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- Federal Grand Jury Indicts Man Investigated By FBI For COVID-19 Relief Fraud.
- Ohio Couple Sentenced For Bribery, Tax Fraud.

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- US Places Restrictions On Several Russian IT Firms.
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- NYTimes Analysis: Uncertainty Abounds As To What Comes Next After Administration Implements Executions Moratorium.
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- NYTimes Analysis: NYC Statistics Indicate City Still Struggling To Prosecute Rape Cases.
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- CBS-YouGov Poll: Americans Are Growing Increasingly Concerned About Delta Variant.
- CDC Data Shows Teenagers Remain Undervaccinated.
- Some States Move To Ban Mask And Vaccine Mandates.
- FDA Grants Priority Review To Pfizer's COVID Vaccine For Full Approval.
- Delta Variant Now Dominant Strain Globally.
- White House Voices Support For Biden's BLM Pick.
- Reuters Poll: 90% Of Economists Expect Biden To Reappoint Powell.
- Biden Donor Reportedly Set To Be Nominated To Be US Ambassador To The UK.
- Biden To Tap Udall To Be Ambassador To New Zealand.
- NASA Executive Utilized COVID Relief Funds For His Own Expenses.
- Biden Senior Migration Adviser Departing.
- Federal Judge Says Obama Unlawfully Created DACA, Blocks Approval Of Pending Applications.
- Apprehensions At US-Mexico Border Surpass One Million This Fiscal Year.
- CDC Affirms Order Allowing Unaccompanied Children To Enter US In Exception To Trump-Era Rule.
- Democrats Urging Biden To Do More To Enforce Ethics Rules.
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- Administration Rescinds Trump-Era Beach Sand Policy.
- PETA Files Formal Complaint Asking Marines To Stop Using Animals During Survival Training Exercises.

- Miami-Dade Judge "Open To All Options" For Site Of Champlain Towers South.
- FAA Grounds Cargo Airline Following Boeing 737 Crash.
- Three Texas Legislators Who Fled To DC To Inhibit Passage Of Voting Restrictions Test Positive For Coronavirus.
- Champlain Towers South Collapse Causing New Challenges For Florida's Insurance Market.
- NYTimes Profile: Klain Is "Most Influential" Recent White House Chief Of Staff.
- Biden To Welcome Tampa Bay Buccaneers To White House Tuesday.
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- Klobuchar Says Breyer Should Retire "Sooner Rather Than Later" Due To Senate Status.
- Lawmakers Increasingly Embracing Proxy Voting.
- Pennsylvania Lawmaker Pushes For "Forensic Investigation" Of 2020 Election Results.
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- Two Athletes Staying In The Olympic Village Test Positive For COVID.
- UK PM Johnson Calls For Caution Ahead Of "Freedom Day."
- Officials Surprised By Scale Of "Vaccine Gap" Between Rich And Poor Countries.
- Cuba's Practice Of Shipping Medical Personnel Overseas In Spotlight As Pandemic Spreads.
- 2021 Hajj Begins In Saudi Arabia, But Attendance Reduced Due To Coronavirus.
- Italian Tourism Industry Revives Following Lockdowns.
- WSJournal: Biden Should Focus On Turning Internet Back On In Cuba.
- Afghan Government, Taliban Talks In Doha End, Say They Will Meet Again.
- China Holds Amphibious Landing Exercises Near Taiwan.
- Misinformation Being "Amplified Online" In South Korea.
- WPost Decries Indian Treatment Of Government Critics.
- Austria Investigating Reports That US Diplomats In Vienna Suffering Symptoms Of Havana Syndrome.
- Merkel Visits Schuld As Death Toll From Floods Exceeds 180 People.
- Pro-British Northern Irish Suspicious Of Biden.
- Russian Rights Group, Fearing Government Crackdown, Disbands.
- Ahead of Eid, Egypt Frees Some "Prominent" Activists, Journalists.
- WSJournal: Iranian Actions Give Biden Administration Reasons To Walk Away From Talks.

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LEADING THE NEWS

White House: Biden Has Confidence In Wray Despite Nassar Probe Report.

The Washington Times (7/16, Mordock, 626K) reports, "White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Friday that President Biden has confidence in" FBI Director Wray, "even as blunders keep mounting for the embattled bureau. 'Yes, he has confidence in Christopher Wray,' Ms. Psaki said at a White House press briefing." The Times adds, "Ms. Psaki's comments come the same week that a scathing report by the Justice Department's inspector general laid bare the FBI's embarrassing bungling of its sex-abuse investigation of former USA Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar. The report found the FBI 'failed to respond with the utmost seriousness and urgency that the allegations deserved and required.' It also found that officials made 'numerous and fundamental errors,' including failing to alert state or local authorities, and did not take steps to mitigate the ongoing threat of Nassar."

WWJ-TV Detroit (7/16) reports, "The Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on the FBI's handling of the Larry Nassar sex abuse case. In a statement, Committee Chairman Senator Dick Durbin says 'The FBI's failure in this case led to more athletes being victimized. This committee has the responsibility of oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.' He also went on to say the hearing is needed to examine the injustice, and prevent similar tragedies from happening."

Fox News (7/16, Creitz, 23.99M) reports, "The first woman to come forward with accusations of sexual abuse at the hands of disgraced, and now imprisoned, USA Gymnastics team doctor Larry Nassar told Fox News on Friday that more girls could've been protected from the physician's deviancy if not for "multiple errors" made by the FBI as described in an inspector-general report." Rachael Denhollander, 36, "now an attorney, told 'The Story' that the bureau dropped the ball multiple times in its investigation of Nassar, and claimed an FBI official 'wined and dined' with now-disgraced former USA Gymnastics chief Stephen Penny Jr. Penny was arrested in 2018 by the Great Smoky Mountains division of the U.S. Marshals and indicted on charges he hid or destroyed documents relating to Nassar's sexual abuse at the Huntsville, Texas, ranch of Olympics gymnastics champion Bela Karolyi."

The Indianapolis Star (7/16, Evans, Cook, Phillips, Kwiatkowski, 662K) reports, "The stinging criticism of the FBI's Indianapolis field office in a report issued Wednesday by the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Justice leaves more questions than answers," and "those who can help explain the roles and motivations of key agents cited in the report – which found misconduct including lying and ethical breaches in connection with the failure to follow up on 2015 reports about sexual abuse allegations against longtime USA Gymnastics team doctor Larry Nassar – aren't talking." The Star adds, "The failings by local FBI agents, including then-Special Agent in Charge W. Jay Abbott, allowed Nassar to continue sexually abusing women and young girls. The justice department report said at least 70 were molested during the nearly year-long delay in pursuing the July 2015 allegations. An attorney for 250 Nassar survivors said the number is more than 120."

In a separate article, the Indianapolis Star (7/16, Evans, Cook, Kwiatkowski, Bowman, 662K) reports, "The former chief of the FBI's Indianapolis Division considered applying for the head position of USA Gymnastics after he sat on sexual abuse allegations against the Indianapolis-based Olympic organization's longtime team doctor Larry Nassar in 2015." W. Jay Abbott "and other senior Indianapolis FBI officials failed to act on those allegations for at least 8 months, and later lied about doing so, according to a stinging rebuke of the FBI's handling of the case from the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Justice. That delay and inaction allowed Nassar to continue to practice and molest at least 100 more young athletes under the guise of medical treatment, according to an attorney for 250 Nassar survivors."

Two Men Facing Charges After Plotting To Attack California Democratic Party Headquarters.

The New York Times (7/16, MacFarquhar, 20.6M) reports, "Angered by the results of the 2020 presidential election, two men in Northern California plotted for months to blow up the state Democratic Party headquarters in Sacramento, according to federal authorities." The two individuals "face conspiracy and weapons charges," and the Times adds that they, according to court documents, talked about assorted targets via encrypted messaging apps, with the targets "including the Governor's Mansion as well as Twitter and Facebook offices." Documents quoted defendant Ian Benjamin Rogers as having told the other man, Jarrod Copeland, via text, "I want to blow up a democrat building bad."

The Washington Post (7/16, Sonmez, 10.52M) reports that Rogers and Copeland "were 'prompted by the outcome of the 2020 Presidential election' and believed their attack would spark a 'movement,' according to federal prosecutors, who said the men were members of a militia group." The Post paraphrases the indictment as having said that law enforcement confiscated "five pipe bombs, thousands of rounds of ammunition and 'between 45 and 50 firearms, including at least three fully-automatic weapons' during a January search of Rogers's home and business."

On ABC World News Tonight (7/16, story 8, 1:49, Muir, 5.66M), correspondent Pierre

Thomas reported that Rogers and Copeland "allegedly believed Trump had won the 2020 election. The indictment says text messages from Rogers' phone reveal 'his intent to attack Democrats and places associated with Democrats in an effort to ensure that Trump remained in the office.'" Thomas went on to say, "A federal prosecutor says the men remain a threat. Rogers and Copeland are still in custody. Copeland today pled not guilty."

Reuters (7/16, Lynch) reports, "Two California men have been indicted on charges they conspired to attack the Democratic Party headquarters in Sacramento, the state's capital city, the U.S. Justice Department said on Friday." Reuters adds, "According to the unsealed indictment, Ian Benjamin Rogers, 45, of Napa and Jarrod Copeland, 37, of Vallejo started plotting to attack Democratic targets after the 2020 presidential election. They also tried to get support from an anti-government group to further the cause. The indictment does not name the militia group they contacted, but prosecutors in a different court filing said Copeland emailed the far-right group Proud Boys, trying to 'recruit others to join the plot,' and also was a member of a militia group affiliated with the Three Percenters."

The AP (7/16, Thompson) reports from Sacramento, California, "Ian Benjamin Rogers had five illegal pipe bombs and nearly 50 weapons at his home and shop in California's wine country, a 'ThreePercenters' bumper sticker on his vehicle, a 'white privilege card' at his house, and text messages that led federal prosecutors to charge him with conspiring to firebomb the state Democratic Party headquarters in Sacramento. His attorney admits his client is in serious trouble, but said Friday that the alleged plot was nothing more than drunken talk between two buddies inflamed by the defeat of former president Donald Trump. 'Firebombing your perceived political opponents is illegal and does not nurture the sort of open and vigorous debate that created and supports our constitutional democracy,' U.S. Attorney Stephanie Hinds said in announcing the unsealing of an indictment Thursday in San Francisco federal court."

USA Today (7/16, Hauck, 12.7M) reports, "The men 'began planning to attack targets they associated with Democrats after the 2020 Presidential election and sought support from an anti-government militia group,'" federal prosecutors said. The men "intended to first target the John L. Burton Democratic Headquarters in Sacramento, according to court documents, and 'made plans to attack it using incendiary devices.'" The men "believed that the attacks would start what they called a 'movement,'" the indictment said."

CNN (7/16, Polantz, 89.21M) reports, "Court records citing extensive encrypted messages between Rogers and Copeland raise the alarm of how the men sought to inspire domestic terrorism toward Democrats – and how their anti-government motivations may still persist. In January, Rogers had told Copeland, 'I want to blow up a democrat building bad,' and Copeland responded in agreement, writing, 'Plan attack.' The pair discussed 'war' after President Joe Biden's inauguration, the Justice Department said. They also discussed attacking George Soros, a billionaire donor who supports liberal causes, and Twitter, which by then had removed Trump from the social media platform. 'I hope 45 goes to war if he doesn't I will,' Rogers allegedly wrote."

The Los Angeles Times (7/16, Chabria, 3.37M) reports, "Democratic Party Chairman Rusty Hicks called the plot 'extremely disturbing' in a news release, adding, 'it points to a broader issue of violent extremism that is far too common in today's political discourse.'"

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage, as did the CBS Evening News (7/16, story 5, 0:27, O'Donnell, 3.34M) in a brief broadcast.

Among other news outlets reporting are Bay City (CA) News (7/16), the Daily Beast (7/16, Richards, 933K), CNBC (7/16, Constantino, 7.34M), Newsweek (7/16, Jackson, 2.67M), BuzzFeed News (7/16, Miller), KQVR-TV Sacramento, CA (7/16, 46K), and KQVR-TV Sacramento, CA (7/16, 46K).

Biden: Social Media Platforms Are "Killing People" By Failing To Censor Vaccine Critics.

CNN (7/16, Judd, Vazquez, 89.21M) reports that on Friday, President Biden "said...social media platforms like Facebook are 'killing people' with misinformation surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic as the White House ramps up its rhetoric around false information on social media regarding the pandemic. 'They're killing people – I mean they're really, look, the only pandemic we have is among the unvaccinated,' Biden told reporters as he left the White House for Camp

David." CNN adds, "Meetings between the Biden administration and Facebook in recent weeks have been 'tense,' a source familiar with the conversations told CNN. The source said Biden officials who had taken concerns about vaccine misinformation to Facebook had concluded that the company was either not 'taking this very seriously, or they are hiding something,' due to what they view as Facebook's unwillingness to tackle vaccine misinformation."

The New York Times (7/16, Kanno-Youngs, Kang, 20.6M) says Biden "unleashed his growing frustration with social media," with the outburst capping "weeks of anger in the White House over the dissemination of vaccine disinformation online, even as the pace of inoculations slows and health officials warn of the rising danger of the Delta variant."

According to the Los Angeles Times (7/16, Megerian, Hupka, 3.37M), "The president's remark in answer to a reporter's question came at the end of a week in which the White House began to push back more strongly against misinformation about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines, blaming it for some Americans' unwillingness to get their shots." The Times adds, "The resurgence of COVID-19 cases represents a setback for Biden, who staked his presidency on ending the pandemic and ushering in an economic recovery. The increases are greatest in areas that favored his rival, former President Trump, reflecting the politicization of the pandemic response in the prior administration, which left many conservatives averse to wearing masks, social distancing and, ultimately, getting vaccines." The CBS Evening News (7/16, lead story, 3:20, O'Donnell, 3.34M) explained that new polls show "a majority of those who haven't been vaccinated believe incorrect information about the shot, and this is why health officials are concerned."

In a front-page article, the Washington Post (7/16, A1, Viser, Lerman, Pager, 10.52M) reports Biden's comments "marked a far more combative tone than he had taken previously on the pandemic and came a day after Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy issued a broader warning against health misinformation." Axios (7/16, Sukin, 1.26M) and The Hill (7/16, Chalfant, 5.69M) provide related coverage.

In an appearance on MSNBC's Morning Joe (7/16, 822K), US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy said, "I'm very concerned about the misinformation that's...preventing people from getting vaccinated. ... We know there are two thirds of people unvaccinated right now who are saying they believe common myths about COVID-19 or think they might be true." Murthy added, "We've been in conversation with technology companies.... We believe technology companies have a responsibility to reduce the spread of misinformation on their platforms. It's not enough to say this might get better in a few years. Right now the misinformation is harming people's health. If you run a platform, have a technology company that is somehow inadvertently or contributing to the spread of misinformation, you have a responsibility to take action to stop it. ... We are seeing people lose their lives because of misinformation."

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, Parti, Needleman, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports Facebook spokesman Kevin McAlister pushed back on the claim, arguing that "the facts show that Facebook is helping save lives. Period." The company said earlier on Friday that it had "removed more than 18 million pieces of COVID misinformation, removed accounts that repeatedly break these rules, and connected more than 2 billion people to reliable information about COVID-19 and COVID vaccines across our apps." Reuters (7/16, Bose, Culliford) reports McAlister said the company "will not be distracted by accusations which aren't supported by the facts."

NBC Nightly News (7/16, story 2, 2:43, Holt, 4.59M) reported that in addition to Facebook, "YouTube says it's taken down more than 800,000 videos, TikTok [took down] 50,000 just late last year."

CNBC (7/16, Rodriguez, 7.34M) reports on its website that Biden "was echoing earlier comments from White House press secretary Jen Psaki." Psaki is quoted as saying, "We're dealing with a life or death issue here and so everybody has a role to play in making sure there's accurate information. ... We are regularly making sure social media platforms are aware of the latest narratives dangerous to public health that we and many other Americans are seeing across all of social and traditional media."

However, Fox News (7/16, Miller, 23.99M) reports Psaki's comments drew criticism from conservatives, who accused the Administration of colluding with social media to censor speech. Fox News's Peter Doocy asked Psaki "how long the administration has been spying on people's

Facebook profiles," while Fox News contributor Katie Pavlich tweeted that "Psaki says the White House has been flagging 'problematic posts' on Facebook they believe are misinformation about Wuhan coronavirus." Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) said on [Fox News](#) (7/16, 23.99M) that the Administration's work with Facebook "looks like a First Amendment violation."

In an editorial, [The Wall Street Journal](#) (7/16, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) cautioned against the coordination between the federal government and big tech companies on censorship, pointing to former President Trump's lawsuits and censorship during the COVID pandemic.

[Bloomberg](#) (7/16, Parker, Sink, 3.57M) reports Psaki "said the outreach was no different than when the White House engaged regularly with news organizations, and called on social media companies to create 'robust enforcement strategies' to combat those providing misinformation."

CDC Director Warns "Preventable" COVID Cases Among Unvaccinated Americans. [The New York Times](#) (7/16, Anthes, Petri, 20.6M) reports, "As the highly contagious Delta variant of the coronavirus fuels outbreaks in the United States, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned on Friday that 'this is becoming a pandemic of the unvaccinated.'" CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said, "Our biggest concern is that we are going to continue to see preventable cases, hospitalizations and, sadly, deaths among the unvaccinated."

[CNBC](#) (7/16, Mendez, 7.34M) reports, "Deaths from the coronavirus are increasing again as the delta variant rips through unvaccinated pockets of the country... [Walensky] said Friday." She explained, "After weeks of declines, seven-day average daily deaths have increased by 26% to 211 per day." Additionally, new cases are "on the rise, with a current seven-day average of 26,300 cases, according to the CDC...an increase of roughly 70% from the seven-day average last week." Lastly, "the seven-day average for hospitalizations is now at 2,790, up about 36% from a week ago after weeks of decline."

The [Washington Post](#) (7/16, A1, Abutaleb, Sellers, 10.52M) reports on its front page that Walensky said "We are seeing outbreaks of cases in parts of the country that have low vaccination coverage because unvaccinated people are at risk, and communities that are fully vaccinated are generally faring well." She added that 97% of COVID-19 hospitalizations are among the unvaccinated, as are "virtually all" deaths.

The [AP](#) (7/16, Hollingsworth, Funk) reports that "some hospitals are reporting record or near-record patient volumes." However, "even for those that aren't, this round of the pandemic is proving tougher in some ways, hospital and health officials said," since "staff members are worn out, and finding traveling nurses to boost their ranks can be tough."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (7/16, lead story, 3:03, Holt, 4.59M) reporter Miguel Almaguer said, "Amid protests over vaccine mandates, a handful of states with high case rates are reporting a higher rate of newly vaccinated. But for now, it's not enough to slow a dangerous and deadly rise, a threat looming larger every day." He added, "the CDC stopped tracking breakthrough infections unless they resulted in hospitalization, which is rare. But NBC News has heard back from 27 states so far, and we tallied 66,000 breakthrough cases. That's just a small fraction of the vaccinated."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/16, lead story, 3:00, Muir, 5.66M) reported, "There is also concern over the danger this poses to children soon going back to school. Twelve and under have not been vaccinated. And for these rare breakthrough cases, people testing positive even after they have been fully vaccinated. ... The rate of new vaccinations has now fallen nearly 85% since mid-April, to the lowest level since January." Meanwhile, "as the vaccination rate plummets the number of new COVID cases is spiking up nearly 70% from just last week." The [Washington Post](#) (7/16, Bump, 10.52M) provides related coverage.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/16, 10.52M) editorializes that "as long as the pandemic rages out of control, it can incubate new variants to pose a threat to everyone." The Post adds, "Vaccines are the most important exit from the pandemic misery, but doses are still too scarce." While the US "has stepped up in sharing vaccines," the Post concludes "far more must be done to help stand up vaccine factories and ensure that everyone in the world can be protected. Until that happens, no one is truly protected."

Murthy Joins Biden In Criticizing Social Media Companies For Spread Of Misinformation About COVID Vaccines. [USA Today](#) (7/18, Brown, 12.7M) reports Surgeon General Murthy "took aim Sunday at social media platforms like Facebook for perceived inaction

on stopping misinformation about COVID-19 and vaccines," two days after President Biden "said falsehoods online are 'killing people.'" USA Today says the remarks "more forcefully criticizing media and tech platforms they argue are endangering the public" comes amid "rising coronavirus infections across the country" and the persistence of "conspiracy theories about the pandemic," while [The Hill](#) (7/18, Klar, 5.69M) reports the "new pressure from the federal government" comes as the Administration "makes a push to encourage reluctant Americans to get COVID-19 vaccines."

[Politico](#) (7/18, Ward, 6.73M) reports Murthy on [Fox News Sunday](#) (7/18, 828K) "dismissed the idea that the Biden administration is looking for a scapegoat and using Facebook misinformation as an excuse for missing its vaccination goals." Murthy said, "This is about the health of Americans and the reality is that misinformation is still spreading like wildfire in our country, aided and abetted by technology platforms." He continued, "I have been in dialogue with a number of technology companies in good faith efforts to express my concerns to them and where they have taken positive steps. And some of them have, I've acknowledged that, as we should do, but what I've also said very clearly to them, privately and also publicly, is that it's not enough."

Likewise, the Surgeon General asserted on [ABC's This Week](#) (7/18, 2.38M), "I've been deeply concerned about the flow of misinformation across technology platforms and throughout society over the last many months. This is not a new problem, to be clear. For a doctor, I, for years, sat with patients and worked with them to try to untangle the web of misinformation about help they'd received on social media and other sources. What we're seeing that's different now is the speed and scale with which misinformation is spreading." He continued that he has called on technology companies to adopt "greater transparency with the data they have to share with independent researchers so we can get a better sense how much misinformation is flowing on these sites and how to address them. The algorithms on these sites which serve up information again and again to people that sometimes reinforces misinformation are also places where we can ask those companies to make changes."

In addition, the [AP](#) (7/18, Reeves) reports Murthy on [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (7/18, 610K) "said...he's concerned about what lies ahead with cases of COVID-19 increasing in every state, millions still unvaccinated and a highly contagious virus variant spreading rapidly," and "said the worsening situation shows the need to convince more people to get inoculations." The AP adds Murthy "said 'not nearly enough' progress was being made in the fight against misinformation spread through social media about COVID-19 and vaccines," while [Reuters](#) (7/18, Schectman, Lynch) reports he "said that social media companies have fueled false narratives about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines, echoing...Biden's comments that social media companies were 'killing people.'"

The [New York Times](#) (7/18, Kang, 20.6M) reports the Surgeon General "also responded to accusations by a Facebook official who spoke anonymously to CNN, saying the administration was 'looking for scapegoats for missing their vaccine goals,'" a claim the Times says he "disputed." Murthy stated, "I've been very consistent in what I've said to the technology companies." He added, "When we see steps that are good, we should acknowledge those." However, the Surgeon General continued, "I've also said...that it's not enough. We are still seeing a proliferation of misinformation online."

Meanwhile, the [Washington Post](#) (7/18, Wang, Rowland, 10.52M) reports that with "less than half the country fully vaccinated and daily inoculation numbers having slowed considerably, administration officials have intensified their warnings to the public. Vice President Harris on Sunday tweeted: 'This Delta variant is no joke. Get vaccinated.'" The Post adds Harris' office on Saturday had "issued a statement saying she and her staff had met with members of the Texas state legislature who last week tested positive for the coronavirus despite being fully vaccinated – so-called 'breakthrough cases' – but it was determined neither the vice president nor her aides were at risk of exposure," and "on Sunday, after the White House said Harris was visiting Walter Reed military hospital for a routine doctor's appointment, two officials close to the vice president emphasized it was 'not covid-related at all' and didn't have anything to do with her recent meeting with the Texas Democrats."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/18, Restuccia, Needleman, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that according to Zignal Labs Inc, the spread of false information about vaccines has more

than doubled on social media platforms over the past three months. The Journal adds Administration officials said behind-the-scenes talks with Facebook on how to address the misinformation about vaccines were unproductive, which spurred the President and other officials to adopt more public criticism of the company.

On ABC World News Tonight (7/18, lead story, 2:45, Davis, 4.52M), Trevor Ault said that Administration officials "believe rampant misinformation around COVID is still getting in the way" of widespread vaccination. NIAID Director Fauci: "If we had had the pushback for vaccines the way we're seeing on certain media, we probably would still have smallpox."

Jennifer Rubin writes in the Washington Post (7/18, Rubin, 10.52M) when the President said, "They're killing people" in response to a question "about platforms such as Facebook that amplify scientifically false anti-vaccines claims, and deter people from getting lifesaving shots" he was correct. Rubin argues that those individuals spreading disinformation, including Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) and other elected officials "are putting people at risk. Not only do these voices discourage vaccination, and thereby endanger those inclined to follow their advice, they also put children too young to receive the vaccination at risk. It is hard to imagine a more disgraceful way to make money or advance one's career."

James Downie writes in his Washington Post (7/18, 10.52M) column that given the wide availability of vaccines, the recent rise of COVID Cases has been "entirely preventable. The backsliding is due in part to Republican politicians and right-wing commentators who have spread misinformation about the virus, as well as colleagues too scared to confront them." Downie says, "Not all vaccine hesitancy is due to red vs. blue politics," but what "makes vaccine resistance among Republicans different is that it's being fanned for partisan gain and right-wing media profit. The result will be hundreds and hundreds – if not thousands – of avoidable deaths."

Gottlieb: Disinformation About Fertility, DNA Are Most Responsible For Vaccine Hesitancy. Former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, on CBS' Face The Nation (7/18, 2.4M), said "probably the most pervasive" misinformation contributing to vaccine hesitancy "is that somehow the vaccine itself is going to have an impact on fertility." He said that this is "discouraging a lot of young women from getting vaccinated," but "what we've seen is COVID infection during pregnancy can be very dangerous" and "I think every woman who's an expectant mom or a prospective mom should be talking to their doctor about getting vaccinated." He also criticized misinformation regarding DNA alleging that the vaccines are "going to integrate into your genome. That's not the case. This is an mRNA vaccine. And what it really is doing is delivering a genetic sequence of mRNA of the spike protein. ... When the body sees that mRNA, it does one of two things: Either it destroys it or it translates it into the protein, and then your body develops antibodies against that protein."

Klobuchar Warns Social Media Companies That Misinformation Justifies Need For Changing Liability Standards. Bloomberg (7/18, Yang, 3.57M) reports Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) on CNN's State Of The Union (7/18, 639K) "said misinformation on social media about Covid-19 vaccines adds urgency to her call to change liability standards for what is published on their platforms." She said, "I really appreciate President Biden calling this out." According to Bloomberg, Klobuchar also "suggested using antitrust laws to 'look back and see if they should divest assets so we can get true competition' with 'dominant' social media platforms."

Portman: While Vaccines Are "Safe" And "Effective," Administration Should Not Be "Going Door-To-Door And Mandating It On People." Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH), on CNN's State Of The Union (7/18, 610K), discussed the partisan gap in vaccinations. Portman said, "The vaccines are a miracle. It's amazing. By the way, President Trump's Administration started this effort with Operation Warp Speed. It's something we should all celebrate. Vaccines are safe. The vaccines are effective. As you know, I was in one of the trials. I'm still in the trial. The J&J trial. I got my vaccine early to show my constituents that I trusted the vaccines, that they were safe and effective. ... I don't think it ought to be something where we're going door-to-door and mandating it on people. We ought to be doing a much more effective and massive public media campaign, talking about the facts, giving people the scientific facts on this."

Cassidy: Officials Should Not Be "Surprised" That "Citizens Don't Trust

Government.” Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA), on [Fox News Sunday](#)⁸ (7/18, 828K), said people should not be “surprised when citizens don’t trust government. When you have partisan comments coming out of the White House regarding the next Jim Crow laws, people like Senator Schumer and the White House not cooperating on a bipartisan bill. ... That just doesn’t work, but I would also argue as a position, you need to go back to your healthcare workers. It shouldn’t be the president advocating. Again, [Biden’s] depicting himself as an über partisan. You need to have your doctor, your nurse, physician’s assistants speaking to the patients they normally care for. ... This is good, it saves lives. What I’m trying to do, I’m trying to educate. ... You choose either to be vaccinated or accept a higher rate of unnecessary deaths. That’s the way to communicate your position, not through some uber partisan person who asked us to trust him except when they’re making incredibly partisan statements.”

Cruz: Psaki’s Allegations That Tech Companies Allowing Misinformation To Spread “Strengthened” Trump’s Lawsuit. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX), on [Fox News’ Sunday Morning Futures](#) (7/18), said former President Donald Trump “filed a class action lawsuit against big tech based on the theory that they were engaged in censorship that is unconstitutional, that is contrary to the first amendment. Now, the challenge his lawsuit faces is the following: The first amendment applies only to government action. ... The Supreme Court has long recognized a line of cases that when government uses a private company as a tool, as an arm to implement a government policy, and in this instance when government explicitly asks a private company to censor the following speech that we disagree with, that private company can be treated as a state actor. ... I wonder if Jen Psaki is on the payroll of Donald Trump because her press conference strengthened President Trump’s lawsuit against big tech.”

CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

Capitol Riot Cases Being Delayed Due To “Struggle To Manage Huge Amounts Of Video Evidence.”

The [Washington Post](#) (7/16, 10.52M) reports, “A struggle to manage huge amounts of video evidence is delaying hundreds of Jan. 6 Capitol breach cases as many of more than 500 people charged now wait for U.S. prosecutors to produce records that could help defendants decide whether to face trial or plead guilty.” The government has passed on sizable “blocks of evidence directly implicating many individual defendants – including pertinent social media posts.” However, while the government has disclosed “clips of U.S. Capitol surveillance and officer body-camera footage, it has yet to release comprehensive video of the entire event that might reveal mitigating or exonerating conduct that day, such as whether a person helped maintain order at other times, or what police or others nearby were doing, prosecutors and defense lawyers have said.” Party due to this, only roughly 20 suspects out of in excess of 500 charged up to this point have pleaded guilty.

Judge Rebuffs DOJ Request To Disclose Capitol Riot Grand Jury Materials To Contractor.

[The Hill](#) (7/16, Castronuovo, 5.69M) reports, “A federal judge on Friday denied a request from the Department of Justice (DOJ) to share grand jury materials from investigations into the Jan. 6 Capitol riot with a contractor who was hired to organize them into a database.” US District Court for the District of Columbia Chief Judge Beryl Howell “said in a 54-page memorandum opinion that the DOJ was incorrect in arguing that employees of Deloitte contracted to work on the project could be considered ‘government personnel,’ which would grant them access to the grand jury evidence.” Howell wrote, “Deloitte, a private firm contracted by the government on a non-exclusive basis, is a private rather than a public governmental entity, and its staff are employees of the firm rather than the government.” The Hill adds, “Thus, Howell argued that the secrecy provisions pertaining to grand jury rules do ‘not allow disclosure of grand jury matters to Deloitte and its employees.”” [Politico](#) (7/16, Gerstein, Cheney, 6.73M) says Howell’s decision “could complicate and drag out the prosecutions” of Capitol riot defendants “by requiring government personnel to be more involved in aspects of the process of sharing evidence with defense

attorneys.”

Two Florida Police Officers Charged In Capitol Siege Probe.

The Washington Post (7/16, 10.52M) reports, “A father and son, who are current and former Florida police officers, and a North Carolina man have been charged with joining alleged Proud Boys members in the Jan. 6 Capitol riots, according to a new, five co-defendant indictment unsealed in Washington on Friday.” Kevin “Tito” Tuck, 51, and Nathaniel A. Tuck, 29, “of central Florida were arrested and released on \$25,000 unsecured bond Thursday by a U.S. magistrate judge in Tampa, court records show. Edward George Jr. was also arrested Thursday and was scheduled to appear in federal court Friday in Raleigh, according to court records.” The charges “bring the number of off-duty law enforcement officers charged in the Capitol mob to at least 20, and the defendants’ ties to several central Florida police agencies highlight the continued pressure on sheriffs and police chiefs nationwide to scrub their ranks of members with links to white supremacist and far-right armed groups.”

The Hill (7/16, Castronuovo, 5.69M) reports, “According to a superseding indictment unsealed Friday, authorities have charged 51-year-old Kevin Tuck and his son, 29-year-old Nathaniel Tuck, with multiple crimes, including obstruction of an official proceeding and disorderly and disruptive conduct. The two were arrested in Tampa, Fla., and were released on a \$25,000 bond Thursday.” The Tucks “were included in the indictment along with Edward George Jr., who was scheduled to appear in federal court Friday in Raleigh, N.C., as well as previously charged Orlando-area men Arthur Jackman and Paul Rae. George was also charged with allegedly assaulting a police officer and stealing government property, and along with Kevin Tuck was charged with entering the Senate chamber. Both George and Nathaniel Tuck were charged with engaging in civil disorder, according to the indictment.”

The Daily Beast (7/16, Weill, 933K) reports, “A Florida man arrested for allegedly breaking into the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 and hitting a police officer inside is himself a former cop who joined the Proud Boys while still serving on the force, chat logs tied to the far-right group reveal.” Nathan Tuck, 29, “was arrested this week in connection with the storming of the Capitol, as was his father, Kevin. The elder Tuck was a police officer with the Windermere, Florida, police department until he resigned after his arrest on Thursday. Nathan Tuck, meanwhile, served as a police officer in Apopka, Florida, until September 2020. Following his arrest, the Apopka Police Department released a statement noting that Tuck was not on the force during the Capitol riot. The younger Tuck was, however, a police officer when he filed an application to join the Proud Boys, according to chat logs reviewed by The Daily Beast.”

Arizona Man Charged In Capitol Siege Probe.

The Salt Lake (UT) Tribune (7/16, Schott, 284K) reports, “A man dressed as Captain Moroni, a figure from the Book of Mormon, who took part in the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol was arrested by federal authorities on Thursday.” The FBI “arrested Nathan Wayne Entrekin in Cottonwood, Arizona. According to the FBI affidavit, he was carrying a ‘wooden dowel with a piece of cloth attached.’ ‘The cloth appears to have the following text handwritten on it: IN MEMORY OF OUR GOD, OUR RELIGION, AND FREEDOM. AND OUR PEACE, OUR WIVES, AND OUR CHILDREN. ALMA 46:12,’ the statement of facts continued.” The FBI memo “spends several paragraphs detailing the story of Captain Moroni who raised armies and ‘his followers executed anyone who rejected to Title of Liberty [the all caps words noted on the cloth above] or who refused to accept democracy of tyranny.’”

The Deseret News (UT) (7/16, 114K) reports, “Entrekin narrated videos for his mother while he walked around inside the Capitol and on the grounds outside and also gave videotaped interviews, according to the affidavit. ‘I am Captain Moroni. I’m the William Wallace of the Book of Mormon,’ Entrekin said in one interview, according to the affidavit. ‘In the Book of Alma of the Book of Mormon, a freedom fighter named Captain Moroni fought for his freedom against the King-Men,’ the affidavit said Entrekin said in interviews.”

The AP (7/16, Billeaud) reports, “Entrekin documented his movements in and outside the building in cellphone videos in which he addressed his mother, who wasn’t at the Capitol,

authorities said. While Entrekin claimed that he was herded into the building by the crowd, the FBI said security video shows Entrekin didn't appear to be pushed into the Capitol. And when he left the building and re-entered it, investigators said Entrekin didn't appear to be pushed forced in against his will, according to court records."

The [Washington Post](#) (7/16, Shepherd, 10.52M) reports, "In videos FBI investigators said they found on Entrekin's cellphone, he said he wanted to represent 'the Mormon element' at a rally for Trump. The alleged rioter told FBI agents that the scene at the insurrection had been 'solemn' and 'revered,' according to a criminal complaint filed on Wednesday. Police say Entrekin told them in the interview that he had entered the federal building but said he did not realize he was not allowed inside, despite video that showed alarms blaring as he walked in. FBI agents also found videos on Entrekin's phone that showed him relaying that police had sprayed tear gas and rubber bullets into the crowd."

Group Launches Ad Hitting Johnson Over Capitol Riot Comments.

[NBC News](#) (7/18, 4.91M) reports on its website a "coalition of more than 20 prominent progressive groups and unions," including "the NAACP, the Sierra Club, the Planned Parenthood Action Fund, the Working Families Party and the National Education Association labor union," is "launching an ad campaign slamming Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., for his response to the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol and his vote against federal voting rights legislation." The coalition, called Democracy for All 2021 Action, is "spending \$800,000 on a 30-second television spot and print ad campaign, which kicked off Sunday." The ad begins, "You're failing us, Sen. Johnson. Protecting our democracy has never been partisan, and yet you refused to investigate the deadly attack on our Capital." The ad "contrasts images of rioters smashing windows at the Capitol with a brief clip of Johnson" saying, "By and large it was peaceful protest."

