, the Times said.

## **Zelenskyy outlines his ‘victory plan’ to Ukraine’s lawmakers, including a call to join NATO**

By SAMYA KULLAB and HANNA ARHIROVA Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told lawmakers Wednesday that Ukraine’s Western partners are increasing pressure to negotiate with Russia, but he hinted such talks would be unfavorable

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to Kyiv as he unveiled what he called his "victory plan" for the war.

Major points of the plan include an invitation for Ukraine to join NATO and permission to use Western-supplied longer-range missiles to strike military targets deep inside Russian territory — steps that have been met with reluctance by Kyiv's allies so far.

"If we start moving according to this victory plan now, it may be possible to end the war no later than next year," Zelenskyy told the Verkhovna Rada, the parliament. He will present the five-point plan to the European Council on Thursday.

Zelenskyy also said that in private communications with Ukraine, its partners are increasingly mentioning "negotiations" and much less frequently using the word "justice."

But he reiterated that Ukraine is not prepared for a "frozen conflict" or any "trade-offs involving territory or sovereignty," which drew sustained applause from the lawmakers.

As the war grinds through its third year, the mood in Ukraine is grim as its troops face difficulty holding back Russian advances, especially in the east. Although Moscow's gains are incremental, the steady forward movement is making Kyiv feel it needs more large-scale Western help.

But there are signs that support may be hurt by the increasing focus on conflicts in the Middle East. The U.S. presidential election next month also could bring a major shift from Washington toward Ukraine.

Zelenskyy's plan has been shrouded in secrecy as he outlined it to key allies including U.S. President Joe Biden in recent weeks, and he did not mention some of its more confidential parts to the lawmakers.

The plan is seen as a way for Ukraine to strengthen its hand in any negotiations with Moscow. Besides the NATO invitation and seeking permission for the longer-range missile attacks, it includes continued military operations in Russia, such as the incursion into the Kursk border region that began in August.

Ukraine, he said, also needs more air defense systems and assistance from partners to shoot down Russian missiles. It also requested access to a broader range of intelligence from allies.

Lawmakers will prioritize the bills needed to implement Zelenskyy's plan, said Speaker Ruslan Stefanchuk after the speech. Stefanchuk said that while the issue of NATO membership is political, it also requires adopting laws to match the alliance's standards.

Zelenskyy's request for an invitation leaves NATO in a bind. Since the full-scale invasion began in 2022, NATO has struggled to find a way to bring Ukraine closer without formally inviting it in.

"We understand that NATO membership is a matter of the future, not the present," Zelenskyy acknowledged. He reckons that such an invitation would alter President Vladimir Putin's "geopolitical calculations."

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte remained noncommittal after the plan was unveiled.

"We are in close contact with allies, with Ukraine, to see how we can take next steps," Rutte told reporters at NATO headquarters in Brussels. He declined to provide details, saying: "I cannot give you all the insights about that."

"We are working with the Ukrainians to understand better ... how this would help in ending the war," he said. For now, Rutte added, the focus must be to help Ukraine to win back more territory and strengthen its position for any future peace negotiations.

Zelenskyy said granting Ukraine an invitation to NATO would be a "testament of determination" by its allies to support Kyiv.

NATO's collective security guarantee — Article 5 of its founding treaty — is the pillar on which its credibility is based. It is a political commitment by all member countries to come to the aid of any member whose sovereignty or territory might be under attack.

At their summit in Washington in July, NATO's 32 members declared Ukraine to be on an "irreversible" path to membership. Any decision on offering to start membership talks is probably not likely before the next summit in the Netherlands in June.

Despite his attempts to win approval for the plan from Western partners, none have yet publicly voiced their support.

Zelenskyy and Biden spoke by phone later Wednesday to discuss a new \$425 million package of security assistance for Ukraine from Washington, the White House said.



Asked about Ukraine's "victory plan," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre responded, "That's their plan, and let them speak to it," adding that the U.S. would continue "to show our support for the Ukrainians on the battlefield." Biden is to travel to Germany, where he will meet Friday with Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

Lawmakers had a mixed reaction to Zelenskyy's plan and whether it could be implemented.

"First of all, it's not a plan. Plan means something with concrete steps," said opposition lawmaker Oleksii Honcharenko. "It's kind of a wish list from Ukraine for our partners, how they can and should support us. And it doesn't look realistic. We were waiting for some real serious conversation about the situation and the strategy, and this is not that."

He said that delivering a plan purported to be about victory as Russia advances in the east is "contradictory."

Lawmaker Oleksandr Merezhko, from Zelenskyy's party, called it "realistic and rather pragmatic," adding: "It can be implemented if we have enough aid and support from our allies and partners."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov mocked it as "ephemeral," and Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova called it "a set of incoherent slogans."

In his speech, Zelenskyy also underscored his recent claim that North Korea is sending military personnel as well as ammunition to help Russia's war effort, and that Iran and China also are aiding Moscow.

He noted that Ukraine is rich in natural resources, including critically important metals "worth trillions of U.S. dollars," such as uranium, titanium, lithium, graphite and others.

Those assets, as well as the country's agricultural production, are among Russia's key targets in the war, he said, but could be shared with partners to boost each others' economies. Similarly, battle-hardened Ukrainian troops would be an asset for NATO efforts to keep Russia at bay, Zelenskyy added.

## **A Texas board rejects clemency plea from a man facing execution in shaken baby syndrome case**

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — A Texas state board on Wednesday declined to stop what could be the first execution in the U.S. in a case tied to the diagnosis of shaken baby syndrome, rejecting clemency pleas from a man whose claims of innocence have drawn wide support, including from Republican lawmakers and a detective who say the conviction was based on faulty science.

The parole board voted unanimously, 6-0, to not recommend that Robert Roberson's death sentence be commuted to life in prison or that his execution be delayed.

The decision is a major setback for efforts by Roberson's attorneys and a diverse coalition of individuals and groups to stop his lethal injection on Thursday. Roberson, who has long proclaimed his innocence, has few options left.

Gov. Greg Abbott can only grant clemency after receiving a recommendation from the board. Abbott does have the power to grant a one-time 30-day reprieve without a board recommendation. All members of the board are appointed by the governor.

But in his nearly 10 years as governor, Abbott has halted only one imminent execution, in 2018 when he spared the life of Thomas Whitaker, who had masterminded the fatal shootings of his mother and brother. Abbott said he commuted the sentence in part because Whitaker's father, who survived the shooting, indicated he would be victimized again if the state put to death his last remaining immediate family member.

Earlier Wednesday, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals denied another request from Roberson to stay his execution. Roberson's attorneys have asked the U.S. Supreme Court to stay his execution.

Roberson, 57, was condemned for the 2002 killing of his 2-year-old daughter, Nikki Curtis, in the East Texas city of Palestine.

"We urge Governor Abbott to grant a reprieve of 30 days to allow litigation to continue and have a court hear the overwhelming new medical and scientific evidence that shows Robert Roberson's chronically ill, two-year-old daughter, Nikki, died of natural and accidental causes, not abuse," said Gretchen Sween,

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one of Roberson's attorneys.

A spokesperson for Abbott did not immediately reply to an email seeking comment Wednesday.

One of those who has been pushing to stop Roberson's execution is Texas GOP megadonor and conservative activist Doug Deason.

"I believe he is innocent," Deason wrote in a post on X on Tuesday.

Deason told the Houston Chronicle he has been talking directly with Abbott's general counsel, James Sullivan, and two other Abbott staff members in recent weeks about Roberson's case.

The parole board's decision came on the same day as a Texas House committee met in Austin to discuss his case.

Brian Wharton, the lead detective with Palestine police who investigated Curtis' death, told members of the Texas House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee he feels shame for playing a role in Roberson's conviction. He called on Abbott to halt Roberson's execution.

"Don't make my mistake. Listen to Robert. Hear his voice wherever you can find him, on the pages of all those documents you have from his attorney. But listen and you will hear innocence," Wharton told members of the committee, most of whom are part of a bipartisan group of more than 80 state lawmakers, including at least 30 Republicans, who had asked the parole board and Abbott to stop the execution.

Roberson's scheduled execution has renewed debate over shaken baby syndrome, which is known in the medical community as abusive head trauma.

His lawyers as well as the Texas lawmakers, medical experts and others say his conviction was based on faulty and now outdated scientific evidence related to shaken baby syndrome. The diagnosis refers to a serious brain injury caused when a child's head is hurt through shaking or some other violent impact, like being slammed against a wall or thrown on the floor.

Roberson's supporters don't deny head and other injuries from child abuse are real. But they say doctors misdiagnosed Curtis' injuries as being related to shaken baby syndrome and that new evidence has shown the girl died not from abuse but from complications related to severe pneumonia.

Roberson's attorneys say he was wrongly arrested and later convicted after taking his daughter to a hospital. They say she had fallen out of bed in Roberson's home after being seriously ill for a week. His lawyers say the short fall from the bed would have explained the only injury, a minor one, that a defense expert later found on the girl's head.

Roberson's lawyers have also suggested his autism, which was undiagnosed at the time of his daughter's death, was used against him as authorities became suspicious of him because of his lack of emotion over what had happened to her. Autism impacts how people communicate and interact with others.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, other medical organizations and prosecutors say the diagnosis is valid and that doctors look at all possible things, including any illnesses, when determining if injuries were attributable to shaken baby syndrome.

Anderson County District Attorney Allyson Mitchell, whose office prosecuted Roberson, told the Texas House committee that a hearing was held in 2022 in which Roberson's attorneys presented their new evidence to a judge, who rejected their claims. Mitchell said the prosecution's case showed Curtis had been abused by her father.

"I trust in the legal process that it has the safety nets and the reviews to do the checks and balances to make sure everything is right. And I believe that did occur here," Mitchell said.

The parole board has recommended clemency in a death row case only six times since the state resumed executions in 1982. In three of those cases — in 1998, 2007 and 2018 — death row inmates had their sentences commuted to life in prison within days of their scheduled executions. In two of the cases — from 2004 and 2009 — then-Texas Gov. Rick Perry rejected the parole board's recommendation to commute a death sentence to life in prison and the two prisoners were executed.

In 2019, the parole board recommended a 120-day reprieve for Rodney Reed, just days before his scheduled execution. But the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals stayed Reed's execution before Abbott could take any action on the board's recommendation.

Roberson's scheduled execution would come less than a month after Missouri put to death Marcellus

Williams amid lingering questions about his guilt and whether his death sentence should have instead been commuted to life in prison. Williams was convicted in the 1998 killing of Lisha Gayle, a social worker and former St. Louis Post-Dispatch reporter.

## Harris' interview with Fox News is marked by testy exchanges over immigration and more

By ZEKE MILLER AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris engaged in a combative interview with Fox News on Wednesday, sparring with anchor Bret Baier on immigration and shifting policy positions while asserting that if elected, she would not represent a continuation of Joe Biden's presidency.

Harris' interview marked her first foray onto the network, which is popular with conservative viewers, as she looked to broaden her outreach to GOP-leaning voters with less than three weeks until Election Day. Her nearly 30-minute sit-down with Baier repeatedly grew heated, with the two talking over each other.

When Baier kept talking as Harris tried to respond to his challenges on immigration, Harris said: "May I please finish? ... You have to let me finish, please."

Harris tried repeatedly to pivot the conversation to attacking Donald Trump. But she also had plenty to say about herself.

A week after saying she couldn't think of any move made by Biden that she would have done differently, Harris asserted, "My presidency will not be a continuation of Joe Biden's presidency."

Harris did not offer specifics, but said, "Like every new president that comes into office, I will bring my life experiences, and my professional experiences and fresh and new ideas."

Asked to clarify her assertion that she wants to "turn the page," though Democrats currently hold the White House, Harris said she is running on "turning the page from the last decade in which we have been burdened with the kind of rhetoric coming from Donald Trump."

On immigration, Harris expressed regret over the deaths of women who were killed by people who were detained and then released after crossing into the U.S. illegally during the Biden administration, but she criticized Trump for his role in blocking a bipartisan immigration bill earlier this year that would have boosted border funding.

"I am so sorry for her loss, sincerely," Harris said after Baier played footage of the mother of Jocelyn Nungaray blaming Biden and Harris for her daughter's death.

Harris indicated she no longer supports decriminalizing crossing the border illegally, as she did in 2019.

"That was five years ago and I am very clear that I will follow the law," she said. She gave the same answer about proposals to allow those in the U.S. illegally to get driver's licenses and subsidized healthcare.

Of Trump, she said, "People are exhausted with someone who professes to be a leader and who spends full time demeaning and engaging in personal grievances." She added, "He's not stable."

She also sought to focus Fox viewers on Trump's talk of "the enemy within" and threats to punish political rivals.

Baier challenged Harris over her attestations to Biden's mental stamina after his disastrous debate with Trump in June that forced his exit from the 2024 presidential race and her elevation to the top of the ticket. She again defended Biden, but added, "Joe Biden is not on the ballot and Donald Trump is."

Trump's campaign spokesperson Karoline Leavitt said Harris was "angry, defensive, and once again abdicated any responsibility for the problems Americans are facing." She added that if "Kamala can't handle the pressure of an interview with Fox News, she certainly can't handle the pressure of being president of the United States."

Pushing back against Baier's line of questioning, Harris at one point said, "I would like if we could have a conversation that is grounded in a full assessment of the facts."

Harris campaign spokesperson Brian Fallon said her team felt she "achieved what we set out to achieve" with the "Special Report" host. "She was able to reach an audience that has probably been not exposed to the arguments she's been making on the trail and she also got to show her toughness in standing tall

against a hostile interviewer," he said.

Referring to former Trump challenger Nikki Haley, Fallon said, "I think there's a good number of independents and Haley-style Republicans who are very open to voting for Vice President Harris and that's why we are open to doing events with Republicans and on Fox News."

## **Harris campaign calls plagiarism claims a partisan attack. Expert says it was 'sloppy writing'**

By RICHARD LARDNER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris' campaign is dismissing accusations that she and a co-author plagiarized parts of a 2009 book on the U.S. criminal justice system as a desperate attempt by "rightwing operatives" to distract voters.

Plagiarism experts and academics who reviewed the claims said several were benign or could not be proven, and others were more due to careless writing than malicious intent.

The allegations surrounding the book, "Smart on Crime: A Career Prosecutor's Plan to Make Us Safer," surfaced Monday when conservative activist Christopher Rufo posted an article on his Substack platform that listed a handful of passages he said were copied from other sources without any or adequate attribution.

"Taken in total, there is certainly a breach of standards here," Rufo wrote. "Harris and her co-author duplicated long passages nearly verbatim without proper citation and without quotation marks, which is the textbook definition of plagiarism."