AP Analysis: Disinformation Fueling Fact Inversion Of January 6 Attack.

The [AP](#) (7/18, Woodward, Long, Klepper) examines the ongoing campaign by some conservatives to overhaul the public-facing history of the January 6 attack. The campaign "is rooted in the formula of potent propaganda through the ages: Say it loud, say it often, say it with the heft of political power behind you, and people will believe," and the techniques "have been in play at least since World War I, when the U.S. government roused sentiment for the cause with posters depicting the German soldier as an ape-human with a willowy American maiden in his clutches." The AP adds former President Trump has "perfected the art of repetition."

Attorney General Urged To Reject Rep. Brooks' Claim In January 6 Lawsuit. In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (7/18, 20.6M) , former Deputy Attorney General Donald Ayer, Danielle Brian, who is executive director of the Project On Government Oversight, and Norman Eisen, who served as special counsel to the House Judiciary Committee during the first Trump impeachment, write of Rep. Eric Swalwell's (D-CA) lawsuit against Rep. Mo Brooks (R-AL) over the latter's actions on January 6 that Brooks has asked Attorney General Garland "to certify that his actions on Jan. 6 were those of a government employee acting within the scope of his employment." According to the authors, Garland "should emphatically reject Mr. Brooks's request to make this certification, because our nation deserves a full accounting for those involved in the storming of the Capitol," and should "unequivocally reject any notion that a congressman is doing his job when he foments a riot based on lies in order to sabotage a legitimate national electoral process."

National Guard Warns About Potential Ramifications Of It Not Receiving Reimbursement For Post-Capitol Riot Deployment.

[The Hill](#) (7/17, Lonas, 5.69M) reports the National Guard "said this week that if it does not receive the \$521 million reimbursement for its help protecting Washington, D.C., following the Jan. 6 insurrection it will hinder the readiness of the guardsmen to respond to other situations." In a statement which the Hill acquired on Saturday, National Guard Bureau leader Army Gen. Daniel Hokanson said, "Without reimbursement funding, there is significant impact on National Guard readiness if we're not able to resolve this in a timely manner." The Hill adds that "guardsmen were

deployed from almost every state and territory in the months following the Capitol riot.”

PROTESTS

Confederate Statue In Louisiana Removed.

The AP (7/17) reports onlookers on Saturday cheered while a Confederate general's statue was taken off of "a pedestal where it stood for 99 years in front of a city hall in south Louisiana." The Advertiser "posted video of the work that happened a day after United Daughters of the Confederacy signed a settlement agreeing to move the statue of Gen. Alfred Mouton or let the city do so. A trial had been scheduled for July 26." The statue had stood in the city of Lafayette.

COUNTER-TERRORISM

US Charges Three Florida White Supremacists With Racketeering.

WJXT-TV Jacksonville, FL (7/16, Peel, 396K) reports from Jacksonville, Florida, "Three local men in federal court in Jacksonville on Thursday are among 16 Florida men named in a federal indictment, part of a violent gang that goes by 'Unforgiven.' One of the men is from Jacksonville, one is from Orange Park and another is from Satsuma. According to the indictment, gang members tried to use corrupt law enforcement members to find out about the investigation into the organization. Officials call the group a racketeering enterprise that's accused of murder, kidnapping, robbery and other violent crimes." According to WJXT-TV, "News4Jax spoke with Toni Chrabot who is a retired FBI assistant special agent in charge, now CEO of Risk Confidence Group. 'They believe in the Aryan philosophy. They have their own constitution and by-laws but we don't know exactly what those are,' Chrabot said."

Alabama Man Jailed For Anthrax Hoax Letters Is Convicted Of Similar Crimes In Louisiana.

The AP (7/17, McConnaughey) reports, "A 49-year-old Alabama man serving time for sending anthrax hoax letters has been convicted of sending similar letters from a federal prison in Louisiana." The AP adds, "The conviction for sending four envelopes of white powder from the prison in Oakdale to the U.S. Senate in 2016 could add up to 20 years to Clifton Lamar Dodd's prison time. He received a total of 15 years and 6 months in two earlier cases. Some of the letters mailed in 2010 and 2011 also were sent from behind bars." Dodd "was trying to make trouble for other Oakdale inmates by sending the letters in 2016, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for Louisiana's western district. A federal jury in Lafayette convicted Dodd on Thursday on four counts of mailing hoax letters in which talcum powder simulated 'a biological agent and toxin.'"

Arizona Man Charged With Threatening Governor, Secretary Of State.

KTVK-TV Phoenix (7/16, Palacios Perez, 390K) reports, "A Phoenix man on the FBI's Terrorist Watchlist was arrested on Wednesday after he threatened Arizona Governor Doug Ducey and Secretary of State Katie Hobbs." KTVK-TV adds, "According to court documents, on July 1, 26-year-old Laquint Cherry posted on Twitter under an alias account a statement threatening the lives of Ducey and Hobbs. His message read in part: 'Doug Ducey, Katie Hobbs wanna join Jesus in heaven?' Cherry also included hashtags, tagging ISIS and the Islamic State. In the post, Cherry included a photo of himself holding a loaded gun with an extended magazine in his left hand, documents state. The social media company flagged the post, but investigators had to track down the person behind the alias account."

Three Men Arrested Near All-Star Game Face Federal Gun Charges.

The AP (7/16, Slevin) reports from Denver, "Three men arrested with more than a dozen weapons and hundreds of rounds of ammunition at a Denver hotel near the site of Major League Baseball's All-Star Game have been charged with federal firearms crimes, the U.S. Attorney's Office said Friday." The AP adds, "The number of weapons found May 9 near the event and a request by one

of the men for a room with a balcony raised concerns among police of a possible mass shooting but the FBI soon said it had no reason to believe the arrests were connected to terrorism or that there was a threat to the game. Federal prosecutors reiterated that in announcing that Richard Platt, Ricardo Rodriguez and Gabriel Rodriguez had each been charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm. Each has multiple previous felony convictions, according to court documents. Gabriel Rodriguez is also charged with possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine."

The Denver Gazette (7/16, Cardi, Mullen) reports, "The city's downtown detention center confirmed to The Denver Gazette that agent Greg Johnson picked up Richard Platt, Gabriel Rodriguez and Ricardo Rodriguez Friday morning. Court records showed initial appearances scheduled for 2 p.m. The fourth suspect, Kanoelehua Serikawa, remained in local custody as of Friday and she does not currently face federal charges. Her attorney previously told The Gazette she had 'peripheral' involvement in last week's operation, and Platt told investigators Serikawa was not involved in the sales of the guns, according to affidavits prepared by Johnson. According to the affidavits, Platt said he did not have a choice in taking part in the gun sales because he was in trouble with 'Rocco,' a person he named as his drug dealer and trying to make extra money."

The Washington Examiner (7/16, Beaman, 888K) reports, "The incident quickly commanded national attention, as some officials suspected early on that the firearms were part of a plot to kill baseball fans in Denver for the All-Star Game. Some speculated the suspects planned a 'Las Vegas-style shooting' akin to 64-year-old Stephen Paddock's murder of concertgoers from his hotel room in 2017, the Denver Post reported."

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

Chinese National Sentenced For Scheme To Buy US Commando Craft.

The Washington Times (7/16, Gertz, 626K) reports, "A Chinese national was sentenced to 3 ½ years in prison on Friday as part of what U.S. officials said was a plot to illegally export inflatable military boats that are used by special operations commandos to China." Ge Songtao, 51, of Nanjing, China, "pleaded guilty in federal court in Florida last fall to charges of conspiracy to submit false export information to the federal government. Analysts said the case reveals how China's military has gone through Hong Kong to obtain embargoed goods." US District Judge Harvey Schlesinger, "during a hearing in Jacksonville federal court, said Ge intended to reverse-engineer the special military-grade engines and sell a knock-off version to Beijing's military. The boats were described in court as 'maritime raiding craft.'"

Administration Probing "Havana Syndrome" Infections.

The Hill (7/17, Lonas, 5.69M) reports the Administration "is investigating a series of mysterious health incidents known as 'Havana syndrome' that have occurred among U.S. officials in Austria." The State Department "announced on Friday there have been a series of Havana syndrome cases among the U.S. embassy community in Vienna...that will be investigated by multiple American agencies." The sickness originally "appeared at the U.S. Embassy in Cuba in 2016 when American officials began to get mysteriously ill." Its cause remains unknown.

Prosecutor In Hunter Biden Probe Rejected Moves That Would Have Revealed Investigation Earlier.

Politico (7/16, Schreckinger, 6.73M) reports, "Last summer, federal officials in Delaware investigating Hunter Biden faced a dilemma. The probe had reached a point where prosecutors could have sought search warrants and issued a flurry of grand jury subpoenas. Some officials involved in the case wanted to do just that. Others urged caution. They advised Delaware's U.S. Attorney, David Weiss, to avoid taking any actions that could alert the public to the existence of the case in the middle of a presidential election. 'To his credit, he listened,' said a person involved in the discussions, reported here for the first time. Weiss decided to wait, averting the possibility that the investigation would become a months-long campaign issue." Politico adds, "Since taking office, President Joe Biden has left Weiss – a Republican appointed by Donald Trump on the

recommendation of Delaware's two Democratic senators – in place. That puts him in one of the most sensitive positions in the Justice Department, deciding how to proceed with an investigation of the president's son that has proven politically fraught on several fronts."

ODNI Confirms Classified UAP Report 17 Pages In Length.

The New York Post (7/16, Rhett Miller, Greenstreet, 7.45M) reported ODNI's preliminary report on unidentified aerial objects "released last month did little to satisfy...and the classified version isn't likely to provide much more depth with just eight additional pages, according to a report by The Black Vault, a website operated by author and podcaster John Greenwald." Greenwald tweeted Thursday "that he had confirmed the length of the classified report," and an email from Sally Nicholson of ODNI's FOIA office confirmed the full classified report on UFOs is "17 pages in length."

Opinion: NSA Allegations An "Alarm Bell For All Americans."

In an op-ed for The Daily Caller (7/17, 375K), James Bovard writes that Tucker Carlson's allegations the NSA is spying on him "cannot be understood outside the context of perennial NSA abuses." He argues the intelligence community should "come clean on any surveillance and leaks that may have targeted Tucker Carlson or otherwise violated his rights. The Carlson case is a wake-up call to Congress and concerned citizens to stop any new war on dissent."

Sen. Rubio Introduces "Intelligence Community Workforce Agility Protection Act."

Florida Daily (7/16, Derby) reported that on Wednesday, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Vice Chairman Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) introduced the "Intelligence Community Workforce Agility Protection Act." In a statement, Rubio's office said, "Currently, active duty members of the military can deduct certain moving expenses from their federal taxes, but that benefit does not extend to intelligence community professionals. The Intelligence Community Workforce Agility Protection Act would expand the treatment of moving expenses to employees and new appointees in the intelligence community who must relocate pursuant to a change in assignment." The bill has the support "of more than a dozen senators including U.S. Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., who leads the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence."

Senate Report: Commerce Investigative Unit Abused Intelligence Database Access.

The New York Times (7/16, A1, Edmondson, 20.6M) reported officials in a "little-known" security unit within the Commerce Department "conducted unauthorized surveillance and investigations into the agency's employees that targeted people of Chinese and Middle Eastern descent, Senate investigators said in a new report." The report, informed by "more than two dozen whistle-blowers and released this week by Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi, the top Republican on the Commerce Committee, concluded that the Investigations and Threat Management Service functioned for more than a decade as 'a rogue, unaccountable police force,' opening thousands of unauthorized investigations into department employees, often for specious reasons." Investigators with the unit "surveilled social media activity for commentary criticizing the census, and then would run the commenters' names through classified databases, 'despite having unclear authority from the intelligence community to use these databases for this purpose,' the report said."

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Missouri Officials Charge Three Over Deadly Duck Boat Accident.

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports on Missouri officials having charged a captain as well as a pair of amphibious tour-boat firm managers over a 2018 duck boat accident that occurred in proximity to Branson, Missouri and resulted in 17 deaths. The vessel went into Table Rock Lake in the midst of severe weather warnings, and sank after the storm arrived. No passengers had life vests on.

Baltimore Officers Indicted In Case Entailing Teen Having Been Allegedly Assaulted.

On its website, [CNN](#) (7/17, Moshtaghian, Sanchez, 89.21M) reports, "Two Baltimore police officers have been indicted in a case in which a teenager was allegedly assaulted and threatened with death by choking during a car theft investigation, according to the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office." CNN adds, "Officer Maxwell Dundore was indicted Thursday on charges of second-degree assault and misconduct in office stemming from the incident on April 27, 2020, according to a statement from prosecutors and the indictment." Meanwhile, the statement also indicates that Dundore's supervisor, Sgt. Brendan O'Leary, was indicted on false statement as well as misconduct in office charges.

Nationals Park Reopens After Nearby Shooting.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/18, 10.52M) reports hours after "a burst of gunshots outside Nationals Park" on Saturday disrupted the game between the San Diego Padres and Washington Nationals, "unaware, in that moment, that the incident took place on South Capitol Street and there wasn't an active shooter situation in the stadium." the teams "returned Sunday morning to play a baseball game. Fans showed up, too, in small pockets around a park that fits more than 41,000." To the Post, "It was normal except that, in the lead-up to first pitch at 1:08 p.m. for the resumption of a contest that stopped amid nearby gunfire in the sixth inning, all people discussed was their version of the previous night." On the [CBS Weekend News](#) (7/18, story 2, 1:48, Duncan, 230K), Kris Van Cleave said that "for the people that were there [Saturday] it was a very scary experience, myself included. I was in the stands and there was a point in time where you didn't know what was going on or if you were in danger."

On [NBC Nightly News](#) (7/18, story 4, 1:14, Snow, 3.43M), Kelly O'Donnell reported officials "say shots were exchanged between two cars. Three people were wounded, including a woman passerby, grazed in the chaos." Likewise, Elizabeth Schulze reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/18, story 4, 2:14, Davis, 4.52M) that the suspects "have yet to be identified, and police say they're combing through surveillance video and witness accounts as part of this investigation."

Meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/18, Day, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says that the shooting outside the ballpark and a separate one that left a six-year-old girl dead this weekend have highlighted the increase in gun crime in DC and in other US cities. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/18, story 13, 0:23, Davis, 4.52M) reported in a brief broadcast on the shooting of the child, who [NBC Nightly News](#) (7/18, story 5, 0:51, O'Donnell, 3.43M) identified as Nyiah Courtney. Kelly O'Donnell said the shooting that also left "her mother and four other adults wounded," comes amid "a national spike in gun violence." O'Donnell added that in New York City, "gun incidents [are] up 29% over last year," in Atlanta, "homicides up more than 27%. Philadelphia up 31%, with 299 murders as of this weekend." O'Donnell continued that President Biden "says the federal government can do more to crack down on licensed gun dealers who sell illegal weapons." Biden: "We'll make sure you can't sell death and mayhem on our streets. It's an outrage." O'Donnell added on [NBC Nightly News](#) (7/18, story 6, 0:21, Snow, 3.43M) that the Administration "is setting up five new strike force teams to deal with illegal gun trafficking, and telling state and local officials how they can use some extra COVID relief funds for crime prevention."

However, a [Washington Post](#) (7/18, 10.52M) editorial argues that a recent 2-1 ruling by the Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit "has given a thumbs-up to licensed handgun sales for a cohort of individuals, aged 18 to 20, who are vastly more likely to use them to commit murder than older adults," and as such "shrugged off public safety concerns and brushed aside the legislative prerogatives of Congress, which mandated a legal age of 21 to purchase handguns from licensed dealers more than a half-century ago." The Post warns, "That act of judicial arrogance, if affirmed on appeal, would likely accelerate the current spike in homicides, many of them committed with handguns by individuals under the age of 21. And it comes as Americans are embarked on a record-setting gun-buying spree, which began during the pandemic and shows no sign of waning."

King: Bowser's Plan To Address Gun Violence In Eastern Anacostia Insufficient.

Colbert King writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/18, 10.52M) that Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser (D) "has come up with a scheme that she calls 'a first-of-its-kind in the nation to deploy a public health approach to gun violence prevention.'" Her "Building Blocks DC" program is

"supposed to be aimed where gun violence is regularly happening." Bowser is "launching her program in several blocks east of the Anacostia River in Ward 8." However, King argues, "It may be a hard political truth for City Hall to swallow, but gun violence, as Nationals Park showed the whole country, is affecting a wider swath of the nation's capital than just the eastern side of the Anacostia." Bowser's program, which "will concentrate on '151 blocks that represent nearly 2% of all blocks in the District, but were the site of 41% of all gunshot-related crimes' leaves residents in the rest of the city's blocks...to cry out, 'What about us?'"

Texas SWAT Team Commander Killed, Four Officers Injured In Standoff With Gunman.

The AP (7/16) reports from Levelland, Texas, "Authorities captured the suspect late Thursday following an hourslong police standoff where one officer was killed and four others were wounded in a small West Texas city." Omar Soto-Chavira, 22, "was injured when he was taken into custody around 11:30 p.m. at a home in Levelland, police Chief Albert Garcia told reporters. The suspect was being transported to a hospital in Lubbock for treatment, Garcia said. The extent of the suspect's injuries was not disclosed. Authorities used robots to enter the home, then deployed gas, which drew Soto-Chivara out of the residence, Lubbock County Sheriff Kelly Rowe said at the briefing." The AP adds, "The standoff between the suspect and law enforcement had begun at the home around 1 p.m. after someone reported a man as possibly armed along the residential street in Levelland, about 30 miles west of Lubbock."

CBS News (7/16, 5.39M) reports, "Hockley County Sheriff Ray Scifres had said the suspect had a history of contact with police. He also said Bartlett, leader of the Lubbock County Sheriff's Office's SWAT command, was a nine-year veteran of the department who had served overseas in the U.S. Army." The Hill (7/16, Lonas, 5.69M) reports, "Multiple agencies including the FBI were involved in the standoff."

California Woman Convicted After Robbing Drug Store, Coughing On Employees.

SFGate (CA) (7/16, Bote, 1.9M) reports, "A San Francisco woman was found guilty in federal court of stealing merchandise at a Walgreens – all the while faking a COVID-19 diagnosis and coughing on employees." Carmelita Barela, 36, "entered the Walgreens by the Civic Center with another female accomplice in April 2020 without masks but holding empty bags, according to a press release from the Department of Justice. As a store manager offered to help Barela and the unnamed woman, the latter began coughing without covering her mouth. Once they were ordered to leave, they reportedly told the manager, 'We have COVID.'" Barela "was convicted of robbery affecting interstate commerce and faces a sentence of up to 20 years and \$250,000 in fines. 'People working in grocery stores and convenience stores were risking going to work so the rest of us could get the food and medicine we needed,' said FBI Special Agent Craig Fair."

Former St. Louis Officer Sentenced In Colleague's Beating.

The AP (7/16) reports from St. Louis, "A former St. Louis police officer has been sentenced to three years of probation for her role in the beating of a Black, undercover police officer during a 2017 protest." Bailey Colletta "was sentenced Thursday in federal court after pleading guilty nearly two years ago to making a false declaration to a grand jury, admitting she lied to the FBI and a federal grand jury in an effort to cover up the attack on Officer Luther Hall. Her sentence comes just days after her codefendant, former officer Randy Hays, was sentenced to more than four years in prison for his role in the beating."

FBI Seeking Man Who Robbed New Mexico Bank.

The Albuquerque (NM) Journal (7/16, Reisen, 188K) reports, "The FBI is looking for a man robbed a Moriarty bank in a RV company shirt and a Gucci face mask on Thursday afternoon." The Journal adds, "FBI spokesman Frank Fisher said the man walked into the Wells Fargo at 901 U.S. Route 66 around 3 p.m. and gave a demand note to a teller. He said the man was given an undisclosed amount of cash and left the bank. The man was wearing a long-sleeve blue shirt with a La Mesa RV logo, a baseball cap with a rainbow design, and dark green pants."

Washington, DC Police Offer Reward After Six-Year-Old Girl Killed In Shooting.

[ABC News](#) (7/17, Sanchez, Deliso, 2.44M) reports, "Police are pleading for information after a 6-year-old girl was killed and five others were injured in a shooting late Friday night in Washington, D.C." According to ABC News, "The shooting took place shortly after 11 p.m. in the neighborhood of Congress Heights, according to the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia. Police heard gunfire at the 2900 block of Martin Luther King Jr., Avenue, Southeast, and rushed to the scene to find six victims injured: three male adults, two female adults and one child, Executive Assistant Chief Ashan M. Benedict said in a video statement on the shooting. Police respond to a shooting at the intersection of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Avenues in the Congress Heights area of Southeast Washington, July 16, 2021. Six people were injured and one 6-year-old girl killed in a shooting that took place at this intersection on July 16, 2021."

Arizona Sex Crime Operation Nets 40 Arrests.

[Fox News](#) (7/16, Aitken, 23.99M) reports, "Arizona authorities arrested 40 men in connection to child sex crimes as part of an inter-agency operation called 'Behind the Mask,' officials said Tuesday." The men, "ranging between 20 and 64 years old, were arrested on suspicion of charges that included luring a minor for sexual exploitation, aggravated luring a minor for sexual exploitation, child sex trafficking and attempted sexual conduct with a minor. The operation was the result of a partnership involving the Tempe Police Department, Homeland Security, the FBI and the Attorney General's office, as well as Phoenix, Mesa and Scottsdale police. 'Throughout the operational period, undercover detectives placed ads on websites commonly sought out by suspects seeking illegal sex acts,' police told Fox 10 Phoenix. 'The suspects reportedly solicited and/or brokered deals for various sex acts and were subsequently arrested.'"

FBI Announces Reward For Information In New Orleans Armored Truck Driver Shooting.

[WVUE-TV New Orleans](#) (7/16, 37K) reported in a video that the FBI and Loomis are offering a \$50,000 reward for information on the fatal shooting of an armored truck driver in New Orleans on Friday. [WVUE-TV New Orleans](#) (7/17, 37K) also shared a separate clip of a press conference including members of the FBI.

FBI Arrests Picayune Police Officer For Child Exploitation.

[WLOX-TV Biloxi, MS](#) (7/16, 50K) reported from Picayune, Mississippi that a sergeant in the "Picayune Police Department is no longer employed after being arrested this week by the FBI." Joshua Stockstill was fired Wednesday "just after being taken into custody by federal agents in connection to a sexual exploitation investigation, confirmed Police Chief Freddy Drennan." The FBI announced Wednesday morning "that they were trying to identify and locate a man seen with a child in a video. By Thursday morning, the FBI reported that an arrest had been made." According to the FBI, "this investigation was part of Operation Rescue Me and Endangered Child Alert Program."

[WXXV-TV Gulfport, MS](#) (7/16, Magandy) reported Stockstill was charged with "4 counts of distribution, 1 count of lustful touching and 1 count of production in relation to child exploitation." The FBI distributed a "flyer showing am man listed as John Doe 44 and asking the public's help to identify the man."

Authorities Say \$2M Charleston Bank Truck Heist Was Inside Job.

The [Charleston \(SC\) Post and Courier](#) (7/16, Garrison, 299K) reported an armored bank truck "heist earlier this year in North Charleston was an inside job that netted the robbers almost \$2 million, federal authorities contend in newly filed court documents." Five men have been indicted "in U.S. District Court for South Carolina on charges of bank larceny and conspiracy to commit bank larceny in the truck robbery the morning of Jan. 16." After the robbery, the FBI "described the suspects as an armed squad of Folk Nation gang members who emptied the contents of a truck carrying Bank of America funds."

Omaha Man Faces 40 Years On Child Porn Charges.

WQWT-TV Omaha, NE (7/17, Newbill, 59K) reported from Omaha, Nebraska that a "45-year-old man is facing up to 40 years after being found guilty on child porn charges on Thursday." Timothy E. Caruso was found guilty "on charges of distributing child pornography and accessing with intent to view child pornography. He's expected to be sentenced on Friday, Oct. 8." In an investigation "by the Omaha FBI's Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force, Caruso was already under federal supervision on a previous conviction of not registering as a sex offender when officials were able to track a photo uploaded to a private board on Pinterest to a Google account Caruso used in December 2018."

FBI Says Bloods Gang Leader Killed In Shootout.

KOB-TV Albuquerque, NM (7/16, 69K) reported from Albuquerque, New Mexico that the FBI identified the man "who died in Wednesday's shootout with agents as Marquez Floyd." According to his arrest "warrant, the FBI believe he was the leader of a gang with ties to the Bloods." The FBI, APD "and the DEA had been monitoring Floyd for nearly two years." According to the "warrant, FBI agents say they discovered Floyd did most of his trafficking over Facebook and Snapchat. Agents were able to get multiple photos of guns and drugs they say he intended to sell from his social media accounts. They also pulled multiple online conversations they say show Floyd selling drugs and recruiting prostitutes." According to the "warrant, the FBI was going to not only arrest Floyd, but to also seize multiple items from the stash house-- including cell phones, computers, firearms and drugs to use as evidence against him."

Nineteen People Indicted In Connection With Indiana Drug Investigation.

The Washington Examiner (7/16, Beaman, 888K) reported that 19 people have been indicted in connection with an Indiana drug investigation. The DEA and the FBI were involved with the investigation of the case against those defendants, who "face charges of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and fentanyl."

Five Men Suspected Of Operating Drug Ring In Pennsylvania.

The Johnstown (PA) Tribune-Democrat (7/16, Hurst, 6K) reported, "Drug charges have been filed against five men" who are suspected of "operating an organized drug ring." The ring allegedly "moved crack cocaine from the Pittsburgh area to Johnstown for nearly two years," according to the Tribune-Democrat article, which said the FBI was involved with the investigation of this case.

Former Police Detective Found Guilty Of Heroin Distribution, Other Charges.

The Carlisle (PA) Sentinel (7/16, Walmer, 24K) reported that Christopher Collare, a former detective with the Carlisle Police Department in Pennsylvania, has been found guilty of "six counts of making false statements, one count of distribution of heroin, one count of bribery, and one count of federal program bribery." During his time with that police department, Collare was involved with an FBI-led "anti-drug trafficking operation." In its coverage of this story, the Harrisburg (PA) Patriot-News (7/16, Miller, 567K) reported that the FBI began investigating Collare in 2018. The WPMT-TV Harrisburg, PA (7/16, Schweigert, 106K) and WHTM-TV Harrisburg, PA (7/16, 88K) websites also covered the outcome of Collare's federal trial.

Detroit Man Gets 15 Years For Using Drugs To Force Women Into Sex Trafficking.

In online coverage, WJBK-TV Detroit (7/16, Ainsworth, 381K) reported that Detroit resident Jharmall K. McGaughy "received a 15-year prison sentence for using drugs to force women with addictions into sex trafficking." Acting US Attorney Mohsin commended the FBI for performing investigative work that led to that sentence.

Man Who Was Killed In Shootout Was A Suspected Gang Leader.

The Albuquerque (NM) Journal (7/15, Reisen, 188K) reported that Marquez Floyd, who allegedly "opened fire on an FBI agent before being killed in" a recent shootout, "was a suspected leader of

a prominent gang in Southeast Albuquerque." That gang is suspected of being "involved in drug, gun and sex trafficking."

Reputed MS-13 Member Facing Murder And Racketeering Charges In US.

Newsday (NY) (7/16, 776K) reported that Henry Edenilson Salmeron, a "reputed MS-13 member who allegedly spent years on the run after participating in the brutal 2017 slayings of four young men in a Central Islip park," is "now facing federal murder and racketeering charges following his extradition from Guatemala." The US Marshals Service and the FBI "found Salmeron in Guatemala before a transnational anti-gang unit arrested him there in February." The Northport (NY) Patch (7/16, 1.44M) published a similar story.

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

Ohio Man Charged With COVID-19 Relief Fraud.

The Willoughby (OH) News-Herald (7/18, 77K) reports, "A Chester Township man was indicted by a federal grand jury on charges related to alleged COVID-19 relief fraud." Robert Bearden, 49, "faces three counts of wire fraud and one count of theft of government funds in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio. According to the indictment, Bearden is accused of devising a scheme to fraudulently obtain Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) guaranteed by the U.S. Small Business Administration under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. About \$60,000 in loans are identified in the indictment." The News-Herald adds, "According to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Ohio, Bearden allegedly carried out the scheme in multiple ways. That included submitting EIDL applications through the SBA's online application portal that contained false information about existing business and non-existing business."

US Charges Nursing Home Operators With Selling Bogus Diplomas.

The AP (7/16, Kunzelman) reports from College Park, Maryland, "The owners and operators of nursing schools in Virginia and Florida have been charged with plotting to sell bogus transcripts and diplomas, helping unqualified candidates pass nursing board exams and get health care jobs, federal authorities said Friday." The AP adds, "In March 2019, a witness told the FBI that Patrick Nwaokwu, 50, of Laurel, Maryland, and Musa Bangura, 62, of Manassas, Virginia, were creating illegitimate transcripts and certificates through a nursing school in Woodbridge, Virginia. After the school was shut down for violating state regulations, Nwaokwu and Bangura continued selling bogus transcripts and certifications backdated to when it was open, the FBI says. The FBI also investigated allegations that Nwaokwu and Bangura worked with people in Florida to sell illegitimate degrees for licensed practical nurses and registered nurses at a second school established by Johanah Napoleon, 45, of Wellington, Florida."

Federal Grand Jury Indicts Man Investigated By FBI For COVID-19 Relief Fraud.

WKYC-TV Cleveland (7/16, DeNatale, 418K) reported a federal grand jury in Cleveland "has indicted a 49-year-old Chesterland man with three counts of wire fraud and one count of theft of government funds totaling \$60,000." This investigation was carried out by the FBI and the IRS.

Ohio Couple Sentenced For Bribery, Tax Fraud.

The Willoughby (OH) News-Herald (7/16, 77K) reported a federal judge sentenced "a Kirtland couple to 18 months in prison after both pleaded guilty to bribing a former city of Cleveland demolition official." Joseph Tucceri III and Gwen Tucceri were also "ordered to pay \$114,422 in restitution to the IRS. The pair will have two years of supervised release following their time in prison." The case was investigated "by the Cleveland Division of the FBI, Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General and IRS-Criminal Investigation."

CYBER DIVISION

WPost Report: NSO Group's Pegasus Spyware Used To Hack Journalists, Activists Worldwide.

In a nearly 5,000-word story, the [Washington Post](#) (7/18, A1, Priest, 10.52M) reports that "military-grade spyware licensed by an Israeli firm," the NSO Group, "to governments for tracking terrorists and criminals was used in attempted and successful hacks of 37 smartphones belonging to journalists, human rights activists, business executives and two women close to murdered Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, according to an investigation by The Washington Post and 16 media partners." The phones "appeared on a list of more than 50,000 numbers" that was provided by Amnesty International and Paris-based Forbidden Stories to media outlets.

The [Guardian \(UK\)](#) (7/18, 5.53M), one of the media partners in the investigation, says it "suggests widespread and continuing abuse of NSO's hacking spyware, Pegasus, which the company insists is only intended for use against criminals and terrorists. Pegasus is a malware that infects iPhones and Android devices to enable operators of the tool to extract messages, photos and emails, record calls and secretly activate microphones."

In a second piece, the [Washington Post](#) (7/18, Priest, 10.52M) looks at the use of the spyware to target the phones "of the two women closest to murdered Saudi columnist Jamal Khashoggi." The phone of his wife, Hanan Elatr, "was targeted by a Pegasus user six months before his killing, but the analysis could not determine whether the hack was successful. The iPhone of his fiancée, Hatice Cengiz, was penetrated by spyware days after the murder, the forensics showed."

In a piece driven by the Washington Post article, the [AP](#) (7/19, Bajak) calls NSO Group the "most infamous hacker-for-hire outfit," and says that the company "denied in an emailed statement that the data on which the report was based was leaked from its servers 'since such data never existed on any of our servers.'" Critics "say repeated abuse of Pegasus spyware highlights the nearly complete lack of regulation of the private global surveillance industry." [Politico](#) (7/18, 6.73M) and [Bloomberg](#) (7/18, Yang, 3.57M) also run pieces based on the Post report.

US Places Restrictions On Several Russian IT Firms.

[Reuters](#) (7/16) reports the US on Friday "took a new stab at Russia's cybersecurity industry, restricting trade with four information technology firms and two other entities over 'aggressive and harmful' activities - including digital espionage - that Washington blames on the Russian government." According to a Commerce Department posting, the Treasury Department during April sanctioned the six entities, and Reuters adds that the entities being put on the Commerce Department's blacklist implies that US firms "cannot sell to them without licenses, which are seldom granted."

DHS, DOJ Unveil "One-Stop" Cybersecurity Hub.

[ExecutiveGov](#) (7/16, Edwards) reported the DOJ and DHS have "unveiled a new website to serve as a central hub of federal cybersecurity resources to help U.S. companies and public sector organizations protect their networks from ransomware attacks." The website [StopRansomware.gov](#) provides "guidance on how businesses can report attacks and includes alerts on ransomware threats from several agencies, including the FBI, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), DOJ said Thursday." DHS Secretary Mayorkas urged "every organization across our country to use this new resource to learn how to protect themselves from ransomware and reduce their cybersecurity risk."

Canadian Cybersecurity Agency Warns About Threat Of Future Foreign Election Interference.

The [Canadian Press](#) (7/16) reported Canada's federal cybersecurity agency is "warning that Canadians are likely to run into some effort by foreign actors to influence or otherwise interfere with their right to vote in the next election." The Communications Security Establishment also

"says in a new report released on Friday that holding an election during the COVID-19 pandemic could increase the threat of foreign interference because of the need to move more parts online."

DOD Issues \$1.1M Grant To Create Cybersecurity Institute.

The AP (7/17) reported the DOD has awarded "a \$1.12-million grant to the University of Detroit Mercy to establish a cybersecurity institute." The regional-based cybersecurity consortium "will be led by the university and include other academic institutions in southeastern Michigan. The University of Arizona will be a research partner."

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

FBI To Consider Upgrading Criminal Background Checks To Prevent Sale Of Guns To Underage, Out-Of-State.

CNN (7/16, Carrega, 89.21M) reports, "The FBI has agreed to consider modifying its criminal background check system after the Justice Department's inspector general found the system did not cross check the buyer's age with legal requirements of their home state, according to a report released on Thursday." CNN adds, "Under federal law, customers are not allowed to buy firearms, specifically a rifle or a shotgun, in a jurisdiction that is different from the address listed on their identification unless the customer's age is legal in both the state of sale and where the person lives, according to the report. The findings stem from an Office of Inspector General's audit that was launched, in part, after Colorado lawmakers asked the agency to probe the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which is used by licensed federal firearms sellers and other retailers, after an 18-year-old purchased a shotgun in Colorado even though she was a resident in Florida, which prohibits the sale of firearms to anyone under 21."

NBC News (7/16, Williams, 4.91M) reports, "The FBI must upgrade its system for conducting background checks on gun buyers to avoid repeating illegal sales like the one that led hundreds of Colorado schools to close or lock down in 2019, the Justice Department's inspector general said in a new report." NBC News adds, "Members of Congress asked Inspector General Michael Horowitz to conduct a review after an 18-year-old woman from Florida came to the state just before the 20th anniversary of the deadly school shooting in Columbine. Sol Pais flew to Denver and shortly after arriving bought a 12-gauge shotgun and ammunition. Alerted by police in Miami that she was obsessed with Columbine and had made threats toward area schools, authorities in Colorado launched an immediate search, considering her armed and dangerous. Dozens of schools in the Denver area were closed or locked down. Pais was found the next day, dead of an apparent self-inflicted shotgun wound, police said." Also reporting on their websites are KUSA-TV Denver (7/16, Sylte, 738K) and WPBF-TV West Palm Beach, FL (7/17, 69K).

FBI Expects 7,500 Cases In Oklahoma Next Year In Wake Of McGirt Ruling.

The Oklahoman (7/16, Casteel, 205K) reports, "Money to help the federal government and Indian tribes handle the criminal caseload stemming from the jurisdiction shift in eastern Oklahoma has cleared a key U.S. House committee amid a prediction that the FBI will have to investigate 7,500 Indian-related cases in the state next fiscal year." The Oklahoman adds, "The House Appropriations Committee on Thursday approved \$70 million in additional funding for the U.S. Justice Department specifically for the increased caseload related to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *McGirt v Oklahoma*. A separate bill including \$10 million for the Bureau of Indian Affairs for *McGirt*-related expenses cleared the committee earlier this month. Both bills, which will now be considered by the full House, include requests for long-term estimates of *McGirt* related costs."

FAA Struggles With Rise In Unruly Airline Passengers.

In a nearly 3,000-word article, the Washington Post (7/18, A1, Laris, Aratani, 10.52M) reports the Federal Aviation Administration "has received more than 3,400 reports of 'unruly' passengers this year" despite enacting "a 'zero-tolerance' enforcement policy in January – amid a rise in conflicts often tied to mask requirements in the air," but the FAA "said that as of mid-July it had

"completely closed" just seven cases." The Post says its review of federal cases "points to alcohol, drug use and mental illness as key factors in outbursts that have terrified passengers and crew members, sometimes leaving them hospitalized." The Post adds aviation experts "say cases of 'air rage' are nothing new, but verbal attacks are turning physical more quickly."

Pritzker Authorizes Law Forbidding Law Enforcement From Telling Untruths While Interrogating Minors.

The Washington Post (7/16, 10.52M) reports, "Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker (D) on Thursday signed the nation's first law banning law enforcement from lying and deploying other deceptive practices when interrogating minors." The Post adds that the ban becomes effective on January 1, with Pritzker saying that it demonstrates Illinois' acknowledgment of the "need to change laws that have failed the people they serve."

NYTimes Analysis: Uncertainly Abounds As To What Comes Next After Administration Implements Executions Moratorium.

A New York Times (7/16, Fuchs, 20.6M) analysis says that while President Biden's Justice Department has put "a moratorium on executions amid a review of department policies related to capital punishment," what occurs next is unclear, as is whether the moratorium will endure beyond the Administration. Congressional progressives are urging the Administration to take apart "the federal capital punishment system and formally commute all federal death sentences." Totally ceasing utilization "of the federal capital punishment would require Congress to pass legislation."

Some Law Enforcement Criticize Laws To Make Pre-Trial Releases Less Difficult.

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says a number of states have approved laws to make it less difficult for accused offenders to be released prior to their trials. The Journal adds that Chicago is the most recent municipality in which law enforcement have criticized laws of this nature for playing a part in violent crime.

NYTimes Analysis: NYC Statistics Indicate City Still Struggling To Prosecute Rape Cases.

In a more than 3,000-word article, the New York Times (7/18, Ransom, 20.6M) reports that while the "Me Too" movement "led to heightened awareness of the prevalence of sexual assault, an increase in reports to police, and a new hope that people accused would be more frequently held accountable," New York City statistics "and the accounts of women who say they were attacked suggest that little has changed about the way the criminal justice system grapples with rape accusations." According to the Times, "Most New York City prosecutors' offices rejected a greater percentage of sex crime cases in 2019, the last year for which reliable data is available, than they did roughly a decade earlier, before the case against Harvey Weinstein touched off a national reckoning." The Times adds the "low prosecution rate" in Manhattan and the Bronx "partly reflects the inherent challenges of prosecuting sexual assault," but "some" claim it "also reflects prosecutors' unwillingness to tackle those challenges."

USA Today Calls On Police To Address Racial Disparities In Traffic Stops.

USA Today (7/18, 12.7M) editorializes that Philadelphia "is one of a handful of jurisdictions across the country - from California to Virginia - moving to change the way traffic laws are enforced. These moves are as welcome as they are belated." USA Today laments that Black drivers "for decades...have been subjected to racial disparities in police traffic stops," and asserts that "it's no longer possible to ignore the problem, as study after study has revealed how widespread this bias is." USA Today concludes changing such policies "are well worth trying if they can prevent the trauma, humiliation and even the violence against Black motorists that have occurred during some traffic encounters. No more young Black men should have to consider getting pulled over for an unwarranted traffic stop a rite of passage."

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Haitian Security Officials Barred From Leaving Country Amid Assassination Investigation.

The Washington Post (7/16, 10.52M) reports that "at least four top Haitian security officials responsible for presidential protection have been placed under travel restrictions amid an investigation into the assassination...Haitian prosecutor Bed-Ford Claude said Friday." According to the Post, "Those under departure bans include presidential security chief Dimitri Hérard, who was detained Thursday, along with other officials in question." The Post adds that Hérard "has been removed from his position, at least for now," but "it is not clear if he faces formal charges." The Post points out that "no members of the Moïse's security detail were injured in the attack on his private residence, in which he was slain and his wife injured."

CNN (7/16, Hu, Dupain, Gallón, Rivers, 89.21M) reported the killing of Moïse has "sparked a sprawling investigation across multiple countries, supported by both the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation and Colombian intelligence services."

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, Vyas, Forero, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) also reports.

Former Haitian Intelligence Officer Gave Assassination Order, Colombian Police Chief Says. The New York Times (7/16, Turkewitz, Kurmanaev, 20.6M) reports, "Colombian officials on Friday identified a former Haitian intelligence official as the man who ordered two former Colombian soldiers to kill Haiti's president, Jovenel Moïse, this month." The former intelligence officer, "Joseph Felix Badio, had first told two Colombian soldiers that they would be 'arresting' the president, Gen. Jorge Luis Vargas, the head of Colombia's national police, said at a news conference." However, "a few days before the operation, he said, the plan changed," and "Badio told the former soldiers, Duberney Capador and Germán Alejandro Rivera Garcia, that 'what they had to do was assassinate the president of Haiti,' General Vargas said."

CNN (7/16, Gallón, Hu, Perez, 89.21M) reported that, speaking in an "edited video provided to media outlets, Gen. Jorge Vargas alleged that newly obtained information from the ongoing investigation had led Colombian authorities to believe that Badio told two Colombians suspected to have been involved in the operation to assassinate President Jovenel Moïse." Reuters (7/16, Bocanegra, Symmes Cobb, Griffin) reported Vargas did not provide "proof or give more details about where the information came from." Capador was killed and Rivera captured by Haiti police in the aftermath of Moïse's murder, authorities have said.

International Bloc Of Diplomats Backs Haitian Prime Minister-Designate, Snubs Interim Prime Minister. The Washington Post (7/17, Merancourt, Taylor, Faiola, 10.52M) reports that a recent "statement released by the Core Group, an informal bloc of ambassadors and envoys that includes the United States," appeared to offer support for Prime Minister-designate Ariel Henry, without mention of Claude Joseph, the "interim prime minister and Haiti's effective leader." The statement emphasized the importance of establishing a "consensual and inclusive government," and it called on "Henry to continue the mission entrusted to him to form such a government." This makes the Core Group "the first major international group to withdraw its support for Joseph – a move that surprised some observers given the tense political situation in Haiti."

In Unexpected Move, Haiti's First Lady Leaves Miami, Returns To Country. The AP (7/18, Coto) reports that in a "surprise" move on Sunday, Haiti's first lady, Martine Moïse, was discharged from a hospital in Miami and returned to the country. Moïse "did not make any public statements after she descended a private jet wearing a black dress, a black bulletproof vest, a black face mask and her right arm in a black sling as she mourned" for her husband. The AP says that "some experts" and "many" in the country "were surprised at how quickly she reappeared in Haiti and questioned whether she plans to become involved in the country's politics." The Miami Herald (7/18, Charles, 647K) reports that Moïse was "greeted by acting Prime Minister Claude Joseph and other members of her late husband's administration." The Hill (7/18, Oshin, 5.69M) also runs a brief report on her return while the Wall Street Journal (7/18, Vyas, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) looks at the prominent role played by well-armed gangs in Haiti, particularly after the massive 2010 earthquake.

Haiti's First Lady Returns Home For Husband's Funeral. ABC World News Tonight

(7/17, story 9, 0:16, Johnson, 3.45M) reported, "To Haiti now, and we're just learning that the widow of Haiti's assassinated President arrived back in the country today. She's returning for the funeral of her husband next week."

Former President Aristide Returns To Haiti After Undergoing Treatment In Cuba.

The [AP](#) (7/16, Coto) reports that former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide "was scheduled to arrive Friday in Haiti after spending nearly a month in Cuba for medical treatment." According to the AP, Aristide's "return adds a potentially volatile element to an already tense situation in a country facing a power vacuum following the July 7 assassination of President Jovenel Moise." The AP says Aristide "has long been one of Haiti's most polarizing politicians and is still popular with some groups. The twice-elected, twice-ousted leader returned to Haiti from exile in 2011 and has largely kept a low profile except for when he campaigned for the presidential candidate of his party in 2016."

The Hill: Haitian-American Elected Officials Request "Urgent" Meeting With Biden.

[The Hill](#) (7/16, 5.69M) reported a group of more than "200 current and former Haitian American elected officials are reaching out to the Biden administration and requesting an 'urgent' meeting to discuss U.S. policy toward the Caribbean nation in the wake of the assassination of the country's president." In a letter sent Friday "to Secretary of State Antony Blinken and obtained by The Hill, the National Haitian-American Elected Officials Network (NHAEON) requests a briefing on the administration's approach to Haiti amid the country's political turmoil, ongoing plague of gang violence and struggle against COVID-19."

Haiti Enlists Lobbyist For Congressional Outreach. [Politico](#) (7/16, Oprysko, 6.73M)

reported the Haitian government is "enlisting more help in Washington as the island nation continues to hunt for those responsible for the assassination last week of President Jovenel Moise." The country's ambassador to the U.S., "Bocchit Edmond, on Thursday retained the help of LFA Holdings' Luis Aleman for outreach to members of Congress, according to a copy of the contract filed with the Justice Department."

OTHER FBI NEWS

Garland Criticizes States' Election Laws.

On its website, [Fox News](#) (7/17, Laco, 23.99M) says Attorney General Garland "violated his pledge to avoid 'politicizing' the Department of Justice (DOJ) by blasting states' election laws in a statement honoring the one year anniversary of the death of civil rights giant Democratic Rep. John Lewis." In a statement from Saturday, Garland said, "Since 2013, there has been a dramatic rise across the country in legislative efforts that make it harder for millions of citizens to vote. This increase accelerated after the 2020 elections." Garland also said that his agency is utilizing "all the tools at its disposal to protect the voting rights of all citizens, but that is not enough. We need Congress to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, which would provide the Department with important tools to protect the right to vote and to ensure that every vote is counted."

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

LA County Supervisor Defends Her County's New Mask Mandate, As Do Murthy And Fauci.

The [AP](#) (7/18) reports LA County Supervisor Hilda Solis on [ABC's This Week](#) (7/18, 2.38M) defended her county's newly revived mask mandate, which seeks to stem a new surge in COVID cases. Solis said, "I'm not pleased that we have to go back to using the masks in this matter but, nonetheless, it's going to save lives. And right now that to me is what's most important." The AP says the revived policy "follows a winter where the region experienced a massive surge in infections and deaths, with hospitals overloaded with COVID-19 patients and ambulances idling outside, waiting for beds to open."

On [Fox News Sunday](#) (7/18, 828K), Surgeon General Murthy said, "What's happening in LA

County is happening in other parts of the country where counties are seeing rising levels of cases. They are considering what additional mitigation measures to take. ... What LA County tells us and what other parts of the country that we are seeing rising cases tell us is that even though we've got many people who are vaccinated, we still have many who are not."

On the [CBS Weekend News](#)[®] (7/18, lead story, 2:21, Duncan, 230K), Lilia Luciano reported Los Angeles has become "the first county to require masks again." Luciano added NIAID Director Fauci is "warn[ing] of a dangerous outbreak among the unvaccinated," even though Los Angeles "is a place with a high vaccination rates." Asked about the mask mandate, Fauci said, "There are still plenty of people who are not vaccinated, leading to that dynamic spread of the virus throughout the community. I believe that's what the challenge is in Los Angeles."

While the [New York Times](#) (7/18, Craig, Albeck-Ripka, 20.6M) says the mandate "expands beyond the current state standard and the recommendation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention," [NBC Nightly News](#)[®] (7/18, story 3, 0:17, Snow, 3.43M) reported the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office has declined to enforce the mandate, arguing that the ban has no basis in science.

In addition, Kathy Park reported on [NBC Nightly News](#)[®] (7/18, story 2, 1:51, Snow, 3.43M) that whereas Murthy "defended the CDC's decision [not to require masks] for the fully vaccinated," former Surgeon General Jerome Adams is "tweeting the 'CDC guidance' was 'premature' and 'wrong.' He added, 'Instead of vax it or mask it, the emerging data suggests CDC should be advising to vax it and mask it in areas with rising cases and positivity.'"

CBS-YouGov Poll: Americans Are Growing Increasingly Concerned About Delta Variant.

[The Hill](#) (7/18, Mastrangelo, 5.69M) reports that according to a new [CBS-YouGov](#) poll of 2,238 US adults (7/14-7/17), "Americans are growing increasingly concerned about the delta variant of the coronavirus and are split along party lines on President Biden's handling of the new strain." The poll showed 62% "said they are concerned about the delta variant, now the dominant strain in the United States, including 48 percent of people who indicated they are not vaccinated or not fully vaccinated," while 57% of Republicans "said Biden is focusing too much on getting people vaccinated. Only 35 percent of Democrats said the same." The Hill adds 84% of Democrats "said they are or plan to be fully vaccinated, as opposed to 62 percent of Republicans and 67 percent of independents. Nearly 30 percent of Republicans polled said they will not be vaccinated."

Linsey Davis opened [ABC World News Tonight](#)[®] (7/18, lead story, 2:45, Davis, 4.52M) "with the increasingly urgent warnings from health officials. In nearly every state, cases are on the rise. Healthcare workers once again being pushed to their limits. Some hospitals in COVID hot spots admitting more COVID patients now than at any other time in the pandemic." Trevor Ault added, "The Delta variant's now driving up cases everywhere but South Dakota and Wyoming. Alongside Arkansas, the highest infection rates are in Florida and Missouri." Ault continued that new cases in Los Angeles County are "up four-fold since the Fourth of July."

Springfield, Missouri Mayor Ken McClure, on [CBS' Face The Nation](#)[®] (7/18, 2.4M), discussed the increase in COVID cases due to the Delta variant. McClure said, "I think there are several reasons for Springfield as a hub. We are an attraction for tourism, we are an attraction for transportation, for business, for higher education and certainly healthcare. ... And I think that has greatly increased our exposure, compounded with what has been already indicated on misinformation. ... I think we are seeing a lot spread through social media as people are talking about health-related fears, what it might do to them later on in their lives, what might be contained in the vaccinations. And that information is just incorrect. And I think we as a society, and certainly in our community, are being hurt by it."

CDC Data Shows Teenagers Remain Undervaccinated.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)[®] (7/18, story 2, 0:33, Davis, 4.52M) reported that new CDC data "says 75% of 12 to 15-year-olds are not fully vaccinated" ahead of the upcoming school year, which begins as early as next week for one school district. The risk of a new COVID surge is leading states to launch new vaccination campaigns, but enduring vaccine hesitance continues to

undermine vaccinations among younger Americans.

Some States Move To Ban Mask And Vaccine Mandates.

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, Hawkins, Campa, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that more states are moving to block schools and colleges from requiring vaccine and mask mandates, going against federal guidance that students get vaccinated and unvaccinated students wear masks for in-person learning. States banning vaccine mandates and vaccine passports and mandates include Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Montana, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Utah, while Arizona, Arkansas and Oklahoma have banned mask mandates in schools.

ABC World News Tonight (7/16, story 2, 0:54, Johnson, 5.66M) reporter Whit Johnson said, "And with some children returning to the classroom in just days, Arizona educator and parent Katie Nash wants the state to bring back its mask mandate in schools." She said, "It just makes me very apprehensive about what potentially could happen when you have 30-plus kids in a classroom, all working together. You know, sharing that same space, that same air." Johnson explained, "Kids under 12 still not eligible for a vaccine, but Pfizer is planning to apply for emergency authorization in September or October. Regulators say they want to see extra assurances the vaccine is safe, possibly extending the time spent monitoring kids for any reactions. That could mean shots into arms by late this year or early 2022."

FDA Grants Priority Review To Pfizer's COVID Vaccine For Full Approval.

Bloomberg (7/16, Annett, 3.57M) reports that Pfizer "said its Covid-19 vaccine was granted priority review by U.S. regulators, putting it on track for a potential full approval by early next year." Pfizer and its partner BioNTech "said in a statement Friday that the Food and Drug Administration plans to decide whether to approve the shot for use in people 16 and older by January 2022."

ABC World News Tonight (7/16, story 3, 0:41, Muir, 5.66M) reported that the priority review "could give full approval to the Pfizer vaccine in those 16 and older by January 2022, possibly sooner."

Delta Variant Now Dominant Strain Globally.

Reuters (7/16, Mason) reports, "The Delta variant of COVID-19 is now the dominant strain worldwide, accompanied by a surge of deaths around the United States almost entirely among unvaccinated people, U.S. officials said on Friday." The sharpest "uptick in cases has occurred in Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Missouri and Nevada, said White House COVID-19 response coordinator Jeff Zients."

White House Voices Support For Biden's BLM Pick.

Reuters (7/16) reports the White House on Friday expressed support for the President's pick to head the country's "public lands bureau, pushing back against growing calls to withdraw the nomination from key Republican lawmakers." Reuters also says, "Earlier, U.S. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell joined calls by several Republican Senate colleagues for Biden to withdraw the nomination of Montana conservationist Tracy Stone-Manning to run the Bureau of Land Management due to her ties to a decades-old tree-spiking incident." In a statement, though, the White referred to Stone-Manning as "a dedicated public servant who has years of experience and a proven track record of finding solutions and common ground when it comes to our public lands and waters." The White House also said, "She is exceptionally qualified to be the next Director of the Bureau of Land Management."

In an editorial, the Wall Street Journal (7/16, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) argues Stone-Manning has not been honest with Congress regarding her past involvement with the group Earth First! The Journal questions whether Stone-Manning can be trusted to lead the agency.

Reuters Poll: 90% Of Economists Expect Biden To Reappoint Powell.

Reuters (7/16) reports that "an overwhelming majority of economists polled by Reuters this week" expect President Biden to reappoint Fed Chair Powell. According to Reuters, "Ninety percent of

economists, or 36 of 40, in response to an additional question in the July 12-15 Reuters poll on the U.S. economy, said Biden would choose the status quo." Reuters adds, "The White House will decide in coming months whether it wants Powell to remain but any decision to replace him could flare market reaction just as the U.S. economy is battling high inflation and employment activity is lagging the overall recovery."

Biden Donor Reportedly Set To Be Nominated To Be US Ambassador To The UK.

The Washington Post (7/16, 10.52M) reports President Biden will nominate Jane Hartley, the former US ambassador to France, to be his ambassador to Britain. The Post says Hartley "was a major fundraiser for President Barack Obama, was a significant fundraising 'bundler' for Biden's campaign, though not in the upper echelon." According to the Post, "Top donors raised sums in the middle seven figures, while Hartley brought in several million dollars less." According to the Post, "Biden's team struggled for months to find the right person for the job, and it had considered a wide range of prominent people, including former New York mayor Mike Bloomberg and former secretary of state Colin Powell." The Post adds, "At one point, the White House had discussed selecting a Black person for the role."

Biden To Tap Udall To Be Ambassador To New Zealand.

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, Parti, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports the White House on Friday indicated the President will tap ex-Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) to be ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa. In a statement, Udall said, "This position – working with one of our closest partners and allies – is integral as we work closely with New Zealand to confront the challenges facing our nations – including COVID-19, climate, and China."

NASA Executive Utilized COVID Relief Funds For His Own Expenses.

The Washington Post (7/16, Weiner, 10.52M) reports Andrew Tenza "says he regretted applying for covid-19 relief loans from the Small Business Administration almost as soon as he filed the paperwork. The NASA senior executive tried, unsuccessfully, to cancel one of the applications." When the \$272,000 showed up, though, Tenza acknowledged having utilized the money "as he had planned – to pay down his massive debts while incurring new costs, including \$6,450 for a French bulldog and nearly \$50,000 for a swimming pool." Tenza, who helped supervise NASA spending, on Thursday received an 18-month prison sentence in federal court.

Biden Senior Migration Adviser Departing.

CNN (7/16, Alvarez, Vazquez, 89.21M) reports on its website that the President's "senior adviser for migration, Amy Pope, is leaving her position, according to the White House." Her final day employed at the White House was Friday, and CNN adds that her "appointment to the White House role was temporary." Pope "will be replaced by Tyler Moran, the current special assistant to the President for Immigration for the Domestic Policy Council."

Federal Judge Says Obama Unlawfully Created DACA, Blocks Approval Of Pending Applications.

The New York Times (7/16, Jordan, 20.6M) reports that federal judge Andrew S. Hanen of the United States District Court in Houston ruled that President Obama exceeded his authority when he created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program by executive order in 2012. However, "in a nuanced decision, the judge said he would not order that the program be immediately vacated." In Hanen's "ruling, he wrote that the Department of Homeland Security may continue to accept new applications and renewals for the program known as DACA but is temporarily prohibited from approving any of them." As such, "immigrants enrolled in the program, most of whom were brought to the United States as children, will for now retain the ability to stay and work in the country, though those protections could evaporate if the government is unable to rectify a series of legal shortcomings in the program's authorization that were identified by the court."

The Washington Post (7/16, 10.52M) reports on its front page that despite the ruling, "the judge said he recognized that legions of young immigrants...and their communities need the program, and said he would not wrest it from them as the Biden administration attempts to correct its deficiencies." Hanen "said his order was a 'reasonable' decision that took into consideration the competing interests of Dreamers and states such as Texas that had argued that the program granted people work permits who could then get drivers' licenses and compete with Americans for jobs."

NBC Nightly News (7/16, story 4, 0:49, Holt, 4.59M) reported, "The government is sure to appeal this decision, but it puts new pressure on the White House and Congress to come up with a permanent fix for what to do about the DREAMERS."

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, A1, Kendall, Hackman, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) and CBS Evening News (7/16, story 3, 0:26, O'Donnell, 3.34M) also provided coverage of the ruling.

Biden Vows To Appeal DACA Ruling, Calls On Congress To Pass Pathway To Citizenship. The Washington Post (7/17, Wang, Sacchetti, 10.52M) reports President Biden on Saturday said US District Judge Andrew S. Hanen's ruling finding DACA to be an "illegally implemented program" was "deeply disappointing," and vowed to appeal the decision. Hanen's decision allowed the "more than 600,000 young people already in the program to keep their protected status" while the issue is remanded to "the Department of Homeland Security for reconsideration," but included a "permanent injunction vacating the memo that created DACA in 2012," which prevents the "Department of Homeland Security from approving new applications." Biden also asked Congress to provide DACA recipients with a path to citizenship, saying it is his "fervent hope that through reconciliation or other means, Congress will finally provide security to all Dreamers, who have lived too long in fear."

According to Bloomberg (7/16, Leonard, Calkins, 3.57M), Hanen's 77-page ruling said that Congress' "continued failure to pass bills coextensive with the DACA population evinces a rejection of this policy." However he noted "widespread sympathy for Dreamers," saying "as much as this court might agree with these sentiments, and as popular as this program might be, the proper origination point for DACA was, and is, Congress."

Axios (7/16, Knutson, 1.26M) explains the ruling "followed a challenge to the program filed by the attorneys general for nine Republican-led states, including Texas, who argued that DACA was improperly adopted and financially burdened them by making them pay for DACA recipients' education and health care."

CNN (7/16, Alvarez, Sneed, 89.21M) reports "lawyers representing individual DACA recipients said Friday that they're in the process of assessing next steps." The Biden Administration has announced plans to appeal the decision to the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals, and "New Jersey, which intervened to defend DACA, could also choose to appeal." However, CNN notes that the 5th Circuit is an "extremely conservative appeals court," and if the case "makes it to the Supreme Court, DACA's defenders will be facing a conservative majority that includes three justices who called the program unlawful in a dissent in a previous case." The CBS Weekend News (7/17, story 5, 0:26, Barnett, 2.16M) provided similar coverage.

The Hill (7/17, Castronuovo, 5.69M) reports Biden also claimed that DACA "has allowed hundreds of thousands of young immigrants to remain in the United States, to live, study, and work in our communities," and that the ruling "relegates hundreds of thousands of young immigrants to an uncertain future." Biden added that "the Department of Homeland Security plans to issue a proposed rule concerning DACA in the near future."

ABC World News Tonight (7/17, story 6, 2:14, Johnson, 3.45M) reported Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Saturday that his agency is "committed to ensuring that DREAMERS do not face deportation and are 'allowed to continue to contribute to this country that is their home.'" Fox News (7/17, Shaw, 23.99M) says Mayorkas also "confirmed the effort to issue a rule and said the DACA renewals would continue to be processed."

According to the AP (7/17), the House "approved legislation in March creating a pathway toward citizenship for those impacted," but a companion bill is "stalled in the Senate." Immigration advocates plan to include a provision in the upcoming \$3.5 trillion spending bill, "but it's unclear whether that language will survive."

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, A1, Kendall, Hackman, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) explains that if the Democrats can satisfy certain procedural requirements, the bill would only need a simple majority to pass. However, the Journal argues that even a majority vote does not guarantee the provision will pass.

Reuters (7/17) reports "Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer plans an early test for the reconciliation approach on Wednesday," following a tweet stating that the "time to act is now."

Similarly, CNN (7/17, 89.21M) reports House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Friday that Democrats "will continue to press for any and all paths to ensure that the Dream and Promise Act, now passed twice by the House, becomes the law of the land." Pelosi called on "Republicans in Congress to join us in respecting the will of the American people and the law, to ensure that Dreamers have a permanent path to citizenship."

Politico (7/16, Rodríguez, Gerstein, 6.73M) reports "immigrant advocacy groups, Democrats, DACA recipients and backers of the program were" also "quick to put out statements slamming the ruling and calling on Congress" to act following the ruling. Among them, Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ) argued that "Congress must seize the moment and any and all opportunities to finally provide a pathway to legalization for millions of undocumented immigrants."

The Hill (7/17, Vakil, 5.69M) reports former President Obama said in a tweet on Saturday that it is "long past time for Congress to act and give" DACA recipients "the protection and certainty they deserve."

Reuters (7/17) reports "some U.S. tech companies" including Google, Twitter, and Adobe expressed disappointment in the ruling, and "urged the U.S. Congress to come together to protect Dreamers."

However, NBC Nightly News (7/17, story 6, 2:06, Alexander, 3.23M) reported DACA opponents pushed back on the President's remarks. They included Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R), who argued that the Biden Administration is "blind" to the fact that its open-border policies are "enticing millions of young children into a life where they could be trafficked, where they could be harmed, where some lose their lives."

Apprehensions At US-Mexico Border Surpass One Million This Fiscal Year.

The Washington Post (7/16, 10.52M) reports, "Federal officials have logged more than 1.1 million apprehensions at the U.S.-Mexico border this fiscal year, after another busy month in June, Customs and Border Protection said in a news release Friday." Many people "taken into custody have attempted to cross the border more than once, officials said."

In a front-page article, the New York Times (7/16, A1, Sullivan, 20.6M) reports, "A record number of migrants arrived at the southwestern border last month, a slight uptick from May and a sign that the surge this year may extend into the hotter summer months when numbers typically start dropping." New data released on Friday by Customs and Border Protection also showed that June "brought more migrant families to the border than any other month since President Biden took office." All together, "border officials encountered migrants there 188,829 times, the largest number in a single month in recent history."

NBC News (7/16, 4.91M) reported on its website that "nearly 105,000" of the migrants "were expelled back into Mexico without being given the chance to claim asylum in the U.S. due to the government's use of Title 42, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention authority used to prevent the spread of Covid-19." NBC News adds, "Media reports have indicated the Biden administration has drafted plans to end the policy by July 31, and some, including Chief Brian Hastings, head of the Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley sector, have said the end of the policy could spark a rise in migration."

ABC World News Tonight (7/16, story 9, 0:14, Muir, 5.66M), NBC Nightly News (7/16, story 5, 0:20, Holt, 4.59M), and the Wall Street Journal (7/16, Hackman, Rubin, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provided similar coverage.

CDC Affirms Order Allowing Unaccompanied Children To Enter US In Exception To Trump-Era Rule.

The Hill (7/16, Beitsch, 5.69M) reports, "The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Friday

affirmed the Biden administration's policy of letting unaccompanied children enter the country as an exception to a pandemic-based regulation allowing border officials to quickly expel anyone who crosses." The recent order cements a previously temporary notice issued by the Administration in February permitting the Biden Administration to make an exception to "Title 42, which was finalized by the CDC under the Trump administration in March of last year, to quickly expel migrants crossing the border, including asylum-seekers."

Democrats Urging Biden To Do More To Enforce Ethics Rules.

Politico (7/16, Kumar, 6.73M) says "a growing number of Democratic lawmakers and government watchdog groups" are "pushing" President Biden "to follow through on his campaign promise to press for an aggressive 25-point plan for ethics reform, fearful that the window to do so may be closing – and with it an opportunity to prevent the lapses of the Trump years from happening again." Politico says Biden "hasn't publicly or privately pushed members of Congress to pass other laws that would encompass his campaign pledges – from prohibiting foreign governments from hiring lobbyists, to strengthening whistleblowers protections, to preventing Congress from being influenced by personal financial holdings." Politico adds, "In the absence of that legislative push, a coalition of more than a dozen government advocates are urging Biden to appoint a senior White House official to oversee, enforce and communicate about ethics the way former Republican President George W. Bush and Democrat President Barack Obama did."

Administration Reversing Trump-Era Rule On Showerhead Water Flow.

The AP (7/16, Daly) reports the Administration "is reversing a Trump-era rule approved after the former president complained he wasn't getting wet enough because of limits on water flow from showerheads." The Energy Department is now "going back to a standard adopted in 2013, saying it provides plenty of water for a good soak and a thorough clean." The AP adds, "The rule change will have little practical effect, since nearly all commercially made showerheads comply with the 2013 rule – the pet peeve of the former president notwithstanding."

Administration Rescinds Trump-Era Beach Sand Policy.

The Wall Street Journal (7/16, Ferek, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports the Administration has rescinded the Trump-era policy that allowed towns along the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic coasts to use the sand from environmentally protected areas in anti-erosion projects that are federally funded.

PETA Files Formal Complaint Asking Marines To Stop Using Animals During Survival Training Exercises.

The Washington Post (7/16, 10.52M) reports animal rights group PETA submitted a formal complaint to the Office of the Naval Inspector General calling for a ban on the use of animals during the Marines' annual training exercise in Thailand and to "reprimand any senior officer who orders Marines to throw decency aside in favor of bloodlust." The exercise, "known as Cobra Gold, runs every spring for about two weeks" in Thailand and is "designed to allow U.S. and local troops to share tactics and skills that could prove useful in a fight against a common enemy." PETA argued that the "Marines need to turn to plant-based food sources in the jungle instead of relying on live scorpions and cobra blood." However, Thai Chief Petty Officer 1st Class Phairoj Prasansai explained in 2019 that "the reason we drink cobra's blood is we're searching for water," because "finding water in the jungle is hard."

Miami-Dade Judge "Open To All Options" For Site Of Champlain Towers South.

The AP (7/16) reports Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Michael Hanzman is "considering what should become of the" site of the Champlain Towers South. The AP adds the "decision may be weeks or months from being made as families grapple with difficult decisions over personal and financial losses, including whether to rebuild, place a memorial on the site or accommodate both." Hanzman "said he was open to all options, but no decision came at a hearing Friday."

FAA Grounds Cargo Airline Following Boeing 737 Crash.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/16, 10.52M) reports the Federal Aviation Administration "announced Friday that it grounded a Hawaii cargo airline after one of its Boeing 737 jets crashed into the ocean this month." According to the agency, a probe regarding maintenance as well as safety problems had discovered deficiencies. The Post adds that the FAA "said it had been investigating Rhoades Aviation, which does business as Honolulu-based Transair, since last fall and proposed grounding its planes June 13, about two weeks before the crash."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/16, Maidenberg, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports the FAA on Thursday indicated having let Rhoades know that it would remove the firm's ability to carry out maintenance inspections, virtually barring Rhoades from lawfully operating.

FAA Calls For More Frequent Boeing 737 Inspections. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/16, story 10, 0:17, Muir, 5.66M) reported the FAA has "order[ed] more frequent safety checks for all Boeing 737 passenger jets, focusing on air pressure switches designed to warn the flight crew of cabin depressurization. If those switches fail, oxygen levels could drop to dangerous lows. No reports of failures on actual flights."

Three Texas Legislators Who Fled To DC To Inhibit Passage Of Voting Restrictions Test Positive For Coronavirus.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/17, 10.52M) reports, "Three Texas House Democrats who fled to Washington this past week to prevent voting restrictions from being passed in their state have tested positive for the coronavirus, according to a statement from the Texas House Democratic Caucus." A caucus member on Friday tested positive and at once "informed the rest of the caucus; members and staff then took rapid tests, all of which were negative, the statement said." However, caucus leaders indicated that two other members on Saturday tested positive. The leaders also said the three members were completely vaccinated. No less than 50 caucus members departed Texas abruptly on Monday, and the Post adds that in DC, the Texas legislators "have held numerous high-profile news conferences and meetings – including with Vice President Harris and Sen. Joe Manchin III (D-W.Va.)."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/17, Hughes, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that in a statement, a Harris spokeswoman said that "it was determined the vice president and her staff present at the meeting were not at risk of exposure because they were not in close contact with those who tested positive and therefore do not need to be tested or quarantined."

The [New York Times](#) (7/17, Jimenez, 20.6M) reports that in a statement, Texas House Democratic Caucus Chairman Chris Turner said, "This is a sober reminder that Covid is still with us, and though vaccinations offer tremendous protection, we still must take necessary precautions." The Times adds, "One of the lawmakers has mild symptoms, according to The Austin American-Statesman, which first reported the infections. Most of the lawmakers are staying at the same hotel in Washington, and since they arrived on Monday had used masks sparingly, the newspaper reported."

WPost Analysis: Texas Democrats In DC Acknowledge They "Have A Rapidly Closing Window To Capitalize On The National Spotlight." A [Washington Post](#) (7/17, 10.52M) analysis says that days after almost 60 Texas Democrats left Austin for Washington so as to break quorum and inhibit passage of voting restrictions, "many of them acknowledge that how that battle will unfold remains very uncertain – and that they have a rapidly closing window to capitalize on the national spotlight." The Post adds, "While they quickly secured meetings with Vice President Harris, Sen. Joe Manchin III (D-W.Va.) and other lawmakers in their first week in Washington, so far the Texans have been unable to push forward long-stalled federal voting rights legislation." Meanwhile, in Texas, GOP officials have increased "their attacks on the Democrats for abandoning their legislative duties, threatening to have them arrested when they return to the state."

Champlain Towers South Collapse Causing New Challenges For Florida's Insurance Market.

The [New York Times](#) (7/17, A1, Flavelle, Mazzei, Heyward, 20.6M) reports that for survivors of the collapse of the Champlain Towers South in Surfside, Florida "sorting out complicated insurance payouts is but one part of starting over after a catastrophic loss." The Times adds "Floridians may soon be feeling the shock waves from the tragedy, as spooked insurance companies begin scrutinizing the buildings they are covering, raising rates that are already among the highest in the nation, or canceling coverage altogether." The collapse "is causing new turmoil in Florida's troubled insurance market, further jeopardizing a coastal housing economy that was already under pressure from climate change."

The [Washington Post](#) (7/17, Tan, Kornfield, Brice-Saddler, 10.52M) adds the collapse "has shaken Miami," raising "concerns that the rising sea levels and flooding which have long exerted pressure on Miami's coastal properties are being further exacerbated by climate change." The Post says, "In gentrifying communities like Liberty City and nearby Little Haiti – traditionally Black and Latino neighborhoods that are located inland and on higher ground – the tragedy has also stirred anxiety over a burgeoning trend that academics and activists have called 'climate gentrification.'"

NYTimes Profile: Klain Is "Most Influential" Recent White House Chief Of Staff.

A [New York Times](#) (7/18, Leibovich, 20.6M) profile of White House Chief of Staff Klain describes him as "the most influential chief of staff of recent vintage and a marked departure from the four battered and marginalized short-timers who held the position under President Donald J. Trump." Klain "is viewed in and out of the West Wing as the essential conductor of administration business, a surrogate for the president and – in the mischievous portrayal of opponents – an all-powerful, unelected orchestrator of an ultraliberal agenda. Republicans have taken to calling him Prime Minister Klain."

Biden To Welcome Tampa Bay Buccaneers To White House Tuesday.

On its website, [CNN](#) (7/18, Judd, 89.21M) cites "an official" who said President Biden "will welcome the Super Bowl champion Tampa Bay Buccaneers to the White House on Tuesday." The visit marks "yet another return to normalcy after the coronavirus pandemic and years of tension between the NFL and Biden's predecessor, former President Donald Trump." It will be "the first time since 2017 that a Super Bowl champion has visited the White House."