James Singer, a spokesman for the Harris campaign, said in an emailed statement that the plagiarism allegations represent a partisan attack on a book Harris co-authored more than a decade ago.

"Rightwing operatives are getting desperate as they see the bipartisan coalition of support Vice President Harris is building to win this election, as (former president Donald) Trump retreats to a conservative echo chamber refusing to face questions about his lies," Singer wrote. "This is a book that's been out for 15 years, and the vice president clearly cited sources and statistics in footnotes and endnotes throughout."

Rufo's article cited a new study of Harris' 248-page book by Stefan Weber, an Austrian academic known in Europe as a "plagiarism hunter." Among the findings, the book plagiarized a section from a Wikipedia article and made up a childhood anecdote that originated with Martin Luther King Jr., according to Weber.

Trump's running mate, Ohio Republican Sen. JD Vance, seized on the allegations to needle Harris.

"Hi, I'm JD Vance. I wrote my own book, unlike Kamala Harris, who copied hers from Wikipedia," he wrote on X. Vance's 2016 memoir, "Hillbilly Elegy" recounts his blue-collar upbringing in Kentucky and Ohio.

The allegation involving King centers on a story Harris said her mother told her about a time when she was fussing as a toddler. Her mother, according to the book, asked her what was wrong and what she wanted. "I wailed back, 'Fweedom,'" Harris wrote. Weber said Harris appropriated the anecdote, without attribution, from an interview King gave in 1965.

But other plagiarism experts questioned the severity of the claims. Jonathan Bailey, a consultant and publisher of the website Plagiarism Today, said in a Tuesday post that the King story allegation first arose in early 2021 and couldn't be proven based on available evidence. But several other plagiarism accusations are more troublesome, he said, including Weber's allegation that Harris' book copied and pasted, without citation, a section of a Wikipedia article.

But the patterns in the book point to "sloppy writing habits, not a malicious intent to defraud," he said.

"Though some of the passages, such as the Wikipedia one, are sloppy to the point of negligence, when you look at the portion of the book involved, the nature of the issues, and the citations provided, negligence remains more likely than malice in my eyes," Bailey wrote.

Miguel Roig, a psychology professor at St. John's University in New York who studies plagiarism in the sciences, said the lapses described by Weber meet the definition of plagiarism. But, he added, context is important. The problematic passages amount to a small total of the overall book and "hardly seems like an attempt to defraud," he said.

"Any time minor issues like these occur, the offending authors should simply acknowledge the obvious



errors, apologize, and make corrections where feasible, and just move on," Roig said.

Harris wrote "Smart on Crime" when she was the district attorney for San Francisco. The book spelled out her ideas for improving public safety and making the criminal justice system more effective. In 2010, a year after the book was published, she was elected attorney general of California.

Harris' co-author, Joan O'C. Hamilton, works as a book collaborator and ghostwriter, according to her website.

Weber, the plagiarism researcher in Austria, said in an email that much of the work to check Harris's book was done by an associate whom he did not identify. But he said the associate was "driven by personal choice and interest, not by political motivations." This was Weber's first "international case," he said.

He also said he was unaware until the Harris review had been released that Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, had published books.

"Every scientist can feel free to check the books of Donald Trump or whomsoever as we did it with Kamala Harris," Weber said.

Debora Weber-Wulff, a professor of media and computing at Berlin University of Applied Sciences in Germany and no relation to Weber, sided with Bailey's assessment and said the book's publisher would have to decide whether any problems justify removing it from sales. Any legal action is unlikely because the original author of the plagiarized content would have to pursue a potentially costly lawsuit.

"No one in their right mind would invite a suit like this," Weber-Wulff said. "Only the lawyers profit."

## Judge invalidates election rules passed by Trump-backed board in Georgia

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A Georgia judge has declared that seven new election rules recently passed by the State Election Board are "illegal, unconstitutional and void."

Fulton County Superior Court Judge Thomas Cox issued the order Wednesday after holding a hearing on challenges to the rules. The rules that Cox invalidated include three that had gotten a lot of attention — one that requires that the number of ballots be hand-counted after the close of polls and two that had to do with the certification of election results.

Cox found that the rules are "unsupported by Georgia's Election Code and are in fact contrary to the Election Code." He also wrote that the State Election Board did not have authority to pass them. He ordered the board to immediately remove the rules and to inform all state and local election officials that the rules are void and not to be followed.

The Associated Press has reached out to the lawyers for the State Election Board, as well as the three Republican members who had supported the rules, seeking comment on the judge's ruling. They could appeal but time is running short with less than three weeks to go until Election Day.

The State Election Board, which is controlled by three Republicans endorsed by former President Donald Trump, has passed numerous rules in recent months mostly dealing with the processes that happen after ballots are cast. Trump narrowly lost Georgia to Democrat Joe Biden in the 2020 presidential election but claimed without proof that widespread fraud cost him victory in the state.

Democratic Party organizations, local election officials and a group headed by a former Republican state lawmaker have filed at least half a dozen lawsuits over the rules. Democrats, voting rights groups and some legal experts have raised concerns that some rules could be used by Trump allies to delay or avoid certification or to cast doubt on results if he loses next month's presidential election to Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris.

Cox's ruling came in a lawsuit filed by Eternal Vigilance Action, which was founded and led by former state Rep. Scot Turner, a Republican. The organization had argued that the State Election Board overstepped its authority in adopting the rules.

Reached by phone Wednesday evening, Turner said he was "thrilled with the victory."

"It was a complete and total victory for the Constitution of the United States," he said. "These rules were

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opposed by citizens that are Republican, as well as Democrats and independents. This is not about party. It's about doing what's constitutional and reestablishing separation of powers, and that's something that every conservative in this country should be concerned with and support."

One new rule that the judge blocked requires that three separate poll workers count the number of Election Day ballots by hand to make sure the number of paper ballots matches the electronic tallies on scanners, check-in computers and voting machines.

Georgia voters make selections on a touchscreen voting machine that prints out a piece of paper with a human-readable list of the voter's choices as well as a QR code. That is the ballot that the voter puts into a scanner, which records the votes. The hand-count would be of the paper ballots — not the votes.

Critics, including many county election officials, argued that a hand-count could slow the reporting of election results and put an extra burden on poll workers at the end of an already long day. They also said there isn't enough time to adequately train poll workers.

The rule's supporters argued the count would take extra minutes, not hours. They also noted that scanner memory cards with the vote tallies could be sent to central tabulation centers in each county while the hand-count is completed so the reporting of results would not be slowed.

Fulton County Superior Court Judge Robert McBurney on Tuesday had temporarily blocked the hand-count for the November election while he considers the legal merits. He said the hand-count may ultimately prove to be good policy, but it's too close to the general election to implement it now.

Cox wrote that the rule "is nowhere authorized" by Georgia laws, which "proscribe the duties of poll officers after the polls close. Hand counting is not among them."

Two other new rules that Cox invalidated were passed by the State Election Board in August and have to do with certification. One provides a definition of certification that includes requiring county officials to conduct a "reasonable inquiry" before certifying results, but it does not specify what that means. The other includes language allowing county election officials "to examine all election related documentation created during the conduct of elections."

Supporters argued those rules are necessary to ensure the accuracy of the vote totals before county election officials sign off on them. Critics said they could be used to delay or deny certification.

The first certification rule is not part of Georgia law and "adds an additional and undefined step into the certification process," Cox wrote, saying it is thus "inconsistent with and unsupported by" Georgia law, making it "void and unenforceable." The second rule is "directly inconsistent" with Georgia law, "which provides the time, manner, and method in which election-related documents must be produced and maintained," he wrote.

The other rules Cox said are illegal and unconstitutional are ones that: require someone delivering an absentee ballot in person to provide a signature and photo ID; demand video surveillance and recording of ballot drop boxes after polls close during early voting; expand the mandatory designated areas where partisan poll watchers can stand at tabulation centers; and require daily public updates of the number of votes cast during early voting.

At least half a dozen lawsuits had been filed challenging some or all of the new rules. The Democratic National Committee and the Democratic Party of Georgia had filed two lawsuits and joined others. Election boards in some counties and individual election officials in other counties had also sued.

Republican Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, the state's top elections official, has said the last-minute nature of the rules creates confusion for voters and poll workers and can undermine confidence in election results. An association of county election officials also asked the state board to tap the brakes on new rules.

And in a memo last month, the office of state Attorney General Chris Carr, also a Republican, warned that some rules appeared to conflict with existing law.

## Harris and Trump offer new details about policies and strategy in dueling interviews

By STEVE PEOPLES, COLLEEN LONG and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the presidential race moves into its final weeks, Democrat Kamala Harris and Republican Donald Trump embarked on an interview blitz that offered new details about their policy priorities and their political strategies.

In recent days, Harris has sat with Charlamagne tha God, whose radio show is especially popular among younger and Black audiences, and appeared in a combative 30-minute interview on Fox News, typically a safe haven for Republicans. Trump, meanwhile, participated in a contentious interview with the editor of Bloomberg News at an economic forum in Chicago, though the crowd was friendly to him, and participated in town halls on Fox News and the Spanish-language network Univision.

Here are some takeaways from the cascade of appearances:

Controlled campaigns are going public — with risks

Both candidates have largely avoided traditional interviews during the campaign, preferring to sit before friendly hosts, often in nontraditional media settings. The two-day interview marathon was a noteworthy partial break from that strategy.

Harris, whom the Trump campaign hammered for not doing interviews after replacing President Joe Biden at the top of the Democratic ticket, has ramped up the pace this month. The vice president appeared on ABC's "The View," spoke with radio host Howard Stern and taped a show with late-night comedian Stephen Colbert, among other appearances. She also sat down with the newsmagazine "60 Minutes," as is traditional for presidential candidates, while Trump canceled his appearance with the show.

Harris' appearance on Fox with anchor Bret Baier on Wednesday seemed designed to show her willingness to face any questioner, especially after Trump bailed on "60 Minutes." The risks of that became apparent quickly as Baier challenged her immediately on immigration and often interrupted her afterward.

In contrast, Trump, in his Chicago interview Tuesday, frequently spoke over Bloomberg editor-in-chief John Micklethwait and even insulted him as the audience cheered Trump on. Micklethwait challenged Trump's support for tariffs and his plans to pay for his campaign promises.

The former president also faced a friendly all-women audience in a Fox News town hall before participating in a town hall on the Spanish-language network Univision, where he faced pointed questions from Latino voters. Like Harris, Trump is trying to broaden his coalition to get the key votes he needs to win the neck-and-neck race. So, for him as well, every interview counts.

Trump offers tacit acknowledgment that he's vulnerable on abortion

Trump has repeatedly said he is proud of his leading role in the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. But his latest comments on abortion serve as a fresh reminder that the Republican understands that the issue is dangerous politically for him and his party.

He was forced to defend his position when asked a surprisingly pointed question from the all-women audience at a Fox News town hall.

"Women are entitled to do what they want to and need to do with their bodies, including their unborn. That's on them regardless of the circumstance," the questioner said. "Some are necessary to save their own lives. Why is the government involved in women's basic rights?"

Trump initially responded with his typical refrain that the issue had been returned to the states. But he also acknowledged that some of the state laws are "too tough." And he went further: "And this is going to be redone, because already there's a movement in those states ... to redo it."

It's not exactly clear what Trump was referring to. There is little evidence that pro-Trump Republican officials in states that have adopted strict abortion bans, some that take effect before many women realize they're pregnant, are taking action to "redo" their laws.

A few states with strict bans have questions on the ballot this year that would roll them back. That includes Florida, where Trump has criticized the ban as too harsh but also said he would vote to uphold the law.

The truth is that the reversal of *Roe* has been a political disaster for Trump's Republican Party. Women

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have revolted against the GOP in various elections since the Supreme Court ruling. But Trump is betting that muddying the waters with vague promises and a softer tone might limit the damage come November.

Harris agrees that Trump is a 'fascist' as Trump doubles down on authoritarian rhetoric

Charlamagne pushed the limits of Harris' rhetoric when the Democrat reminded voters that they had "two choices ... and it's two very different visions for our nation."

"The other is about fascism. Why can't we just say it?" Charlamagne interjected.

Harris immediately replied, "Yes, we can say that."

It was the first time the vice president so directly and publicly agreed with that kind of language to describe Trump. The exchange underscored Harris' decision to revert to a key Biden argument as Election Day draws near: Democracy is on the line on Nov. 5. And, the Democratic argument goes, Trump is unfit to lead because of his lies about the legitimacy of the 2020 election, his role in the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol riot and his consistent authoritarian rhetoric, among other things.

Trump offered a fresh example during his appearances on Fox and Univision.

When pressed about his supporters' violent attack against the Capitol, Trump defended his loyalists. "That was a day of love from the standpoint of the millions," he said on Univision.

He also refused to back down from his weekend comments that his Democratic rivals represent a more serious threat to the United States than China and Russia. Over the weekend and again in the Fox interview, he called them "the enemy within."

Experts have warned that such language is common among authoritarian leaders seeking to quell dissent.

"It is the enemy from within, and they're very dangerous. They're Marxists and communists and fascists," Trump said on Fox, naming former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., who served on the congressional committee that investigated Trump's role in the Jan. 6 insurrection.

Harris tried to hammer Trump over the comments on Fox, but the network played a truncated clip of Trump contending it was "the other side" that was a threat to democracy. Harris complained that wasn't a full portrayal of what he said.

Both campaigns are vying to win over Black men

In an election that could be decided on the margins, every vote counts. In the final stretch toward the election, Trump and Harris are turning their focus to Black men.

Harris, in her interview with Charlamagne, warned that Trump wanted to oversee a return to harsh policing tactics known as "stop and frisk" that disproportionately affect Black men. She promised to push for legislation to address discriminatory law enforcement practices and decriminalize marijuana arrests, which also affect Black men disproportionately. And she said reparations for ancestors of slaves should be studied, a position that isn't new but one that Trump has sought to exploit to help strengthen his advantage with white voters.

It was among the first times this campaign season that criminal justice reforms have been a leading talking point for Harris, though they dominated in 2020.

Trump oozed confidence when he addressed Black voters Tuesday. Both parties concede that while Harris is likely to win Black voters overwhelmingly, Trump is eating into her margins, especially among young Black men. Any significant shift could be consequential in a razor-thin election.

"Any African American or Hispanic, and you know how well I'm doing there, that votes for Kamala, you've got to have your head examined," Trump said.

Harris said part of her challenge is that Trump's campaign is "trying to scare people away because otherwise they know they have nothing to run on."

"Ask Donald Trump what is his plan for Black America," she said. "Ask him."



## Harris calls on Republican voters to put 'country first' as Trump woos Latino voters

By WILL WEISSERT, ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press  
WASHINGTON CROSSING, Pa. (AP) — Surrounded by more than 100 former Republican officeholders and officials, Democrat Kamala Harris urged GOP voters on Wednesday to put "country first" and abandon Donald Trump.

The Democratic presidential candidate made her case to Republican voters that the patriotic choice was her party in next month's election because Trump is "unstable" and "unhinged" and would eviscerate democratic norms if given a second White House term.

"America must heed this warning," said Harris, speaking at a rally near where Gen. George Washington led hundreds of troops across the Delaware River to a major victory in the Revolutionary War.

Joined by the former lawmakers and government officials for a rally in the Philadelphia suburbs, Harris said, "Anyone who tramples on our democratic values as Donald Trump has, anyone who has called for the 'termination' of the Constitution of the United States as Donald Trump has, must never again stand behind the seal of the president of the United States."

The rally was part of Harris' effort to appeal to a swath of Republican voters in battleground states that she believes still can be swayed.

With 20 days to go, Harris is hoping to tear away any Republican or on-the-fence voter by warning that Trump is looking to govern with "unchecked power." She has pledged to nominate a Republican to her Cabinet and create a bipartisan council to advise her on policy matters if elected.

Meanwhile, Trump addressed Latino voters in Miami, Florida. It's a group that historically has leaned Democratic but that Republicans have made inroads with.

Trump is walking a tightrope as he looks to woo Latino voters.

On Wednesday, he defended his call for mass deportation of immigrants who are in the U.S. illegally, even as he nodded to a need for immigrant labor during a town hall-style event on Univision, the nation's largest Spanish-language network.

"We want workers, and we want them to come in, but they have to come in legally, and they have to love our country," the Republican presidential candidate said during the event, scheduled to air Wednesday evening. Trump was answering the question of Jorge Velásquez, a farm worker who said most people doing such jobs are undocumented and suggested, if they're deported, food prices will increase.

Trump then returned to his criticism of Harris for being a critical player in the Biden administration's that presided over an influx of migrants with criminal backgrounds.

The event featured pointed questions for Trump, about his wife Melania's support for abortion rights, noted in her new memoir, and about the Jan. 6, 2021, siege of the U.S. Capitol by his supporters who breached the building in an attempt to stop the certification of the 2020 election results.

"Your own vice president doesn't want to support you now," said Ramiro Gonzalez, of Tampa, Florida, a Republican who said he was no longer registered with the party but wanted to give Trump the chance to win him back. Gonzalez was referring to former Vice President Mike Pence, who has disavowed Trump in light of Jan. 6.

Trump's response: "Hundreds of thousands of people come to Washington. They didn't come because of me. They came because of the election. They thought the election was a rigged election. That's why they came."

"That was a day of love from the standpoint of the millions," Trump told Gonzalez.

Harris was in Bucks County, a vote-rich stretch of suburban Philadelphia where Democrats have held a narrow advantage in recent presidential elections. Her advisers believe she needs to improve her margins in Philadelphia and surrounding suburbs to win the state's 19 electoral votes.

Harris was joined for her rally by former Reps. Barbara Comstock of Virginia, Jim Greenwood of Pennsylvania, Mickey Edwards of Oklahoma and Adam Kinzinger of Illinois as well as Republican officials from every administration going back to Ronald Reagan.

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"No matter your party, no matter who you voted for last time, there is a place for you in this campaign," Harris said. "The coalition we have built has room for everyone who is ready to turn the page on the chaos and instability of Donald Trump."

Several of the GOP surrogates said that supporting a Democrat felt awkward but was necessary due to Trump's rejection of electoral norms and his support of the rioters who tried to stop the certification of his 2020 election loss to President Joe Biden.

"You know, Donald Trump may be running as a Republican, but the truth is, he does not share those long held Republican values of supporting democracy, of standing for the rule of law, and a faithfulness to the Constitution as a Republican," Kinzinger said. "That saddens me."

Harris tapped a couple, Pennsylvania farmers Bob and Kristina Lange who had previously backed Trump, to introduce her at the rally. Bob twice voted for Trump and Kristina backed him in 2016.

"Never in a million years did either of us think that we'd be standing here supporting a Democrat," Kristina Lange said. "But we've had enough. We've had enough."

Some of the rallygoers who have voted Republican in the past said they were looking for the party to rewind to its fiscal conservative roots.

"We need more Republicans to stand up and say, 'This is not what our party is about, this is not what we are about,'" said Sarah Larson, 53, of East Rockhill Township, who last voted for a Republican presidential candidate in 2008 when John McCain was at the top of the ticket. "It's not what we recognize anymore as Republican values - which is less government, more freedom - right now."

While in Pennsylvania, Harris conducted an interview with Fox News' Bret Baier in which the two sparred over immigration policy and her shifting policy positions over the years, among other things. A week after saying she couldn't think of any move made by Biden that she would have done differently, Harris asserted that "My presidency will not be a continuation of Joe Biden's presidency."

Trump and Harris also campaigned in Pennsylvania Monday, when the Republican was in nearby Oaks while Harris was on the opposite end of the state in Erie County, among Pennsylvania's most closely divided counties over the past two presidential contests.

Harris' simplest path toward the 270-vote winning threshold in the Electoral College is by carrying a trio of northern battleground states, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Harris campaigned in Detroit Tuesday and planned to campaign in three Wisconsin cities Thursday.

## People with felony records can now vote in Nebraska — and it could help tip the balance in November

By MARGERY A. BECK Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska's top election official had no authority to strip voting rights from people convicted of a felony, the state Supreme Court ruled Wednesday in a decision that could add hundreds of new voters to the rolls and potentially help tip the balance on Nov. 5.

The order by Republican Secretary of State Bob Evnen could have kept 7,000 or more Nebraskans from voting in the upcoming election, the American Civil Liberties Union said. Many reside in Nebraska's Omaha-centered 2nd Congressional District, where both the presidency and the makeup of Congress could be at stake.

In July, Evnen had ordered county election officials to reject voter registrations from those with felony convictions, citing an opinion from the state attorney general. That opinion, which Evnen had requested, deemed as unconstitutional a law passed this year by the Legislature immediately restoring the voting rights of those who complete the terms of their felony sentences.

"Patty and Selma at the Department of Motor Vehicles may not be constitutional scholars, but they know that they are expected to follow the law," Justice Lindsey Miller-Lerman wrote in Wednesday's ruling, using names that appear to reference the older sisters of Marge Simpson from the animated TV show "The Simpsons."

She also criticized Evnen and Attorney General Mike Hilgers for taking it upon themselves to declare the

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law unconstitutional, writing, "Do we want to live in a world where every state employee who has a hunch a statute is flawed gets to ignore it?"

Evnen released a statement following the ruling saying he had reversed his earlier order to county election officials. Hilgers simply said he appreciated the court's clarification.

Nebraska is heavily Republican overall but is one of two states — the other is Maine — that apportion its Electoral College votes by congressional district. The Omaha-area district has twice awarded its one vote to Democratic presidential candidates — to Barack Obama in 2008 and again to Joe Biden in 2020. In a 2024 presidential race shown by polling to be a dead heat, a single electoral vote could be decisive.

Registered Republicans outnumber Democrats in the district by more than 13,000 following a 2021 re-drawing of the boundaries. But the district also has nearly 114,000 independent and third-party voters. In 2020, Biden bested former President Donald Trump there by more than 22,000 votes.

Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris and Democratic groups have spent millions there to secure the precious electoral vote — far more than Trump and Republican groups.

Nebraska also has competitive races for one U.S. Senate seat and the 2nd District's U.S. House seat. Two-term Republican Sen. Deb Fischer faces a strong challenge from independent candidate Dan Osborn, a former union leader who eschewed both major parties. In the House race, Republican Rep. Don Bacon is running against Democratic state Sen. Tony Vargas in a rematch of a 2022 contest that Bacon narrowly won.

The last day to register to vote for the 2024 general election in Nebraska is Oct. 25 and must be done in person.

The attorney general's opinion said the 2024 law allowing people with felony convictions to vote violated the state constitution's separation of powers, because only the state Board of Pardons under the control of the executive branch could restore voting rights through rarely-issued pardons. Evnen, Hilgers and Gov. Jim Pillen — all Republicans — make up the three-member Pardons Board.

The opinion also found unconstitutional a 2005 state law that restored voting rights two years after the completion of a felony sentence.

In its ruling, the Nebraska Supreme Court unanimously agreed to order election officials to enforce the 2024 law, noting the election is days away and that the state constitution allows only a supermajority of five state Supreme Court justices to determine whether a law passed by the Legislature is unconstitutional.

But the justices diverged wildly on whether they believe both voting-rights laws are constitutional. Several justices said the court should not reach a conclusion, while two of its most conservative members — Justices Jeffrey Funke and John Freudenberg — said they would find them unconstitutional.

Miller-Lerman disagreed in a scathing retort, saying that to find the laws unconstitutional could disenfranchise 59,000 Nebraska residents who have been eligible to vote since the 2005 law passed and that such a finding would consolidate power in the executive branch.

The ACLU represented advocacy group Civic Nebraska and two Nebraska residents — Jeremy Jonak, who plans to register as a Republican, and Gregory Spung, an independent. Both men have felony records and would have been denied the right to vote under Evnen's directive. Because Evnen's move came only weeks ahead of the November election, the ACLU took the lawsuit directly to the Nebraska Supreme Court.

"For so long, I was uncertain if my voice would truly count under this law," Spung said in a statement. "Today's decision reaffirms the fundamental principle that every vote matters."

At a news conference Wednesday held by several advocacy organizations, Jason Kotas spoke on behalf of RISE, a Nebraska nonprofit that supports those leaving prison. He also spoke as someone who spent most of his adult life behind bars for crimes committed while addicted to drugs and alcohol.

"So, I'm 50 years old, and this is the first time in my life I'll be able to register to vote," Kotas said minutes before walking to a local election office to register. "This is a really big deal. I think people who have never lost this right — I don't even think you really understand how important this is."

Felony disenfranchisement laws date to the Jim Crow era and mainly targeted Black people, according to experts. Black registered voters have an overwhelmingly positive view of Harris, according to a recent

poll from the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Restoration of the voting rights of people with felony convictions has drawn national attention in recent years. In Florida, lawmakers weakened a 2018 voter-approved constitutional amendment to restore the voting rights of most people convicted of felonies. Following that, an election police unit championed by Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis arrested 20 such people. Several said they were confused by the arrests because they had been allowed to register to vote.

In Tennessee, lawmakers killed a bipartisan bill this year that would have let residents convicted of felonies apply to vote again without also restoring their gun rights.

Dozens of states allow people with felony convictions to vote, either for those not currently in prison or upon completion of their sentences. Two states, Maine and Vermont, allow even those in prison to vote. But despite a recent trend toward restoration of rights, felony disenfranchisement laws prevent around 5.85 million people across the country from voting, according to the ACLU.

## **Trudeau says Canadian police went public with Indian diplomat allegations to prevent more violence**

By ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Wednesday that Canada's national police force went public with its allegations against Indian diplomats this week because it had to disrupt violent acts in Canada including drive-by-shootings, extortions and even murder.

The Royal Canadian Police said Monday it had identified India's top diplomat in the country and five other diplomats as persons of interest in the June 2023 killing of Sikh activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. The RCMP also said they uncovered evidence of an intensifying campaign against Canadians by agents of the Indian government.

"We are not looking to provoke or create a fight with India," Trudeau said. "The Indian government made a horrific mistake in thinking that they could interfere as aggressively as they did in the safety and sovereignty of Canada. We need to respond in order to ensure Canadians safety."

Nijjar's killing has strained bilateral relations between India and Canada for over a year and boiled over this week as the countries expelled each other's top diplomats over those allegations and other alleged crimes in Canada.

Trudeau said he has tried not to "blow up" relations with India and that Canadian officials provided evidence privately with their Indian counterparts who, he said, have been uncooperative.

"The decision by the RCMP to go forward with that announcement was entirely anchored in public safety and a goal of disrupting the chain of activities that was resulting in drive by shootings, home invasions, violent extortion and even murder in and across Canada," Trudeau said while testifying Wednesday before the Foreign Interference Commission in Ottawa.

Trudeau said Indian diplomats have been passing information about Canadians to the highest levels of the Indian government which was then shared with organized crime, resulting in violence against Canadians.

"It was the RCMP's determination that that scheme needed to be disrupted," he said.

RCMP Commissioner Mike Duheme said Monday police have evidence allegedly tying Indian government agents to other homicides and violent acts in Canada. He declined to provide specifics, citing ongoing investigations, but he said there have been well over a dozen credible and imminent threats that have resulted in police warning members of the South Asian community, notably the pro-Khalistan, or Sikh independence, movement.

Trudeau said India has violated Canada's sovereignty. India has rejected the accusations as absurd.

In response to Trudeau's testimony at the inquiry, India's foreign ministry claimed again that Canada has not provided evidence of the allegations. In a statement, the ministry blamed Trudeau for "the damage that this cavalier behavior has caused to India-Canada relations."

India has repeatedly criticized Trudeau's government for being soft on supporters of the Khalistan movement who live in Canada. The Khalistan movement is banned in India but has support among the Sikh



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diaspora, particularly in Canada.

Nijjar, 45, was fatally shot in his pickup truck after he left the Sikh temple he led in Surrey, British Columbia. An Indian-born citizen of Canada, he owned a plumbing business and was a leader in what remains of a once-strong movement to create an independent Sikh homeland.

Four Indian nationals living in Canada were charged with Nijjar's murder and are awaiting trial.

Trudeau noted his government could have gone public with the allegations when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the G20 Summit in September 2023, but chose not to. He met with Modi and expressed concerns privately then.

"It was a big moment for India welcoming all the leaders of the world to New Delhi for a very important summit and we had the opportunity of making it a very uncomfortable summit for India if we went public with these allegations ahead of time," said Trudeau. "We chose to continue to work with India behind the scenes to try and get India to cooperate with us."

Trudeau said that when he returned home India's response, particularly through the media, was to attack Canada.

Trudeau later went public in Parliament with the allegation that the Indian government might have been involved in Nijjar's killing. He said there were about to be media stories detailing the allegation of India's possible involvement in the killing of a Canadian Sikh on Canadian soil. He said he went public because of worries about public safety.

Canada's foreign minister on Monday said violence in Canada has worsened since then.

The British government said India should cooperate with Canada's investigation into accusations that its government has been involved in an escalating number of violent crimes in Canada. In a statement, the British Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office said India's cooperation with Canada's legal process "is the right next step."

A U.S. State Department spokesman told a news conference Tuesday that the U.S. had long been asking India to cooperate with Canadian authorities.