Biden To Issue Executive Order To Benefit Small Farmers In Legal Fights.

[The Hill](#) (7/18, Elbein, 5.69M) reports President Biden plans to issue a "wide ranging" executive order "targeting anti-competitive business practices is expected to give a major boost to sustainability efforts in the agriculture industry." The Hill adds that the order "is poised to upend the business models of some of the biggest food producers – household names like Tyson, Perdue Pilgrim's Pride and Sanderson Farms – by potentially making it easier for small farmers to sue them." The Hill says that according to a White House fact sheet, Biden's order "directs the Department of Agriculture to consider a rule that would make 'it easier for farmers to bring and win claims, stopping chicken processors from exploiting and underpaying chicken farmers,'" while "the sustainability implications of the order go even further by essentially looking at industry competition beyond traditional pricing."

Klobuchar Says Breyer Should Retire "Sooner Rather Than Later" Due To Senate Status.

Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), on [CNN's State Of The Union](#)^{*} (7/18, 639K), discussed the potential of Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer's retirement. Klobuchar said, "I'm not going to speculate on his retirement. In your exclusive interview from CNN, it was very clear that he said two reasons. One is health that he would look at and, two, the court. When you look at the court, he has to be concerned about the makeup. And you have to be concerned about how you get a justice on the court with all of the manipulation that Mitch McConnell has engaged in. So, that would lead me to say sooner rather than later. He makes his own decision about if he's going to retire. If he's going to retire, it should be sooner rather than later if you are concerned about the court. What happens in the US Senate matters."

Lawmakers Increasingly Embracing Proxy Voting.

The New York Times (7/18, Fandos, 20.6M) reports the House “revamped its rules in the early days of the pandemic to allow lawmakers to vote remotely,” and 14 months later, the “public health threat” is now “in retreat and most members of Congress [are] vaccinated,” but “a growing number of lawmakers are using the practice to attend political events, double down on work back home or simply avoid a long commute to Washington.” The Times says “perhaps no one has benefited more from the arrangement than” House Speaker Pelosi, as it “has allowed Ms. Pelosi, whose majority is so slim that she can afford to lose no more than four Democrats if every member is present and voting, to all but ensure that absences alone do not cost her pivotal support.” The Times adds “rank-and-file lawmakers” have been taking “full advantage,” and data “suggests that lawmakers regularly use the system to extend their weekends back home,” although House Minority Leader McCarthy “and other top Republicans” oppose proxy voting.

Pennsylvania Lawmaker Pushes For “Forensic Investigation” Of 2020 Election Results.

The AP (7/18) reports in “the battleground state of Pennsylvania, where [former President Donald] Trump lost by 80,000 votes eight months ago,” the former President’s “false claims of a stolen election” are “finding new signs of life.” State Sen. Doug Mastriano (R), “bolstered by campaign trail support from top Republican candidates for governor and U.S. Senate, has launched a push for a ‘forensic investigation’ of the presidential election results.” Mastriano’s effort “is likely to face legal challenges and is still limited to three counties, where it is getting pushback even from Republican commissioners.” Mastriano’s effort “has fast become a litmus test in an election cycle where an open governor’s office and an open U.S. Senate seat...have triggered fiercely competitive Republican primaries. ... Some Republicans privately worry that the spectacle of a protracted election audit is a time bomb that not only will damage the state’s democratic institutions, but also the party’s credibility with critical swing voters.”

Oregon Bootleg Fire Expands To Size Of Los Angeles.

The AP (7/18) reports that the Oregon Bootleg Fire “torched more dry forest landscape...on Sunday, one of dozens of major blazes burning across the West as critically dangerous fire weather loomed in the coming days.” The fire “grew to more than 476 square miles, an area about the size of Los Angeles,” and authorities “expanded evacuations that now affect some 2,000 residents of a largely rural area of lakes and wildlife refuges.”

The Wall Street Journal (7/18, Levitz, Lovett, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that the Bootleg Fire was 22% contained as of Sunday morning after growing by 17,000 acres Saturday and covering over 298,662 acres. The Bootleg Fire area remains an estimated 5-10 degrees above normal, and it is exacerbating ongoing tinder conditions.

CBS Weekend News (7/18, story 5, 0:21, Duncan, 230K) provided additional coverage.

California Authorities Expand Evacuation Orders Over Wildfires. The Hill (7/18, Vakil, 5.69M) reports that the Tamarack Fire “jumped a highway and forced additional evacuations” on Sunday. The fire “was zero percent contained as of Sunday afternoon,” and it “is now covering 18,000 acres.” The wildfire “has grown steadily since lighting sparked it on July 4, leading officials to also close a portion of the Pacific Crest Trail between California State Route 88 and California State Route 4 on Sunday.”

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Two Athletes Staying In The Olympic Village Test Positive For COVID.

The Wall Street Journal (7/18, Gale, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that two Olympic athletes have tested positive for COVID-19. The two athletes were staying at the Olympic Village in Tokyo, but they have since been moved into a mandatory 14-day quarantine.

Bloomberg (7/18, Nakamichi, 3.57M) reports that the two athletes who tested positive were South African footballers. Their “cases are the first reported among athletes at the village, according to a document from Tokyo’s Olympic-organizing committee on Sunday.” So far, “there

are 55 positive cases tied to the Tokyo Games.”

The AP (7/18, Wade, Kageyama, Imray) reports that “the positive tests came as some of the 11,000 athletes and thousands more team officials expected from across the globe began arriving.” Along with the two players, “a team video analyst...also tested positive.”

Reuters (7/18) reports that “organizers on Sunday reported 10 new cases connected to the Olympics, including a third athlete who was not staying in the village, down from 15 new cases a day earlier.” Polls have shown “many Japanese oppose holding the Games with the influx of overseas visitors it entails,” especially at a time when “infection rates are climbing among Tokyo’s general population, topping 1,000 new cases for five consecutive days.”

Wall Street Journal (7/18, A1, Bachman, Gale, Radnofsky, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides additional coverage.

US Tennis Olympian Coco Gauff Tests Positive For COVID. ABC World News Tonight (7/18, story 3, 1:44, Davis, 4.52M) reported US tennis star Coco Gauff “is out of the Olympics” after she “tested positive for COVID” ahead of her Tokyo flight. The announcement comes as other Olympic athletes have tested positive in-country. NBC Nightly News (7/18, lead story, 2:13, Snow, 3.43M) reported Gauff “played at Wimbledon and before that the French Open, but it’s unclear if she had been vaccinated before traveling to Europe or where she tested positive.” She wrote on Twitter, “I want to wish Team USA best of luck and safe games.”

UK PM Johnson Calls For Caution Ahead Of “Freedom Day.”

Reuters (7/18) reports UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is “end[ing] more than a year of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions in England on Monday,” and he is “urging the public to remain cautious but putting his faith in vaccines to protect the country even as infections are surging.” English COVID laws will end at midnight, and the goal is to “speed up Britain’s economic recovery after it suffered one of the biggest hits from the pandemic among advanced economies last year.”

Johnson Announces Self-Isolation. The CBS Weekend News (7/18, story 8, 0:53, Palmer, 230K) Johnson announced a new round of self-isolation after he received a text “saying he had been in contact with someone who had COVID, and that person happened to be his own health secretary.” He said in a statement, “Hi folks. Like so many hundreds of thousands of other people across the country, I have been pinged.” ABC World News Tonight (7/18, story 8, 0:15, Davis, 4.52M) reported Johnson “was infected last year and spent several days in the ICU.”

Officials Surprised By Scale Of “Vaccine Gap” Between Rich And Poor Countries.

The AP (7/17, Hinnant, Ghosal, Cheng) reported on the “vaccine gap between the global rich and poor” which it attributes to COVID-19 having “unexpectedly devastated wealthy countries first” and to “a global purchase plan to provide vaccines for poorer countries” that “was so flawed and underfunded that it couldn’t compete.” According to the AP, “The disparity was in some ways inevitable,” but, it added, “the scale of the inequity, the stockpiling of unused vaccines, the lack of a viable global plan to solve a global problem has shocked health officials.”

Cuba’s Practice Of Shipping Medical Personnel Overseas In Spotlight As Pandemic Spreads.

USA Today (7/18, Shesgreen, 12.7M) reports that when the coronavirus pandemic was in its early stages, the Cuban government “ramped up” its “medical diplomacy program, sending teams of doctors and nurses to Italy, Venezuela and other countries overwhelmed by COVID-19 outbreaks.” USA Today portrays this as short-sighted and highly controversial that has given fuel to public discontent as the pandemic overtakes the island’s healthcare system.

2021 Hajj Begins In Saudi Arabia, But Attendance Reduced Due To Coronavirus.

The CBS Weekend News (7/18, story 7, 1:32, Duncan, 230K) reported that Muslims “have started to arrive in Mecca and Saudi Arabia for their annual pilgrimage known as the Hajj,” but the numbers “are again reduced as the delta variant takes a toll around the world.”

Italian Tourism Industry Revives Following Lockdowns.

CBS Weekend News^N (7/18, story 12, 2:11, Duncan, 1.61M) reported that the Italian tourism industry, which cratered following the appearance of COVID in 2020, has successfully revived itself following the lifting of lockdowns throughout the country. Venice is working to restore its historic tourism numbers, which typically reached 20 million visitors on an annual basis prior to the pandemic.

WSJournal: Biden Should Focus On Turning Internet Back On In Cuba.

In an editorial, the Wall Street Journal (7/18, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says that the US has the technological ability to restore Internet access to Cuba, and encourages President Biden to pursue it. The Journal suggests the use of high-altitude balloons to act as mobile wireless towers from international airspace, noting that this was done to restore Internet connectivity to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria in 2017.

Afghan Government, Taliban Talks In Doha End, Say They Will Meet Again.

Reuters (7/18) reports that delegations from the Afghan government and the Taliban "issued a joint statement on Sunday saying that they will meet again and that they have issued instructions to expedite their peace negotiations, Qatar's Al Jazeera (7/18, 118K) TV reported." The two delegations, meeting in Doha over the weekend, said "the two sides committed to continue negotiations at a high level until a settlement is reached," adding, "We will work to provide humanitarian assistance throughout Afghanistan."

Meanwhile, the AP (7/18, Gannon) reports Taliban leader Maulawi Hibatulla Akhonzada "said Sunday that his movement is committed to a political settlement to end decades of war in Afghanistan, even as the insurgents battle in dozens of districts across the country to gain territory." Akhonzada said that "in spite of the military gains and advances, the Islamic Emirate strenuously favors a political settlement in the country, and every opportunity for the establishment of an Islamic system."

Afghanistan Withdraws Diplomats From Islamabad After Kidnapping Incident.

Reuters (7/18) reports that Afghanistan announced on Sunday that it had withdrawn its ambassador and senior diplomats from the Pakistan's capital after the ambassador's daughter was briefly seized by kidnappers on Friday. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, "The Afghan government recalled the ambassador and senior diplomats to Kabul until the complete elimination of the security threats, including the arrest and punishment of the perpetrators."

Petraeus: Afghanistan Likely Heading Into "Brutal Civil War." Politico (7/18, Cohen, 6.73M) reports that on CNN's "Fareed Zakaria GPS," retired Gen. David Petraeus, a former top US commander in Afghanistan, warned, "The situation on the ground has become increasingly dire with each passing week." He added, "I fear we will look back and regret the decision to withdraw. Sadly, we may regret that sooner than I had originally thought when I said that right after the decision was announced." Later in the show, Petraeus said, "What I see now, sadly, is the onset of what is going to be quite a brutal civil war."

China Holds Amphibious Landing Exercises Near Taiwan.

Bloomberg (7/18, 3.57M) says the Chinese military "held joint amphibious landing exercises on Friday, a day after a second U.S. military aircraft landed on Taiwan in less than two months, the Communist Party-backed Global Times reported Sunday." The exercises "should be seen as warnings and a deterrent to the U.S. as well as 'Taiwan secessionists,' the newspaper cited an unidentified military expert as saying. More complex drills will likely be staged in the future, the report said."

China Signals End To Chinese Corporate Listings In The US. Bloomberg (7/18, 3.57M) reports that China has signaled its intention to close a legal loophole allowing Chinese companies to list on the US stock exchange in a statement released on July 10. The new rule, which will "require approval from a newly empowered cybersecurity regulator," is expected to heavily restrict new listings in the near future, and it was "triggered by Didi Global Inc.'s decision to push

ahead with a New York listing despite objections from regulators.”

Misinformation Being “Amplified Online” In South Korea.

The New York Times (7/18, Sang-Hun, 20.6M) reports that in “the history of South Korea’s fight for democracy, the 1980 uprising in Gwangju stands out as one of the proudest moments.” But “right-wing extremists” have “offered an alternative, highly inflammatory view of what happened: Gwangju, they say, was not a heroic sacrifice for democracy, but a ‘riot’ instigated by North Korean communists who had infiltrated the protest movement.” The Times says that “conspiracy theories” like this have been “spreading quickly in South Korea, where a political divide...is being amplified online.”

WPost Decries Indian Treatment Of Government Critics.

In an editorial, the Washington Post (7/18, 10.52M) says that the “cruelty with which India treats its critics speaks to the alarming deterioration of what is often celebrated as one of the world’s foremost democracies. The White House should advocate for the freeing of India’s political prisoners before another humanitarian dies awaiting trial.”

Austria Investigating Reports That US Diplomats In Vienna Suffering Symptoms Of Havana Syndrome.

CNN (7/18, Hruby, Hansler, 89.21M) reports on its website that the Austrian Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs on Sunday announced it is “investigating reports that US diplomats in Vienna have experienced symptoms of a mystery illness known as Havana Syndrome.” A spokesperson for the US State Department on Saturday said, “In coordination with our partners across the US Government, we are vigorously investigating reports of possible unexplained health incidents among the US Embassy Vienna community or wherever they are reported.” ABC World News Tonight (7/18, story 12, 0:24, Davis, 4.52M) provided similar coverage in a brief broadcast.

Merkel Visits Schuld As Death Toll From Floods Exceeds 180 People.

The New York Times (7/18, Eddy, 20.6M) reports German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Sunday “met with survivors and thanked volunteers as she made her way through” the “formerly quaint village” of Schuld, which was “wrecked by the extraordinary floods that have killed at least 183 people in Germany and Belgium, calling the level of destruction ‘surreal and eerie.’” The Times adds the village on the banks of the Ahr River was “rendered an unrecognizable tangle of debris covered in sticky brown mud” in flooding that German meteorologists “called...the worst in 500 years, if not a millennium.” However, the Times says that even as rescue teams “continued searching for victims amid the wreckage and debris, heavy rains in the southern German region of Bavaria caused still more flooding on Sunday.” On ABC World News Tonight (7/18, story 5, 2:00, Davis, 4.52M), Maggie Rulli reported officials “say more than 300 are still missing, as the rescue mission now turns to focus on recovery.” Rulli added, “Even as those storms move further south and the water starts to recede, fears of homes collapsing and dams breaking mean that thousands of people are still evacuated tonight.”

The AP (7/18, Moulson) reports Merkel “said authorities will work to ‘set the world right again in this beautiful region, step by step,’ and her Cabinet will approve an immediate and medium-term financial aid program on Wednesday.” The AP adds German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz “told the Bild am Sonntag newspaper that more than 300 million euros (\$354 million) will be needed immediately. And he said officials must set up a longer-term rebuilding program which, from experience with previous flooding, will be in the billions of euros.” On NBC Nightly News (7/18, story 8, 1:38, Snow, 3.43M), Meagan Fitzgerald reported residents “say it could take months, even years, to recover from this massive devastation.”

Meanwhile, Reuters (7/18, Brock, Fuessel) reports Merkel “said governments would have to get better and faster in their efforts to tackle the impact of climate change only days after Europe outlined a package of steps towards ‘net zero’ emissions by the middle of the century.” Likewise,

Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo "said the link [between the flooding and] climate change was clear." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/18, Pancevski, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) and a brief [CBS Weekend News](#) (7/18, story 6, 0:29, Duncan, 230K) broadcast provided similar coverage.

Pro-British Northern Irish Suspicious Of Biden.

[NBC News](#) (7/18, Abbas, Bradley, Symington, 4.91M) reports the Biden Administration "is insisting that London respect an agreement with the European Union that draws a customs border in the Irish Sea between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland. The arrangement, called the Northern Ireland Protocol, has enraged the enclave's pro-British loyalists." The loyalists argue the Protocol "pulls Northern Ireland closer to the neighboring Republic of Ireland, cementing Protestant suspicions of what they say is Biden's bias toward Irish Republicanism."

Russian Rights Group, Fearing Government Crackdown, Disbands.

The [AP](#) (7/18, Litvinova) reports that Team 29, a Russian right group, announced on Sunday that it was shutting down, "citing fear of prosecution of its members and supporters after Russian authorities blocked its website for allegedly publishing content from an 'undesirable'" Czech NGO. The group is an "association of lawyers and journalists specializing in treason and espionage cases and freedom of information issues."

Ahead of Eid, Egypt Frees Some "Prominent" Activists, Journalists.

[Reuters](#) (7/18) reports that several "prominent Egyptian activists and journalists were released from custody on Sunday following months of detention on charges including joining or aiding a terrorist group and spreading false news, lawyers representing them said." Reuters says that Esraa Abdelfattah, "an activist and journalist who was among the organisers of Egypt's January 2011 revolution," along with a number of others were freed.

WSJournal: Iranian Actions Give Biden Administration Reasons To Walk Away From Talks.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/18, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), in an editorial, says that while nuclear talks with Iran may resume next month, that nation's behavior indicates that it is not responding to the Administration's outreach. As evidence, the Journal cites that a variety of Iranian actions, including the indictment last week of an Iranian intelligence network that sought to kidnap a US citizen in New York and take her to Iran. The piece concludes by saying that the President has plenty of reasons to walk away from the talks and keep the pressure on Iran with sanctions.

THE BIG PICTURE

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[OPEC, Allies Agree To Boost Oil Output As Demand Roars Back](#)

[Red-Hot US Economy Expected To Cool From Here](#)

[Senate Infrastructure Bill Drops IRS Funding, Raising Pressure For New Revenue](#)

[Days Before The Olympics, More Athletes Test Positive For Covid-19](#)

[Selling Your Used Car? You Could Turn A Profit.](#)

[Peppa Pig, A Pandemic Favorite, Has American Children Acting British](#)

New York Times:

['Nobody Believed Me': How Rape Cases Get Dropped](#)

[Scorched, Parched And Now Uninsurable: Climate Change Hits Wine Country](#)

[The Ascension Of Ron Klain](#)

[Israeli Spyware Maker Is In Spotlight Amid Reports Of Wide Abuses](#)

[Historically Black Colleges Finally Get The Spotlight](#)

'Historical Distortions' Test South Korea's Commitment To Free Speech

Washington Post:

Jamal Khashoggi's Wife Targeted With Spyware Before His Death

Israeli Firm's Government Clients Use Phone-Hacking Tool For Surveillance Far Beyond Terrorists, Criminals

Bitter Loss In S. Africa After Wave Of Violence

Rules For Air Travel Are Put To Test

The New Real Estate Normal

Financial Times:

Opec+ Reaches Deal To Raise Oil Production

Pentagon Drones '8 To 14 Times' Costlier Than Banned Chinese Craft

Climate Change Blamed For Devastating German Floods

Booster Shot Debate Takes Centre Stage

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: COVID Update; COVID Vaccines-Teens; Tokyo Olympics-COVID; DC-Nationals Park Shooting; Germany-Flooding; Weather Forecast; Houston-Chemical Scare; UK-Johnson COVID Exposure; Bezos-Space Flight; Harris-Walter Reed Medical Center Visit; Michigan-Carbon Monoxide Poisoning; Austria-Potential Havana Syndrome; DC-Shooting; Britney Spears-Conservatorship; North Carolina-Veteran Receives New Home.

CBS: COVID Update; DC-Nationals Park Shooting; DC-Shooting; CBS' Kris Van Cleave-Nationals Park Shooting; US-Severe Weather; Germany-Flooding; COVID-Hajj Pilgrimage; UK-Johnson COVID Exposure; Houston-Chemical Scare; Texas-Voting Rights; 1964 Tokyo Olympics; Italy-Tourism; Bezos-Space Flight.

NBC: Tokyo Olympics-COVID; COVID Update; LA-Mask Mandate; DC-Nationals Park Shooting; DC-Shooting; White House-Gun Violence; Houston-Chemical Scare; Germany-Flooding; Bezos-Space Flight; Collin Morikawa Wins British Open; US-Jobs; Kentucky-Woman With Disability Competes In Horse Competitions.

Network TV At A Glance:

COVID Update – 6 minutes, 55 seconds

Bezos-Space Flight – 6 minutes, 15 seconds

DC-Nationals Park Shooting – 5 minutes, 20 seconds

Germany-Flooding – 4 minutes, 10 seconds

Tokyo Olympics-COVID – 4 minutes

Houston-Chemical Scare – 3 minutes, 55 seconds

DC-Shooting – 1 minute, 50 seconds

UK-Johnson COVID Exposure – 1 minute, 10 seconds

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

- President Biden — Receives the President's Daily Brief; delivers remarks on the economic recovery and the remarkable progress made under his Administration – from 60,000 to 600,000 new jobs per month thanks to the American Rescue Plan – and why we need the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework and his Build Back Better agenda to sustain that growth in the years to come; welcomes Their Majesties King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein and Queen Rania Al Abdullah of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II, to the White House; participates in a bilateral meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; participates in an expanded bilateral meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.
- Vice President Harris — Receives the President's Daily Brief.

US Senate:

- Senate Rules and Administration Committee field hearing, in Georgia, on voting rights – Field hearing on 'Field Hearing: Protecting the Freedom to Vote: Recent changes to Georgia voting laws and the need for basic federal standards to make sure all Americans can vote in the way that works best for them', with testimony from Democratic Sen. Rev. Raphael Warnock; Georgia State Sen. Sally Harrell; Georgia Coalition for the People's Agenda Executive Director Helen Butler; and Jose Segarra of Warner Robins, GA * Represents the Committee's first field hearing in 20 years

Location: National Center for Civil and Human Rights, 100 Ivan Allen Jr Blvd NW, Atlanta, GA; 10:00 AM

- Senate holds vote on judicial nominee – Senate reconvenes and begins a period of morning business, with agenda including a vote on the nomination of Tiffany Cunningham to be US Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit and, earlier, consideration of 'S.658 – National Cybersecurity Preparedness Consortium Act of 2021' and 'S.Res.306 – A resolution to authorize representation by the Senate Legal Counsel in the case of Jennifer Grappell v. Alberto M. Carvalho, et al.'

Location: US Capitol, Washington, DC; 3:00 PM

- Senate Armed Services subcommittee marks up National Defense Authorization Act – Strategic Forces Subcommittee closed markup hearing on 'National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022' * Conducted at the secret level

Location: Rm 232A, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 5:30 PM

- Senate Armed Services subcommittee marks up National Defense Authorization Act – Cybersecurity Subcommittee closed markup hearing on 'National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022' * Conducted at the secret level

Location: Rm 232A, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 6:00 PM

US House:

- House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on H.R. 3985 – Allies Act of 2021', 'H.R. 2467 – PFAS Action Act of 2021', and 'H.R. 2668 – Consumer Protection and Recovery Act'

Location: US Capitol, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM

Cabinet Officers:

- Treasury Secretary Yellen convenes meeting on stablecoins – Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen convenes the President's Working Group on Financial Markets (PWG), plus the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, to discuss interagency work on stablecoins * PWG was established to 'enhance the integrity, efficiency, orderliness, and competitiveness of US financial markets'

General Events:

- Wilson Center discussion on the future of US-Pakistan relations – 'Beyond Afghanistan: US Perspectives on the Future of US-Pakistan Relations' Wilson Center online discussion, with former US Ambassador to Pakistan, Lebanon, and Jordan David Hale, former USIP Country Representative for Pakistan Nadia Naviwala, USIP South Asia Programs Director Tamanna Salikuddin, and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's James Schwemlein

Location: Virtual Event; 10:30 AM

- Department of Energy Nuclear Science Advisory Committee meeting

Location: Virtual Event; 11:00 AM

- Federal Reserve Board of Governors closed meeting (virtual) – Federal Reserve Board of Governors closed meeting via conference call to review and determine the advance and discount rates to be charged by the Federal Reserve Banks; 11:30 AM

- Dem Sen. Chris Van Hollen at discussion on peace in Sudan – 'Partnering for Peace in Sudan' Center for Strategic and International Studies online event, with Democratic Sen. Chris Van Hollen and Sudan Ambassador to the US Amb. Nureldin Satti discussing the country's current political, economic, and security challenges

Location: Virtual Event; 12:00 PM

- HHS Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services meeting

Location: Virtual Event; 12:30 PM

- FPA releases 'A China Agenda for the Biden Administration' report – Foreign Policy Association releases 'A China Agenda for the Biden Administration' report, exploring what should be key agenda items for President Joe Biden's team to improve the relationship between the US and China

Location: Virtual Event; 8:30 PM

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b7E -3

From: [redacted] (OGC) (FBI)
Subject: Re: FYI -- Justice Department expands use of body-worn cameras by feds
To: [redacted] (PG) (FBI)
Cc: Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC) (FBI)
Sent: July 19, 2021 9:58 AM (UTC-04:00)
Hi [redacted]

b5 -1
b6 -1
b7C -1

[redacted] I've copied SC Stephen Kelly, Master of all things BWC, for his weigh in.

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]
Counsel, Field Legal Program
Office of General Counsel
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Cell: [redacted]
Desk [redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 9:16 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: FYI -- Justice Department expands use of body-worn cameras by feds

b5 -1
b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

[redacted]
SSA [redacted]
Chief Division Counsel
Pittsburgh Field Office

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 11:40 AM
To: HQ-DIV09-CDC [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC) (FBI) [redacted]
Subject: Fw: FYI -- Justice Department expands use of body-worn cameras by feds

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

All,

I know this is generating a lot of questions. This was a sudden DOJ announcement and OGC did not have the opportunity to notify the field counsel ahead of time. OGC SC Stephen Kelly and his team are working hard on this. There is a lot to be worked through and there are no answers yet as the situation is still very fluid, and likely will be for awhile. Please grant us some understanding and time - OGC is working as fast and hard as possible on this.

Thank you

[Redacted]

Counsel, Field Legal Program
Office of General Counsel
Federal Bureau of Investigation

[Redacted]

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

From: [Redacted]

Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 9:56 AM

To: [Redacted]; Prest, Erin M. (OGC) (FBI); [Redacted]; Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC)

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

[Redacted]

Cc: Jones, Jason Allen (OGC) (FBI); [Redacted]; Browning, Dawn Marie (OGC) (FBI)

[Redacted]

Subject: FYI -- Justice Department expands use of body-worn cameras by feds

<https://www.politico.com/news/2021/06/07/justice-department-body-camera-feds-492071>

<https://www.justice.gov/dag/page/file/1402061/download>

From: [redacted] OGC (FBI)
Subject: Fw: FY 2021 CRPT 100 TFO Body Cameras report for review
To: [redacted] OGC (FBI); Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC) (FBI)
Sent: July 19, 2021 7:21 PM (UTC-04:00)
Attached: CRPT FY21_100 - DOJ Task Force Body Camera Pilot Program -ALO edits.docx
FYSAA...

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

SSA [redacted]
Unit Chief
Investigative Law Unit
Office of the General Counsel
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Confidentiality Statement: This message is transmitted to you by the Office of the General Counsel of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The message, along with any attachments, may be confidential and legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient of this message, please destroy it promptly without further retention or dissemination (unless otherwise required by law). Please notify the sender of the error by a separate e-mail or by calling [redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 19, 2021 3:31 PM
To: [redacted]
Subject: Fw: FY 2021 CRPT 100 TFO Body Cameras report for review

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

From: OCA_TASKING [redacted]
Sent: Friday, July 9, 2021 9:48 AM
To: [redacted]

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

Subject: FY 2021 CRPT 100 TFO Body Cameras report for review

Comments Due: 11am July 13

Please find attached the FY 2021 CRPT 100 TFO Body Cameras report for review. To the extent your office has any comments, please submit them by the deadline.

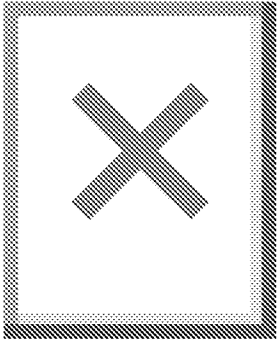
Thank you,

[redacted]
Legislative Affairs Specialist
Office of Congressional Affairs

From: Bulletin Intelligence
Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - FBI Public Affairs News Briefing Wednesday, July 21, 2021
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: July 21, 2021 6:29 AM (UTC-04:00)

b7E -3

Mobile version and searchable archives available at [REDACTED]



TO : THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF
DATE : WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 2021 6:30 AM EDT

TODAY'S TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEADING THE NEWS

- Trump Adviser Barrack Accused Of Acting As An Agent Of UAE.
- White House Mulls Taking Action Against Social Media Platforms Over Vaccine Misinformation.

FBI (22-cv-00149)-6788

- More Than 535 Arrested So Far In Capitol Siege Probe.

CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

- Florida Man Pleads Guilty To Joining "Stack Formation" During Capitol Siege.
- Man Who Claims He Was Fired By DEA Arrested In Connection With US Capitol Breach.
- McCarthy Taps Trump Loyalists For Jan 6 Committee, Signaling Partisan "Battle."
- Alabama AG Won't Say Where He Was Before Or After January 6.
- Former Montgomery County Police Chief Tapped To Lead Capitol Police.

COUNTER-TERRORISM

- Poway Synagogue Shooter Pleads Guilty To Murder And Arson Of Mosque.
- New York Man Sentenced To 18 Months For Threatening To Assassinate Federal Judge.
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- San Francisco FBI Reports "Concerning Spike" In Bay Area Child Trafficking.
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- Virginia Police Officer Faces Charges For Sexual Misconduct With Underage Cadet.
- Kentucky Man Gets Three Years For Impersonating FBI Agent.
- FBI Seeking Parents Whose Children May Be Victims Of Massachusetts Nanny In Child Porn Case.
- Pennsylvania Woman Faces Charges In North Carolina For Military Romance Scam.
- After Months-Long Manhunt, FBI Arrests Fugitive Suspected In Fatal Shooting Of 7-Year-Old Chicago Girl.
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- Court Records Show New Mexico Gang Leader Opened Fire Before Deadly Shootout With FBI.
- Continuing Coverage: Mississippi Youth Minister Faces Child Porn Charges.
- FBI, Local Police Arrest Suspect In North Dakota Bank Robbery.
- Authorities Rule Out Foul Play, Say Gas Leak Likely Caused Explosion Of Texas Home.
- Three Ohio Residents Facing Drug Charges.
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- Biden Nominates Kanter To Lead DOJ's Antitrust Division.

- Newman Settles Lawsuit Claiming She Bribed Potential Primary Opponent.
- Undercover FBI Agent And Paige Carter-Smith Testify In Burnette Trial.
- May 22 Trial Date Set For Corruption Case Against Cincinnati City Councilman.

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- FBI Warns Of Hackers Potentially Interfering With Olympic Games.
- State Department Offers \$10M Rewards For Information On Cybercrimes.
- US Says China Breached Dozens Of Pipeline Companies In Past Decade As DHS Boosts Cybersecurity Requirements.
- House Passes Bipartisan Bills To Strengthen Cybersecurity.
- Administration Official: US Doesn't Know Why REvil Vanished From Web.

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- DOJ Pushes For 50-Year Delay In Release Of Grand Jury Material.

OTHER FBI NEWS

- OIG Report Finds Ex-FBI Official Accepted Unauthorized Gifts From Media.
- Inspiration For "White Boy Rick" Sues Ex-FBI Agents, Detroit Police For \$100M.
- FBI Documents Show Bulger Fixed Pennsylvania Horse Race In 1974.
- FBI Holds Teen Outreach Program In Virginia.

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- Fauci Warns Of Delta's Growth In Senate Hearing.
- Additional Democratic Political Staff Report Infections Following Meeting With Texas Delegation.
- Amid Pandemic, US Life Expectancy Fell Sharply In 2020: CDC Report.
- HHS Says National Strategic Stockpile Much Better Prepared Compared To When Pandemic Began.
- House Ethics Panel Upholds \$500 Fines Over Lack Of Masks.
- Media Analyses: Brady's Jokes Steal The Show As Biden Welcomes Buccaneers To White House.
- WSJournal Critical Of Lhamon's Nomination To Education Post.
- Gebelhoff: If Confirmed, Gupta Will Need To Promote Needle Exchanges.
- Republicans Urge Schumer To Delay Vote On Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill.
- Biden Order On Competition Prompts Lobbying Effort.
- Administration Officials See Signs Of Relief For Global Chip Shortage.
- Bezos Becomes Second Billionaire To Kick Off Space Tourism Industry.
- Experts Say Pentagon Budget May Not Deter Chinese, Russian Aggression.
- Senate Subcommittee Advances Gillibrand's Military Justice Overhaul.
- UC Irvine Law Professors Establish New Center That Aims To "Strengthen" US Democracy.
- Former FDA Adviser Says HHS IG's Probe Into Biogen Alzheimer's Drug Approval Should Consider Lack Of Evidence For Treatment.
- States, Cities Reportedly Near \$26B Settlement With Opioid Distributors And J&J.
- Pentagon IG To Examine Security Of "Nuclear Football."
- Unrest In Cuba Has Not Yet Caused Substantially Increased Emigration.
- Biden Marks Six Months In Office.
- President Looks To Sell His Economic Agenda In Ohio On Wednesday.
- Appeals Court Dismisses GOP Lawsuit Challenging House Proxy Voting.
- More Than 80 Wildfires Now Burning Across US.
- Several K Street Firms Post Record Q2 Revenues Amid "Lobbying Boom."
- General Secretary Of Catholic Bishops Group Resigns After Cellphone Data Exposes Grindr Profile.

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- Report Suggests Several Million Indians May Have Died From COVID.
- International Olympic Community Announces New Athlete Infections.

- Bipartisan Group Of Senators Introduce Legislation Toughening War Powers Act.
- NSO's Ties To Israeli Intelligence Draw Scrutiny.
- Henry Installed As Haiti's New Prime Minister.
- US Blocks Former Honduran President, Family Over Corruption Allegations.
- Castillo Expected To Be Sworn In As Peruvian President On July 28.
- Thiessen Condemns BLM Group's Backing Of Cuban Regime.
- Afghans Who Aided US To Be Resettled At Bases In Qatar, Kuwait.
- NYTimes Report: China "Infuriated" By Biden Administration's "Attacks."
- Heavy Flooding Hits China's Henan Province.
- Taiwan Establishing Lithuanian Office Under Its Own Name.
- WSJ Report: US To Lift Opposition To Nord Stream 2.
- Russia Unveils Prototype "Fifth-Generation" Fighter.
- UK Cuts Off Fund To Microchip Factory After Sale To China.
- WPost: West Needs To Support Moldova's Sandu.
- US Drone Strike Hits Shabab For First Time During Biden Administration.
- Israeli Army, Militants Exchange Artillery Fire On Lebanese Border.
- Ignatius: Jordanian King Pressed Biden To Back Other Regional Leaders.
- Woodsome: Fate Of Americans Held By Iran Tied To Nuclear Deal.

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LEADING THE NEWS

Trump Adviser Barrack Accused Of Acting As An Agent Of UAE.

NBC Nightly News (7/20, story 8, 0:24, Holt, 5.14M) reported that on Tuesday, Thomas Barrack, former chair of Donald Trump's 2017 Inaugural Committee, "was arrested today and charged with violating federal lobbying laws." The AP (7/20, Melley, Neumeister) explains Barrack "was among three men charged in federal court in Brooklyn, New York, with acting as unregistered foreign agents as they tried to influence U.S. policy" on behalf of the United Arab Emirates "while Trump was running in 2016 and later while he was president."

CNN (7/20, Orden, 89.21M) continues on its website that Barrack "was charged...with illegal foreign lobbying on behalf of the United Arab Emirates for what federal prosecutors in Brooklyn described as an effort to influence the foreign policy positions of both the 2016 Trump presidential campaign and the subsequent incoming administration." According to CNN, Barrack is "charged in a seven-count indictment with acting as an agent of the UAE between April 2016 and April 2018," and "is also charged with obstruction of justice and making false statements to federal law enforcement agents."