## Elon Musk commits \$70 million to boost Donald Trump

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Elon Musk, a tech mogul who is the world's richest person, plunged more than \$70 million into helping Donald Trump and other Republicans win in November's election, making him one of the biggest donors to GOP causes this campaign season, according to campaign finance disclosures released this week.

Musk made the donation over the summer to America PAC, a super political action committee he launched in May to aid Trump in his bid to return to the White House. It quickly became a central player in Trump's election effort.

"The America PAC is just aiming for common sense, centrist values," the Space X and Tesla founder said Tuesday on his social media platform X, shortly after the sum of money he contributed was made public in a campaign finance filing.

Super PACs like Musk's America PAC can raise and spend unlimited sums of money but are typically forbidden from coordinating their efforts with the candidates they support. A recent opinion by the Federal Election Commission, which regulates federal political campaigns, allowed for candidates and these big-spending groups to work together on so-called ground game efforts, which are the armies of people deployed to knock on doors to help turn out the vote.

While candidates and political parties have traditionally organized and paid for such efforts, Trump's campaign has struggled to raise money this year and has turned to a handful of outside groups to undertake the work, with Musk's America PAC being top among them.

But in doing so, the campaign has outsourced a core function to a coterie of untested groups that operate independently. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' decision to have an outside group canvass for him was said to be one of the reasons his presidential bid failed.

So far, America PAC has spent over \$38 million on voter “canvassing” efforts, according to campaign finance disclosures.

Much of America PACs money has been paid to a handful of consulting firms, including a number that are linked to Phil Cox, a former presidential campaign aide to DeSantis and a onetime executive director of the Republican Governors Association. Businesses under the umbrella of Cox’s various companies have collected at least \$21 million since August, records show.

Trump’s outsourcing much of his get-out-the-vote effort is not the only unorthodox strategy his campaign has adopted this year. His campaign and allies have also jettisoned the traditional approach toward getting out the vote, which typically focused on winning over independent or moderate voters to your side. Instead, they are trying to drive turnout among Trump supporters who seldom cast a ballot, a novel if risky approach.

Though Musk is America PAC’s top donor, he is not its only one. The super PAC also collected about \$8.75 million from a handful of wealthy donors, including the Winklevoss twins, Tyler and Cameron, the disputed creators of Facebook.

The super PAC has spent nearly \$80 million this year. Though most of the spending has gone toward the presidential race, at least \$5 million has been spent to help Republican House candidates.

## What’s behind the widening gender wage gap in the US?

By ALEXANDRA OLSON and CLAIRE SAVAGE AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Just how much of a setback was the COVID-19 pandemic for U.S. working women?

Although women who lost or left their jobs at the height of the crisis have largely returned to the workforce, a recent finding points to the price many paid for stepping back: In 2023, the gender wage gap between men and women working full-time widened year-over-year for the first time in 20 years, according to an annual report from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Women working full time earned 83 cents on the dollar compared to men in 2023, down from a historic high of 84 cents in 2022. The Census Bureau called it the first statistically significant widening of the ratio since 2003.

Economists trying to make sense of the data say it captures a complicated moment during the disjointed post-pandemic labor market recovery when many women finally returned to work full-time, especially in hard-hit low-wage industries where they are overrepresented like hospitality, social work and caretaking.

The news is not all bad: Wages rose for all workers last year, but faster for men. And while the gender wage gap rose, it’s on par with what it was in 2019 before the pandemic hit.

S.J. Glynn, the Labor Department’s chief economist, said it’s too soon to tell whether 2023 was a blip or the start of a worrisome new trend for the gender wage gap. But she said that even a reversion to the pre-pandemic status quo is a reminder of how far behind women were in the first place, and shows how the pandemic slowed the march toward gender equity.

And while the wage gap reached a historic low in 2022, that may have been a “false narrowing” because so many low-wage women had been pushed out of full-time jobs by the pandemic that it drove up the average female median earnings, said Noreen Farrell, executive director of Equal Rights Advocates and chair of Equal Pay Today, a coalition of groups advocating for workplace gender equity.

A surge of Latinas into the workforce had an impact

Hispanic women in particular illustrate the complexities of this moment. They were the only demographic group of women overall whose wage gap narrowed marginally between 2022 and 2023 in comparison to white men working full time, according to Census Bureau data analyzed by both the National Women’s Law Center and the National Partnership for Women and Families, research and advocacy groups. For Black women and Asian women, the wage gap widened, and for white women, it stayed the same.

Despite their wages rising slightly faster than for other women, however, Latinas remain among the lowest paid workers -- with median full-time earnings of \$43,880, compared with \$50,470 for Black women, \$60,450 for white women and \$75,950 for white men. Consequently, their rapid entry into the full-time

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workforce in 2023 helped slow down median wage gains for women overall, likely contributing to the widening of the gender wage that year, according to Liana Fox, assistant division chief in the Social, Economic and Housing Statistics Division at the Census Bureau.

Latinas have increasingly become a driving force of the U.S. economy as they enter the workforce at a faster pace than non-Hispanic people. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of Latinas working full time surged by 5% while the overall number of full-time female workers stayed the same.

Ariane Hegewisch, program director of employment and earnings at the Institute for Women's Policy Research, said the slight narrowing of the wage gap for Latinas may be because their presence in top earning occupations grew from 13.5% to 14.2% last year, according to an IWPR analysis of federal labor data.

However, the portion of Latinas in full-time low-wage jobs also grew in 2023, she added.

The recovery is leaving behind part-time Latina workers

Latina workers were among the hardest hit by the pandemic, suffering the highest unemployment rate at 20.1% in April 2020 of any major demographic group, according to a Labor Department report that examined the pandemic's disproportionate toll on women.

Domestic workers, who are disproportionately immigrant women, especially felt the effects. Many lost their jobs, including Ingrid Vaca, a Hispanic home care worker for older adults in Falls Church, Virginia.

Vaca, who is from La Paz, Bolivia, contracted COVID-19 several times and was hospitalized for a week in 2020 because she was having trouble breathing. She continued to test positive even when she recovered, so was unable to enter families' homes or work for most of that year or the next.

She had no money for food or rent. "It was very hard," she said, describing how she lost clients during her time away and is still struggling to find full-time, stable work.

The Census Bureau calculates the gender wage gap by comparing only men and women who work year-round in full-time jobs. But a grimmer picture for women emerges from data that includes part-time workers, said Jocelyn Frye, president of the National Partnership for Women & Families.

Latinas, for instance, are only paid 51 cents for every dollar paid to white men by this measure, and their gender wage gap widened from 52 cents on the dollar in 2022 according to the organization's report, which analyzed Census Bureau microdata.

Matthew Fienup, executive director of California Lutheran University's Center for Economic Research & Forecasting, said he expects the gains in Latina wages, educational attainment and contributions to the U.S. GDP "to continue for the foreseeable future." For women overall, he noted that the gender wage gap has steadily narrowed since 1981 despite occasionally widening from one-year-to the next.

"It's important not to put too much emphasis on a single year's data point," he added.

Political divisions have hampered policy solutions

Still, the pace of progress has been slow and seen periods of stagnation.

The U.S. will continue to have a gender pay gap until the country addresses the structural problems that are causing it, according to Seher Khawaja, director of Economic Justice at national women's civil rights organization Legal Momentum.

"There are a few underlying problems that we're really not correcting," Khawaja said.

For example, the current economy relies heavily on women doing unpaid or underpaid care work for children and older adults. "Until we come to terms with the fact that we need to give care work the value that it deserves, women are going to continue to be left behind," Khawaja said.

While many Democrats and Republican agree on the structural challenges facing women in the workforce, they have struggled to find common ground on policy solutions, including expanding paid family leave and offering protection for pregnant workers.

An ongoing battle centers around the Democratic-sponsored Paycheck Fairness Act, which would update the Equal Pay Act of 1963, including by protecting workers from retaliation for discussing their pay, a practice advocates say helps keeps workers in the dark about wage discrimination.

Republicans have generally opposed the bill as redundant and conducive to frivolous lawsuits. Vice President Kamala Harris, however, reiterated her support for Democratic-sponsored bill on Monday following the death of one of its most prominent supporters, the equal pay icon Lilly Ledbetter.

Pay inequity, meanwhile has ripple effects, Khawaja explained: "It's not only women who suffer. It is their families, their children who are suffering from the lack of adequate income and compensation. And this is driving intergenerational cycles of poverty and insecurity."

## Israeli strikes kill 27 in Lebanon, including in a town with a dark history of civilian deaths

By MOHAMMAD ZAATARI, KAREEM CHEHAYEB, and SALLY ABOU ALJOUND Associated Press  
QANA, Lebanon (AP) — Israeli airstrikes pounded areas across Lebanon, killing at least 27 people over the past 24 hours, officials said Wednesday, including more than a dozen in a southern town where Israeli bombardments in previous conflicts are seared into local memory.

Elsewhere in the south, a city's mayor was among the dead in a strike that Lebanese officials said targeted a meeting to coordinate relief efforts.

The Israeli military said they were targeting a Hezbollah commander in the strikes late Tuesday on the southern town of Qana, where 15 people were killed. Associated Press photos and video of the scene showed several flattened buildings and others with their top floors collapsed. Rescue workers carried away the remains of dead people and used a bulldozer to remove rubble, as they searched for more victims.

Israel said the target was Jalal Mustafa Hariri, a Hezbollah commander in charge of the Qana area.

In 1996, Israeli artillery shelling on a United Nations compound housing hundreds of displaced people in Qana killed at least 100 civilians and wounded scores more people, including four U.N. peacekeepers. During the 2006 war, an Israeli strike on a residential building killed nearly three dozen people, a third of them children. Israel said at the time that it struck a Hezbollah rocket launcher behind the building.

"Qana always gets its share," Mayor Mohammed Krasht told the AP, referring to the town's grim history.

Lebanon's caretaker prime minister, Najib Mikati, meanwhile accused Israel of "intentionally targeting" a municipal council meeting to discuss relief efforts in Nabatiyeh, where six people were killed.

"What solution can be hoped for in light of this reality?" he asked in a statement.

Strikes continued across Lebanon, including in the eastern Bekaa Valley and Nabatiyeh, in southern Lebanon, where the Israeli military said it targeted Hezbollah command centers and weapons facilities that had been embedded in civilian areas. Lebanon's crisis response unit recorded 138 airstrikes and shellings Wednesday.

The Israeli military said Hezbollah launched more than 90 projectiles toward Israel on Wednesday. Four civilians were wounded in the strikes, according to Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service.

Israel says it blew up a Hezbollah tunnel

A widely circulated video showed the Israeli army detonating massive explosives on a hill in Mhaibeb, a town about three kilometers (two miles) from the border with Israel. The Israeli military said they targeted a Hezbollah tunnel beneath the village. The mayor of the neighboring village Mays el Jabal, Abdelmoe'm Shucair, told the AP that families had already left the village.

State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller told reporters in Washington the US was aware of the footage and that "obviously, we do not want to see entire villages destroyed." He called on Israel to go after Hezbollah targets in a way that "protects civilian infrastructure and protects civilians."

Israel also resumed its barrage on Beirut's southern suburbs after a six-day pause, hitting what it said was an arms warehouse under an apartment building, without providing evidence. The military warned residents to evacuate before the strike, and there were no reports of casualties.

During an assessment of the situation in Israel's north on Wednesday, Israel Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said Israel was gleaning intelligence from their capture of Hezbollah militants that was significantly weakening Hezbollah's ability to launch attacks. "We will conduct negotiations under fire, I said that on the first day, I said it in Gaza, I said it here - this is our tool," he told soldiers operating in southern Lebanon.

Israel resumes strikes on Beirut

The strikes on southern Beirut came after Mikati said the United States had given him assurances that Israel would curb its strikes on the capital.



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Hezbollah has a strong presence in southern Beirut, known as the Dahiyeh, which is also a residential and commercial area home to large numbers of civilians and people unaffiliated with the militant group.

The Israeli military posted an evacuation warning on the social media platform X ahead of the strike in Beirut. An AP photographer saw three airstrikes in the area, the first coming less than an hour after the notice.

In Nabatiyeh, more than half a dozen strikes hit the city and surrounding areas, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry, which said 16 people were killed and 52 wounded. The city's mayor, Ahmad Kahil, was among those killed, provincial governor Huwaida Turk told The Associated Press.

In his statement about Nabatiyeh, Mikati, the caretaker prime minister, said the international community has been "deliberately silent" about Israeli strikes that have killed civilians.

U.N. Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert called reports of Kahil's death "alarming." "This attack follows other incidents in which civilians and civilian infrastructure have been targeted across Lebanon," she said.

Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel on Oct. 8, 2023, in solidarity with the Palestinian militant group Hamas, following the surprise Hamas attack on southern Israel that triggered the war in Gaza.

A year of low-level fighting along the Israel-Lebanon border escalated into an all-out war last month, and Israel invaded Lebanon at the start of October. Israeli airstrikes have killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and most of his senior commanders, and Israel has vowed to continue its offensive until its citizens can safely return to communities near the border.

The Lebanese Health Ministry said 2,377 people have been killed in Lebanon since last October, more than three-quarters of them in the past month. The fighting has displaced some 1.2 million people in Lebanon, including some 400,000 children.

Hezbollah's rocket attacks, which have extended their range and grown more intense over the past month, have driven around 60,000 Israelis from their homes in the north. The attacks have killed nearly 60 people in Israel, around half of them soldiers.

Hezbollah has said it will keep up its attacks until there is a cease-fire in Gaza, but that appears increasingly remote after months of negotiations brokered by the United States, Egypt and Qatar sputtered to a halt.

Palestinians say 350 bodies recovered from Israeli operation in Gaza

Israel is still at war in Gaza more than a year after Hamas' attack, in which some 1,200 people were killed, mostly civilians, and another 250 were abducted. Around 100 captives are still being held, about a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel has been carrying out a major operation for more than a week in Jabaliya, an urban refugee camp in the territory's north dating back to the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation. Israeli forces have repeatedly returned to Jabaliya and other areas after saying that Hamas militants had regrouped.

Hospitals received around 350 bodies since the Jabaliya offensive began on Oct. 6, according to Dr. Mounir al-Boursh, the director-general of Gaza's Health Ministry. He told the AP that more than half the dead were women and children, adding that many bodies remain in the streets and under the rubble, with rescue teams unable to reach them because of Israeli strikes. "Entire families have disappeared," he said.

Israel's offensive has killed over 42,000 people, according to the Health Ministry, which does not say how many were fighters but says more than half were women and children. The offensive has left large areas in ruins and displaced around 90% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million people, forcing hundreds of thousands into crowded tent camps or schools-turned-shelters.

## Kidney transplants are safe between people with HIV, new US study shows

By CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer

People with HIV can safely receive donated kidneys from deceased donors with the virus, according to a large study that comes as the U.S. government moves to expand the practice. That could shorten the wait for organs for all, regardless of HIV status.

The new study, published Wednesday in the New England Journal of Medicine, looked at 198 kidney transplants performed across the U.S. Researchers found similar results whether the donated organ came from a person with or without the AIDS virus.

Last month, the Department of Health and Human Services proposed a rule change that would allow these types of kidney and liver transplants outside of research studies. A final rule would apply to both living and deceased donors. If approved, it could take effect in the coming year.

Participants in the study were HIV positive, had kidney failure and agreed to receive an organ from either an HIV-positive deceased donor or an HIV-negative deceased donor, whichever kidney became available first.

Researchers followed the organ recipients for up to four years. They compared the half who received kidneys from HIV-positive donors to those whose kidneys came from donors without HIV.

Both groups had similar high rates of overall survival and low rates of organ rejection. Virus levels rose for 13 patients in the HIV donor group and for four in the other group, mostly tied to patients failing to take HIV medications consistently, and in all cases returned to very low or undetectable levels.

"This demonstrates the safety and the fantastic outcomes that we're seeing from these transplants," said study co-author Dr. Dorry Segev of NYU Langone Health.

In 2010, surgeons in South Africa provided the first evidence that using HIV-positive donor organs was safe in people with HIV. But the practice wasn't allowed in the United States until 2013 when the government lifted a ban and allowed research studies, at the urging of Segev. At first, the studies were with deceased donors. Then in 2019, Segev and others at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore performed the world's first kidney transplant from a living donor with HIV to an HIV-positive recipient.

All told, 500 transplants of kidneys and livers from HIV-positive donors have been done in the U.S.

People with HIV have been actively discouraged from signing up to be organ donors by stigma and outdated state laws and policies criminalizing organ donation for people with HIV, said Carrie Foote, a sociology professor at Indiana University in Indianapolis.

"Not only can we help those of us living with this disease, but we free up more organs in the entire organ pool so that those who don't have HIV can get an organ faster," said Foote, who is HIV positive and a registered organ donor. "It's a win-win for everyone."

More than 90,000 people are on the waiting list for kidney transplants, according to the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network. In 2022, more than 4,000 people died waiting for kidneys.

In an editorial in the journal, Dr. Elmi Muller of Stellenbosch University in South Africa predicted the new study will have "far-reaching effects in many countries that do not perform transplantations with these organs."

"Above all, we have taken yet another step toward fairness and equality for persons living with HIV," wrote Muller, who pioneered the practice.

## **Signings of the times: Banished letters of intent, shrunk transfer window equals more college chaos**

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

The time-honored tradition of high school athletes proudly sitting behind a table and signing a national letter of intent is a thing of the past. In its place starting in a matter of weeks, athletes will ink their name to something different — a financial aid package that will likely be tied to a revenue-sharing contract.

Coaches reacted with a mix of shock and confusion to the latest end of business as usual in college sports. The NCAA announced the death of the letter of intent last week on the same day it introduced a newly condensed schedule for signing players out of the transfer portal.

"There's been so much going on, so many moving pieces in the middle of our season, that quite honestly, myself and a bunch of our colleagues, we have no idea what the heck is going on," Kentucky football coach Mark Stoops said after hearing about the latest changes.

All the changes are, in some way, related to the antitrust settlement a federal judge conditionally ap-

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proved last week that will result in universities paying their athletes directly through a revenue-sharing program. And that stems from a series of legal and legislative rulings that have allowed college athletes to make money on the use of their name, image and likeness (NIL) since July 2021.

With no national law to pull things together, and with the NCAA's rulemaking authority gutted by the courts, a group called the Conference Commissioners Association, which has looked over letters of intent for decades, made the recommendation to do away with them for good.

What was the national letter of intent and why did it matter?

National letters of intent date to 1964 and used to be a rite of passage, a sign that a player had "made it." They were a player's signed word that he or she would play for at least one year at a certain university.

When players started being able to earn money in 2021, and when they became able to transfer without as many restrictions as in the past, the letters became less important than the financial arrangements that accompanied them, including terms of the NIL deals the players were signing through third parties that supported their soon-to-be school.

Now that the schools are headed toward paying players directly, instead of signing the letter, the players will sign a financial aid agreement that will likely be paired with a contract dictating the terms of their revenue-sharing agreement.

Michael LeRoy, a labor law professor at Illinois familiar with college athletics, said the changes will have an impact. He predicted that bidding for transfers will be less active -- and lucrative -- when revenue sharing becomes a primary focus for schools and NIL deals will become more "limited to an athlete's intrinsic brand or marketing value."

The change also comes as college athletes, notably in California and New Hampshire, seek to be recognized as school employees with the right to collectively bargain for pay and benefits -- a proposal schools are fighting in court.

"It's amazing to see that the faster and farther the NCAA runs away from employment, and even 'pay-to-play,' the more their workarounds create a direct financial relationship with their athletes that looks like employment," LeRoy said.

The new rules prohibit other schools from recruiting a player once the player has signed that aid agreement. Players used to be able to sign aid letters with more than one school, then make sure the NIL money (or other factors) were lined up for their first choice.

Since details of the lawsuit settlement won't be finalized until spring, it means revenue sharing won't officially be allowed when the early signing period for football opens on Dec. 4. NIL deals are still allowed, though players won't be able to back away from the school they sign with, whether next month (for most sports), on Dec. 4 (early football) or on national signing day for football, which is Feb. 5.

"We're getting blown up by recruits and we don't have any answers for them," Missouri football coach Eli Drinkwitz said. "We don't have answers for the settlement, we don't have answers for (NIL), we don't have answers for National Letter of Intent. We don't have a lot of answers right now on the portal."

What's new with the transfer portal and why does that matter?

Since it started becoming exponentially easier for players to transfer, the numbers game has grown more difficult for coaches. They have to figure out how many players are returning, how many are leaving, how many are coming from other schools and how many are coming from high school. Many have responded by adding general managers and beefing up their personnel departments.

While the transfer portal has been viewed as something of a necessary evil of the open market, without rules to strictly regulate it, it has turned into something of a free-for-all. Coaches say roster tampering is not uncommon.

Trimming the amount of time the portal is open by 15 days is not certain to bring more order to roster building.

"I don't know that I totally buy into the exact dates," said Kansas coach Bill Self, acknowledging concerns that the basketball period that begins after the second round of March Madness will shrink the time for players on Sweet 16 teams to decide.

Some football coaches were hoping to eliminate the spring window completely, but there will still be 10

days in April where players can enter the portal.

"My hope is that some of this stuff will start to come to fruition sooner than later, so you have an idea of how to move forward," TCU football coach Sonny Dykes said. "Because it's like anything. If you don't, the people that are going to suffer are going to be the players."

How will roster limits impact all of this?

Ultimately, all these changes impact how a coach builds a roster. Under terms of the lawsuit settlement, they will now work with roster limits (105 players for football, 15 for basketball) instead of scholarships (85 for football, 13 for men's basketball).

Each school will have to decide what it can afford. Last week, for instance, Michigan athletic director Warde Manuel sent a letter to fans saying if the school offered scholarships for all the spots available under the new limits, it would add \$29 million to the \$21 million in revenue-sharing funds Michigan plans to distribute to its athletes.

Even wealthy schools like Michigan do not have millions of dollars readily available to pay athletes. Manuel hinted at fans needing an "openness to developing new revenue streams", in what sounded like a suggestion that fans might be coughing up more money in the future. Tennessee is already planning that step with a "talent fee" for 2025 football season ticket renewals.

Dykes said the new roster limits will change everything from how he runs practice to the kind of developmental player he'd be willing to take a chance on.

"It's complicated, I understand, and there's a lot of possibilities and opportunities," Dykes said. "But you want the players ultimately to be taken care of. You just hope that those decision-makers keep that in mind."

## Italy expands its ban on surrogacy to overseas as critics say it targets same-sex couples

By GIADA ZAMPANO and PAOLO SANTALUCIA Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Italy on Wednesday criminalized citizens who go abroad to have children through surrogacy, a measure slammed by opponents as "medieval" and discriminatory to same-sex couples.

The measure extending a surrogacy ban in place since 2004 was promoted by Premier Giorgia Meloni's far-right Brothers of Italy party and its conservative coalition partner, the League, asserting that it protects women's dignity.

The Senate after a seven-hour debate passed the bill 84-58, the final step in the process after the Lower House's approval last year.

Italians seeking surrogacy in countries such as the United States or Canada, where the practice is legal, can face up to two years in jail and up to 1 million euros (\$1.1 million) in fines.

The surrogacy ban applies equally to all couples. But same-sex parent advocates say it hits gay families particularly hard in a country struggling with record-low birthrates and where only heterosexual couples are allowed to adopt.

Same-sex marriages are also banned in Italy, and LGBTQ+ couples have been fighting to obtain parental rights for the partner who is not the biological parent.

Several lawmakers and LGBTQ+ activists protested in front of the Senate to oppose the law, some holding banners that read: "Parents, not criminals."

"When protectionism prevails, a social phenomenon is not erased," opposition lawmaker Riccardo Magi said during the protest. "It is simply relegated to a dark area, which the law doesn't reach. In that case, it's easier for exploitation, abuse and rights violations to prevail."

"We are very saddened because Italy has once again missed an opportunity to demonstrate that it is a country in line with what Europe and the world are," said Cristiano Giraldi, the father of two 10-year-old children born from a surrogate mother in the U.S.

The Catholic Church has strongly opposed surrogacy in Italy and abroad, with Pope Francis calling for a universal ban and criticizing what he called the "commercialization" of pregnancy.

At the same time, the Vatican's doctrine office has made clear that same-sex parents who resort to



surrogacy can have their children baptized.

While commercial surrogacy contracts are common in the U.S. — including protections for mothers, guarantees of independent legal representation and medical coverage — they are banned in parts of Europe including Spain and Italy.

## **Trump would be the oldest person to become president. He's not sharing health details**

By STEVE PEOPLES and LAURAN NEERGAARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — If he wins next month's election, Donald Trump would be the oldest person in U.S. history to be elected president. Yet the 78-year-old Republican nominee refuses to disclose new details about his physical or mental well-being, breaking decades of precedent.

There have been limited snapshots of Trump's health over the last year. After he survived an attempted assassination in July, Texas Rep. Ronny Jackson, a staunch supporter who served as his White House physician, wrote a memo describing a gunshot wound to Trump's right ear. And last November, Trump's personal physician, Dr. Bruce Aronwald, wrote a letter describing him as being in "excellent" health with "exceptional" cognitive exams. He noted that "cardiovascular studies are all normal and cancer screening tests" were negative. Trump had also "reduced his weight."

But those communications didn't address more fundamental questions about Trump's health, including his blood pressure, exact weight or whether he has continued using previously prescribed medication for high cholesterol — or even what testing he underwent. His campaign has also not disclosed whether Trump has been diagnosed with any diseases or received any mental health care after the assassination attempt.

That's giving his political adversaries, including Democratic rival Kamala Harris, an opportunity to raise questions about his age and ability to execute the duties of the presidency into his 80s.

"It makes you wonder: Why does his staff want him to hide away?" Harris asked recently as she needed Trump for withholding medical records, opting against another debate and skipping an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes." "One must question: Are they afraid that people will see that he is too weak and unstable to lead America?"

Trump's doctors have long been opaque about his health, such as when his team at the White House initially downplayed the severity of his 2020 hospitalization for COVID-19.

His representatives ignored multiple requests from The Associated Press to provide more detailed information about his status for this story.

Drawing a contrast with Trump

In an effort to draw a contrast with Trump, Harris released a letter from her doctor on Saturday that went into far more detail about her medical history including a list of exams and the results. The letter said she has no heart, lung or neurological disorders, is at low risk for heart disease and up-to-date on cancer screenings. She takes medication for allergies and hives. She wears contact lenses, and her only surgery occurred at age 3, when her appendix was removed during an intestinal-related procedure.

While the letter didn't specify her weight, the 59-year-old vice president was declared to be in "excellent health" and to possess "the physical and mental resiliency" required to serve as president.

Still, it's unclear that age will be a significant factor for voters. Polls found that voters were significantly less concerned about Trump's mental capacity and physical health than they were about President Joe Biden's when he was still in the race. Since Harris replaced Biden on the ticket, Trump's advantage on the issue has diminished.

The dynamic is ironic for Trump, who spent years assailing the 81-year-old Biden's age, depicting him as frail and unable to manage the challenges of the presidency. After a disastrous debate performance in June, Biden's fellow Democrats began openly raising similar concerns, ultimately prompting his decision to withdraw from the race and back Harris.

There's no requirement that candidates release health data. But presidential nominees traditionally disclose

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medical records voluntarily given the demands of the job, particularly if there are concerns about their age.

In 2008, Republican nominee John McCain opened more than 1,000 pages of medical documents for the public to examine. At 72, he would have been the oldest president elected to a first term. Facing scrutiny over his advanced age in 2019, the then-77-year-old Biden released a three-page note from his doctor.

The last thorough report on Trump's health came in 2019, when he was still president. That checkup classified him as obese with a weight of 243 pounds and a body mass index of 30.4, which raises the risk of heart disease, diabetes and other problems. That report also revealed increased dosages of medication for high cholesterol. While Trump doesn't drink alcohol or smoke, he has long avoided exercise other than golf and loves fast food.

As for his family history, his father had Alzheimer's disease late in life, one potential risk factor.

Trump's allies point to his active public lifestyle as evidence that he's not on the decline.

Trump is a frequent golfer and an engaged host during social functions. He takes questions from the press far more often than Harris. He often speaks for more than 90 minutes at his rallies, standing the entire time and often ignoring the teleprompter.

Trump often rambles through his public appearances

Still, Trump's public appearances are often marked by rambling. He regularly confuses timelines, events and people.

Trump has confused Republican rival Nikki Haley with former Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. He confused the location of a major military base. He mistakenly said that Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán led Turkey.

Trump regularly acknowledges questions about his age and health during public appearances. On Sunday in Arizona, Trump mocked critics who declare him "cognitively impaired" because he "mispronounced a word."

"They say, He's cognitively impaired!" Trump teased. "No, I'll let you know when I will be. I will be someday — we all will be someday. I'll be the first to let you know."

Without further information, simple life expectancy of the average American man shows Trump has about a 79% chance of surviving a four-year term, said aging researcher S. Jay Olshansky of the University of Illinois at Chicago, who studies presidential health and echoes the call for candidate medical records. The younger Harris has a nearly 97% chance of surviving a first term in office, he said.