The New York Times (7/20, LaFraniere, Rashbaum, 20.6M) reports that federal prosecutors "said that...Barrack used his position as an outside adviser to...Trump's campaign to publicly promote the U.A.E.'s agenda while soliciting direction, feedback and talking points from senior U.A.E. officials. After Mr. Trump was elected...Barrack continued to try to influence the administration policies in favor of the U.A.E. At one point, he told senior U.A.E. officials to give him a 'wish list' of foreign policy moves they wanted Washington to take within the first 100 days, first six months, first year and by the end of...Trump's term."

The Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) says "the charging documents do not claim that Barrack, who chaired Trump's inaugural committee, was paid for his secret lobbying work. But a UAE sovereign wealth fund has invested significantly in Colony Capital, the investment firm Barrack founded and ran for years before he stepped down as executive chairman this year." Reuters

(7/20) adds "federal prosecutors are seeking to have Barrack held in detention, saying in a court filing that his vast wealth, access to private jets and history of international travel indicate he could become a fugitive."

ABC World News Tonight⁸ (7/20, story 9, 1:27, Muir, 6.08M) reported that "Barrack is a billionaire businessman and one of Donald Trump's best friends." The Wall Street Journal (7/20, O'Brien, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports their friendship pre-dates Trump's presidency, observing that Barrack helped organize the sale of New York's Plaza Hotel to Trump in 1988 and also attempted to purchase some of Trump's casinos. The Journal says Barrack later raised \$30 million for the campaign in 2016.

The CBS Evening News⁹ (7/20, story 3, 1:47, O'Donnell, 3.93M) added that "Barrack joins a long list of indicted Trump associates including most recently Allan Weisselberg, the former CFO of Trump Organization."

White House Mulls Taking Action Against Social Media Platforms Over Vaccine Misinformation.

CNN (7/20, Klein, 89.21M) reports on its website that White House Communications Director Kate Bedingfield indicated on MSNBC's Morning Joe¹⁰ (7/20, 949K) that the Administration is "reviewing whether social media platforms should be held legally accountable for publishing misinformation via Section 230, a law that protects companies' ability to moderate content." Bedingfield said, "We're reviewing that, and certainly they should be held accountable." Bedingfield continued, "Everybody bears responsibility to ensure that we are not providing people with bad information about a vaccine that will save their lives." According to CNN, "The Section 230 debate is taking on new urgency in recent days as the administration has called on social media platforms to take a more aggressive stance on combating misinformation. The federal law, which is part of the Communications Decency Act, provides legal immunity to websites that moderate user-generated content."

CNBC (7/20, Bursztynsky, 7.34M) reports on its website that White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki had "previously said the Biden administration had started 'flagging problematic posts for Facebook that spread disinformation,' and that the government had proposed changes to major social media platforms." CNBC adds Bedingfield's comments "follow a fight between the White House and Facebook, after President Joe Biden last week said that giants like Facebook were 'killing people' by allowing disinformation regarding Covid vaccines." According to Bloomberg (7/20, Wagner, 3.57M), after Biden "said Friday that social networks like Facebook are 'killing people'...the company tried to defend itself," and, "in a strongly-worded blog post, an executive attempted to redirect people to more positive data, on the ways Facebook has spread good information." However, Bloomberg says "that didn't address the critique," and "the problem Biden was flagging is real: Covid-19 misinformation is a big issue on Facebook, and one that hasn't been fixed."

The Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) reports that some conservatives have "upped their unsubstantiated accusations that tech companies are censoring their speech as the Biden administration pressured Facebook and other tech companies to do more to limit coronavirus vaccine misinformation." Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) "sent a letter to the White House, claiming that the Biden administration is working with tech giants 'to censor Americans' free speech,'" and "specifically took issue with remarks made by White House press secretary Jen Psaki, who said the White House is regularly in touch with social media companies about 'problematic posts' related to vaccines." The Post says Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) "responded to President Biden's comments by calling social media 'a tool for Big Brother.'"

On NBC Nightly News¹¹ (7/20, story 2, 1:43, Holt, 5.14M), Gabe Gutierrez reported on "what public health experts describe as the 'moveable middle,' adults that may have been initially skeptical of the vaccine but aren't dead set against it." Gutierrez added, "Around the country, roughly half of Americans are fully vaccinated, but daily vaccinations have dropped below one million. Louisiana is among the states with the lowest rates: 36% of the population here is fully vaccinated. Some parishes are below 20%." According to Gutierrez, "For those getting the vaccine

now, it seems, the choice is all the more personal," but "it is an uphill battle. This hospital in Lafayette has 260% more COVID patients than it did two weeks ago."

In a column for the New York Times (7/20, 20.6M), Farhad Manjoo writes critically of the President's comments on Facebook's handling of vaccine misinformation, saying the President "reduced the complex scourge of runaway vaccine hesitancy into a cartoonishly simple matter of product design: If only Facebook would hit its Quit Killing People button, America would be healed again." Worse, Manjoo adds, Biden "fed into the bogus right-wing notion that Facebook and other social media giants now operate as media arms of the Democratic Party." Finally, Biden "illustrated the profound challenges that bedevil calls for stricter regulation of social media. Facebook and Twitter, like The New York Times and Fox News, enjoy a right protected by the First Amendment to post or to amplify — or to not post or not amplify — just about any legal content they care to."

Ross Douthat writes in the New York Times (7/20, 20.6M), "Vaccine hesitancy abounds outside the conservative base, and overall vaccination numbers for Republicans and independents actually look more alike than the numbers for independents and Democrats." While liberals "convinced that the main problem lies with deluded QAnon moms or intransigent Trumpistas are naturally drawn to punitive solutions: pressure online giants to censor vaccine skepticism to break the spell of misinformation, and find as many ways as possible to mandate vaccinations, to force the intransigent to take their jabs or lose their jobs," Douthat argues "if the unvaccinated and their motivations are complex and heterogeneous, then these strategies are more fraught." Douthat suggests "a more patient approach seems much more civically healthy: a mix of local outreach, public health guidance that consistently promises normalcy as a benefit of vaccination (and doesn't withdraw it arbitrarily), and actually arguing with skeptics."

Charles Lane writes in the Washington Post (7/20, Lane, 10.52M) that there has been "far too little creative thought given to a potentially powerful means of herding the last stragglers over the vaccine finish line: financial incentives or, if you prefer, bribery." Lane argues, "Only after the possibilities for financial inducement have been exhausted should we consider mandates."

McConnell Urges Americans To Vaccinate. The AP (7/20, Mascaro) reports Senate Minority Leader McConnell "implored unvaccinated Americans Tuesday to take the COVID-19 shot, issuing a stark and grave warning of a repeat of last year's rising caseloads and shutdowns if people refuse to protect themselves from the coronavirus."

ABC World News Tonight (7/20, story 7, 0:59, Scott, 6.08M) reported McConnell said, "The way to defeat getting back into the position we were last year is to get vaccinated. This is not complicated. I want to encourage everybody to do that and to ignore all of these other voices that are giving demonstrably bad advice."

De Blasio Announces New York City Vaccine Regulation. The New York Times (7/20, Goldstein, 20.6M) reports New York Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a new COVID testing policy on Tuesday, "requiring workers in city-run hospitals and health clinics to get vaccinated or else get tested on a weekly basis." The new policy "goes into effect at the beginning of August," and it will "apply to more than 10 percent of the well over 300,000 people who work for city government."

Fox's Hannity, Doocey Begin Urging Vaccinations. The New York Times (7/20, Grynbaum, Hsu, Kanno-Youngs, 20.6M) reports that while major Fox hosts continue to disparage vaccinations, Sean Hannity and Steve Doocey have started to "encourage viewers to get Covid-19 shots as the Delta variant spreads." Doocey's plea "was urgent and framed in the starkest of terms: Get the Covid-19 vaccine, or you could die." Hannity "urged viewers on Monday to 'please take Covid seriously – I can't say it enough.'" He added, "I believe in the science of vaccination." The new messaging comes as Fox News "has faced heavy criticism in recent days over its vaccine coverage, including a denunciation on the Senate floor and accusations of hypocrisy after a memo revealed that its own employees would be allowed to go maskless in the office if vaccinated."

NYTimes Analysis: Congressional Republicans Fail To Challenge Vaccine Skepticism. The New York Times (7/20, Weisman, Stolberg, 20.6M) reports that while the Delta variant "rips through conservative communities," their representatives "remain reluctant to confront vaccine misinformation and skepticism in their midst." Republican politicians "have either stoked or ignored the flood of misinformation reaching their constituents," and they have "focused

their message about the vaccine on disparaging President Biden, characterizing his drive to inoculate Americans as politically motivated and heavy-handed."

Tumulty: The US Has A Proven History Of Vaccine Passports. Karen Tumulty argues in the Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) that the Republican opposition to vaccine passports is confusing because the military has a long history of requiring vaccination data for military families. Tumulty describes her "International Certificates of Vaccination as Approved by the World Health Organization" booklet, which her family updated and transported as they moved across the country and the world. She adds that the booklets developed out of the horrors of the early 20th century, when preventable diseases killed or disabled tens of thousands of children.

More Than 535 Arrested So Far In Capitol Siege Probe.

CBS News (7/20, Hymes, 5.39M) reports, "The Department of Justice said that six months after the attack" on the US Capitol, "more than 535 defendants had been arrested, and the FBI said they have yet to identify more than 300 individuals believed to have committed violent acts on the Capitol grounds, including over 200 who assaulted police officers. FBI Director Christopher Wray said late last month, 'This is far from over.'" CBS News adds, "Prosecutors have called the case 'unprecedented' in scale, and the government said in a March court filing that the Capitol attack 'is likely the most complex investigation ever prosecuted by the Department of Justice.'" According to CBS News, "Of the more than 535 defendants who have been arrested in connection with the riots, CBS News has reviewed court documents for 525 defendants' cases that have been unsealed. Of those, at least 204 defendants were also indicted by grand juries."

The Washington Post (7/19, Zak, Heller, 10.52M) reports, "Robert Gieswein is a good man, according to family and friends." Gieswein, 24, "had no criminal history when he traveled to D.C. in January and, according to the U.S. government, joined a violent siege of the U.S. Capitol." Gieswein "appears to be affiliated with the radical militia group the Three Percenters, the FBI says, and the leader of a 'private paramilitary training group' called the Woodland Wild Dogs. Gieswein has pleaded not guilty to six criminal counts, including assaulting an officer and destruction of government property. Now he wants to be let out of jail, subject to very strict conditions, while he awaits trial – because the man he really is, according to his lawyer, is not the man the government says he was on that day." The Post adds, "That's what the U.S. District Court in D.C. is doing with at least 535 people who were somehow involved in the breach of the Capitol; there are hundreds of ongoing investigations beyond that, according to FBI Director Christopher A. Wray."

CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

Florida Man Pleads Guilty To Joining "Stack Formation" During Capitol Siege.

The Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) reports, "A Tampa man pleaded guilty Tuesday to joining a 'stack formation' of Oath Keepers members and associates who allegedly breached the Capitol on Jan. 6, becoming the latest to cooperate with prosecutors and the first among the formation to specify that he intended to hinder Congress that day using intimidation and coercion." Caleb Berry, 20, "pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy and one count of obstructing an official proceeding. In a plea deal, prosecutors agreed to request lowering an estimated prison term of 51 to 63 months under federal guidelines for Berry, who has no criminal record and is one of the youngest defendants charged in the Capitol riots, in exchange for his substantial assistance." US District Judge Amit P. Mehta "accepted the plea after Berry acknowledged that he coordinated plans and discussed the need to bring firearms for Jan. 6 in the nation's capital with Oath Keepers members."

NBC News (7/20, Williams, 4.91M) reports, "Prosecutors had asked a federal judge to keep records of his case under seal until Tuesday to avoid tipping off other Oath Keepers who face federal charges. Maintaining secrecy 'will ensure the defendant's safety while he cooperates pursuant to his plea agreement,' they said." NBC News adds, "The FBI has been successful so far in persuading members and followers of the Oath Keepers to cooperate with the sprawling federal investigation. Several members of the group face conspiracy charges, and prosecutors have said

they played a role in planning the Capitol siege. Three other people have admitted that they joined other Oath Keepers in storming the Capitol. Two pleaded guilty last month – Mark Grods of Alabama and Graydon Young of Florida. In April, Jon Schaffer of Indiana became the first Oath Keeper to plead, admitting that he entered the Capitol wearing a tactical vest and carrying bear spray.”

Man Who Claims He Was Fired By DEA Arrested In Connection With US Capitol Breach.

The [AP](#) (7/20, Kunzelman, Mustian) reports an off-duty DEA agent “posed for photographs in which he flashed his DEA badge and firearm outside the US Capitol” on the day it was breached earlier this year, according to a federal court document. That man, Mark Sami Ibrahim, has been arrested on charges that include “entering or remaining in a restricted building or grounds with a firearm and making a false statement.” The AP reports that during a Fox News [interview](#) in March, Ibrahim said he was “fired after being suspended for two months for performance issues.”

The [Washington Post](#) (7/20, Weiner, 10.52M) reports, “In a voluntary interview, according to” the federal government, “Ibrahim told an agent for the US Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General that he went to the Capitol to assist a friend who was documenting” breach-related activities for the FBI. But court records show that “friend told the agent that he was not there in any formal capacity for the FBI and that Ibrahim had concocted the story.” An [Insider](#) (7/20, 2.74M) article highlights the Post story.

Ibrahim’s arrest is also covered by other media outlets, including [Reuters](#) (7/20), [Politico](#) (7/20, Gerstein, 6.73M), [USA Today](#) (7/20, 12.7M), the [NBC News](#) (7/20, Williams, 4.91M) website, the [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/20, Queally, 3.37M), [Newsweek](#) (7/20, Kika, 2.67M), the [Daily Beast](#) (7/20, Rohrich, 933K), the [CBS News](#) (7/20, McDonald, 5.39M) website, the [Across America Patch](#) (7/20, Moran, 1.44M), the [New York Post](#) (7/20, Lapin, 7.45M), the [WTTG-TV Washington](#) (7/20, 168K) website, the [New York Daily News](#) (7/20, Brown, 2.51M), [The Hill](#) (7/20, Kruzel, 5.69M), the [WUSA-TV Washington](#) (7/20, Wainman, Fischer, Flack, Wilson, 502K) website, [The Week](#) (7/20, Garcia, 2.17M), the [Independent \(UK\)](#) (7/20, Woodward, 1.19M), the [CNN](#) (7/20, Rabinowitz, 89.21M) website, [Axios](#) (7/20, Chen, 1.26M), the [Washington Examiner](#) (7/20, Dima, 888K) and the [CNBC](#) (7/20, Mangan, 7.34M) website.

McCarthy Taps Trump Loyalists For Jan 6 Committee, Signaling Partisan “Battle.”

The [New York Times](#) (7/20, Broadwater, 20.6M) reports that House Minority Leader McCarthy (R-CA) “has chosen a pair of former President Donald J. Trump’s staunchest and most combative allies to be among his five picks to sit on the special House committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, signaling he is approaching the inquiry as a partisan battle.”

[Politico](#) (7/20, Wu, Beavers, 6.73M) continues that McCarthy has selected, Rep. Jim Banks (R-IN), chair of the Republican Study Committee, “to be the party’s leader on the select panel,” and Reps. Jim Jordan (R-OH), Rodney Davis (R-IL), Kelly Armstrong (R-ND), and Troy Nehls (R-TX) to fill the four remaining GOP spots. Politico adds, “Three out of the five Republican appointees voted to challenge certification of former President Donald Trump’s election loss. But as much as that fact may infuriate House Democrats’ base, the lawmakers themselves appear resigned to moving ahead and have little appetite to contest McCarthy’s choices — over which Speaker Nancy Pelosi technically wields veto power.” The [CBS Evening News](#) (7/20, story 6, 0:42, Killion, 3.93M) added that while “the Speaker won’t say” if she will veto McCarthy’s choices, she “did say how lawmakers voted on the election is not a criteria for service.”

WPost: Pelosi Shouldn’t Allow GOP Picks To Sabotage Jan. 6 Committee’s Work. The [Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) editorializes that Speaker Pelosi’s selections for the Jan. 6 committee – including Reps. Liz Cheney (R-WY) and Bennie Thompson (R-MS) – reflect “a real seriousness of purpose.” The Post continues, “in contrast...McCarthy’s choices seem solely designed to make a circus of the proceedings. Ringleader, of course, would be” Rep. Jordan, “a persistent if not terribly skillful disrupter and provocateur.” Furthermore, the Post says, Reps. Jordan, Banks, and Nehls “all voted against certifying the results of the election” and “their complicity in feeding...Trump’s lie about a stolen election is not compatible with any dispassionate investigation of the day’s events.” The Post concludes, “the committee has important questions to

explore, including the role that...Trump and the Pentagon played on Jan. 6; possible failures of intelligence; and, most of all, how to lessen the likelihood of a recurrence." The Speaker "should approve the appointment only of legislators who are committed to answering those questions and uncovering the truth."

Alabama AG Won't Say Where He Was Before Or After January 6.

Alabama Political Reporter (7/20, Burkhalter) reports, "Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall won't say where he was on the days leading up to and following the deadly Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol." Marshall "leads the Republican Attorneys General Association's dark-money nonprofit Rule of Law Defense Fund, which paid for robocalls detailing when and where citizens should meet. Then-Republican Attorneys General Association director Adam Piper attended a Jan. 5 meeting at the Trump International Hotel in Washington D.C., along with Sen. Tommy Tuberville, R-Alabama; Donald Trump Jr.; Eric Trump; Trump's former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn; adviser Peter Navarro; Trump's 2016 campaign manager Corey Lewandowski; and 2016 deputy campaign manager David Bossie, according to Charles W. Herbster, who was then the national chairman of the Agriculture and Rural Advisory Committee in Trump's administration. 'They discussed how to pressure more members of Congress to object to the Electoral College results that made Joe Biden the winner,' Herbster told The Omaha World-Herald about that Jan. 5 meeting."

Former Montgomery County Police Chief Tapped To Lead Capitol Police.

The AP (7/20, Tucker, Balsamo, Long) reports that following "an extensive search" by the Capitol Police Board, J. Thomas Manger, "who most recently served for 15 years as chief in Montgomery County, Maryland," has been selected as the next chief of the US Capitol Police. The AP says Manger's selection "comes as the Capitol Police and other law enforcement agencies are struggling to determine the best way to secure the Capitol" in the wake of January 6 insurrection and "what direction to take the 2,300-person force that guards the building and the lawmakers inside it and functions as mashup of a national security agency and local police department."

COUNTER-TERRORISM

Poway Synagogue Shooter Pleads Guilty To Murder And Arson Of Mosque.

KNSD-TV San Diego (7/20, 105K) reports John T. Earnest pleaded guilty Tuesday to murder and attempted murder for the attack at the Chabad of Poway and to the charge of arson at Dar-ul-Arqam Mosque on March 24, 2019. Earnest faces a "sentence of life without parole, plus an additional 121 years to life and another 16 years" and is to be sentenced September 30.

NBC News (7/21, Helsei, 4.91M) reports Earnest could face the death penalty for his federal charges. The decision deadline "on whether to seek the death penalty is Aug. 30, and the next hearing is scheduled for Sept. 8."

New York Man Sentenced To 18 Months For Threatening To Assassinate Federal Judge.

Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) reports Frank Caporusso, 53, from Manorville, New York, was sentenced Monday to 18 months in prison for threatening to assassinate the federal judge overseeing prosecution of Michael Flynn. U.S. District Judge Trevor McFadden said Caporusso "intended to subvert the criminal justice system by intimidating [Sullivan] against continuing to preside over a high-profile case." Caporusso claimed to have been intoxicated when he made the phone call and drinking six to eight shots of liquor a day on average, saying "I could not be more sorry or remorseful for threatening Judge Sullivan and his staff and family, and ashamed that I have done such a thing." Caporusso suffered a traumatic back injury in January 2020 and had been addicted to painkillers, in addition to a growing alcohol dependency and financial issues caused by the pandemic shutdowns.

Fox News (7/20, Wallace, 23.99M) provides additional coverage.

Former Guantánamo Detainee Turned Over To Authorities In Morocco.

The [New York Times](#) (7/20, Rosenberg, 20.6M) reports that former Guantánamo detainee Abdul Latif Nasser "was reunited with his family in Casablanca after U.S. troops turned him over to Moroccan state custody, his lawyers said Tuesday." The US airlifted Nasser from Guantánamo on Sunday "in the first release of a detainee from the prison by the Biden administration."

Guantánamo Detainee Fears Being Sent Back To Russia.

The [Daily Beast](#) (7/20, 933K) reports Guantanamo detainee Ravil Mingazov, who "was arrested in Pakistan in 2002 and accused of being associated with al Qaeda and the Taliban," now "faces the threat of being forcibly sent back to Russia where his family fears he could be detained, tortured or killed." Mingazov's family "maintains that fleeing persecution in Russia was the reason he was in Pakistan and Afghanistan in the first place."

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

FedScoop: IC Faces Challenge Of "Turning Cloud Competitors Into Partners."

[FedScoop](#) (7/20, Mitchell) reports the US intelligence community has "five cloud providers in place... under its multibillion-dollar Commercial Cloud Enterprise (C2E) contract," and must undertake the difficult task of "incentivizing those companies to work together rather than compete for task orders under the larger contract." Acting IC CIO Michael Waschull "pointed to this dynamic of collaborating competitors as the greatest challenge the IC faces in moving" to C2E. The IC is also planning "to bring on a systems integrator through a second, separate contract under C2E to help manage this environment," or what Waschull describes as, "providing knowledge, skill and ability to help the government make the best possible choices to devise that best-fit formula for cloud capacity and capability." Until the integrator contract "is awarded, they are supported by the CIA Cloudworks Program Management Office, said Waschull." Waschull concluded, "Having these best of breed cloud contributors in the fight with us, if we can find the magic sauce that gets them to work together, cooperatively and collaboratively, we're going to be in a far more competitive place than our neighbors that we have to deal with in this 21st-century competition."

Reports Of "Havana Syndrome" Among American Officials Now Number 200.

[NBC Nightly News](#) (7/20, story 10, 1:33, Holt, 5.14M) reported that "US officials" are "telling NBC News" that "as many as 200 Americans have now reported possible cases of that so-called Havana syndrome." NBC explained that the syndrome, which involves "mysterious neurological symptoms, sometimes brain damage," was initially "reported by diplomats at the US Embassy in Havana in 2016," but has since appeared in Russia, China, and – this year – Vienna and Berlin. NBC said the afflicted include "personnel from the State Department, CIA and Pentagon," but there is still "no proof of the cause." NBC added, "the Biden Administration is working on devices to protect personnel as it's considering sending diplomats back to Havana for the first time since" the attacks began.

NSO's Ties To Israeli Intelligence Draw Scrutiny.

As part of its "Pegasus Project" investigation, the [Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) says Israel's NSO Group "earned a reputation among national security experts around the world as a best-in-class manufacturer of surveillance technology capable of secretly gathering information from a target's phone. But U.S. and European security officials regard the company with a degree of suspicion." The Post reports that "several current and former officials said they presumed that the company, which was founded by former Israeli intelligence officers, provides at least some information to the government in Jerusalem about who is using its spying products and what information they're collecting. 'It's crazy to think that NSO wouldn't share sensitive national security information with the government of Israel,' said one former senior U.S. national security official who has worked closely with the Israeli security services."

France's Macron, Pakistan's Khan Among Those Targeted By NSO. The [Washington](#)

Post (7/20, A1, Timberg, Birnbaum, Harwell, Sabbagh, 10.52M) reports that the "list of more than 50,000 phone numbers...targeted by [NSO's] Pegasus spyware licensed to governments worldwide," includes "three presidents, 10 prime ministers and a king." The Post adds, "Three sitting presidents, France's Emmanuel Macron, Iraq's Barham Salih and South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa. Three current prime ministers, Pakistan's Imran Khan, Egypt's Mostafa Madbouly and Morocco's Saad-Eddine El Othmani. Seven former prime ministers, who according to time stamps on the list were placed there while they were still in office, including Lebanon's Saad Hariri, Uganda's Ruhakana Rugunda and Belgium's Charles Michel. And one king: Morocco's Mohammed VI."

Indian Opposition Disrupts Parliament, "Seeks Probe Into Pegasus." Reuters (7/20) reports Indian opposition parties "disrupted parliament on Tuesday, demanding an investigation into reports that the government used Israeli-made Pegasus spyware to snoop on scores of journalists, activists and politicians, including the main opposition leader Rahul Gandhi." Shouting out slogans against "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, the opposition members said they wanted an independent probe into the complaints of spying and the resignation of Interior Minister Amit Shah."

WPost: Private Spyware Industry Needs Regulation. In an editorial, the Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) says that in light of the revelations about the NSO group, the "private spyware industry is thriving, largely unrestrained. That must end. Transparency requirements and accountability requirements should ensure companies' 'rigorous reviews' are actually rigorous, but governments should also take the onus on themselves to assess the human rights impact of issuing a license before it's approved — and, if it is approved, after."

Maine Senators Support Intelligence Community Workforce Agility Protection Act.

The AP (7/21) reports Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Angus King (I-ME) have "joined a push to help intelligence professionals increase their mobility" and want to "allow the intelligence workers to deduct some moving expenses from federal taxes." The senators "said the intelligence workers are vital to national security and sometimes must relocate due to a change in assignment. They have joined a bipartisan group of senators that is supporting the Intelligence Community Workforce Agility Protection Act of 2021."

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Rep. Slotkin Seeks FBI Briefing On Nassar Report.

State News (7/20, Ramsey) reports, "Rep. Elissa Slotkin has sent a letter to FBI Director Christopher Wray to request a briefing from the FBI following the Department of Justice's, or DOJ, report last week that the FBI made errors in its investigation of Larry Nassar, according to a press release from her office." The report "said that the FBI's Indianapolis Field Office department 'failed to respond to the Nassar allegations with the utmost seriousness and urgency that they deserved and required' and did not act quickly enough to prevent Nassar from committing more sexual assaults. Slotkin said in a statement following the report that she would be requesting a private briefing to understand how the errors occurred."

FBI Failed To Respond To Nassar Allegations. The Los Angeles Daily News (7/20, Reid, 256K) reports the DOJ Inspector General report released last week found the FBI did not respond to allegations against Larry Nassar "with the urgency that the allegations required" and certain agents at the FBI Indianapolis office made false statements to minimize errors and conflicts of interest. The report claims that these errors allowed Nassar to abuse over 40 new victims. Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) said "It's now up to Director Wray to hold bad actors accountable...The FBI must learn from its failures and take correct actions to ensure this never happens again."

The Washington Times (7/20, Bruce, 626K) posts an opinion piece from commentator Tammy Bruce on the failure of the FBI to investigate Larry Nassar. Bruce questions the FBI's capability to deal with its mission profile, citing the Nassar coverup and politically motivated investigations.

FBI Seeking To Identify Lexington Bank Robber.

WLEX-TV Lexington, KY (7/20, 114K) reports the FBI is requesting aid from the public in identifying a man who robbed Traditional Bank in Lexington, Kentucky Monday. The suspect is described as a tall, thin, white male.

Joplin And Louisburg Bank Robberies Possibly Linked.

KOAM-TV Pittsburg, KS (7/20) reports the Joplin Police Department is investigating whether the recent bank robberies in Joplin, Missouri and Louisburg, Kansas may be linked.

FBI & Bibb County Sheriff's Office Arrest 10 In Joint Operation.

WMGT-TV Macon, GA (7/20, Coates) reports the FBI and Bibb County Sheriff's Office conducted a joint search warrant operation in Georgia that led to the arrest of 10 suspects Tuesday morning. The arrests were made "in response to an increase in violent crimes in the community." So far, Deion Bernard Adams, 27, Johnifer Dernard Barnwell, 35, Tyrell Valente Barnwell, 26, Christopher Leon Coleman Jr. 38, Jameliha Shalonda Coleman, 34, Nickolas Ray French, 27, Rodreecus Philayoungy Jolly, 28, Terrell Shamar Moore, 24, Diamond Monique Thomas, 25, and Zerrick Kenterris Usry, 37 have been arrested.

The Macon (GA) Telegraph (7/20, Baxley, 159K) reports the arrests "cover a range of crimes, from a probation violation and failure to appear in court to possession of drugs and intent to distribute them. Some also face weapons charges."

WMAZ-TV Macon, GA (7/20, 334K) reports the FBI sent out a statement to WMAZ-TV, saying, "The FBI, in conjunction with the Bibb County Sheriff Office and with the assistance of other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, executed a number of court authorized search warrants in the Macon area as part of a response to an increase in violent crimes in our communities. Our investigation is ongoing and to preserve the integrity of that investigation we won't be able to share any further information at this time."

The Macon (GA) Telegraph (7/20, Baxley, 159K) reports that Macon, Georgia had a record number of 50 homicides in 2020, spurring the Macon Violence Prevention Initiative, public forums and community events in responding to the violence, as well as the recent law enforcement actions.

Reading Police Chief Updates Public On Progress Of Operation Ceasefire.

Berks Weekly (7/20) reports Reading Police Department Chief Richard Tornielli shared with the public the latest results of Operation Ceasefire, a police effort to reduce gun violence in Reading, Pennsylvania. Launched in February 2021, Operation Ceasefire has led to a 33% reduction in shooting incidents compared to 2020. A large-scale enforcement detail was conducted in Reading July 8 as part of Operation Ceasefire, leading to three new felony arrests and four new misdemeanors.

FBI Investigating Possible Hate Crime In Mount Laurel.

The Philadelphia Inquirer (7/20, Burney) reports the FBI is investigating a possible hate crime in a Mount Laurel, New Jersey development. Edward Cagney Mathews is accused of threatening Black residents in the Essex Place condo community. FBI Special Agent Vernon Addison was at a Mount Laurel Council meeting last week with Mayor Stephen Steglik to discuss Mathews' past behavior.

FBI Seeks Suspect In Three Albuquerque Area Bank Robberies.

The Albuquerque (NM) Journal (7/20, Reisen, 188K) reports the FBI is searching for a suspect believed to be connected to three Albuquerque area bank robberies. The suspect is described as "Hispanic, around five feet seven inches tall, with tattoos on his neck and forearm." FBI spokesman Frank Fisher said the man "robbed a bank in Moriarty and Tijeras Monday morning and is suspected of robbing another Moriarty bank last Thursday."

Trenton, New Jersey, Takes Action Against Violent Criminals.

The [Times of Trenton \(NJ\)](#) (7/20, Shea, 1.58M) reports Trenton, New Jersey Interim Police Director Steve Wilson said he is "putting together a task force to combat violence in the city" a day after two men were killed in separate shootings in Trenton. Wilson said, "Each life lost to violent crime is a horrible tragedy to the family and friends of the victims and the community at large. Our community will not tolerate this deadly outbreak and through its police department and local, state and federal law enforcement partners, we will push back against the violence."

88 More People Claim To Have Been Framed By Corrupt Police Officer Ronald Watts.

The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (7/20, Esposito, 970K) reports 88 people have claimed to be framed by corrupt ex-Chicago Police Sgt. Ronald Watts. Cook County prosecutors have already cancelled 109 convictions connected to Watts and his tactical teams.

[NBC News](#) (7/20, Schuppe, 4.91M) reports the 88 people demanding exoneration have gone directly to a judge after dissatisfaction over the state attorney's handling of the case.

[AP](#) (7/20, Babwin) provides additional coverage.

Editorial: South LA Residents Not To Blame For LAPD Fireworks Failure.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/20, 3.37M) posts an editorial placing the blame for the June 30 fireworks mishap on the LAPD's lack of caution. The editorial board writes, "L.A. leaders have an obligation to provide immediate assistance so impacted residents can repair or replace their property, and begin to heal from the trauma of the explosion. This is not the time to put struggling families through the usual bureaucratic claims and insurance process."

South Carolina Man Sues Police For Defamation.

[AP](#) (7/20, Collins) reports Travis Price is suing the city of Rock Hill, South Carolina and Rep. Ralph Norman (R-SC) for defamation after "police body camera footage showed he did not fight an officer who attacked him." Price's lawyer, Justin Bamberg wrote in a statement, "The entire official written City Memorandum was written in a way so as to disparage the character, image, and reputation of Plaintiff; purposefully using statements like 'managed to handcuff Travis' so the public would believe Plaintiff was combative and fighting officers, resisting or evading arrest, and/or otherwise being unlawfully non-compliant with law enforcement lawful orders."

San Francisco FBI Reports "Concerning Spike" In Bay Area Child Trafficking.

[KGO-TV](#) San Francisco (7/20, Sierra, 271K) reports human trafficking rescue organizations around the San Francisco Bay Area are reporting an increase in demand for services. Founder of non-profit Breaking the Chains, Debra Rush said her organization received about two to three requests a week by early 2020, but by July 2021 requests have increased to 15 to 20 per week. FBI Special Agent Dan Costin, overseer of the San Francisco Violent Crimes Against Children and Human Trafficking squad, said, "The amount of time that kids have spent online this year and a half, constantly being in front of the screen and being in environments where they can be easily contacted. It's all through social media apps, video games, and phone applications." A report showed "disclosed there were 57 human trafficking cases investigated in San Francisco in 2017 - less than half of those cases resulted in arrests. According to the taskforce, only two people were charged and three other people were convicted."

Woman With Dementia Kidnapped And Held At East Hollywood Motel.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (7/20, Wick, 3.37M) reports a 68-year-old woman with dementia "was kidnapped outside the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Medical Center then held for several hours at an East Hollywood motel." The woman was being accompanied by a friend from the Wilshire Veterans Affairs Medical Center when Johnny Ray Gasca, 51, of Bronx, New York, abducted the victim and took her away in a pickup truck. Gasca told FBI agents after his arrest that he withdrew \$15,000 from her account at a bank. Gasca was previously "sentenced to seven years in federal prison for illegally taping movies in theaters and other crimes in 2006."

[KTLA-TV](#) Los Angeles (7/20, Kiszla, 348K) reports that in California on Monday, the FBI

rescued a 68-year-old woman who suffers from "dementia" after she was "kidnapped" from the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Medical Center. The FBI was also able to arrest her abductor, Johnny Ray Gasca. KTLA explains that Gasca "physically forced" the woman into his pickup truck while she was attempting to schedule an appointment at the hospital at approximately 8:30 a.m. on Monday. A friend who had accompanied her to the hospital recognized Gasca, "who had a prior relationship with the victim," and told federal agents. Gasca now faces a federal kidnapping charge.

Weinstein Extradited To California To Face Sex Crime Charges.

NBC Nightly News (7/20, story 9, 0:23, Holt, 5.14M) reported former movie mogul Harvey Weinstein "arrived at the airport in Burbank, California" on Tuesday "after losing his fight against extradition." The Wall Street Journal (7/20, Paul, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says the disgraced movie producer, who is serving a 23-year sentence for sex crimes in New York, will face rape and sexual assault charges from a separate case in California. Weinstein's extradition has been delayed for over a year due to the COVID pandemic and his own health problems. The CBS Evening News (7/20, story 7, 0:20, O'Donnell, 3.93M) added "Weinstein could appear in court as early as" Wednesday on the new charges, which involve allegations from five women.

Virginia Police Officer Faces Charges For Sexual Misconduct With Underage Cadet.

WRC-TV Washington (7/20, Smith, Alvarez Brinez, 301K) reports that on Monday, local prosecutors in Virginia indicted John Grimes, a former officer in the Fairfax County Police Department, "for alleged sexual misconduct with an underage police cadet in 2019." WRC explains, the department "learned in December 2019 of alleged misconduct against a 16-year-old girl who was a member of the Fairfax County Police Public Safety Cadet Program ... The department said it immediately stripped Grimes of his police powers." WRC adds the FBI "tipped off" the Fairfax County police after Grimes applied to become a special agent and "underwent background checks."

Kentucky Man Gets Three Years For Impersonating FBI Agent.

The Somerset (KY) Commonwealth Journal (7/20, Slaven, 23K) reports that on July 8, a local court sentenced Eugene Christian Moore to three years in prison "after pleading guilty to Impersonating a Peace Officer." The Commonwealth Journal explains that "according to the arrest citation," officers received a call about "a man who entered the business flashing a badge and stating he was with the FBI and needed to get a vehicle parked behind the building." Officers caught up with Moore and he admitted "that he had presented a gold coin and told workers he was with the FBI and needed to take the BMW to Lexington."

FBI Seeking Parents Whose Children May Be Victims Of Massachusetts Nanny In Child Porn Case.

The AP (7/20) reports that on Tuesday, "authorities in Boston...said they are reaching out to parents who use a popular child care website and whose children may be victims" of Stephanie Lak, "a nanny who is now charged with sharing child pornography." The AP explains, "Investigators found that...Lak...used the website Care.com to find work as a nanny as recently as 2019 ... Parents who were in contact with her are being asked to contact the FBI."