When it comes to the presidency, "it's not about age, it's about function," Olshansky cautioned.

## Trump would be the oldest person to become president. He's not sharing health details

By STEVE PEOPLES and LAURAN NEERGAARD Associated Press

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There have been limited snapshots of Trump's health over the last year. After he survived an attempted assassination in July, Texas Rep. Ronny Jackson, a staunch supporter who served as his White House physician, wrote a memo describing a gunshot wound to Trump's right ear. And last November, Trump's personal physician, Dr. Bruce Aronwald, wrote a letter describing him as being in "excellent" health with "exceptional" cognitive exams. He noted that "cardiovascular studies are all normal and cancer screening tests" were negative. Trump had also "reduced his weight."

But those communications didn't address more fundamental questions about Trump's health, including his blood pressure, exact weight or whether he has continued using previously prescribed medication for high cholesterol — or even what testing he underwent. His campaign has also not disclosed whether Trump has been diagnosed with any diseases or received any mental health care after the assassination attempt.

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"It makes you wonder: Why does his staff want him to hide away?" Harris asked recently as she needed Trump for withholding medical records, opting against another debate and skipping an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes." "One must question: Are they afraid that people will see that he is too weak and unstable to lead America? Is that what's going on?"

Trump's doctors have long been opaque about his health, such as when his team at the White House initially downplayed the severity of his 2020 hospitalization for COVID-19.

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While the letter didn't specify her weight, the 59-year-old vice president was declared to be in "excellent health" and to possess "the physical and mental resiliency" required to serve as president.

Sensing an opportunity to put Trump on the defensive, the Harris campaign on Monday released a letter from more than 250 doctors and other medical professionals calling on Trump to release his medical records.

Still, it's unclear that age will be a significant factor for voters. Polls found that voters were significantly less concerned about Trump's mental capacity and physical health than they were about President Joe Biden's when he was still in the race. Since Harris replaced Biden on the ticket, Trump's advantage on the issue has diminished.

And so far, the Lincoln Project is among the few anti-Trump groups spending money on ads that focus on Trump's age. An ad titled "One Old Man" describes Trump as "weak, impotent, forgetful, mentally declining fast."

Such messages are designed to irritate Trump as much as move voters against him, said Lincoln Project co-founder Rick Wilson.

"We do these ads because Trump hates them," Wilson said.

The dynamic is ironic for Trump, who spent years assailing the 81-year-old Biden's age, depicting him as frail and unable to manage the challenges of the presidency. After a disastrous debate performance in June, Biden's fellow Democrats began openly raising similar concerns, ultimately prompting his decision to withdraw from the race and back Harris.

There's no requirement that candidates release health data. But presidential nominees traditionally disclose medical records voluntarily given the demands of the job, particularly if there are concerns about their age.

In 2008, Republican nominee John McCain opened more than 1,000 pages of medical documents for the public to examine. At 72, he would have been the oldest president elected to a first term. Facing scrutiny over his advanced age in 2019, the then-77-year-old Biden released a three-page note from his doctor.

"In an era where we're having ever older individuals running for or being president, it seems to me it should be less acceptable, frankly," to have such little information, said Dr. Eric Lenze of Washington University in St. Louis, a geriatric psychiatrist who evaluates cognition in older adults.

The last thorough report on Trump's health came in 2019, when he was still president. That checkup classified him as obese with a weight of 243 pounds and a body mass index of 30.4, which raises the risk of heart disease, diabetes and other problems. That report also revealed increased dosages of medication for high cholesterol. While Trump doesn't drink alcohol or smoke, he has long avoided exercise other than golf and loves fast food.

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Trump's allies point to his active public lifestyle as evidence that he's not on the decline.

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Trump is a frequent golfer and an engaged host during social functions. He takes questions from the press far more often than Harris. He often speaks for more than 90 minutes at his rallies, standing the entire time and often ignoring the teleprompter.

Trump often rambles through his public appearances

Still, Trump's public appearances are often marked by rambling. He regularly confuses timelines, events and people.

At a town hall-style forum in Fayetteville, North Carolina, Trump seemed to have no recollection of meeting with a severely injured veteran and his family. The veteran's wife noted that "you visited with him many times" and "you just saw him this summer."

Trump has also confused Republican rival Nikki Haley with former Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. He confused the location of a major military base. He mistakenly said that Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán led Turkey.

During a meandering news conference riddled with false and misleading statements in August, Trump recalled riding as a passenger in the chopper with former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown when it was forced to make an emergency landing.

Brown later said he had never shared a helicopter with Trump. Instead, it was likely a Los Angeles city councilman, who is also Black, who shared a rocky helicopter ride with Trump decades earlier.

And more recently, at a rally in Wisconsin, he seemed to squint at teleprompters as he lurched from subject to subject. He described the country as a "third-world hellhole." He then told his audience, "Remember, there's a hat that's made that sells like crazy," before interrupting himself to comment on a fly.

"Oh there's a fly, I wonder where the fly came from. See, two years ago, I wouldn't have had a fly up here. You're changing rapidly," Trump said.

He has begun boasting about his "beautiful body" and describes his often long-winded speeches as "flawless."

Trump regularly acknowledges questions about his age and health during public appearances. On Sunday in Arizona, Trump mocked critics who declare him "cognitively impaired" because he "mispronounced a word."

"They say, He's cognitively impaired!" Trump teased. "No, I'll let you know when I will be. I will be someday — we all will be someday. I'll be the first to let you know."

The AP consulted with several medical experts, but none would comment specifically on Trump's overall health or cognitive abilities without having examined him or having access to recent medical records.

John R. Beard, director of the International Longevity Center at Columbia University, ticked off what could be red flags for cognitive issues during aging, including unusual speech patterns and rambling.

"People can jump from one thought to another without there being any logical link between them, and then tend to go on at length about an issue without really it being tied in with the key argument," Beard said. But some people may have displayed such traits for years, so the questions are whether they're worsening or impair performance, he added.

Earlier this year, the science news organization STAT asked a handful of aging experts to analyze clips of Trump's speeches. They reported several troubling changes since 2017, including an increase in confused word order, repetition and what's called "all-or-nothing thinking."

Lenze and Beard urged every presidential candidate, regardless of age, to release a detailed medical report to make clear how healthy they really are.

Lenze said after a certain age, maybe 70 or 75, that should include a full neuropsychological exam, something that takes several hours. It's far more intensive than quick screening tests that are a snapshot in time, such as the Montreal Cognitive Assessment or MoCA, that Trump often brags about passing in 2018.

"Someone can get a perfect score on the MoCA but still be impaired," Lenze said. "The level of cognitive intactness and ability to run the presidency is, I think, quite a bit greater than that required to finish the MoCA."

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a 79% change of surviving a four-year term, said aging researcher S. Jay Olshansky of the University of Illinois at Chicago, who studies presidential health and echoes the call for candidate medical records. The younger Harris has a nearly 97% chance of surviving a first term in office, he said.

When it comes to the presidency, "it's not about age, it's about function," Olshansky cautioned.

## **Listeria recall grows to 12 million pounds of meat and poultry, some of it sent to US schools**

By JONEL ALECCIA AP Health Writer

A nationwide recall of meat and poultry products potentially contaminated with listeria has expanded to nearly 12 million pounds and now includes ready-to-eat meals sent to U.S. schools, restaurants and major retailers, federal officials said.

The updated recall includes prepared salads, burritos and other foods sold at stores including Costco, Trader Joe's, Target, Walmart and Kroger. The meat used in those products was processed at a Durant, Oklahoma, manufacturing plant operated by BrucePac. The Woodburn, Oregon-based company sells pre-cooked meat and poultry to industrial, foodservice and retail companies across the country.

Routine testing found potentially dangerous listeria bacteria in samples of BrucePac chicken, officials with the U.S. Agriculture Department said. No illnesses have been confirmed in connection with the recall, USDA officials said. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has not launched an outbreak investigation, a spokesperson said.

The recall, issued on Oct. 9, includes foods produced between May 31 and Oct. 8. The USDA has posted a 342-page list of hundreds of potentially affected foods, including chicken wraps sold at Trader Joe's, chicken burritos sold at Costco and many types of salads sold at stores such as Target and Walmart. The foods were also sent to school districts and restaurants across the country.

The recalled foods can be identified by establishment numbers "51205 or P-51205" inside or under the USDA mark of inspection. Consumers can search on the USDA recall site to find potentially affected products. Such foods should be thrown away or returned to stores for refunds, officials said.

Eating foods contaminated with listeria can cause potentially serious illness. About 1,600 people are infected with listeria bacteria each year in the U.S. and about 260 die, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Listeria infections typically cause fever, muscle aches and tiredness and may cause stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance and convulsions. Symptoms can occur quickly or to up to 10 weeks after eating contaminated food. The infections are especially dangerous for older people, those with weakened immune systems or who are pregnant.

The same type of bacteria is responsible for an outbreak tied to Boar's Head deli meat that has killed at least 10 people since May.

## **In the heartland of Mexico's Sinaloa cartel, the old ways have changed and violence rages**

By MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Cellphone chats have become death sentences in the continuing, bloody factional war inside Mexico's Sinaloa drug cartel.

Cartel gunmen stop youths on the street or in their cars and demand their phones. If they find a contact who's a member of a rival faction, a chat with a wrong word or a photo with the wrong person, the phone owner is dead.

Then, they'll go after everyone on that person's contact list, forming a potential chain of kidnapping, torture and death. That has left residents of Culiacan, the capital of Sinaloa state, afraid to even leave home at night, much less visit towns a few miles away where many have weekend retreats.

"You can't go five minutes out of the city, ... not even in daylight," said Ismael Bojórquez, a veteran

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journalist in Culiacan. "Why? Because the narcos have set up roadblocks and they stop you and search through your cellphone."

And it's not just your own chats: If a person is traveling in a car with others, one bad contact or chat can get the whole group kidnapped.

That's what happened to the son of a local news photographer. The 20-year-old was stopped with two other youths and something was found on one of their phones; all three disappeared. Calls were made and the photographer's son was finally released, but the other two were never seen again.

Residents of Culiacan had long been accustomed to a day or two of violence once in a while. The presence of the Sinaloa cartel is woven into everyday life there, and people knew to stay indoors when they saw the convoys of double-cab pickups racing through the streets.

But never have they seen the solid month of fighting that broke out Sept. 9 between factions of the Sinaloa cartel after drug lords Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada and Joaquín Guzmán López were apprehended in the United States after flying there in a small plane on July 25.

Zambada later claimed he was kidnapped and forced aboard the plane by Guzmán López, causing a violent battle between Zambada's faction and the "Chapitos" group led by the sons of imprisoned drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzmán.

Residents of Culiacan are mourning their old lives, when the wheels of the local economy were greased by cartel wealth but civilians seldom suffered — unless they cut off the wrong pickup truck in traffic.

But the cartel factions have turned to new tactics, including a huge wave of armed carjackings in and around Culiacan. Cartel gunmen used to steal the SUVs and pickups they favor for use in cartel convoys; but now they focus on stealing smaller sedans.

They use these to go undetected in their silent, deadly kidnappings.

Often, the first a driver knows is when a passing car tosses out a spray of bent nails to puncture his tires. Vehicles pull up front and rear to cut him off. The driver is bundled into another car. All that is left for neighbors to find is a car with burst tires, the doors open, the engine running, in the middle of the street.

The State Council on Public Safety, a civic group, estimates that in the past month there have been an average of six killings and seven disappearances or kidnappings in and around the city every day. The group said about 200 families have fled their homes in outlying communities because of the violence.

Culiacan is no stranger to violence — shooting broke out across the city in October 2019 when soldiers mounted a failed attempt to arrest another of Chapo Guzmán's sons, Ovidio. Fourteen people were killed that day.

A few days later, civic activist Estefanía López arranged a peace march and 4,000 residents turned out for it. When she tried to do something similar this year, she could get only about 1,500 people to attend a similar demonstration.

"We got a lot of messages beforehand from a lot of people who said they wanted to join and march, to support the cause, but who were afraid to come," López said.

There's reason to be afraid: Last week, gunmen burst into a Culiacan hospital to kill a patient previously wounded by gunshots. In a town north of Culiacan, drivers were astonished to see a military helicopter seeking to corral four gunmen in helmets and tactical vests just yards from a highway; the gunmen were shooting back at the chopper.

President Claudia Sheinbaum's response to all this has been to blame the United States for stirring up trouble by allowing the drug lords to turn themselves in.

"Sinaloa practically didn't have homicides" before the two drug lord's capture on July 25, Sheinbaum said. "Starting with that, a wave of violence was unleashed in Sinaloa," she said.

Her claim is easily disproved: the cartel factions had been killing each other for years, albeit at lower levels. But it illustrates the government's head-in-the-sand approach: Sheinbaum and her predecessor, former president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, had little problem with the existence and local dominance of drug cartels as long as they didn't make headlines.

Now that the violence has boiled over, the government has sent in hundreds of army troops.

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But irregular urban combat in the heart of a city of 1 million inhabitants — against a cartel that has lots of .50-caliber sniper rifles and machine guns — is not the army's specialty.

Squads of soldiers went into a luxury apartment complex in the city's center to detain a suspect and they wound up shooting to death a young lawyer who was merely a bystander.

López, the peace activist, has been asking for soldiers and police to be posted outside schools, so children can return to classes — most are currently taking classes online because their parents judge it too dangerous to take them to school.

But police can't solve the problem: Culiacan's entire municipal force has been temporarily disarmed by soldiers to check their guns, something that's been done in the past when the army suspects policemen are working for drug cartels.

The local army commander recently acknowledged that it's up to the cartel factions — not authorities — when the violence will stop.

"In Culiacan, there is not even faith anymore that we will be safe, with police or soldiers," López said, noting that that has had a clear effect on daily life and the economy. "A lot of businesses, restaurants and nightclubs have been closed for the past month."

Laura Guzmán, the leader of the local restaurant chamber, said about 180 businesses in Culiacan have closed, permanently or temporarily, since Sept. 9 and almost 2,000 jobs have been lost.

Local businesses tried to organize evening "tardeadas" — long afternoons — for residents who were afraid to go out after dark, but they didn't draw enough customers.

"Young people are not interested in going out right now," Guzmán said.

For those looking to get away from the violence temporarily, the seaside resort of Mazatlan used to be only 2½ hours away by car. But that's not an option since last month when cartel gunmen hijacked passenger buses, forced the tourists off and burned the vehicles to block the road to Mazatlan.

That leaves just one option, and one only open to some.

"Those who have the economic resources get out of the city by airplane to take a break," Guzmán said.