WBIS-TV Boston (7/20, 83K) adds that Lak, who was arraigned in April, is facing two charges: "possession of child pornography and distributing material of a child in a sex act." WEXT-TV Boston (7/20) explains, "On April 15, the Boston Police Department and the FBI's Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force executed a search warrant at Lak's residence and seized a laptop and three smartphones. Then on April 27, Lak was interviewed by members of the investigative team and allegedly admitted receiving and sending about 100 files of child sexual abuse material, and to engaging in conversation with other social media users in which the abuse of children was discussed."

Pennsylvania Woman Faces Charges In North Carolina For Military Romance Scam.

Greensburg (PA) Tribune-Review (7/20, Signorini) reports that last week, a Jo Ann Burkey, a Greensburg, Pennsylvania resident, "surrendered to North Carolina authorities last week after investigators accused her of stealing money from a person on a dating website by claiming to be a member of the military." The Tribune-Review explains, "The situation was reported to the department on Jan. 29 after a person who met Burkey through an online dating website sent her \$7,500. Authorities said Burkey claimed to be in the military and needed money to ship her belongings back home." Burkey now faces charges of accessing a computer to defraud, obtaining property by false pretense and attempting to obtain property by false pretense.

After Months-Long Manhunt, FBI Arrests Fugitive Suspected In Fatal Shooting Of 7-Year-Old Chicago Girl.

The AP (7/20) reports that on Monday, Devontay Anderson, the man wanted in connection with the fatal shooting of 7-year-old Jaslyn Adams in April at a McDonald's drive-thru in Chicago, was "taken into custody." Fox News (7/20, Casiano, 23.99M) continues that "FBI Special Agent Shelley Gryz told" reporters that Anderson "was arrested 'without incident' in connection to the April 18 shooting." Fox adds that "the arrest came months after Anderson was charged with first-degree murder, along with a separate federal charge of unlawful flight to avoid prosecution."

The Chicago Tribune (7/20, Meisner, Casanova, 2.03M) says that according a federal complaint, Anderson "was one of three men believed to be involved in the April 18 attack...that left Jaslyn dead and her father seriously wounded." The Tribune adds that "two others, Marion Lewis...and Demond Goudy...were previously arrested on murder charges and have been ordered held without bond." The Chicago Patch (7/20, Swanson, 1.44M) explains that the case against Anderson will proceed in state court.

The Chicago Sun-Times (7/20, 970K), and WLS-TV Chicago (7/20, 334K) also provide coverage of Anderson's arrest.

Missing Wisconsin Girl Rescued, Alabama Man Charged With Human Trafficking.

Birmingham (AL) News (7/20, Robinson, 656K) reports that "a human trafficking investigation" in Homewood, Alabama "led to the arrest of a Birmingham man," Jeremy Alexander, "and the rescue of a 14-year-old Wisconsin girl." The News continues that Alexander now faces charges of "first-degree human trafficking, first-degree kidnapping and certain persons forbidden to carry a firearm." The News adds, "The operation was carried out...Homewood's Special Investigation Unit with assistance from the FBI Child Endangerment and Human Trafficking Task Force." WKOW-TV Madison, WI (7/20, 47K), WMTV-TV Madison, WI (7/20, 40K), and WSFA-TV Montgomery, AL (7/20, 34K) all provide coverage of Alexander's arrest.

Court Records Show New Mexico Gang Leader Opened Fire Before Deadly Shootout With FBI.

The Albuquerque (NM) Journal (7/20, Reisen, 188K) reports that "recently unsealed federal affidavits" establish that "as FBI agents surrounded Marquez Floyd" – a suspected member of "Kirk Town Piru" (KTP) and a leader of "Tha Firm Family Movement" – in his SUV last Wednesday, "the 31-year-old 'suddenly' reached for a gun and shot at them." The Journal adds one agent was wounded by Floyd's shots and other agents returned fire, killing Floyd.

KRQE-TV Albuquerque, NM (7/20, 224K) explains Floyd had been under investigation "for nearly two years for nearly two years because of his alleged ties to" KTP – "the same gang linked to the murder of the University of New Mexico baseball player Jackson Weller." KRQE says "court documents reveal that on July 14, the day of the shooting, agents had followed Floyd from his home...and attempted to pull him over." While Floyd did stop his vehicle "in the parking lot behind a strip mall," he "ignored commands" after "task force agents identified themselves as FBI and asked him to get out of the vehicle." The agents approached the vehicle and "Floyd grabbed a gun and started shooting." The agents returned fire, "striking Floyd." KRQE adds the FBI "says the shooting itself will be thoroughly investigated."

Continuing Coverage: Mississippi Youth Minister Faces Child Porn Charges.

The [Enterprise-Journal \(MS\)](#) (7/20, 31K) reports that following his arrest last Thursday in Mississippi as part of "a joint operation" between "local law enforcement and an FBI task force," Thomas Allen 'Tag' Gatlin, a youth minister, "was charged with possession of child pornography."

FBI, Local Police Arrest Suspect in North Dakota Bank Robbery.

The [Wahpeton \(ND\) Daily News](#) (7/20, Staff, 7K) reports Tessa Jaksa, the suspect in a July 19 bank robbery in Wyndmere, North Dakota, "has been arrested." The Daily News adds that according to KFGO, "FBI agents assisted Moorhead police in making the arrest."

Authorities Rule Out Foul Play, Say Gas Leak Likely Caused Explosion Of Texas Home.

[Newsweek](#) (7/20, Kika, 2.67M) reports that "a single-story home in Plano, Texas, was 'entirely destroyed' in an explosion on Monday evening. The blast was reportedly felt by residents up to a mile away and sent six people to the hospital." The [Dallas Morning News](#) (7/20, 772K) continues that on Tuesday, "fire investigators said" the explosion was "likely caused by an isolated gas leak." The Morning News adds that officials "from the FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives" had responded to the scene and "used a dog to rule out the existence of any explosives. Authorities have ruled out foul play but are still trying to determine where exactly the explosion happened." The [Fort Worth \(TX\) Star-Telegram](#) (7/20, Johnson, 431K) and the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (7/20, 188K) also provide coverage of the explosion.

Three Ohio Residents Facing Drug Charges.

The [Portsmouth \(OH\) Daily Times](#) (7/20, 36K) reports the Southern Ohio Drug Task Force conducted an investigation that led to drug charges for Portsmouth residents Bria Gilliland, Terrence West, and Stanley Abdul Lamar Howard Jr. The FBI is represented on that task force, according to the Daily Times and a similar [Scioto Post \(OH\)](#) (7/20, Newman) story.

MS-13 Gang Member Pleads Guilty To Racketeering Charge.

An online [WFMD-AM](#) Frederick, MD (7/20, McManus, 1K) report says MS-13 gang member Jorge Guerra-Castillo has pleaded guilty in federal court "to conspiracy to commit racketeering." Anyone who has information on MS-13 gang activities is encouraged to call the FBI's "nationwide hotline at 1-866-STP-MS13 (1-866-787-6713)."

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

Biden Nominates Kanter To Lead DOJ's Antitrust Division.

The [New York Times](#) (7/20, Hirsch, 20.6M) reports the White House on Tuesday announced President Biden will "nominate Jonathan Kanter to be the top antitrust official at the Justice Department," which "would add another longtime critic of Big Tech and corporate concentration to a powerful regulatory position." The Times says Biden "has named other critics of Big Tech to prominent roles, such as appointing Lina Khan, a critic of Amazon, to lead the Federal Trade Commission," while Tim Wu, "another legal scholar who says regulators need to crack down on the tech giants, serves in an economic policy role at the White House." The Times adds that Kanter is "an antitrust lawyer who has made a career out of representing smaller rivals of the American tech giants," and his nomination "signals how strongly the administration is siding with...lawmakers, researchers and regulators who say that Silicon Valley has obtained outsize power over the way Americans speak with one another, buy products online and consume news."

Likewise, the [Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) says Kanter, "is known as an adversary of giant tech corporations including Google and Apple," and "has represented large companies like Microsoft, as well as smaller tech companies like Google critic Yelp." The Post adds his nomination "would fill a critical vacancy amid a broader administration effort to crack down on concentration in the economy, particularly in the tech sector," that includes "a sweeping executive order targeting corporate consolidation [and] directly challenges the path that Google, Facebook, Amazon and Apple took to dominance."

Politico (7/20, Nysten, Birnbaum, 6.73M) reports Sens. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) both "hailed the selection of Kanter," and Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), "the vice chair of the House Judiciary antitrust subcommittee and leading progressive in the lower chamber, said she welcomes Kanter's efforts to 'rein in Big Tech's anti-competitive practices, put an end to monopolistic practices, and promote fairness.'" However, Politico adds Kanter "may not have an untroubled path," and reports that White House ethics officials "had raised red flags about hiring antitrust officials with a history of representing critics of the tech giants." Bloomberg (7/20, Sink, McLaughlin, 3.57M) and the Wall Street Journal (7/20, Restuccia, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provide similar coverage.

Newman Settles Lawsuit Claiming She Bribed Potential Primary Opponent.

Roll Call (7/20, Marquette, 130K) reports Rep. Marie Newman (D-IL) "has agreed to settle a lawsuit alleging she bribed a potential primary opponent not to run against her." Iymen Chehade claimed "he and Newman entered into an employment contract in December 2018 that said if Newman won the congressional race in Illinois' 3rd District in 2020, Chehade would be hired in her office and paid between \$135,000 and \$140,000 annually." The lawsuit said, "In an effort to induce Chehade not to run against her in the primary, Newman offered Chehade employment as Foreign Policy Advisor and Legislative or District Director." A spokesperson for Newman's campaign said in a statement, "Congresswoman Newman and Chehade have resolved their dispute and the lawsuits have been dismissed by agreement." The lawsuit in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois "was dismissed with prejudice on July 16."

Undercover FBI Agent And Paige Carter-Smith Testify In Burnette Trial.

WCTV-TV Tallahassee, FL (7/20, Casey, 60K) reports testimony in the J.T. Burnette Trial continued as Paige Carter-Smith and undercover FBI agent "Mike Miller" testified on Tuesday morning. Carter-Smith testified that she was not "knowingly" part of the scheme. "Mike Miller" and the other undercover agents posed as members of Southern Pines development in 2016.

May 22 Trial Date Set For Corruption Case Against Cincinnati City Councilman.

WCPO-TV Cincinnati (7/20, Murphy, 185K) reports U.S. District Court Judge Matthew McFarland set a May 2, 2022 trial date in the "corruption case against suspended Cincinnati City Councilman Jeff Pastor." Pastor was arrested last November by the FBI on charges "that he took \$55,000 in bribes from two developers during his first term on council. He faces charges of conspiracy, honest services wire fraud, bribery, attempted extortion and money laundering, which, if convicted, could send him to prison for several years." Suspended Cincinnati City Councilman P.G. Sittenfeld was also arrested by the FBI last November under corruption charges. No trial date has yet been set for Sittenfeld's case.

CYBER DIVISION

FBI Warns Of Hackers Potentially Interfering With Olympic Games.

The Washington Times (7/20, Blake, 626K) reports, "Hackers and cybercriminals of all sorts may seek to disrupt or otherwise attack the already delayed 2020 Olympics, the FBI warned ahead of the Summer Games set to start Friday in Tokyo." The FBI "issued an alert Monday warning about the possibility of hackers launching attacks on private-sector targets either directly or indirectly related to the upcoming Olympics. While the FBI said it was unaware of any specific threat on the Olympics or a related entity, it noted there is potential for malicious cyberactivities to occur and encouraged vigilance. The FBI specifically warned about the likelihood of hackers using distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks, ransomware, social engineering, phishing or insider threats to meddle with the Olympics."

State Department Offers \$10M Rewards For Information On Cybercrimes.

ExecutiveGov (7/20, Edwards) reports the State Department is offering "up to \$10 million in

rewards through the Rewards for Justice (RFJ) program for information that could help identify and locate individuals involved in malicious cyber operations against U.S. critical infrastructure." Certain malicious cyber activities "homing in on critical infrastructure may be considered a violation of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA), the State Department said Thursday." The State Department "said the RFJ program has established a Tor-based reporting channel to protect the security and safety of individuals providing tips and is collaborating with interagency partners to facilitate information processing and payment of rewards to sources." The department may pay "potential sources in the form of cryptocurrency through the RFJ program."

US Says China Breached Dozens Of Pipeline Companies In Past Decade As DHS Boosts Cybersecurity Requirements.

The [New York Times](#) (7/20, Perloth, 20.6M) reports, "The Biden administration disclosed previously classified details on Tuesday about the breadth of state-sponsored cyberattacks on American oil and gas pipelines over the past decade, as part of a warning to pipeline owners to increase the security of their systems to stave off future attacks." From 2011 to 2013, "Chinese-backed hackers targeted, and in many cases breached, nearly two dozen companies that own such pipelines, the F.B.I. and the Department of Homeland Security revealed in an alert on Tuesday," and "for the first time, the agencies said they judged that the 'intrusions were likely intended to gain strategic access' to the industrial control networks that run the pipelines 'for future operations rather than for intellectual property theft.' In other words, the hackers were preparing to take control of the pipelines, rather than just stealing the technology that allowed them to function."

Meanwhile, the [AP](#) (7/20, Merchant) reports that on Tuesday, DHS "announced new requirements for U.S. pipeline operators to bolster cybersecurity following a May ransomware attack that disrupted gas delivery across the East Coast. In a statement, DHS said it would require operators of federally designated critical pipelines to implement 'specific mitigation measures' to prevent ransomware attacks and other cyber intrusions. Operators must also implement contingency plans and conduct what the department calls a 'cybersecurity architecture design review.'" The AP says DHS "did not immediately release further details about the guidance, which comes after another directive issued weeks after the May 7 attack on Georgia-based Colonial Pipeline." [Bloomberg](#) (7/20, Subscription Publication, 4K) reports that "the new requirements" were "levied by the Transportation Security Administration."

China Rejects Western Charges That It Is Behind Cyberattacks. [Bloomberg](#) (7/20, 3.57M) reports that on Tuesday, China "rejected accusations by the U.S., U.K. and their allies that actors linked to the Asian nation's government were behind the Microsoft Exchange hack and other 'malicious cyber activities.'" The [AP](#) (7/20) says foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said, "The United States ganged up with its allies to make unwarranted accusations against Chinese cybersecurity. This was made up out of thin air and confused right and wrong. It is purely a smear and suppression with political motives."

Meanwhile, David Ignatius writes in his [Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) column that with Russia and China "facing more pressure from Western governments to stop malicious cyberattacks, they've announced a pact to work together for new rules to control cyberspace. In the annals of diplomatic hypocrisy, this new accord is a stunner, even by Russian and Chinese standards." Ignatius argues the agreement "should raise eyebrows because it comes at a time when U.S. intelligence agencies are discovering new evidence that Russian and Chinese intelligence agencies are either directing or condoning use of ransomware and other malicious cyberattacks against Western companies. ... Even as Russian and Chinese intelligence operatives escalate their attacks on the West, the two governments are trying to claim the high road as Internet cops - and denouncing Western technology companies as dangerous monopolists."

House Passes Bipartisan Bills To Strengthen Cybersecurity.

[The Hill](#) (7/20, 5.69M) reports the House on Tuesday "approved five bipartisan measures designed to enhance various aspects of the nation's cybersecurity following recent major cyberattacks." According to The Hill, "The cyber-related package passed in a 319-105 vote. It included measures to fund cybersecurity at the state and local level, bolster reporting requirements and test critical

infrastructure." One bill, the State and Local Cybersecurity Act, "would establish a grant program to provide \$500 million annually to state and local governments over the next five years for cybersecurity needs. Also included in the package was the Cybersecurity Vulnerability Remediation Act, which would improve the reporting of cybersecurity vulnerabilities. A third bipartisan bill...would require the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), an agency within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to establish a program to test critical infrastructure readiness against cyberattacks."

Administration Official: US Doesn't Know Why REvil Vanished From Web.

Politico (7/20, Toosi, 6.73M) reports, "The Biden administration does not know exactly why ransomware gang REvil, thought to be based in Russia, has vanished from the dark web, a senior official said Tuesday," but the US "will continue to place pressure on criminal groups like REvil, as well as governments, such as Russia, that are responsible for the territory where these groups operate, the administration official added." According to Politico, the official's comments "were the clearest yet to suggest that the United States did not play a direct role in taking down REvil's websites and other online infrastructure in recent days." REvil "is suspected of targeting a meat supplier and a major information-technology vendor in recent months. The move hit businesses in the United States and beyond by locking them out of their systems while REvil demanded money to stop the attack."

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

DOJ Pushes For 50-Year Delay In Release Of Grand Jury Material.

The Washington Post (7/19, 10.52M) reports that the Justice Department "is pushing for rule changes that would put a 50-year delay on when courts can consider releasing material from federal grand juries...and would separately allow gag orders to be applied more broadly to witnesses." The Post says that while these recommendations were initially "made during the Trump administration," President Biden's Justice Department has continued to push for "the changes, even as critics oppose what they say would be a significant expansion of secrecy around federal courts and investigations."

OTHER FBI NEWS

OIG Report Finds Ex-FBI Official Accepted Unauthorized Gifts From Media.

The Daily Caller (7/20, Price, 375K) reports, "A former senior FBI official had unauthorized contacts with media sources and accepted unauthorized gifts from members of the media in the run up to the 2016 presidential election, according to The Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG)." According to the Caller, "The OIG released a report Tuesday detailing how an unnamed then-senior FBI employee had 'unauthorized contacts' and 'received items of value' from members of the media between January and November of 2016 in violation of bureau policy. 'In addition to substantive communications with reporters, this media contact included unauthorized social engagements outside of FBI Headquarters involving drinks, lunches, and dinners,' the report alleged. 'The OIG also found that the Senior FBI Official violated federal regulations and FBI policy when the Senior FBI Official accepted tickets from members of the media to two black tie dinner events, one valued at \$225 and the other valued at \$300, and received transportation to one event from a reporter, all without prior authorization.'"

Human Events (7/20, 22K) reports, "According to a Justice Department investigation, a former senior FBI official violated agency policy by having unauthorized contact with – and accepting gifts from – members of the media during the Trump-Russia probe." According to Human Events, "The investigation found that the official, who has since retired from the agency, 'had numerous contacts with members of the media between January and November 2016 in violation of FBI policy,' and accepted unauthorized gifts from media members. The official had accepted tickets from members of the media for two black-tie dinner events, one costing \$225 and

the other \$300." Human Events adds, "The official had unofficial contact with media officials during the opening months of the Trump-Russia probe, which began in the months leading up to the 2016 election."

Inspiration For "White Boy Rick" Sues Ex-FBI Agents, Detroit Police For \$100M.

The Hill (7/20, Oshin, 5.69M) reports that Richard Wershe Jr., "a former convicted drug dealer and FBI informant is suing the Detroit Police Department and several retired FBI agents, alleging he was coerced into helping authorities, according to multiple reports." In a lawsuit filed in federal court, Wershe "alleges that local police and federal authorities pressured him to be an informant, sending him into operations before abandoning him when he faced legal issues." The Hill adds, "Wershe's life was the inspiration for the 2018 film 'White Boy Rick,' which starred Matthew McConaughey and Richie Merritt." Wershe, 52, "served nearly 30 years in prison before he was released in 2017 and served additional time in a Florida prison for an unrelated crime."

FBI Documents Show Bulger Fixed Pennsylvania Horse Race In 1974.

The Harrisburg (PA) Patriot-News (7/20, Marroni, 567K) reports, "Newly released FBI documents show a notorious Boston crime boss fixed a horse race in Pennsylvania in the 1970s. James 'Whitey' Bulger carried out the scheme at the Pocono Downs in Plains Township, Luzerne County, WBRE/WYOU is reporting." According to the Patriot-News, "The records detailing Bulger's activities in Pennsylvania were released on the FBI's Vault public records website earlier this month. According to reports, Pennsylvania State Police say Bulger met with a jockey at the Treadway Inn in August 1974, ordering him to ensure his horse placed first, second or third. A member of Bulger's group told investigators they fixed a race on Aug. 18, 1974 because the owner and trainer of a horse named Cactus Jack R said they could help the horse win the sixth race, paying a good price, reports indicate."

FBI Holds Teen Outreach Program In Virginia.

WTVR-TV Richmond, VA (7/20, Fultz, 173K) reports from Henrico County, Virginia, "Students across Virginia experienced what it's like to work for the FBI Tuesday, as part of the FBI Outreach Program." WTVR-TV adds, "This week, the FBI branch in Richmond hosted 25 students for the 2021 teen academy. The teens applied and were accepted into the program last year but due to the pandemic, things were put on hold until now. Leaders with the FBI said the teens heard presentations from recruiters, civil rights and intel programmers, as well as see demonstrations from SWAT and bomb techs. 'When we connect with the community, there are things that we can teach them, there are things that they can see and learn about and if possible, give and initiate part of that thought that they can accomplish, they can look at a career or position with the FBI if they start early,' Stanley Meador, Special Agent in charge of Richmond FBI Field Office, said."

WWBT-TV Richmond, VA (7/20, Harrison, 112K) reports, "SWAT teams and bomb techs gave active presentations, jumping out of a helicopter as students watched. Then teens listened as Behavioral Analysis, Civil Rights and Intel programs informed them as to the day-to-day work they do. 'This is all about community outreach,'" Meador said, adding, "It gives them that opportunity to meet us face-to-face. They meet members of our professional staff, our FBI special agents, and even me, those who are in executive management." WWBT-TV adds, "Students learn FBI roles in a span of two days. Despite the short timing of the program, those who participated said it has already had an effect on them. 'You see them on TV, and on all those shows, but being here really solidified the general area of what I want to do,' said Vivian Stewart, part of Teen Academy. 'It's just meant so much to me to be here.'"

WRIC-TV Richmond, VA (7/20, Thrasher, 241K) reports, "In the 2021 Teen Academy program, the students were able to view presentations on violent crimes, hate crimes and civil rights - in addition to doing demonstrations with Bomb Techs, SWAT units, and simulators with Henrico Police." Meador "said this is 'an opportunity to bring them inside our walls and show them what we do.' 'We're looking to give students an education on things to think about for their career,' Meador said. 'Opportunities to learn about what we do, investigations we work, giving them hands-on to our specialty programs like our computer analysis response team.'"

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Fauci Warns Of Delta's Growth In Senate Hearing.

Reuters (7/20, O'Donnell, Roy) reports NIAID Director Fauci appeared before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee on Tuesday, and warned that the Delta variant is rapidly spreading throughout the country, representing at estimated 80 percent of new COVID infections. The Wall Street Journal (7/20, Abbott, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports Fauci said, "The reason it's so formidable is the fact that it has the capability of transmitting efficiently from human to human in an extraordinary manner well beyond any of the other variants that we've experienced up to now."

ABC World News Tonight (7/20, story 5, 0:31, Muir, 6.08M) reported Fauci "was also asked again today about this notion about whether millions of Americans might one day need a booster shot." He "seemed to offer some new information, a new threshold of sorts, that might trigger the need for that booster," and Fauci "says if that effectiveness were to drop to the 80s or the 70s, then the general public would need a booster shot."

USA Today (7/20, 12.7M) reports the weekly rolling new case average "has nearly tripled in the last month," and the mortality rate "is up sharply – 24.7% from its low point two weeks ago." ABC World News Tonight (7/20, story 3, 3:22, Muir, 6.08M) reported that the latest data "is a dramatic increase, up from 50% for the week of July third." NBC Nightly News (7/20, lead story, 3:07, Holt, 5.14M) reported that the US "averaging 26,000 new infections a day, over 1,000 an hour."

Leana Wen writes in the Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) that "daily coronavirus infections in the United States have climbed 145 percent" compared to two weeks ago. The delta variant "accounts for the majority of new infections. Vaccinated people are still well-protected from becoming severely ill, but reports abound of breakthrough infections." Wen calls on the CDC to "issue new guidance that takes into account these emerging concerns." The CDC "needs to state, as it should have in May, that unless there is a way to distinguish between the vaccinated and unvaccinated, indoor mask requirements should be reinstated." Wen says "leadership from the Biden administration can make a difference." The Biden Administration, she writes, "has done many things right during the pandemic, but it made a grave error with its premature return to normalcy. It must hit reset and issue new guidance that addresses the escalating infections, waning interest in vaccination and unknowns of the Delta variant."

Hugh Hewitt writes in the Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) that there is currently "a wholly misplaced sense of virus complacency settling into place in the United States." This "false sense of security is unfortunate, even as the vaccines stop or diminish the worst effects of the virus, including its known variants. ... What we don't know...is how many more variants will arrive, and whether one or more will not only defeat the vaccines that exist but also prove deadlier and more contagious than the first waves." We are "much closer to a follow-on pandemic stalking the globe than we were at the time of the initial confirmed Wuhan outbreak in late 2019." Hewitt argues "we need a cease-fire in the pandemic blame-game wars, and a collective turn toward the future and its threats."

Paul, Fauci Clash During Congressional Hearing. The Hill (7/20, Weixel, 5.69M) reports Fauci "clashed with Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) on Tuesday, accusing the senator of lying about the role the National Institutes of Health (NIH) played in funding controversial research in Wuhan, China." The incident came after Paul "said the NIH funded illegal gain of function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology," and he also "implied Fauci had previously lied to Congress, and that he was fully aware of what the Wuhan lab was doing with grant money that came from NIH." Fauci said, "Senator Paul, you do not know what you are talking about, and I want to say that officially."

ABC World News Tonight (7/20, story 4, 1:07, Ault, 6.08M) reported Paul said, "All the evidence is pointing that it came from the lab and there will be responsibility for those who funded the lab, including yourself." The CBS Evening News (7/20, story 2, 2:27, O'Donnell, 3.93M) reported Fauci added, "I totally resent the lie that you are now propagating, and if anybody's lying

here, Senator, it is you!"

Johnson & Johnson Vaccine May Be Less Effective Against Delta Variant, Study Suggests. The New York Times (7/20, Mandavilli, 20.6M) reports a lab study conducted on blood samples found that Johnson & Johnson's single-shot coronavirus vaccine was "much less effective against the Delta and Lambda variants than against the original virus." The preprint study, which hasn't yet been peer reviewed, "is consistent with observations that a single dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine – which has a similar architecture to the J.&J. vaccine – shows only about 33 percent efficacy against symptomatic disease caused by the Delta variant."

Additional Democratic Political Staff Report Infections Following Meeting With Texas Delegation.

Politico (7/20, Sheehy, 6.73M) reports that a senior spokesperson for House Speaker Pelosi and a Biden Administration official have "tested positive for Covid-19 after coming into contact with Democrats from the Texas state legislature last week." Pelosi's deputy chief of staff Drew Hammill said in a statement, "The entire Press Office is working remotely today with the exception of individuals who have had no exposure to the individual or have had a recent negative test," while White House press secretary Jen Psaki "confirmed during Tuesday's press briefing that a fully vaccinated White House official tested positive for Covid-19 on Monday, saying the official currently 'remains off-campus as they wait for a confirmatory PCR test.'"

CBS Evening News (7/20, story 5, 1:17, O'Donnell, 3.93M) reported that the COVID infection spread "forced the White House to defend its own COVID protocols, adding [that the] infected staffer was now working offsite and showing only mild symptoms and acknowledged other breakthrough infections." ABC World News Tonight (7/20, story 6, 1:25, Muir, 6.08M) reported that its White House press reporter asked Psaki if the Biden Administration "would...ever provide the number of breakthrough cases that have happened within the Administration thus far." Psaki responded, "I said I'd be happy to check on the status of that, sure." The Hill (7/20, Samuels, 5.69M) reports a separate anonymous White House source said, "The White House is prepared for breakthrough cases with regular testing. This is another reminder of the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines against severe illness or hospitalization. We wish our colleague a speedy recovery." The Wall Street Journal (7/20, Restuccia, Collins, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) and Axios (7/20, Nichols, 1.26M) provide similar coverage.

Amid Pandemic, US Life Expectancy Fell Sharply In 2020: CDC Report.

The AP (7/20, Stobbe) reports that US life expectancy "fell by a year and a half in 2020, the largest one-year decline since World War II, public health officials said Wednesday. The decrease for both Black Americans and Hispanic Americans was even worse: three years." The drop reported by the CDC "is due mainly to the COVID-19 pandemic, which health officials said is responsible for close to 74% of the overall life expectancy decline." The Washington Post (7/21, A1, Chiu, Bever, Cha, 10.52M) reports the data "shows that life expectancy at birth — a generally reliable measure of the nation's health — for the total population declined from 78.8 years in 2019 to 77.3 years in 2020." Lead author Elizabeth Arias, "a health scientist at the National Center for Health Statistics, said mortality tends to be fairly stable from year to year, which is why 2020 was 'very unusual.'" The Wall Street Journal (7/21, McKay, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) runs a similar report.

COVID Survivors Begin Planning Advocacy Platforms. The New York Times (7/20, Stolberg, 20.6M) reports that new grassroots groups of COVID survivors "are learning how to lobby for things like mental health and disability benefits, research on "long haulers," an investigation of the pandemic and a day to honor the dead." Yet, The groups, which proliferated online using social media, "are navigating challenging terrain" as they attempt to overcome intense polarization. These groups "echo those who lost loved ones in the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks and coalesced into a political force, pushing for an investigation that led to changes in intelligence gathering," but there "are significant differences." While 9/11 "brought the country together," the pandemic "tore an already divided nation further apart."

HHS Says National Strategic Stockpile Much Better Prepared Compared To When

Pandemic Began.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/20, Goldstein, 10.52M) reports HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response Dawn O'Connell testified to the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee on Tuesday, and she said that the US National Strategic Stockpile "contains 35 times as many N95 respirator masks" as it did in the beginning of the pandemic. O'Connell said, "We're beginning to see some progress," but Ranking Member Burr "cautioned that it will be difficult to prevent the stockpile from becoming depleted again over time, because lawmakers tend to have relatively short memories and may be reluctant to keep providing money for manufacturing supplies."

House Ethics Panel Upholds \$500 Fines Over Lack Of Masks.

[The Hill](#) (7/20, Marcos, 5.69M) reports that the House Ethics Committee, which "is evenly split between" Democrats and Republicans, has "announced...that it is upholding \$500 fines against three additional GOP lawmakers for refusing to wear masks on the House floor while it was still required during the pandemic."

AP Analysis: US Lacks Unified School Mask Policy Ahead Of New School Year. The [AP](#) (7/20, Hollingsworth, Webber, Richmond) examines the myriad of contrasting school district mask policies across the country, highlighting the heightened polarization of the subject ahead of the 2021-2022 school year. Conservative states "have banned districts from requiring masks despite outcry from medical professionals," and the growing spread of Delta is raising concerns of a new COVID surge in September. The American Academy of Pediatrics has pushed back, and it "recommended universal masking in schools, even for those who are vaccinated against the virus that causes COVID-19," in a statement that challenges CDC guidance.

Media Analyses: Brady's Jokes Steal The Show As Biden Welcomes Buccaneers To White House.

President Biden welcomed the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to the White House on Tuesday, an event that drew heavy media coverage. Overall, media coverage highlighted the light-hearted nature of the event, particularly the jokes made by quarterback Tom Brady at former President Donald Trump's expense. In general, the media noted the President's comments, but gave top billing to Brady's jokes.

The [CBS Evening News](#) (7/20, story 10, 0:51, O'Donnell, 3.93M) reported it was "Super Bowl Day at the White House. President Biden welcomed the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to celebrate the team's championship. Quarterback Tom Brady tried his hand at tossing political punch lines." Brady, said, "Not a lot of people think that we could've won. In fact I think about 40% of the people still don't think we won." Biden responded, "I understand that." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/20, story 12, 0:26, Muir, 6.08M) similarly reported that joke by Brady.

The [New York Times](#) (7/20, Tankersley, 20.6M) reports that Biden "opened the festivities, praising the Bucs for their persistence in reeling off an unbeaten run to the championship after starting the season with seven wins and five losses: 'This is a team that didn't fold, got up, dug deep,' the president said, relishing his role as a sort of cheerleader in chief. 'It's an incredible run.'" However, it was Brady who "snagged the headlines with a pair of political jokes that appeared to be jabs at former President Donald J. Trump, with whom Mr. Brady has shared a long friendship." The [AP](#) (7/20, Whyno) says that Brady "embraced his inner comedian to deliver jokes at old friend Donald Trump's expense." Brady "played off Trump's derisive 'Sleepy Joe' nickname for Biden when talking about a time he forgot what down it was." Brady said, "I lost track of one down in 21 years of playing, and they started calling me 'Sleepy Tom,' Why would they do that to me?"

[CBS Sports](#) (7/20, Breech, 3.81M) says it was a "good thing" that Brady "showed up, because he ended up stealing the show." [CNN](#) (7/20, 89.21M) says that Brady's "searing mockery" of Trump "was something else." CNN adds that Trump's "ears must have been burning Tuesday when Brady showed up with his teammates at the White House to celebrate their championship win — and proceeded to lampoon the ex-President in front of the man who beat him in the house where

he used to live." The [Intelligencer](#) (7/20, Chait, 1.3M) said it was a "scene straight out of a Donald Trump nightmare, and quite possibly the worst day of Donald Trump's life."

[Politico](#) (7/20, Niedzwiedek, 6.73M) reports that Biden, "the oldest person ever elected president, also noted that Brady and Bruce Arians were the oldest quarterback and head coach to helm a Super Bowl-winning team. 'As far as I'm concerned, there's nothing wrong with being the oldest guy to make it to the mountaintop,' Biden said." The President "also singled out wide receiver Chris Godwin — who was born in Philadelphia and raised in Delaware, two places close to Biden's heart." The [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (7/20, Stroud, 762K) reports that Goodwin "said during earlier conversations he had an instant connection with Biden. Godwin said Biden called him to wish him luck before Super Bowl 55." Goodwin said, "It's was awesome. It was an honor for me to have that Delaware connection."

The [Hill](#) (7/20, Chalfant, 5.69M) reports that Biden "took a photo with the team and Brady gifted him a Tampa Bay jersey with the number 46 and the name Biden written on the back. The president delivered brief remarks, commending the team's victory and saying they offered Americans a source of joy during what was a difficult year due to the coronavirus pandemic." The President said, "In the middle of a long dark winter every Sunday people were able to sit down and watch you play. You created memories that helped folks make it through and believe that we could get back to normal again." [Nexstar](#) (7/20, Turnure) reports that in exchange for the shirt, Biden "gave the players a piece of advice ahead of their first practice, scheduled for Wednesday. 'Y'all who don't have a [COVID] shot, man – get one, OK?' he said. 'Get one, get one, get one.'"

[WTSP-TV St. Petersburg, FL](#) (7/20, 246K) says the ceremony "was jam-packed with jokes, memories and calls to action." [WTVT-TV Tampa, FL](#) (7/20, 476K) reports that Biden, referencing the Stanley Cup championships of the NHL's Tampa franchise, said, "We're making a case to start calling Tampa the 'city of champions.'"

The [Washington Post](#) (7/20, Hill, Boren, 10.52M) says that it was the first time an NFL team had visited the White House since 2017. The visit by the Buccaneers and Brady, who made his first visit in 16 years, "came after an interruption because of the coronavirus pandemic and tension between NFL players and Donald Trump." The President and Brady "struck a more amiable tone, finding commonality in their respective accomplishments."

[Yahoo! Sports](#) (7/20, Bromberg) reports that Brady "has been relatively tight-lipped about his relationship with Trump in recent years – his wife Gisele Bundchen asked him to not talk politics in 2016 – as Trump became the most polarizing president in decades. Brady said in April that Trump had wanted him to speak at the 2016 Republican National Convention, an invitation that he declined."

[Reuters](#) (7/20, Bose, Holland) reports that Edward Glazer, "a co-chairman of the Buccaneers and a major fund-raiser for Trump, also attended the event." [Bloomberg](#) (7/20, Parker, Fabian, 3.57M) also reports on the visit, as do [Pro Football Talk](#) (7/20, Florio, 213K), [BBC World News \(UK\)](#) (7/20, 6.59M), and [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (7/20, 5.53M), among others.

WSJournal Critical Of Lhamon's Nomination To Education Post.

A [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/20, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) editorial warns Senators that voting to confirm Catherine Lhamon, President Biden's nominee to be assistant secretary for civil rights at the Department of Education, will likely lead to the enactment of divisive Title IX policies put in place during the Obama Administration that were undone by former Education Secretary Betsy DeVos.

Gebelhoff: If Confirmed, Gupta Will Need To Promote Needle Exchanges.