## **Jill Biden is out campaigning again — but not for her husband anymore. She's pumping up Harris**

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

CLAWSON, Mich. (AP) — Jill Biden wasted no time after she stepped up to the microphone at a suburban Detroit restaurant.

"Now some have come to (the) Detroit area recently and thrown around some insults, but from what I've seen this is a vibrant, thriving city," she said. It was a swipe at Republican Donald Trump, who aimed a recent dart at the most populous city in a critical Midwestern battleground state.

The first lady was back on the campaign trail for the first time in months, but no longer pushing Democrats to support her husband, President Joe Biden. Instead, she is now putting her energy into boosting Vice President Kamala Harris, who Biden endorsed for president after he dropped his reelection bid. On Tuesday, the first lady wrapped up a five-day swing through five battleground states.

While the race itself has changed, what remains unchanged for Jill Biden is her effort to highlight contrasts with Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, in the hope that Democrats can keep the former president out of the White House and help preserve her husband's legacy.

It's one reason why she reminded the 150 or so supporters at a Harris campaign event at the restaurant in Clawson, Michigan, about 20 miles north of Detroit, that the former president had insulted Detroit days earlier by calling it "a mess" while he was there delivering a speech.

The first lady uses her campaign speeches to validate Harris

Before getting in a few digs at Trump, the first lady spends most of her speech pumping up Harris, even sharing that they have "bonded" over many things during the past four years.

"One was how we lost our mothers both to cancer, both long before we were done needing them,"

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Biden says.

In her campaign speech, which has been retooled to focus on the vice president, she says Harris' background has helped make her "a tough, compassionate, decisive leader." She cites Harris' experience in high school helping a friend who was being molested by her stepfather, and her career as a district attorney and California's attorney general.

She promotes Harris' plans to bring down grocery and housing costs by going after "greedy" corporations, as well as her proposal to give \$25,000 in down-payment assistance to people trying to buy their first homes.

Then Biden shifts to "what's at stake for women in this election," recalling how "stunned" and "devastated" she was in 2022 when the three justices Trump nominated for the U.S. Supreme Court helped undo a woman's constitutional right to an abortion.

Harris has been the administration's point person on the abortion and reproductive rights issue for the past two years.

"No one has to abandon their faith or deeply held beliefs to agree that the government shouldn't be telling women what to do," Biden says, echoing the vice president. "As president, Kamala Harris will proudly sign a national law to restore reproductive freedom to every woman in every state in our country."

"As president, Kamala Harris is going to fight for you," Jill Biden says.

Biden turns a lull in her teaching schedule into a swing-state blitz

A break in the fall schedule at Northern Virginia Community College, where the first lady teaches English and writing twice a week, allowed her to get back on the trail for the first time since the president announced in July that he was leaving the race and endorsing Harris.

She delivered speeches and met with small groups of campaign volunteers — bringing cookies to some of them — as she barnstormed through the battlegrounds of Arizona, Nevada, Michigan and Wisconsin on a five-day blitz that ended Tuesday in Pennsylvania.

She joined volunteers making calls at a phone bank in West Chester, a Philadelphia suburb, and spoke at an event at Montgomery County Community College in Blue Bell, another suburb.

The first lady is expected to head out again for Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, in the closing weeks of what remains a neck-and-neck contest.

The first lady takes on Trump

"I even hate to say it," Biden said after the audience packed inside a small Democratic campaign office in Madison, Wisconsin, groaned at her mention of the former president's name.

"Donald Trump wakes up every morning thinking about one person and one person only. Who?" she asked. "Himself!" the audience shouted.

The first lady said a second Trump presidency "would lead to more chaos, more greed, more division. He wants to lower taxes for rich guys like him while costs go up for everyone else."

"And this is important, the next president will likely choose new Supreme Court justices. And our children and our grandchildren will have to live with the consequences," she added.

The first lady encourages supporters to vote early.

"As you know, this election is going to be so close, every vote counts," she told the phone bank volunteers in Pennsylvania before she sat down to make some calls herself.

After speaking at Montgomery County Community College, she met the president in Philadelphia, where, he too, was fulfilling his new mission of boosting Harris.

"Kamala Harris has been a great vice president. She'll be a great president as well," Biden said at a Democratic Party dinner.



## **A brown dwarf discovered 30 years ago is actually twins circling each other**

By ADITHI RAMAKRISHNAN AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A celestial object discovered decades ago is actually twins orbiting each other, a new study confirms.

Scientists have puzzled over the object known as Gliese 229B, the first known brown dwarf discovered 30 years ago. Brown dwarfs are sometimes called failed stars because they're lighter than stars, but heavier than gas giant planets.

This object appeared too dim for its mass. Astronomers collected light and chemical clues using the Very Large Telescope in Chile and observed it's a duo circling close to each other.

"It resolves a glaring discrepancy," said Kevin Luhman, an astronomer at Pennsylvania State University who was not involved with the research.

The twins orbit a small star about 18 light-years away. A light-year is 5.8 trillion miles.

Astronomers have spotted brown dwarf pairs before, but these two whip around at much closer range. They orbit each other every 12 days, less than the time it takes for the moon to circle the Earth.

"It shows you how weird the universe is, and how different solar systems are from our own," said study co-author Rebecca Oppenheimer with the American Museum of Natural History.

The research was published Wednesday in the journal *Nature*.

The twins' discovery means there could be other lurking brown dwarfs with a hidden partner, said co-author Jerry Xuan of the California Institute of Technology.

## **Unions face a moment of truth in Michigan in this year's presidential race**

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI and MATT BROWN Associated Press

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris rallies in Michigan's union halls, standing alongside the state's most powerful labor leader, while former President Donald Trump fires back from rural steel factories, urging middle-class workers to trust him as the true champion of their interests.

As they compete for blue wall states with deep union roots, the presidential candidates are making their case to workers in starkly different terms. And nowhere is that contrast more significant than in Michigan, where both candidates are vying for workers' support in a race that could mark a pivotal moment for organized labor.

"The American dream was really born here in Michigan," United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain told a crowd of several hundred while campaigning for Harris in Grand Rapids. Fain, who described Michigan as "sacred ground" for his union at the early October rally, warned that the dream was on "life support" and that unions like his were key to protecting it for American workers.

Harris, who is planning to meet with union workers again in Michigan on Friday, hopes her message — amplified by supporters such as Fain — will resonate beyond the union families that once formed a rock-solid base for the Democratic Party. Her campaign has grown increasingly concerned about her standing with men in the blue wall states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, where they are looking to union leaders to help mobilize voters in a political landscape that has shifted in the winds of a rapidly changing economy.

These concerns intensified recently when Harris failed to secure two key union endorsements that in 2020 went to President Joe Biden, who has touted himself as the most labor-friendly president in U.S. history. The International Association of Firefighters and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters both declined to endorse anyone, with the Teamsters citing a lack of majority support for Harris among their million-plus members.

The Teamsters have traditionally been less reliably Democratic than other unions, having endorsed Republican Presidents Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan in the past. Some state-level unions have also

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diverged from their national leadership, with Michigan's Teamsters and California's main firefighters' union backing Harris.

Still, any break in unity within the labor movement could strike a blow against a party that has worked hard to restore unions as a central source of its power at the ballot box.

"When you talk about unions, you're addressing more than just unionized workers. Most people in states like Michigan have a family member or close friend in a union," said Adrian Hemond, a longtime political strategist in Michigan. "Unions are just a vessel to get that messaging out to workers."

Trump has seized on the union non-endorsements, claiming they prove rank-and-file workers support his vision for the country.

Many Midwestern communities once core to the labor movement have shifted to the right in recent decades, often in response to economic concerns such as deindustrialization and the removal of trade barriers. In that same span, non-college-educated white voters across the country began voting more conservatively for a number of reasons, including concern about cultural issues involving race and gender.

In Michigan, home to the Big Three automakers and the largest concentration of UAW workers, Trump seeks to capture an even larger share of these votes by framing Harris as a supporter of electric vehicle mandates and trade policies that he says send jobs overseas.

Attempting to separate union workers from their leaders, he labeled Fain a "stupid idiot" and praised Tesla CEO Elon Musk for firing workers who went on strike. The UAW says that could intimidate people who work for the Trump campaign or at Tesla who might want to join a union.

In 2020, Biden narrowly carried the blue wall states that had broken with Democrats in 2016 for the first time in decades on his way to winning the White House. That election win was built on a foundation of strong support from unionized voters, who have traditionally formed a turnout machine for Democrats in the Midwest. But it stood apart from past Democratic victories in a number of significant ways.

While Trump narrowly won white voters in Michigan in 2020, the former president's vote margin was highly polarized along educational, professional and income lines; Trump won nearly two-thirds of non-college-educated white voters in the state, while Biden and Trump were drawn to a near tie among college-educated white voters, according to AP VoteCast, a comprehensive survey of the electorate.

Among Michigan's nonwhite voters, who make up 16% of the state's electorate, Biden won a resounding 80% of the vote. But signs of that coalition fracturing have emerged more recently, particularly among Arab Americans in metro Detroit, many of whom are expected to turn away from Democrats due to the Biden administration's handling of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

As Trump again seeks the presidency, his campaign hopes to boost GOP support among the state's non-college-educated white and nonwhite workers to unprecedented levels, partly to offset expected losses Trump will face with white college-educated voters, where he has hemorrhaged support since his 2020 loss and subsequent efforts to overturn the results in Michigan, Pennsylvania and other swing states.

"I think that part of the problem that Democrats are having with some of the white male, blue collar voters is not within the union itself," said Brian Rothenberg, a former UAW spokesman. "It's those folks that are children or relatives of union members that just aren't doing as well."

Harris has aimed to win over these voters by emphasizing how unions benefit all workers. At a Labor Day rally in Detroit, she said "you better thank a union member" for the five-day work week, for sick and paid leave and for vacation time.

"When union wages go up, everybody's wages go up," said Harris.

Just over a year after securing new contracts for UAW workers at Ford, General Motors and Stellantis, Fain has staked much of his political capital — and potentially his future — on supporting Harris. He argues that UAW backing for Democrats has remained steady over recent elections, with approximately 60% of members voting for the Democratic presidential nominee.

Petitions for union representation have doubled under the Biden administration, and he became the first president to walk the picket line when he visited Michigan in late 2023 amid the autoworker strike. A day later, Trump traveled to Michigan and appeared at a non-union plant, where he railed against Biden's elec-

tric vehicle push and told workers to "get your union leaders to endorse me, and I'll take care of the rest."

Union leaders have said his first term was far from worker-friendly, citing unfavorable rulings from the nation's top labor board and the U.S. Supreme Court, as well as unfulfilled promises of automotive jobs. They emphasize Democratic achievements in states like Michigan, including the recent repeal of a union-restricting right-to-work law enacted over a decade ago by a Republican-controlled legislature.

With membership dwindling in states like Michigan, Fain will need to attract more than just union workers to secure a victory for Harris, who has campaigned in the state alongside him. If the union president cannot deliver Michigan after all these efforts, it could raise questions about his union's political influence in future elections.

"This is a generation-defining moment, where we are right now," Fain told Michigan voters. "This election is going to determine where we go."

## **Ravens' dynamic duo of Henry and Jackson help lead a rushing renaissance in the NFL**

By JOSH DUBOW AP Pro Football Writer

Inside the Numbers dives into NFL statistics, streaks and trends each week. For more Inside the Numbers, head here.

The running game has had a bit of a renaissance early this season thanks in part to a dynamic duo in Baltimore off to a historic start.

NFL teams are rushing at the highest rate through six weeks since 2008, with teams averaging a record-high 4.5 yards per carry and the most yards rushing per game at this point in a season in 40 years.

The average of 121.7 yards rushing per game for teams is the highest through six weeks in a non-replacement player season since 1984, when it was at 124.6.

The Ravens are playing a big part in that thanks to the predictable success of pairing perhaps the NFL's best rushing quarterback with the most prolific running back of his generation.

Derrick Henry has 704 yards rushing and nine total touchdowns in his first six games since signing with Baltimore, while Lamar Jackson has run for 403 yards.

Only one other team since at least 1948 has had one player rush for at least 400 yards and another for at least 600 yards in the first six games of a season. Joe Perry (501) and J.D. Smith (604) did it for San Francisco in 1959.

Baltimore's 1,232 yards rushing this season are the fourth most through six games since 1980, trailing the 2006 Falcons (1,333), the 1984 Bears (1,330) and the 1980 Lions (1,299).

The Ravens have been the NFL's top rushing team every since Jackson took over as starter in 2018 and have two of the three longest streaks in NFL history of rushing for at least 100 yards. Baltimore just did it for the 39th straight game. The Ravens are tied for the longest streak with 43 from 2018-21. The Steelers also did that from 1974-77.

Jackson is averaging 254.8 yards passing per game and 67.2 on the ground and is on pace to join Michael Vick as the only players in history to average at least 250 yards passing and at least 50 rushing for a season. Vick did it in 2010 for Philadelphia.

Jackson moved past Cam Newton into second place in career yards rushing for a quarterback last week with 5,661. He needs 449 more to break Vick's record of 6,109.

Traded away

The Davante Adams era in Las Vegas ended less than halfway through his third season with some individual highs but no team success when he was traded to the New York Jets.

That's not a new situation for the Raiders, who have traded away a first-round pick for a proven veteran four times in the past 20 seasons without making a single playoff appearance with the acquisitions.

There was the 2005 trade for Randy Moss, the 2009 deal for Richard Seymour, the 2011 one for Carson

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Palmer and now the trade that sent first- and second-round picks to Green Bay in 2022 when Las Vegas got Adams.

According to trade records on Pro Football Reference, there have been 35 trades that featured a first-round pick being swapped for a veteran in the last 20 seasons. Of those, only eight of the deals didn't lead to a single playoff berth with the acquisition still on the roster, with the Raiders accounting for four of them.

The others were Tampa Bay acquiring Darrelle Revis in 2013, Indianapolis trading for Carson Wentz in 2021, Arizona getting Marquise Brown in 2022 and Denver trading for Russell Wilson in 2022.

The latest deal reunites Adams with Aaron Rodgers, his quarterback in Green Bay for eight seasons. Adams has caught 615 passes from Rodgers for 7,517 yards and 68 touchdowns — the most in all three categories between any combination of active players.

Home not-so-sweet home

Dallas owner Jerry Jones celebrated his 82nd birthday by watching his team endure its most lopsided home loss in his 36 seasons in charge of the Cowboys.

The 47-9 drubbing by Detroit was the biggest loss at home for the Cowboys since they fell 43-3 to Minnesota on Nov. 13, 1988, just months before Jones bought the team.

The struggles at home have been a problem for Dallas ever since the Cowboys saw their 16-game home winning streak snapped with a 48-32 loss in the wild-card round to Green Bay last season.