Robert Gebelhoff writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) that President Biden's nominee to be drug czar, Rahul Gupta, "will need to navigate a thorny issue at the front lines of the culture wars: needle exchanges." If Gupta "is to effectively carry out the president's agenda, he'll have to do a much better job not just defending but also promoting these programs. The Biden administration has signaled strong support for needle exchanges as a harm-reduction strategy." The "question for Gupta" is "whether, as health commissioner, he provided cover for opponents of needle exchanges, contributing to what is now the 'most concerning' HIV spike in the country,

according to an official at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention." Gebelhoff says Gupta "needs to set the record straight during his confirmation hearings and explain what he thinks about needle exchange programs" and "demonstrate that he's willing to lead on the issue."

Republicans Urge Schumer To Delay Vote On Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill.

Politico (7/20, LeVine, Everett, 6.73M) reports Senators negotiating the bipartisan infrastructure bill are "hustling" to finish their work "as Republicans push for Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer to move a Wednesday test vote that's likely to fail." Some negotiators "say the talks are likely to drag into next week given the size and scale of both the potential bill --with nearly \$600 billion new spending -- as well as disagreements over how to pay for it." While Schumer "has set up a Wednesday vote to advance the bill," Republican leaders "signaled Tuesday that Republicans wouldn't support even beginning debate on legislation that remains unwritten."

The Wall Street Journal (7/20, Duehren, Peterson, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports Republicans said the agreement could be finished by the end of the week and urged Schumer to delay the vote until Monday. On its website, CNN (7/20, Rogers, Raju, 89.21M) says Republicans "are expected to block a vote Wednesday" but lawmakers "said that even with the expected failure of Wednesday's vote, talks would continue to intensify over the next few days with the goal of trying again to advance the \$1.2 trillion measure by early next week."

The AP (7/20, Boak, Jaffe) describes the deal as "hanging precariously" and reports that "tensions were rising Tuesday as Republicans prepared to mount a filibuster over what they see as a rushed and misguided process." The AP says, "With Biden preparing to hit the road to rally support for his big infrastructure ideas...restless Democrats say it's time to at least start debate on this first phase of his proposals. ... Liberal Democrats, in particular, are eager to make gains on Biden's priorities -- with or without Republicans."

Politico (7/20, Everett, LeVine, 6.73M) describes a meeting Schumer convened with the centrist Democrats who helped craft the deal. Before he "cued up a vote on the staggering bipartisan infrastructure agreement," he "gathered them all in person for a gut check." According to "two sources familiar with the meeting," Schumer "needed to make sure everyone in his tight-knit 50-member caucus was behind him before taking a gamble that could endanger the bipartisan talks he's spent weeks supporting." He left the meeting "confident that his aggressive tactics had buy-in from Democratic Sens. Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, Jon Tester of Montana, Joe Manchin of West Virginia, Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire and Mark Warner of Virginia." While many Republicans say he "is undercutting the bipartisan talks by forcing a Wednesday vote before negotiations have concluded, his most important swing votes all sided with him behind closed doors before he made a move."

Meanwhile, Politico (7/20, Caygle, Ferris, 6.73M) says in a separate story, the House is "impatiently waiting for its turn at the wheel." Politico describes "frustration" on the part of "many House Democrats who want to have a greater role in the talks." According to Politico, House Speaker Pelosi is "telling her members to hold tight for now, reflecting a cautious degree of trust in...Schumer as well as her confidence that she can calm her anxious caucus. In a leadership meeting Monday night, she told lawmakers that they would let the Senate process play out, according to multiple Democrats familiar with the meeting." Bloomberg (7/20, House, Wasson, 3.57M) says Pelosi "faced increased pressure Tuesday from some members of her fractious caucus for the House to draft its own tax and spending blueprint."

DeFazio Blasts "Extraordinary Deficiencies" In Bipartisan Deal. Bloomberg (7/20, Laing, 3.57M) reports House Transportation Chairman Peter DeFazio "blasted" the bipartisan Senate deal, "saying there are 'extraordinary deficiencies' in the plan." During a press conference Tuesday, DeFazio said the Senate plan is "essentially status quo on safety, and status quo on highway building and will not deal with fossil fuel pollution and carbon reduction." The Hill (7/20, Lillis, 5.69M) reports DeFazio "has a long list of objections to the Senate framework, many of them related to climate provisions he finds lacking," and he is "warning that he won't just rubber stamp a bipartisan Senate agreement -- should one materialize -- without portions of his own transportation proposal being incorporated."

Biden Order On Competition Prompts Lobbying Effort.

Roll Call (7/20, Ackley, 130K) reports President Biden's executive order "aimed at thwarting corporate consolidation and promoting competition in the economy" has lobbyists plotting "campaigns to influence multiple federal departments and agencies as the executive branch embarks on a major, monthslong effort to write or rewrite regulations that could affect businesses' bottom lines." Biden's order "sets off a process at a dozen federal agencies, which are expected to begin new rule-makings and reviews, examining how consolidation affects consumers and the prices they pay. Some of K Street's biggest spending groups, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, say the administration's new effort on competition has become a top priority."

Administration Officials See Signs Of Relief For Global Chip Shortage.

Bloomberg (7/20, Leonard, 3.57M) reports Administration officials say they are beginning to see "signs of relief for the global semiconductor supply shortage, including commitments from manufacturers to make more automotive-grade chips for car companies that have had to idle production." Commerce Secretary Raimondo "has brokered a series of meetings between semiconductor manufacturers, their suppliers, and their customers including automakers. Senior administration officials said the meetings helped ease mistrust between the sides related to the chipmakers' production and allocation and automakers' orders." As a result there has been "more transparency about the manufacturers' production and shipments and a gradual increase in supply for automakers, Raimondo said in an interview."

Bezos Becomes Second Billionaire To Kick Off Space Tourism Industry.

The Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) reports Amazon founder Jeff Bezos "rocketed past the edge of space Tuesday, launching from the improbable spaceport he has built in the West Texas desert...and fulfilling the lifelong dream of a die-hard Trekkie who was transfixed by the Apollo 11 moon landing and has pledged to use his fortune to open space for the masses." The Post says that in lifting off at 9:12 a.m. ET, "the New Shepard rocket that Bezos's Blue Origin space venture has been developing for years carried one of the most unusual astronaut crews ever to depart Earth." In addition to Bezos, who owns the Post, "on board the capsule were Bezos's brother, Mark; Wally Funk, an 82-year-old aviation pioneer; and Oliver Daemen, an 18-year-old student from the Netherlands who lucked into the flight when the winner of an auction for the fourth seat had to postpone," which meant that the launch "set a record for both the oldest and youngest person to fly to space," while Politico (7/20, Bender, 6.73M) reports it "is only a first leap in a starry-eyed vision that Bezos, 57, has been working to fulfill for decades: laying the groundwork for millions of people to permanently live and work in space."

In an interview with NBC Nightly News (7/20, story 4, 1:18, Holt, 5.14M), Bezos said the experience was "amazing. You know, there are no words. It was a perfect mission. We were - I'm not talented enough to put this into words. The accelerating G-forces and how your skin pulled back and pushed into the seat, and then zero g comes so suddenly and then you're just floating." David Muir opened ABC World News Tonight (7/20, lead story, 4:26, Muir, 6.08M) by reporting Bezos is "saying we're building a road to space so our kids can build a road to the future." On NBC Nightly News (7/20, story 3, 3:04, Holt, 5.14M), Tom Costello reported, "Looking down at the atmosphere, says Bezos, makes climate change very real." Bezos: "What you see is it's actually incredibly thin. It this a tiny, little, fragile thing, and as we move about the planet we are damaging it."

The AP (7/20, Dunn) says the flight made Bezos "the second billionaire in just over a week to ride his own spacecraft." The AP reports he allowed Virgin Galactic's Richard Branson to beat him to space because Tuesday was "the 52nd anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing, a date chosen by Bezos for its historical significance." The New York Times (7/20, Chang, 20.6M) reports that while Branson's flight was first, "some analysts consider Blue Origin, founded by Mr. Bezos more than 20 years ago, to be a more significant contender in the future space economy."

In addition, Reuters (7/20, M. Johnson) reports the two successful flights "give credibility and

inject enthusiasm into the fledgling commercial space tourism industry, which Swiss bank UBS estimates will be worth \$3 billion annually in a decade," while the Wall Street Journal (7/20, Maidenberg, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says Morgan Stanley estimates that such revenue could exceed \$1 trillion by 2040.

On ABC World News Tonight (7/20, story 2, 0:26, Muir, 6.08M), Gio Benitez reported Blue Origin "already has two more flights scheduled this year. We don't know how much the seats will cost, but if you look over at Virgin Galactic, we're talking about \$250,000 per seat. Over on SpaceX, tens of millions to orbit the earth. So clearly, we're talking about a very expensive space race." On the CBS Evening News (7/20, lead story, 3:44, O'Donnell, 3.93M), Mark Strassmann said that "to give you a sense of the interest here, Bezos said today that advanced ticket sales have topped \$100 million." A Wall Street Journal (7/20, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) editorial hails Bezos' space flight as likely beneficial for the American people assuming it helps to kick off the US commercial space industry.

However, The Hill (7/20, Jagoda, 5.69M) says Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) "said Tuesday that he is planning to introduce legislation that would establish excise taxes on commercial space flights with human passengers that aren't focused on scientific research." According to The Hill, "Blumenauer raised concerns about the environmental impacts of the growing space tourism industry, and said that wealthy people making space trips should pay taxes that are similar to the taxes people pay for airplane flights." Politico (7/20, Mintz, 6.73M) says Blumenauer "has not released text of his legislation yet, but he said it will include a per-passenger tax on the price of a commercial flight to space, similar to an airline ticket."

Meanwhile, The Hill (7/20, Scully, 5.69M) says Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) on Tuesday "lashed out at...Bezos, alluding to the poor conditions of [Amazon employees] after he thanked workers and customers upon return from space launch." Ocasio-Cortez also "noted that customers are paying for the flight by 'Amazon abusing their market power to hurt small business.'"

Experts Say Pentagon Budget May Not Deter Chinese, Russian Aggression.

Roll Call (7/20, Clevenger, 130K) reports witnesses before the House Armed Services Committee Tuesday said the Administration's "fiscal 2022 budget request for defense accepts too much near-term risk in exchange for funding long-term needs." They warned that "under-resourcing current national security demands could fail to deter regional ambitions of China and Russia and invite a conflict that the United States is ill-equipped to handle." Stacie Pettyjohn, director of the Defense Program at the Center for a New American Security told the committee that there are indications in the budget request that the Administration's national defense strategy "might not sufficiently prioritize deterring great power aggression, which requires developing a military capable of defeating a conventional attack and strengthening strategic stability." Pettyjohn "advocated developing weapons, such as long-range fires missiles, that could make existing assets like ships and planes more effective at countering Chinese and Russian advances."

Senate Subcommittee Advances Gillibrand's Military Justice Overhaul.

Roll Call (7/20, Donnelly, 130K) reports that on Tuesday, the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee "voted 5-1 to adopt" an amendment to the 2022 defense authorization bill proposed by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) "that would create special prosecutors' offices in the military services to decide which felonies go to courts martial." Roll Call explains, under current law, prosecutorial decisions involving service members "are now made by a handful of generals and admirals in the chain of command." But under Gillibrand's amendment, "the generals would retain control only over military-unique crimes, such as desertion." Roll Call adds that when "the full committee markup" on the legislation "begins Wednesday behind closed doors, it will be the scene of a robust debate on military justice – not whether to change the system, but how much."

UC Irvine Law Professors Establish New Center That Aims To "Strengthen" US Democracy.

Politico (7/20, Montellaro, 6.73M) reports that University of California-Irvine School of Law professors Rick Hasen, "a well-regarded elections law expert," and "David Kaye, a former UN appointee focused on freedom of opinion and speech across the globe," will co-direct the new Fair Elections and Free Speech Center, which is "focusing on elections and free speech." According to Politico, the center's first event on Sept. 1 will "focus on the global impact of disinformation and digital media on elections," and on Sept. 24 it "will hold a conference called 'Election Subversion: Is American Democracy in Danger?'"

Former FDA Adviser Says HHS IG's Probe Into Biogen Alzheimer's Drug Approval Should Consider Lack Of Evidence For Treatment.

Reuters (7/20, Steenhuisen, Beasley) reports an HHS Office of the Inspector General probe of the FDA's "approval of a controversial new Alzheimer's disease drug should look into why that decision was made without clear evidence of patient benefit, a former adviser to the agency said on Tuesday." Acting FDA Commissioner Janet Woodcock earlier this month called for the federal investigation into "whether FDA representatives' interactions with drugmaker Biogen Inc were inconsistent with agency policies." However, speaking at a live event, "Dr. Aaron Kesselheim of Harvard-affiliated Brigham and Women's Hospital, who resigned as a member of the FDA advisory panel that reviewed and voted against approval of Biogen's drug prior to the FDA approval, "said more information is needed on FDA's role in Biogen's evaluation of clinical trial data, as well as why the agency decided to base its approval on a 'surrogate' biomarker rather than the drug's impact on cognitive function."

States, Cities Reportedly Near \$26B Settlement With Opioid Distributors And J&J.

The Washington Post (7/20, A1, Kornfield, Bernstein, 10.52M) reports that more than 20 years "and 500,000 overdose deaths after the U.S. opioid epidemic began, the biggest penalty for drug companies' role in the crisis was announced Tuesday, when lawyers for states, cities and counties detailed a tentative settlement worth \$26 billion." The Post says that under the deal, McKesson, Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen "would pay \$21 billion over 18 years" for "ignoring clear signs that billions of pills spilled onto the black market and contributed to the U.S. addiction problem," while Johnson & Johnson, "which once supplied much of the raw material for opioids and sold some painkillers but no longer does either in the United States, would pay \$5 billion over nine years."

The New York Times (7/20, Hoffman, 20.6M) says that the settlement "would not conclude all of the multifaceted nationwide opioid litigation but would end legal action against some of the companies with the deepest pockets in the pharmaceutical supply chain," but "unlike earlier settlement proposals, this one appears to have the critical backing of more than 40 states and a sweetener of \$2 billion for plaintiffs' attorneys. In recent weeks, many terms were nailed down and the fees for private lawyers in the cases – a previous sticking point – bumped up, prompting enthusiasm that an announcement was imminent, lawyers involved in the talks said."

The AP (7/21, Mulvihill) says the remarks from the lawyers marked "a major step forward" for the "years-long effort by state and local governments in the U.S. to force the pharmaceutical industry to help pay to fix a nationwide opioid addiction and overdose crisis," given that they "said full details could be shared within days." However, the AP adds each state "would have 30 days to decide whether to join. And local governments will have five months after that to decide. If governments don't opt in, the settlement total would go down."

Meanwhile, Reuters (7/20, Pierson, Raymond) reports McKesson, Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen separately "agreed mid-trial to pay up to \$1.18 billion to settle claims by New York state and two of its biggest counties over their role in the nationwide opioid epidemic, the state's attorney general said on Tuesday." According to Reuters, "The deal with New York Attorney General Letitia James and the populous Long Island counties of Nassau and Suffolk came three weeks into the first jury trial accusing companies of profiting from a flood of addictive painkillers that devastated communities," and "as state attorneys general prepare to announce as soon as this week a landmark \$26 billion deal." The Wall Street Journal (7/19, Randazzo, Hopkins, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage.

Pentagon IG To Examine Security Of "Nuclear Football."

Roll Call (7/20, Satter, 130K) reports acting Defense Department Inspector General Sean O'Donnell is investigating the security of the Presidential Emergency Satchel, the so-called "nuclear football," after "a number of security lapses in recent years." According to an announcement from the IG, "the review will examine procedures should the satchel be lost, stolen or compromised."

Unrest In Cuba Has Not Yet Caused Substantially Increased Emigration.

The Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) reports that there have been "fears that Cubans would take to the water – as thousands did in 1980, 1994 and to a lesser degree in 2016 – this month," but, so far, "there has been no sign of a mass exodus." The Post says "massive protests broke out July 11 amid the island's worst economic crisis in decades," but "analysts say the Cuban government, which has blamed the unrest on U.S. policies and intervention from dissidents, is unlikely to lose its grip on power...even if new President Miguel Díaz-Canel has a weaker hold on it." Nevertheless, the Post says that "in the heart of the exile community in South Florida, hopes soared that Cubans would continue protesting – and perhaps push through a change, or force multiparty elections – instead of attempting the risky voyage to the United States."

Biden Marks Six Months In Office.

On NBC Nightly News (7/20, story 7, 1:51, Holt, 5.14M), Lester Holt said President Biden is "marking six months in office [by] insisting he's delivering on his promise on COVID and the economy. But from rising prices to rising crime, Republicans are painting a very different picture." Kellie O'Donnell added that in "a six-month milestone," the President on Tuesday "for the first time...convened his team without distancing, elbow to elbow in the cabinet room." Biden: "We're delivering on our promises." O'Donnell continued, "His stewardship over the COVID crisis, the highest priority." Biden: "We have to stay vigilant, especially with the delta variant that's out there." According to O'Donnell, the President has "deliver[ed] on his early pledge to speed vaccinations, but now struggles to convince hesitant Americans to get the shots," while "on the economy, he says now more Americans are working," but "House Republicans delivered their own six-month report card, including blasting inflation at a 13-year high."

In a more than 2,400-word analysis, CNN (7/20, Liptak, Mattingly, Zeleny, 89.21M) says on its website that Biden's presidency "is only six months old, but the mood inside the White House can often feel like a race against time." According to CNN, "Biden has three-and-a-half years remaining in his term, but his senior advisers speak frequently about the sense of urgency facing his presidency, with the next year almost certain to be dominated by midterm elections that could take away the Democratic majorities in Congress he needs to pass his agenda." A senior adviser to Biden told CNN, "The clock is running. We all know that." They added, "The President certainly knows that."

Meanwhile, a Washington Post (7/20, Stein, Long, 10.52M) analysis says that the "resurgence in coronavirus cases" that have accompanied the Delta variant "is threatening the Biden administration's promises of a swift economic recovery, with Wall Street getting battered on Monday and some leading forecasters beginning to rethink their extremely rosy projections." The Post adds that the variant "may challenge those heady expectations, threatening the recovery along several dimensions," as it "could dampen consumer spending if fears reemerge about the safety of returning to some activities," while its "proliferation abroad has already hurt U.S. supply chains, and shortages could exacerbate inflation by increasing the price of production. And a jump in hospitalizations and deaths among the unvaccinated poses a particular challenge for the Biden administration in more conservative parts of the country, where resistance to new restrictions is strong and federal relief aid is starting to expire."

NYTimes Analysis: Democrats Enabled Biden To Enact Policy Agenda Without Sparking Ideological Fight. The New York Times (7/20, Cohn, 20.6M) reports in an analysis that Democrats "have proposed or enacted trillions of dollars in federal spending, usually under the seemingly nonideological auspices of coronavirus relief and infrastructure" which has provided President Biden "a way to enact an ambitious policy agenda without sparking the kind of

ideologically divisive fight that has derailed the first term of so many recent presidents. If the polls are any indication, he may be pulling it off: Around 60 percent of voters appear to approve of Mr. Biden's big spending initiatives." Although it is "far too soon to say whether Mr. Biden will avoid the fate of Presidents Bill Clinton, Barack Obama and Donald J. Trump, who all lost at least 41 seats in the House of Representatives in their first midterm," but "Biden is so far avoiding one of the most obvious pitfalls of modern presidential politics."

White House Confronting Challenge From Biden's Unscripted Remarks. The Hill (7/20, Parnes, Samuels, 5.69M) reports President Biden has become "more freewheeling with his remarks in the last few weeks, leading to slip-ups the White House has had to clean up." The Hill says Biden twice "in recent weeks" has been "forced to backtrack from public comments that have caused a stir," which "caused some consternation among people close to the White House and raised memories of past Biden gaffes." The Hill contrasts such remarks with his comments during "the early months of the administration," when the President was "scripted" and "rarely stray[ed] from prepared comments and talking points."

President Looks To Sell His Economic Agenda In Ohio On Wednesday.

The AP (7/21, Boak) reports that President Biden "just can't quit Ohio – even if it rejected him in last year's election." He "travels to Cincinnati on Wednesday to push his economic policies. It's the third visit of his presidency to Ohio, the only state Biden lost that he has visited multiple times." The visit "is a testament to Biden's belief that going straight to voters will help cross a barbed political divide." The Cincinnati Enquirer (7/20, DeLetter, 223K) reports that the President will arrive in the afternoon, and "visit a local union training center." Afterwards, he will attend a town hall at Mount St. Joseph University, moderated by CNN anchor Don Lemon.

Appeals Court Dismisses GOP Lawsuit Challenging House Proxy Voting.

The New York Times (7/20, Fandos, 20.6M) reports a three-judge panel of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in a 12-page opinion on Tuesday "threw out a Republican lawsuit against Speaker Nancy Pelosi that had sought to take down the proxy voting system adopted by the House of Representatives to allow for remote legislating during the coronavirus pandemic." According to the Times, the judges "ruled unanimously that courts did not have jurisdiction under the Constitution to wade into the House's rules and procedures, and that the case should be dismissed," and "upheld an earlier decision by a Federal District Court." The Times characterizes the ruling as "a setback for Republicans," and says that "in a bad sign for Republicans' chances of success," Chief Judge Sri Srinivasan was joined "by Judges Judith W. Rogers, a nominee of President Bill Clinton, and Justin R. Walker, a nominee of President Donald J. Trump."

More Than 80 Wildfires Now Burning Across US.

Axios (7/20, Freedman, 1.26M) reports "wildfires across the West dramatically increased in size on Monday into Monday night, with more than 80 large blazes now burning in the U.S. and about 300 to the north in British Columbia." According to Axios, "The western wildfire season has kicked into high gear about two months early, as climate change-related drought and heat waves have dried out vegetation to levels not typically seen prior to late summer. About 20,000 firefighters are already deployed to blazes."

The AP (7/20, Flaccus) says that the 606-square-mile Bootleg Fire, which "has ravaged southern Oregon and is the fourth-largest fire in the state's modern history," has been "expanding by up to 4 miles (6 kilometers) a day, pushed by gusting winds and critically dry weather that's turned trees and undergrowth into a tinderbox." The AP adds that the Bootleg Fire "was one of many fires burning in a dozen states, most of them in the West. Sixteen large uncontained fires burned in Oregon and Washington state alone on Monday."

On the CBS Evening News (7/20, story 4, 1:47, O'Donnell, 3.93M), Jonathan Vigliotti reported, "California's Tamarack Fire south of Lake Tahoe has split, now burning in multiple directions," while the "Dixie Fire...has grown to nearly 60,000 acres and is not far from the town of Paradise, which was decimated by a wildfire in 2018." Vigliotti added that "several" fires are "creating their own weather systems. The intense smoke now drifting East, reaching even New

York." In brief segments, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/20, story 10, 0:37, Muir, 6.08M) and [NBC Nightly News](#) (7/20, story 6, 0:26, Holt, 5.14M) provided similar coverage.

According to [Reuters](#) (7/19), "The spate of conflagrations, marking a heavier-than-normal start of the Western wildfire season, has coincided with record-shattering heat that has baked much of the region in recent weeks and is blamed for hundreds of deaths." Reuters adds, "Scientists have said the growing frequency and intensity of wildfires are largely attributable to prolonged drought and increasing bouts of excessive heat that are symptomatic of climate change," while the [New York Times](#) (7/20, Taylor, 20.6M) reports temperatures "reached the upper 90s and lower 100s in parts of the Northern Rockies, and forecasters warned of 'dry thunderstorms,' which bring lightning that can spark fires, but no rain to quench them." Per the Times, this is "the fourth major heat wave to afflict parts of the West since early June, bringing dangerously hot temperatures and helping fuel the deepening drought and exploding wildfires across the region."

In an editorial, [USA Today](#) (7/20, 12.7M) says that the heat waves are evidence that "the consequences of what mankind has done to the atmosphere are now inescapable." USA Today adds President Biden won "promising broad new policies to cut America's greenhouse gas emissions," and "a \$973 billion infrastructure bill negotiated between Biden and a group of centrist senators (including 10 Republicans) is a start." However, USA Today adds that Democrats "cannot risk losing narrow control of one or both chambers of Congress in the 2022 elections to a Republican Party too long resistant to meaningful action on the climate," given that "much more is needed if the nation is going to reach Biden's necessary goal of cutting U.S. climate pollution in half from 2005 levels by 2030."

Meanwhile, David Von Drehle writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) that "extreme drought conditions prevail in all or parts of at least seven states" in the West. The "long-dreaded future of insufficient water is here. Action must be taken on a gargantuan scale and an emergency timetable. The risk is great that Westerners will snarl this up in a debate about climate and environmentalism." He adds, "We're not seeing a lot of bipartisanship these days. However: Thirsty is thirsty."

Several K Street Firms Post Record Q2 Revenues Amid "Lobbying Boom."

According to [The Hill](#) (7/20, Evers-Hillstrom, 5.69M), "Many of the top K Street firms brought in record revenues in the second quarter of 2021 as clients hired well-connected lobbyists to influence the infrastructure package and other key Biden administration priorities." The Hill adds that "lobbying powerhouse" Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck posted "its best quarter yet, raking in nearly \$14.1 million from April through June," which is "up from \$12.9 million during the same period last year, and more than any other firm earned during the second quarter of 2021," while "K Street staple Akin Gump brought in \$13.7 million in the second quarter of 2021, a record haul for the firm," and "a 10 percent increase compared to the same period last year." The Hill attributes the "lobbying boom" to "Democrats' trillion-dollar spending plans and proposals to crack down on powerful industries."

Lobbyist Jeff Ricchetti Sees Increase In Fees, Clients Since Brother Joined White House. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/20, Bykowicz, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports Ricchetti Inc. the lobbying firm of Jeff Ricchetti, has seen its client list and fees increase since Ricchetti's brother, Steve Ricchetti, was named a senior counselor to the President. According to lobbying records, the firm took in \$1.67 million in lobbying fees in the first half of the year, which is more than quadruple the \$370,000 reported for the same period of last year.

General Secretary Of Catholic Bishops Group Resigns After Cellphone Data Exposes Grindr Profile.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/20, Boorstein, Iati, 10.52M) reports that on Tuesday, Monsignor Jeffrey Burrill resigned from his position as the general secretary of US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) after the Pillar, a Catholic news site, "told the conference it had access to cellphone data that appeared to show he was a regular user of Grindr, the queer dating app, and frequented gay bars." Burrill had served as general secretary since last fall. The Post says it is not clear who

"collected the information about Burrill," and "USCCB spokespeople declined to answer questions...about what it knew about the information-gathering...except to say the USCCB wasn't involved." The Post adds, "Privacy experts have long raised concerns about 'anonymized' data collected by apps and sold to...aggregators and marketing companies. While the information is typically stripped of obviously identifying fields," it is "possible for experts to de-anonymize some of this data and connect it to real people."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Report Suggests Several Million Indians May Have Died From COVID.

The AP (7/20, Saaliq, Pathi) reports that "India's excess deaths during the pandemic could be a staggering 10 times the official COVID-19 toll, likely making it modern India's worst human tragedy, according to the most comprehensive research yet. ... The report released Tuesday estimated excess deaths – the gap between those recorded and those that would have been expected – to be 3 million to 4.7 million between January 2020 and June 2021." According to the AP, "Most experts believe India's official toll of more than 414,000 dead is a vast undercount, but the government has dismissed those concerns as exaggerated and misleading."

The New York Times (7/20, Singh, 20.6M) says the Center for Global Development, "a Washington research institute, attempted to quantify excess deaths from all causes during the pandemic based on state data, international estimates, serological studies and household surveys. 'True deaths are likely to be in the several millions, not hundreds of thousands, making this arguably India's worst human tragedy,' said its authors, one of whom is a former chief economic adviser to the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi." According to the Times, "The authors said the undercount of death after the first wave of infections last year may have resulted, in part, from the fact that it was 'spread out in time,' as opposed to the sharp curve of the second wave when hundreds of thousands of people died amid shortages of oxygen, beds and vaccines."

US Lowers COVID Advisory For India, Pakistan. Reuters (7/20) reports the US State Department "has lowered its COVID 19-related travel advisory for India to 'Level 3 – Reconsider Travel,'" and the Pakistan advisory "was similarly eased." Both countries had been rated at Level 4, "Do Not Travel." The announcement "does not impact travel restrictions imposed in May that bar nearly all non-U.S. citizens from entering the United States who have been in India within the last 14 days."

International Olympic Community Announces New Athlete Infections.

ABC World News Tonight[®] (7/20, story 8, 1:09, Muir, 6.08M) reported that the number of new COVID cases "inside the Olympic bubble [is] growing again tonight." 10 additional athletes tested positive on Tuesday, "bringing the total to at least 71." Major US medal events – gymnastics, tennis and basketball – all losing athletes to positive tests or isolation. Tokyo 2020 CEO Toshiro Muto was "pressed by reporters on whether the games should be canceled just days before the opening ceremony," and he is "not ruling out the possibility of scrapping the Olympics, saying talks will resume if there's a spike in cases."

NBC Nightly News[®] (7/20, story 5, 1:59, Holt, 5.14M) reported that, despite the increase in infections, Olympic organizers "say it will be a different type of event, but promise it will still captivate the world." The CBS Evening News[®] (7/20, story 9, 0:17, O'Donnell, 3.93M) reported that the Olympics "are scheduled to open on Friday."

WHO Director-General Calls For Better Handling Of Olympic COVID Infections. The AP (7/21) reports WHO Director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus "told an International Olympic Committee meeting that how infections are handled is what matters most" as opposed to counting the number of infections. He told an IOC meeting, "The mark of success is making sure that any cases are identified, isolated, traced and cared for as quickly as possible and onward transmission is interrupted."

Bipartisan Group Of Senators Introduce Legislation Toughening War Powers Act.

Reuters (7/20, Zengerle) report three senators "who have campaigned to clamp down on foreign weapons sales and pare back military action unveiled their broadest effort yet on Tuesday to claw back congressional powers over war from the White House." The "National Security Powers Act," introduced by Sens. Chris Murphy (D-CT), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and Mike Lee (R-UT), "is only the latest effort by lawmakers to control weapons sales and push both Republican and Democratic presidents to consult Congress before getting involved in foreign conflicts."

The New York Times (7/20, Edmondson, 20.6M) reports the bill "seeks to claw back congressional authority by placing greater restrictions on the War Powers Resolution of 1973." The legislation "would add a provision that would automatically cut off funding for military operations that were not authorized by Congress and shorten the window of time in which presidents must end the unauthorized military operations." However, the bill "has little chance of passing, given that senators have balked at approving measures that were far narrower." The Washington Post (7/19, Demirjian, 10.52M) similarly says that bill is "is likely to face stiff head winds from lawmakers who defend presidential authority to make decisions affecting national security without constantly seeking permission from Congress, and from the administration itself."

Still, Politico (7/20, Desiderio, 6.73M) says the bill's introduction "marks a watershed moment on Capitol Hill, where lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are growing increasingly amenable to restricting presidential power, with progressive Democrats and libertarian Republicans joining forces on various efforts."

NSO's Ties To Israeli Intelligence Draw Scrutiny.

As part of its "Pegasus Project" investigation, the Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) says Israel's NSO Group "earned a reputation among national security experts around the world as a best-in-class manufacturer of surveillance technology capable of secretly gathering information from a target's phone. But U.S. and European security officials regard the company with a degree of suspicion." The Post reports that "several current and former officials said they presumed that the company, which was founded by former Israeli intelligence officers, provides at least some information to the government in Jerusalem about who is using its spying products and what information they're collecting. 'It's crazy to think that NSO wouldn't share sensitive national security information with the government of Israel,' said one former senior U.S. national security official who has worked closely with the Israeli security services."

France's Macron, Pakistan's Khan Among Those Targeted By NSO. The Washington Post (7/20, A1, Timberg, Birnbaum, Harwell, Sabbagh, 10.52M) reports that the "list of more than 50,000 phone numbers...targeted by [NSO's] Pegasus spyware licensed to governments worldwide," includes "three presidents, 10 prime ministers and a king." The Post adds, "Three sitting presidents, France's Emmanuel Macron, Iraq's Barham Salih and South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa. Three current prime ministers, Pakistan's Imran Khan, Egypt's Mostafa Madbouly and Morocco's Saad-Eddine El Othmani. Seven former prime ministers, who according to time stamps on the list were placed there while they were still in office, including Lebanon's Saad Hariri, Uganda's Ruhakana Rugunda and Belgium's Charles Michel. And one king: Morocco's Mohammed VI."

WPost: Private Spyware Industry Needs Regulation. In an editorial, the Washington Post (7/20, 10.52M) says that in light of the revelations about the NSO group, the "private spyware industry is thriving, largely unrestrained. That must end. Transparency requirements and accountability requirements should ensure companies' 'rigorous reviews' are actually rigorous, but governments should also take the onus on themselves to assess the human rights impact of issuing a license before it's approved — and, if it is approved, after."

Henry Installed As Haiti's New Prime Minister.

On Tuesday, the AP (7/20, Coto) reports that Haiti's government installed Ariel Henry as the new Prime Minister, replacing interim Prime Minister Claude Joseph. Henry said, "I'm from a school that believes in dialogue," adding, "The Haitian people are the solution to the crisis." Henry "has promised to form a provisional consensus government to lead Haiti until elections are held. He said he has already met with various unidentified actors as well as civil society and the private

sector." [Reuters](#) (7/20) reports that Haiti "has been struggling with lawlessness fueled by violent gangs and Henry said he wants to create conditions for as many people as possible to vote in elections, currently scheduled for September."

However, the [New York Times](#) (7/20, Porter, 20.6M) reports that Haiti's leaders "have called the political truce a new chapter, a historic turning of the page that, in the words of the interim prime minister, shows 'that we can actually work together, even if we are different, even if we have different world outlooks.'" However, for many residents, "it does not seem like a change. The list of cabinet ministers published in the government's official gazette featured several familiar names from Mr. Moise's governing party, including the new prime minister and the new foreign minister, both of whom had been angling to take over since the president was killed."

Meanwhile, in a second piece, the [New York Times](#) (7/20, Bilefsky, 20.6M) reports Haiti's national police announced Tuesday "they had arrested three police officers in connection with the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, suggesting there may have been an infiltration of their force ahead of the killing."

US Blocks Former Honduran President, Family Over Corruption Allegations.

[Reuters](#) (7/20) reports the US has blocked former Honduran President Porfirio Lobo Sosa "and his immediate family from any U.S. travel over allegations that he accepted bribes from drug traffickers in exchange for political favors, the U.S. State Department said on Tuesday." Lobo "is being investigated on suspicion of involvement in laundering illegal drug money as part of a wider probe into his 2010-2014 administration, an international anti-corruption mission said in 2019."

Castillo Expected To Be Sworn In As Peruvian President On July 28.

[Reuters](#) (7/20, Aquino) reports that Pedro Castillo, who has just won the Peruvian presidential election, "needs to heal the wounds of a starkly divided nation, split between support for his socialist reforms and fears he will upend the Andean nation's traditional politics and mining." Castillo, the candidate for "a Marxist party," is "expected to take office on July 28, won huge support from poorer rural Peruvians fed up with the political status quo amid rising poverty and inequality," but his "rise has shaken Peru's political and business elite."

Thiessen Condemns BLM Group's Backing Of Cuban Regime.

[Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) columnist Marc Thiessen criticizes the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation for its statement praising the Cuban regime and "calling on the Biden administration to lift the U.S. embargo on Cuba." Thiessen writes, "It seems that Cuba is the only country where police officers can beat unarmed Black protesters and Black Lives Matter sides with the police." Thiessen also argues that "lifting the U.S. embargo on Cuba would allow companies to employ slave labor in Cuba" because "about 9 in 10 Cuban workers are dependent on the Cuban dictatorship for employment. They cannot change jobs without permission. Their salaries are set by the regime."

Afghans Who Aided US To Be Resettled At Bases In Qatar, Kuwait.

[Politico](#) (7/20, Seligman, Desiderio, 6.73M) reports that the Biden Administration is "in the final stages of talks to temporarily house a number of Afghan nationals who aided the U.S. war effort and their families at U.S. military bases in Qatar and Kuwait while they await approval of their visas." Politico adds that according to a Congressional source, "neither country has approved the U.S. request to host the Afghan nationals, but an agreement is 'close.' ... The Qatar and Kuwait arrangements are 'basically done deals,' said the congressional source."