Dallas has dropped three home games to open this season, losing 44-19 to New Orleans in Week 2 and 28-25 to Baltimore in Week 3. The 167 points allowed by the Cowboys in their last four home games are the fourth most ever in a span of four home games, according to Sportradar. Only the 1948 Giants (177 points) and 1972-73 Oilers (176) allowed more.

Dallas isn't the only NFC East team struggling at home. The New York Giants have lost all three home games this season and Daniel Jones dropped to 0-5 with nine turnovers, no TDs and a 57.9 passer rating over the last two seasons at MetLife Stadium following a 17-7 loss to Cincinnati on Sunday. There are 20 players who have thrown a TD pass at MetLife more recently than Jones has.

Falling off

The New Orleans Saints have followed a historic start to the season with a nearly unprecedented collapse. New Orleans opened the season by beating Carolina by 37 points and Dallas by 25 — becoming the 13th team in the Super Bowl era to win each of the first two games by at least 24 points.

The Saints have followed that up with four straight losses, scoring 76 points the past four weeks after having 91 the first two games. Only two other teams in NFL history won the first two games by at least 20 points and then lost four straight, with Dallas doing it in 1965 and the Cleveland Indians in 1921.

New Orleans reached a new low this past week in a 51-27 loss to Tampa Bay when the Saints scored 27 points in the second quarter and none in the other three. They allowed the Buccaneers to become the fifth team in NFL history to gain at least 300 yards through the air and 275 on the ground.

The loss dropped coach Dennis Allen's career winning percentage to .342 — fifth worst out of 148 coaches with at least 75 games.

## Private forums show Canadian doctors struggle with euthanizing vulnerable patients

By MARIA CHENG and ANGIE WANG Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — A homeless man refusing long-term care, a woman with severe obesity, an injured worker given meager government assistance, and grieving new widows. All of them requested to be killed under Canada's euthanasia system, and each sparked private debate among doctors and nurses struggling with the ethics of one of the world's most permissive laws on the practice, according to an Associated Press investigation.

As Canada pushes to expand euthanasia and more countries move to legalize it, health care workers here are grappling with requests from people whose pain might be alleviated by money, adequate housing or



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social connections. And internal data obtained exclusively by AP from Canada's most populous province suggest a significant number of people euthanized when they are in unmanageable pain but not about to die live in Ontario's poorest and most deprived areas.

Some doctors fear moving forward even with cases that meet Canada's legal requirements, which allow euthanasia for people with "irremediable suffering" from serious but nonfatal medical conditions and disabilities. On private forums, doctors and nurses have expressed deep discomfort with ending the lives of vulnerable people whose deaths were avoidable, according to messages provided to AP by a participant on condition of anonymity due to their confidentiality.

Some of the requests from the forums were approved and acted upon. Others were denied. But the discourse about patients who are poor, disabled or lonely shows a fraught process where medical professionals test the limits of what conditions warrant euthanasia. The controversial cases in the forums have never been disclosed through Canada's oversight system, even in an anonymized manner.

When Canada legalized assisted dying in 2016, officials said they wanted to reduce suffering and support individual autonomy and freedom of choice — and polls have consistently shown public approval. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised then that safeguards would prevent vulnerable people from being euthanized "because you're not getting the support and care you actually need."

But experts tasked with delivering euthanasia to people who aren't dying have called it "morally distressing" and say the legal provisions are too vague to be protective, obliging doctors and nurses to at times end the lives of people they believe might otherwise be saved.

"I don't want (euthanasia) to become the solution to every kind of suffering out there," a physician wrote to colleagues on one of the private forums.

Euthanasia programs are increasing

Canada has the world's fastest-growing program for euthanasia, the practice of doctors and nurse practitioners killing patients with an injection of drugs at their request. Medically assisted suicide — patients themselves taking prescribed, lethal medication — also is legal.

But virtually all of Canada's MAiD cases — as it's widely known here, for medical assistance in dying — are euthanasia, with a doctor or nurse practitioner giving the fatal injection.

Unlike many other countries, Canada doesn't require that patients exhaust all medical treatments before seeking death.

After legalizing euthanasia in 2016, Canada broadened its law in 2021 to allow people with incurable, but not terminal, conditions — including disability alone — to seek a way to die. This vastly expanded the number of people eligible, and medical groups in some territories and provinces require doctors to inform, offer or help provide euthanasia to any patients who might qualify.

Adults with serious, incurable conditions must have a written request approved by two independent doctors or nurse practitioners. Those with nonterminal cases must be informed of other ways to relieve their suffering, among other requirements, and there's a minimum 90-day assessment period.

As the eligibility pool has grown, so has criticism among academics, disability advocacy groups and religious communities.

Doctors and nurses "do not treat MAiD as an option of last resort," said an August report published by the Christian think tank Cardus.

The nonprofit organization Inclusion Canada regularly hears from people with disabilities who are offered euthanasia, including one disabled woman whose physiotherapist suggested it when she sought help for a bruised hip, said executive vice president Krista Carr.

"Our response to the intolerable suffering of people with disabilities is: 'Your life is not worth living,'" she said. "We'll just offer them the lethal injection, and we'll offer it readily."

Doctors privately debate euthanasia cases

When euthanasia was legalized, doctors and nurse practitioners set up email discussion groups as confidential forums to discuss potentially troubling cases, with limited patient details for privacy. They're now run by the Canadian Association of MAiD Assessors and Providers.

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Association President Dr. Konia Trouton told AP via email that providing euthanasia for vulnerability or financial reasons alone is "completely forbidden." Trouton said doctors and nurse practitioners consult with one another on the forums "to gain insights and learn from the experiences of others."

The participant who shared some of the email discussions with AP provided dozens of messages raising questions about the medical and ethical complexities of euthanasia requests from people nationwide who weren't terminally ill.

A middle-aged worker whose ankle and back injuries made him unable to resume his previous job told his doctor that the government's mealy support was "leaving (him) with no choice but to pursue MAiD." His doctor told forum participants the patient met legal criteria, with severe pain, strained social relationships and inability to work. Others agreed and assured the doctor the man was clearly in pain. But the doctor was hesitant because the man cited reduced government payments as a key factor.

Cases of homelessness appear regularly and spark some of the most heated debate.

One doctor wrote that although his patient had a serious lung disease, his suffering was "mostly because he is homeless, in debt and cannot tolerate the idea of (long-term care) of any kind." A respondent questioned whether the fear of living in the nursing home was truly intolerable. Another said the prospect of "looking at the wall or ceiling waiting to be fed ... to have diapers changed" was sufficiently painful.

The man was eventually euthanized.

One provider said any suggestion they should provide patients with better housing options before offering euthanasia "seems simply unrealistic and hence, cruel," amid a national housing crisis.

Physicians said keeping their opinions out of assessments was difficult — and painful, given patients' emotions and desperation.

Experts not linked to the forums said that while doctors and nurses need private space for discussion, the lack of transparency about controversial cases is alarming.

"The question about who gets euthanasia is a societal question," said Kasper Raus, a researcher at Ghent University's Bioethics Institute in Belgium. "This is a procedure that ends people's lives, so we need to be closely monitoring any changes in who is getting it.

"If not, the entire practice could change and veer away from the reasons that we legalized euthanasia."

Data suggest marginalized people are affected

Critics have long warned that Canada's policies have led to euthanasia among disadvantaged people whose deaths weren't imminent. Despite publicized cases of people asking to be killed because of insufficient support, government officials have largely refuted the idea that socially disadvantaged people are being euthanized.

But in Ontario, more than three quarters of people euthanized when their death wasn't imminent required disability support before their death in 2023, according to data from a slideshow presentation by the province's chief coroner, shared with AP by both a researcher and a doctor on condition of anonymity due to its sensitive nature.

Of people killed when they weren't terminally ill, nearly 29% lived in the poorest parts of Ontario, compared with 20% of the province's general population living in the most deprived communities, the data show.

People euthanized with nonterminal conditions were "more likely to live in neighborhoods where there's higher levels of residential instability, higher material deprivation and greater dependency on government support," Ontario Chief Coroner Dr. Dirk Huyer said during his May presentation.

The figures suggest poverty may be a factor in Canada's nonterminal euthanasia cases.

But Huyer told AP that the data was only an early analysis and "it's tough to know exactly what it means," saying that his job was only to present the statistics.

Poverty doesn't appear to disproportionately affect patients with terminal diseases who are euthanized, according to the leaked data. And experts say no other country that has legalized euthanasia has seen a marked number of deaths in impoverished people.

Overall for Ontario, the data show, nonterminal patients account for a small portion of all euthanasia cases: 116 of 4,528 deaths last year. But the presentation and discussion among Ontario officials and medical professionals show rising awareness of euthanasia deaths for social reasons.

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Privately, officials admit concern

Health Canada, the government agency responsible for national health policy, publishes yearly reports of euthanasia trends but hasn't released any review of cases that triggered ethical concerns.

Marie-Pier Burelle, a spokeswoman for Health Canada, said in an email that "lack of access to social supports or to health services is not and would never be part of eligibility criteria" for euthanasia. Burelle cited "stringent safeguards to affirm and protect the inherent and equal value of every person's life."

In private, though, Canadian officials have examined worrisome cases.

A document from the Ministry of the Solicitor General in Ontario sent to all euthanasia providers in the province in May noted two cases of "lessons learned" in nonterminal cases. The document was shared with AP by a doctor on condition of anonymity because it wasn't authorized for release.

In one, a 74-year-old patient who'd suffered high blood pressure, a stroke and blindness, among other difficulties, was increasingly dependent on their spouse and "expressed their interest in MAiD to their family physician, due to their vision impairment and loss of hope for improvement of their vision and quality of life."

The report cited three instances where legally mandated safeguards were not met. Among them: No assessor or expert versed in the nonterminal condition was involved, and efforts to discuss alternatives to death were "limited."

The report also said the procedure was scheduled "based on the spouse's preference of timing." Officials questioned whether "the patient's death was genuinely voluntary and free of coercion." Independent legal experts said those breaches could constitute violations of criminal law.

Some push for more reflection

Polls show that expanding access to euthanasia has long been supported across Canada. But the country appears to be pushing the boundaries of what's socially acceptable, experts say, and that could have global implications, as countries including Britain and France move towards legalization.

"Canada seems to be providing euthanasia for social reasons, when people don't have the financial means, which would be a big taboo in Europe," said Theo Boer, professor of health care ethics at Groningen University in the Netherlands. "That may be what Canadians want, but they would still benefit from some honest self-reflection about what is going on."

Some of that reflection is happening in the confidential providers' forums.

They've debated whether it's valid to euthanize people for obesity in several cases. One woman with severe obesity described herself as a "useless body taking up space" — she'd lost interest in activities, became socially withdrawn and said she had "no purpose," according to the doctor who reviewed her case. Another physician reasoned that euthanasia was warranted because obesity is "a medical condition which is indeed grievous and irremediable."

When a health worker inquired whether anyone had euthanized patients for blindness, one provider reported four such cases. In one, they said, an elderly man who saw "only shadows" was his wife's caregiver when he requested euthanasia; he wanted her to die with him. The couple had several appointments with an assessor before the wife "finally agreed" to be killed, the provider said. She died unexpectedly just days before the scheduled euthanasia.

Providers on the forum were divided over ending the lives of people in mourning. One case involved a woman in her 80s who required dialysis and lost her husband, sibling and cat in a six-week period. Her assessor said her suffering and request to die were tied to her husband's death rather than any medical conditions.

Some doctors said because she lost her husband — the protective factor that would make the other losses and suffering bearable — she qualified. Others recommended grief counseling instead.

A provider referenced a similar case, in which a widow requested euthanasia within weeks of her husband's death: "Her whole life system crashed. I felt much ease in providing for her and had no pushback from the coroner."

Dr. Ellen Wiebe, who has euthanized more than 400 people in Canada, told AP that while poverty inevitably exacerbates suffering, improved housing and social situations have never changed a patient's mind.

"The idea that because I'm disabled, I should lose my rights that undiseased people have is outrageous,"

said Wiebe, who suffers from heart disease and uses a wheelchair.

She predicted legal consequences if officials introduce more safeguards for euthanasia: "We'll just be back in court with somebody saying, "You interfered with my basic human rights.""

The government already faces challenges to its euthanasia laws on all sides. The advocacy group Dying with Dignity filed an August lawsuit in Ontario, alleging it's "discriminatory" to exclude mentally ill people from euthanasia. A coalition of disability-rights organizations in a lawsuit last month argued that euthanasia legislation has resulted in premature deaths of people with disabilities.

On euthanasia forums, doctors and nurses continue to struggle with cases of patients who aren't fatally ill, lamenting that Canada's health and social services can seem woefully inadequate.

"I have great discomfort with the idea of MAiD being driven by social circumstances," one provider said. "I don't have a good solution to social deprivation either, so I feel pretty useless when I receive requests like this."

## Today in History: October 17 Loma Prieta earthquake strikes California

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Thursday, Oct. 17, the 291st day of 2024. There are 75 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Oct. 17, 1989, an earthquake measuring 6.9 in magnitude struck northern California, killing 63 people and causing up to \$10 billion worth of damage.

Also on this date:

In 1777, British forces under Gen. John Burgoyne surrendered to American troops in Saratoga, New York, in a turning point of the Revolutionary War.

In 1931, mobster Al Capone was convicted in Chicago of income tax evasion; he would be sentenced to 11 years in prison.

In 1933, Albert Einstein arrived in the United States as a refugee from Nazi Germany.

In 1967, Puyi, the last emperor of China, died in Beijing at age 61.

In 1979, Mother Teresa of India was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1989, Game 3 of the World Series was canceled as the Loma Prieta earthquake struck Northern California just 30 minutes before the game was scheduled to begin at Candlestick Park in San Francisco; the game would eventually be played 10 days later.

In 2018, residents of the Florida Panhandle community of Mexico Beach who had fled Hurricane Michael a week earlier returned to find houses, businesses and campers ripped to shreds; the storm had killed at least 59 people and caused more than \$25 billion in damage in Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Gary Puckett is 82. Actor-musician Michael McKean is 77. Actor George Wendt is 76. Astronaut Mae Jemison is 68. Country singer Alan Jackson is 66. Film critic Richard Roeper is 65. Film director Rob Marshall is 64. Animator-filmmaker Mike Judge is 62. Reggae singer Ziggy Marley is 56. Actor Wood Harris is 55. Musician Wyclef Jean (zhahn) is 55. Golf Hall of Famer Ernie Els is 55. Singer Chris Kirkpatrick ('N Sync) is 53. Rapper Eminem is 52. Actor Matthew Macfadyen is 50. Actor Felicity Jones is 41.