Russian Envoy Says Taliban Promotes Regional Stability. [Bloomberg](#) (7/20, Meyer, 3.57M) reports that on Tuesday, Deputy Foreign Minister Zamir Kabulov, the Kremlin's special envoy for Afghanistan, "said the Taliban is playing a 'positive' role by helping to secure the border with Central Asian states amid a militant threat and could take control of Afghanistan unless peace efforts accelerate." According to Bloomberg, "The Russian diplomat said the Islamist group isn't yet capable of seizing lasting control of the country's major cities. But he warned that the balance of force is on the Taliban's side. Without 'real progress' in negotiations on power-sharing, he said,

“their seizure of power in the country will become a very realistic prospect.”

As US Withdraws From Afghanistan, Dover Air Force Base Chaplain Reflects On War Dead. In an approximately 2,087-word article, the AP (7/20, Sedensky) profiles US Air Force Chaplain David Sparks, who has worked in the mortuary at Dover Air Force Base since the September 11th attacks. The AP explains that nearly “all of the Afghan war’s dead arrived back on American soil...at Dover Air Force Base. Seeing to those remains is such trying work that many do it for just six months. But Sparks was here when the war was launched and the first casualties arrived, through waves of bloodshed, and now, two decades years later.” Now, the AP says, after “two decades of decimated bodies returned home, of survivors so haunted they turned to a bottle or their own gun, of folded flags and mournful trumpets and torn families, it’s finally ending. America’s longest war is nearly over. And Sparks will walk away, left with the emotional remains.”

NYTimes Report: China “Infuriated” By Biden Administration’s “Attacks.”

The New York Times (7/20, Myers, Qin, 20.6M) reports that the “torrent of attacks” by the Biden Administration, such as blaming them for a variety of cyberattacks, “has infuriated Beijing, but six months into the tenure of President Biden, the Communist Party leadership has yet to find an effective strategy to counter the American moves.” In the Chinese view, Biden “has taken a more strategic approach than his predecessor, enlisting allies to join his campaign against Chinese behavior in ways that appear to have frustrated officials. China has resorted to its usual instinct for tit-for-tat measures, while lashing out with a heavy dose of vitriol and sarcasm.”

Heavy Flooding Hits China’s Henan Province.

Reuters (7/20) reports that “large swathes of China’s central Henan province were under water on Wednesday, with its capital Zhengzhou hardest-hit after being drenched by what weather forecasters said was the heaviest rain in 1,000 years.” In Zhengzhou, “12 people have died so far amid the floods, and about 100,000 people have been evacuated to safe zones, the official Xinhua agency reported, citing the local government.”

Taiwan Establishing Lithuanian Office Under Its Own Name.

Bloomberg (7/19, Wang, Marlow, 3.57M) reports that the government of Taiwan “will set up its first office in Europe using the name ‘Taiwan,’ drawing a rebuke from China and praise from the U.S. as the island democracy seeks to strengthen its diplomatic presence around the globe in the face of pressure from Beijing.” According to Bloomberg, “The government in Taipei will open its office in the Baltic nation of Lithuania, Taiwan’s Foreign Minister Joseph Wu told a briefing Tuesday. Taiwan’s other diplomatic outposts on the continent are under the name of ‘Taipei.’” Bloomberg says “the development is a setback for Beijing.”

WSJournal Report: US To Lift Opposition To Nord Stream 2.

In an “exclusive,” the Wall Street Journal (7/20, Pancevski, Forrest, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports the US and Germany have reached an agreement allowing the completion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. The Journal says the Biden Administration will essentially waive the US opposition to the Russian natural gas pipeline. In return, Germany will agree to aid Ukraine in energy-related projects and diplomacy. The deal, which the Journal says should end a major point of tension between the two allies, could be announced as early as Wednesday. Bloomberg (7/20, Wadhams, Leonard, 3.57M) reports that the deal “would threaten sanctions and other retaliation if Russia tries to use energy as a weapon against Ukraine, according to a draft text obtained by Bloomberg News.” The Hill (7/20, Castronuovo, 5.69M) reports White House press secretary Jen Psaki, asked about the potential for a deal, said she expected “the State Department and others will have more on this soon.”

Politico Report: US Urging Ukrainians To “Stay Quiet” About Deal. Meanwhile, Politico (7/20, Swan, Ward, Desiderio, 6.73M) reports that in the midst of the negotiations between the US and German, the Biden Administration “is asking a friendly country to stay quiet about its vociferous opposition. And Ukraine is not happy.” Administration officials “have quietly urged their Ukrainian counterparts to withhold criticism of a forthcoming agreement with Germany

involving the pipeline, according to four people with knowledge of the conversations." The officials "have indicated that going public with opposition to the forthcoming agreement could damage the Washington-Kyiv bilateral relationship," according to the sources, and the officials have also "urged" the Ukrainians not to discuss the plans with Congress. A "senior administration official disputed this reporting, noting that the situation is more nuanced than that, but declined to share further details on U.S. officials' talks with their Ukrainian counterparts."

Russia Unveils Prototype "Fifth-Generation" Fighter.

Reuters (7/20, Stolyarov, Balmforth) reports that on Tuesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin "inspected a prototype of a new Sukhoi fifth-generation fighter" that Russia "unveiled at its annual MAKS air show with an eye on export markets." The project "Checkmate" fighter "is likely to be touted as a rival to the U.S. F-35 stealth fighter, said Oleg Panteleyev, head of the Aviaport analytical agency." The AP (7/20, Isachenkov) reports Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov "voiced hope that the new fighter," which is expected to make its first flight in 2023, "could be sold to India, Vietnam and African nations, adding that foreign customers are expected to order at least 300 such aircraft. Borisov noted that one foreign customer he didn't name has already expressed a strong interest in the new jet."

Meanwhile, Reuters (7/20, Marrow) reports Russia on Tuesday also "released what is thought to be the first footage of its advanced new S-500 surface-to-air missile system in action, a weapon it hopes will beef up its own defences and one day become an export best seller." The S-500's predecessor, the S-400, has "become a source of geopolitical tension with the United States actively discouraging countries to buy it, and, in the case of Turkey, unsuccessfully trying to persuade Ankara to return it."

UK Cuts Off Fund To Microchip Factory After Sale To China.

Reuters (7/20) reports that "British ministers have cut off taxpayer-funded payments to" Newport Wafer Fab, "Britain's biggest microchip factory," after the company was sold to Nexperia, "a Chinese-owned technology company." Reuters adds that "earlier this month, when asked whether the sale of the semiconductor producer would go ahead," Prime Minister Boris Johnson "said he did not want to drive Chinese investment away from Britain because of 'anti-China spirit.'"

WPost: West Needs To Support Moldova's Sandu.

In an editorial, the Washington Post (7/21, 10.52M) says that the Western democratic community needs to throw its support behind Maia Sandu, "a Harvard-educated economist won parliamentary elections" in Moldova "in a landslide this month on an anti-corruption platform." President Biden, the Post concludes, "has often spoken about the importance of winning the global contest between liberal democracy and autocracy; Moldova now offers a tangible opportunity to gain some ground."

US Drone Strike Hits Shabab For First Time During Biden Administration.

The New York Times (7/20, Schmitt, Walsh, 20.6M) report the US conducted a drone strike "against Shabab militants in Somalia on Tuesday, the first such military action against the Qaeda affiliate in East Africa since the Biden administration took office in January." The strike targeted fighters attacking members of the Danab, "an elite American-trained Somali commando force, near the town of Galkayo in the country's north, said a Pentagon spokeswoman, Cindi King." The Hill (7/20, Mitchell, 5.69M) reports Pentagon spokeswoman Cindi King said, "A battle-damage assessment is still pending due to the ongoing engagement between al-Shabaab and Somali forces, however, the command's initial assessment is that no civilians were injured or killed as a result of this strike."

Israeli Army, Militants Exchange Artillery Fire On Lebanese Border.

The New York Times (7/20, Kingsley, 20.6M) reports that early on Tuesday, the Israeli Army "fired several artillery rounds into southern Lebanon" in a "brief response to rockets fired into Israel hours earlier by militants in the neighboring nation." No injuries were reported on either side by

the exchange. The Times says the "incident underscored the fragility of the situation on the Israeli-Lebanese border."

Ignatius: Jordanian King Pressed Biden To Back Other Regional Leaders.

David Ignatius writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) "a source close to Jordanian King Abdullah II" said his visit to the White House Monday was "a reaffirmation of the uniquely close relationship between the White House and Jordan' that had prevailed with every modern president until Donald Trump." The source said, "The king had no one behind him the last four years." Abdullah "brought several messages to Biden, the source close to the king reported." He "urged Biden to back Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, who will visit the White House next week. ... Abdullah also urged Biden to join a task force to help stabilize Syria." Ignatius adds, "A final major area of discussion was Jordan's relationship with the new Israeli government headed by Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid." Despite what Ignatius describes as "Abdullah's fraught relationship with the Saudi crown prince," the source says Abdullah told Biden "we have to work with MBS."

Woodsome: Fate Of Americans Held By Iran Tied To Nuclear Deal.

Kate Woodsome writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/20, 10.52M) that "hostage negotiations are separate from the nuclear talks," with Iran but "a deal on one is unlikely without the other." While "hostages' families had hoped for good news before Iran's Aug. 5 inauguration of a new ultraconservative president with limited experience overseas," the talks "are paused indefinitely, and Iran is steadily approaching what [US special envoy for Iran Robert] Malley calls the 'tipping point,' where its nuclear know-how will make it impossible to return to the terms brokered in 2015." Woodsome says Malley's team is facing "a formidable challenge, partly because the stakes are so high and because partisanship in the United States doesn't make it easy to design or ratify a deal." Woodsome writes, "As long as the two issues are separate yet related and U.S. parties remain polarized, the American captives – and their loved ones – will continue to suffer."

Analysts: Biden Must Stand Up To Iran After Kidnapping Attempt On US Soil. In an opinion for the [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/20, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), Navid Mohebbi and Cameron Khansarinia – both policy experts with the DC-based National Union for Democracy in Iran – argue that after Iran invested in a foiled kidnapping plot against journalist Masih Alinejad on US soil, President Biden should halt nuclear negotiations with the country, expel its remaining diplomats, and open a dialogue with the regime's dissidents.

THE BIG PICTURE

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Stocks Rebound After Dramatic Selloff](#)

[US-German Deal On Russia's Nord Stream 2 Pipeline Expected Soon](#)

[The 2021 Olympics Are Turning Into A \\$20 Billion Bust For Japan](#)

[Now Hiring: White Castle – Four Years After You Applied](#)

[Chinese Suppliers To Apple, Nike Shun Xinjiang Workers As US Forced-Labor Ban Looms](#)

New York Times:

[How An Unproven Alzheimer's Drug Got Approved](#)

[A New Day In Haiti? Many Haitians Have Their Doubts.](#)

[A Drought So Dire That A Utah Town Pulled The Plug On Growth](#)

[Thomas Barrack, Trump Fund-Raiser, Is Indicted On Lobbying Charge](#)

[A House Race In Cleveland Captures The Democrats' Generational Divide](#)

[Bezos Launches To Space, Aiming To Reignite His Rocket Company's Ambitions](#)

Washington Post:

[US Life Spans Decline Again](#)

[A Penalty In Billions For Opioid Brokers](#)

[Trump Ally Charged With Lobbying For UAE Illegally](#)

[Bezos Soars Past Edge Of Space With Historic Crew](#)

[10 Prime Ministers, 3 Presidents And 1 King](#)

Financial Times:

[Jeff Bezos Successfully Completes Space Flight](#)

[China Must Cut Emissions To Avoid Climate 'Chaos', Warns Us Envoy Kerry](#)

[Olympic Organisers Revamp Opening Ceremony After Bullying Scandal](#)

['I Have Nothing To Lose Any More': Iranians Protest Over Water Shortages](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Bezos Space Flight; Commercial Space Flight; COVID Update; Fauci-Capitol Hill; Fauci-Booster Shots; Pelosi Aide Tests Positive For COVID; US-Vaccines; Tokyo Olympics-COVID; Tom Barrack Arrested; US-Wildfires; New York-Explosion; Tom Brady-White House; Wally Funk-Blue Origin.

CBS: Bezos Space Flight; COVID Update; Tom Barrack Arrested; US Wildfires; Pelosi Aide Tests Positive For COVID; January 6 Capitol Sentencing; Harvey Weinstein Extradited; US Economy Inflation; Tokyo Olympics-Covid; Tom Brady-White House

NBC: COVID Update; US-Vaccines; Bezos Space Flight; Bezos Interview; Tokyo Olympics-COVID; US-Wildfires; Biden-Presidency; Tom Barrack Arrested; Harvey Weinstein-Extradited; Havana Syndrome; US Economy-Inflation; NBC Highlights Civilian Space Flights.

Network TV At A Glance:

Bezos Space Flight – 11 minutes, 15 seconds

COVID Update – 8 minutes, 50 seconds

Tom Barrack Arrested – 3 minutes, 35 seconds

Tokyo Olympics-COVID – 3 minutes, 25 seconds

US Economy Inflation – 3 minutes, 15 seconds

US-Wildfires – 2 minutes, 45 seconds

US-Vaccines – 2 minutes, 45 seconds

Pelosi Aide Tests Positive For COVID – 2 minutes, 40 seconds

Tom Brady-White House – 1 minute, 15 seconds

Harvey Weinstein Extradited – 45 seconds

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

- President Biden — Receives the President's Daily Brief; discusses how his Build Back Better agenda will create good-paying union jobs; participates in a town hall hosted by CNN.
- Vice President Harris — Meets with poll workers and other election officials to hear directly from them about their experiences helping voters cast their ballot and have their ballots counted.

US Senate:

- [Senate Public Works Committee hearing on cybersecurity vulnerabilities facing the nation's physical infrastructure](#) – Hearing on 'Addressing Cybersecurity Vulnerabilities Facing Our Nation's Physical Infrastructure', with testimony from Independent Sen. Angus King; Republican Rep. Mike Gallagher; Delmar Public Works Department Special Projects Coordinator Sophia Oberton; Boston Water & Sewer Commission Chief Engineer John Sullivan; ITS America President and CEO Shailen Bhatt; and American Public Works Association Government Affairs Committee member Evan Pratt

Location: Rm 406, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM

- [Senate HELP subcommittee hearing on addressing disparities in life expectancy](#) – Primary Health and Retirement Security Subcommittee hearing on 'Addressing Disparities in Life Expectancy', with testimony from University of North Carolina Distinguished Professor of

Sociology Dr Kathleen Mullan Harris; Foundations Family Medicine owner and Medical Director William Cooke; and Kennebunk, ME, Chief of Police Robert MacKenzie

Location: Rm 430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM

- Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing on 'Navy and Air Force Weapons Systems Divestments' – Defense Subcommittee hearing on 'Navy and Air Force Weapons Systems Divestments', with testimony from Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Integration of Capabilities and Resources Vice Adm. Randy Crites, and Deputy Chief for Warfighting Requirements and Capabilities Vice Adm. James Kilby; and US Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Programs Lt. Gen. David Nahom

Location: Rm 138, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM

- Senate Armed Services Committee marks up National Defense Authorization Act – Closed markup hearing on 'National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022' * Conducted at the secret level

Location: Rm 106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:30 AM

- Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Turkey – Hybrid hearing on 'US Policy on Turkey', with testimony from Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Toria Nuland * Held via videoconference and in-person

Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 11:15 AM

- Senate Indian Affairs Committee legislative hearing – Legislative hearing on 'S.1797, Urban Indian Health Providers Facilities Improvement Act', 'S. 1895, The Indian Health Service Sanitation Facilities Construction Enhancement Act', and 'H.R. 1688, Native American Child Protection Act', with testimony from Indian Health Service Deputy Director for Management Operations Randy Grinnell; Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs Senior Advisor Heidi Todacheene; Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez; National Indian Child Welfare Association President Gil Vigil; and National Congress of Urban Indian Health Vice President Robyn Sunday-Allen * Rescheduled from 14 Jul

Location: Rm 628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:30 PM

- Helsinki Commission hearing on Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act enforcement at the Tokyo Olympic Games – Helsinki Commission hearing on 'The First Clean Olympics? Rodchenkov Act Enforcement at Tokyo 2021', with witnesses – US Anti-Doping Agency Emeritus Chair and Olympic gold medalist Edwin Moses, Office of National Drug Control Policy US Coordinator for Doping in Sport Richard Baum, Dr Grigory Rodchenkov's attorney Jim Walden, former FBI Supervisory Special Agent Debra LaPrevotte, and two-time Olympian Noah Hoffman – discussing 'the importance of the Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act for victims of doping fraud', what athletes should expect in the future, concrete aspects of the law's enforcement (who will be responsible, how investigations would be initiated, and how perpetrators might be arrested and brought to trial for their crimes), and how the new law fits into the broader anti-doping movement and efforts to reform the World Anti-Doping Agency

Location: Rm 428A, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:30 PM

- Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters

Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 3:00 PM

- Senate holds procedural vote on bipartisan infrastructure bill – Senate convenes with agenda including vote on a motion to invoke cloture on a motion to proceed to 'H.R.3684' – the legislative vehicle for the bipartisan infrastructure bill. Also today, assuming cloture was invoked yesterday, agenda includes vote on the nomination of Jennifer Ann Abruzzo to be National Labor Relations Board General Counsel

Location: US Capitol, Washington, DC

- Senate HELP Committee Executive Session – Executive Session, with agenda including 'S. 1275, Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvement Act of 2021', and the nominations of Catherine Lhamon to be Assistant Secretary of Education for Civil Rights, Elizabeth Brown to be Department of Education General Counsel, Roberto Rodriguez to be Assistant Secretary of Education for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, David Weil to be Department of

Labor Wage and Hour Division Administrator, and Gwynne Wilcox and David Prouty to be National Labor Relations Board members

US House:

- House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on 'Banking the Unbanked' – Consumer Protection and Financial Institutions Subcommittee hearing on 'Banking the Unbanked: Exploring Private and Public Efforts to Expand Access to the Financial System', with testimony from University of California-Irvine Professor of Law Mehrsa Baradaran; New Economy Project Co-Director Deyanira Del Rio; Economic Security Project Senior Fellow Ameya Pawar; Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund Senior Principal David Rothstein; and Competitive Enterprise Institute Senior Fellow John Berlau
Location: Rm 2128, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM
- House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on grassroots peacebuilding efforts in the Middle East – Middle East, North Africa and Global Counterterrorism Subcommittee virtual hearing on 'People to People: Examining Grassroots Peacebuilding Efforts Between Israelis and Palestinians', held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from US Institute of Peace Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Program Director Lucy Kurtzer-Ellenbogen; EcoPeace Middle East Palestinian Director Nada Majdalani; Amal-Tikva co-founder and CEO Meredith Mishkin Rothbart; and Center for Strategic and International Studies Project on Prosperity and Development Director Daniel Runde
Location: Virtual Event 10:00 AM
- House Science subcommittee hearing on extreme heat – Environment Subcommittee hybrid hearing on 'Silent Killer: The Rising Problem of Extreme Heat in the US', with testimony from Portland State University Nohad A. Toulou School of Urban Studies and Planning Professor Dr Vivek Shandas; Arizona State University Global Institute of Sustainability and Innovation Assistant Research Professor for Healthy Urban Environments & Knowledge Exchange for Resilience Dr Melissa Guardaro; Tomorrow.io CEO and co-founder Shimon Elkabetz; and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment Interim Director Dr Aaron Bernstein * Held via Zoom and in-person
Location: Rm 2318, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM
- House Small Business subcommittee hearing on 'SBA's role in climate solutions' – Oversight, Investigations, and Regulations Subcommittee hybrid hearing on 'SBA's Role in Climate Solutions', with testimony from Colorado Lending Source Chief Lending Officer Laurel Walk (on behalf of National Association of Development Companies); Midwest Marina Association President Rick Chapman; Clean Energy Business Network President Dr Lynn Abramson; and FASTSIGNS owner and CEO Mark Glenn (on behalf of International Franchise Association) * Held via Zoom and in-person
Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 10:00 AM
- House Agriculture subcommittee hearing on post-COVID-19 recovery for the US wood products industry – Conservation and Forestry Subcommittee hybrid hearing on 'The US Wood Products Industry: Facilitating the Post COVID-19 Recovery'; 10:00 AM
- House Reform Committee hearing on environmental justice and the American Jobs Plan – Hybrid hearing on 'Building Back with Justice: Environmental Justice Is Central to the American Jobs Plan', with testimony from White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council Co-Chair Richard Moore, and member Harold Mitchell; Center for American Progress Vice President for Racial Equity and Justice Nicole Lee Ndumele; New York State Climate Action Council member Raya Salter; Labor Network for Sustainability Executive Director Michael Leon Guerrero; and Opportunity Funds Association Chairman and CEO Shay Hawkins * Held virtually and in-person
Location: Rm 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM
- House Ways and Means subcommittee hearing on forced labor in supply chains – Trade Subcommittee remote hearing on 'The Global Challenge of Forced Labor in Supply Chains: Strengthening Enforcement and Protecting Workers', held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from Global Labor Justice-International Labor Rights Forum (GLJ-ILRF) Executive Director

Jennifer Rosenbaum; Solidarity Center Global Lead for Migration and Human Trafficking Neha Misra; Corporate Accountability Lab Executive Director Charity Ryerson; University of Sheffield Professor of Politics Genevieve LeBaron; and US Council for International Business Senior Vice President for Innovation, Regulation, and Trade Brian Lowry

Location: Virtual Event; 10:00 AM

- House Natural Resources subcommittee hearing on USBR, USGS, FWS, and NOAA budgets – Water, Oceans, and Wildlife Subcommittee hybrid oversight hearing on ‘Examining the President’s Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Proposal for the US Bureau of Reclamation, US Geological Survey, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’ * Held via Cisco Webex and in-person

Location: Rm 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM

- House Judiciary Committee markup hearing – Markup hearing on ‘H.R. 1693, the Eliminating a Quantifiably Unjust Application of the Law Act’ (or the EQUAL Act), ‘H.R. 4035, the Real Justice for Our Veterans Act of 2021’, ‘H.R. 3372, the One Stop Shop Community Reentry Program Act of 2021’, and ‘H.R. 4435, the Fight Notario Fraud Act of 2021’

Location: Rm 2141, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM

- House Commerce subcommittee markup hearing – Hybrid markup hearing on legislation including ‘H.R. 4369, the National Centers of Excellence in Advanced and Continuous Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Act’, ‘H.R. 654, the Drug-Free Communities Pandemic Relief Act’, ‘H.R. 2051, the Methamphetamine Response Act of 2021’, ‘H.R. 2379, the State Opioid Response Grant Authorization Act of 2021’, ‘H.R. 2364, the Synthetic Opioid Danger Awareness Act’, ‘H.R. 2355, the Opioid Prescription Verification Act of 2021’, ‘H.R. 4026, the Social Determinants of Health Data Analysis Act of 2021’, ‘H.R. 3743, the Supporting the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health and the Reagan-Udall Foundation for the Food and Drug Administration Act’, ‘H.R. 550, the Immunization Infrastructure Modernization Act’, ‘H.R. 1550, the Promoting Resources to Expand Vaccination, Education and New Treatments for HPV Cancers Act of 2021’, ‘H.R. 951, the Maternal Vaccination Act’, and ‘H.R. 4387, the Maternal Health Quality Improvement Act of 2021’ * Held via Cisco Webex and in-person

Location: Rm 2123, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM

- House Labor subcommittees joint hearing on phasing out subminimum wages for disabled workers – Workforce Protections Subcommittee and Civil Rights and Human Services Subcommittee joint subcommittee hearing on ‘Phasing Out Subminimum Wages: Supporting the Transition to Competitive Integrated Employment for Workers with Disabilities’, with testimony from New Jersey Statewide Independent Living Council member Nantanee Koppstein; Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress Legislative Specialist John Anton; Employment Horizons CEO Dr Matthew Putts; and National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute Executive Director Anil Lewis; 10:15 AM

- Transportation subcommittee hearing on USCG and maritime transportation budget – Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee hybrid hearing on ‘Review of Fiscal Year 2022 Budget for the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Programs’ * Held virtually and in-person

Location: Rm 2167, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 11:00 AM

- House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda for the week including ‘H.R. 2668 – Consumer Protection and Recovery Act’, ‘H.R. 2467 – PFAS Action Act of 2021’, and ‘H.R. 3985 – Allies Act of 2021’, plus consideration of legislation including ‘H.R. 1870 – Strengthening Local Transportation Security Capabilities Act of 2021’, as amended, ‘H.R. 1893 – Transportation Security Preparedness Act of 2021’, ‘H.R. 1895 – Transportation Security Public Health Threat Preparedness Act of 2021’, ‘H.R. 1877 – Security Screening During COVID-19 Act’, as amended, ‘H.R. 1871 – Transportation Security Transparency Improvement Act’, ‘H.R. 2795 – DHS Blue Campaign Enhancement Act’, as amended, as amended, ‘H.R. 3223 – CISA Cyber Exercise Act’, ‘H.R. 3264 – Domains Critical to Homeland Security Act’, ‘H.R. 1850 – Supporting Research and Development for First

Responders Act', and 'H.R. 3263 – DHS Medical Countermeasures Act' under suspension of the rules

Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 12:00 PM

- Bianca Jagger testifies to Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission on Nicaragua – Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission virtual hearing on 'The Ortega Government and the Human Cost of Repression in Nicaragua: Political Prisoners', held via Cisco WebEx, on human rights violations in Nicaragua since the crackdown on social protests that began in April 2018, with an emphasis on the plight of political prisoners. Witnesses include Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation Chair Bianca Jagger, Berta Valle – wife of Nicaraguan presidential pre-candidate Felix Maradiaga, Victoria Cardenas – wife of Nicaraguan presidential pre-candidate Juan Sebastian Chamorro, and Nicaraguans for Security and Prosperity Foundation President Rafael Estrada

Location: Virtual Event; 2:00 PM

- House Veterans Affairs subcommittee hearing on next steps for VA EHRM program – Technology Modernization Subcommittee hybrid hearing on 'Moving Forward: Evaluating Next Steps for the Department of Veterans Affairs Electronic Health Record Modernization Program'

Location: HVC 210, US Capitol Visitor Center, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM

- House Financial Services subcommittee hearing on bond rating agencies – Investor Protection, Entrepreneurship and Capital Markets Subcommittee hearing on 'Bond Rating Agencies: Examining the 'Nationally Recognized' Statistical Rating Organizations', with testimony from Colorado Public Employees Retirement Association Chief Investment Officer Amy Copeland McGarrity; Fitch Ratings President Ian Linnell; Kroll Bond Rating Agency CEO Jim Nadler; University of Florida Law School Professor Robert Rhee; and Structured Finance Association CEO Michael Bright

Location: Rm 2128, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM

- Helsinki Commission hearing on Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act enforcement at the Tokyo Olympic Games – Helsinki Commission hearing on 'The First Clean Olympics? Rodchenkov Act Enforcement at Tokyo 2021', with witnesses – US Anti-Doping Agency Emeritus Chair and Olympic gold medalist Edwin Moses, Office of National Drug Control Policy US Coordinator for Doping in Sport Richard Baum, Dr Grigory Rodchenkov's attorney Jim Walden, former FBI Supervisory Special Agent Debra LaPrevotte, and two-time Olympian Noah Hoffman – discussing 'the importance of the Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act for victims of doping fraud', what athletes should expect in the future, concrete aspects of the law's enforcement (who will be responsible, how investigations would be initiated, and how perpetrators might be arrested and brought to trial for their crimes), and how the new law fits into the broader anti-doping movement and efforts to reform the World Anti-Doping Agency

Location: Rm 428A, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:30 PM

- House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on FY'22 budget for SOF and USSOCOM – Intelligence and Special Operations Subcommittee hybrid hearing on 'Review of the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Request for US Special Operations Forces and Command', with testimony from Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict Joseph McMenamin; and US Special Operations Command Commander Gen. Richard Clarke * Held via WebEx and in-person

Location: Rm 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 3:00 PM

Cabinet Officers:

- Department of Health and Human Services Secretary's Advisory Committee on Human Research Protections meeting; 10:00 AM
- Agriculture Secretary Vilsack testifies to Senate Judiciary Committee on necessity of immigrant farmworkers – Hearing on 'Immigrant Farmworkers are Essential to Feeding America', with testimony from Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack; United Farm Workers of America President Emeritus Arturo Rodriguez; Kooistra Farms farmer Linnea Kooistra; Owyhee Produce CEO and farmer Shay Myers; former Assistant Secretary of Labor for Policy Leon Sequeira; and National Pork Producers Council President Jen Sorenson

Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00AM

- Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee hearing on combating climate change in East Asia and the Pacific – East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy Subcommittee hybrid hearing on 'Combating Climate Change in East Asia and the Pacific', with testimony from Special Presidential Envoy for Climate's Senior Advisor Dr Jonathan Pershing; Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy and Regional and Security Policy Richard Buangan; USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator for Asia Craig Hart; and Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities Melissa Dalton * Held via videoconference and in-person

Location: Rm 216, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM

- Education Secretary Cardona addresses MCEC National Training Seminar (virtual) – 2021 Military Child Education Coalition National Training Seminar: Embracing the Future for #Milkids, held virtually. Final day includes remarks from Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona

General Events:

- IMF managing director speaks at Peterson Institute event (virtual) – Peterson Institute for International Economics virtual event with International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on 'How trade can support post-pandemic recovery', part of the Trade Winds virtual event series with Cecilia Malmstrom; 9:00 AM
- Atlantic council hosts US-South Korea joint public-private economic forum – Atlantic council hosts 4th US-ROK Joint Public-Private Economic Forum, with featured speakers including Acting Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Marcia Bernicat and South Korean Vice Foreign Affairs Minister Jongmoon Choi

Location: Virtual Event 9:15 AM

- Brookings discussion on the Partnership for Sustainable Communities – 'Partnership for Sustainable Communities: Unfinished business' Brookings Institution online event, with keynote from former Department of Housing and Urban Development Deputy Secretary Ron Sims. Speakers include Transportation for America Director Beth Osborne, MZ Strategies founder Mariia Zimmerman, and National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International President and CEO Doug O'Brien

Location: Virtual Event; 10:00 AM

- National Science Foundation ATLAS Annual Review of Operations for the Division of Physics meeting concludes

Location: Virtual Event; 10:30 AM

- Hudson Institute hosts discussion on industrial cybersecurity – 'The Future of Industrial Cybersecurity' Hudson Institute virtual event, with former Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security Ezra Cohen and former Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Senior Director for Cyber Security Joshua Steinman

Location: Virtual Event; 12:00 PM

- Washington Post Live conversation with NASA Administrator Nelson – Washington Post Live hosts NASA Administrator Bill Nelson, who discusses 'The Path Forward: New Frontiers in Space'

Location: Virtual Event; 12:00 PM

- NOAA committee meeting – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel meeting

Location: Virtual Event; 1:00 PM

- Environmental Protection Agency Clean Air Act Advisory Committee meeting

Location: Virtual Event; 1:00 PM

- Dem Sen. Bob Casey participates in Atlantic Council conversation on the Civilian Conservation Corps – 'Reimagining the Civilian Conservation Corps' virtual event hosted by the Atlantic Council, with featured speakers including Democratic Sen. Bob Casey, Green Forests Work

Director of Operations Michael French, Dream Corps Government Affairs and Policy Manager Harry Johnson, Landforce Executive Director Dr Ilyssa Manspeizer, BlueGreen Alliance Executive Director Jason Walsh, and Atlantic Council Senior Fellow George Frampton

Location: Virtual Event; 2:00 PM

- CBO releases 'Additional Information About the Updated Budget and Economic Outlook: 2021 to 2031' – Congressional Budget Office releases 'Additional Information About the Updated Budget and Economic Outlook: 2021 to 2031' – its complete volume of 10-year budget and economic projections * Earlier this month, the CBO released 'An Update to the Budget and Economic Outlook: 2021 to 2031', which briefly described the projections, but was shorter and less detailed than usual, so that the CBO could provide its projections to Congress as quickly as possible; 2:00 PM
- Wilson Center discussion on 'ransomware everywhere' with Dem Rep. Jim Hines – 'Ransomware Everywhere: Advancing Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace' Wilson Center online discussion, on what roles international cooperation plays in addressing this spectrum of ransomware actors. Democratic Rep Jim Hines keynotes, alongside Silverado Policy Accelerator Executive Chairman Dmitri Alperovitch, and Wilson Center Science and Technology Innovation Program Director Meg King and Kennan Institute Director Matthew Rojansky

Location: Virtual Event; 3:00 PM

- CBO releases 'Federal Debt and the Statutory Limit, July 2021' report – Congressional Budget Office releases 'Federal Debt and the Statutory Limit, July 2021' report * Latest temporary suspension of the nation's public debt limit, extended from 2019 by 'H.R. 3877, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019', expires next week; 3:00 PM
- Atlantic Council hosts discussion on development of U.S. defense-industrial base – 'Modern mobilization: Defense-industrial preparedness for great-power conflict' virtual event hosted by Atlantic Council, with featured speakers including Atlantic Council Senior Fellow James Hasik, CSIS Senior Advisor Mark Cancian, and Department of Defense Supply Chain Risk Management Lead Brennan Grignon

Location: Virtual Event; 3:30 PM

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b7E -3

From: [redacted] (OGC) (FBI)
Subject: Department of State
To: Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC) (FBI)
Sent: July 21, 2021 12:49 PM (UTC-04:00)
Sir,

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

LIU received an email from our training colleagues at the Department of State regarding the FBI's body worn camera policy. I was wondering if we had a product that we could share with them.

Thank you.

[redacted]

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Attached: FBIDirBriefing210722.doc

b7E -3

This morning's Director's AM News Briefing is attached.

Full-text Links: Clicking the hypertext links in our write-ups will take you to the newspapers' original full-text articles.

Interactive Table of Contents: Clicking a page number on the table of contents page will take you directly to that story.

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FBI PUBLIC AFFAIRS – DIRECTOR’S AM NEWS BRIEFING

THURSDAY, JULY 22, 2021 5:00 AM EDT

Pelosi Vetoes McCarthy Picks For Capitol Riot Panel.

ABC World News Tonight (7/21, 6:40 p.m.

ET, story 4, Muir, 5.93M) reported that a “political storm” is “unfolding on Capitol Hill” after Speaker Pelosi (D-CA) made “an unprecedented move” and “rejected two Republicans” that Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) had selected to serve on the “select committee that will now investigate what led to the attack” on the US Capitol

The AP (7/21, Jalonick) continues Pelosi “cited the ‘integrity’ of the probe in refusing to accept the appointments of” Rep. Jim Banks (R-IN), “picked by McCarthy to be the top Republican on the panel,” and Rep. Jim Jordan. (R-OH). The AP says, “the two men are outspoken allies of former President Donald Trump, whose supporters laid siege to the Capitol that day and interrupted the certification of President Joe Biden’s win.” Politico (7/21, Beavers, Caygle, Wu, 6.73M) adds that both Banks and Jordan “voted to challenge certification of President Joe Biden’s electoral wins earlier this year.” And the CBS Evening News (7/21, 6:35 p.m. ET, story 2, O'Donnell, 3.65M) reported that the two lawmakers had “both criticized the” formation of the select committee “calling it another attempt to impeach Trump.”

Roll Call (7/21, Marquette, 130K) reports “the speaker said she was prepared to appoint” Reps. Rodney Davis (R-IL), Kelly Armstrong (R-ND), and Troy Nehls (R-TX), and also “asked McCarthy to put forth two additional picks” in place of Banks and Jordan. Reuters (7/21) reports that, nevertheless, McCarthy withdrew his remaining nominees from the committee.

The New York Times (7/21, Broadwater, 20.6M) continues that “a visibly agitated Mr. McCarthy called a rushed news conference to condemn Ms. Pelosi’s decision and accused her of excessive partisanship. He pledged to carry out a Republican-only investigation into the events of Jan. 6 – and focus on whether Ms. Pelosi could have done more to protect the Capitol from violent supporters of Mr. Trump.” The Hill (7/21, Wong, Lillis, 5.69M) quotes a statement from the minority leader as saying, the Speaker’s decision “represents an egregious abuse of power and will irreparably damage this institution. ... Denying the voices of members who have served in the military and law enforcement, as well as leaders of standing committees, has made it undeniable that this panel has lost all legitimacy and credibility and shows the Speaker is more interested in playing politics than seeking the truth.”

However, Fox News (7/21, Schultz, 23.99M) says that Pelosi has “pointed out that even without McCarthy’s five GOP members, the committee will still be bipartisan since she picked” Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY) “to serve alongside her seven Democratic picks.” CNN (7/21, Grayer, Herb, Nobles, Diaz, 89.21M) adds that Cheney “issued a statement Wednesday on the steps of the Capitol defending” the speaker “and criticizing McCarthy for earlier objecting to the creation of a bipartisan independent commission to investigate the insurrection. She suggested that Jordan could be a ‘material’ witness to the investigation. ‘I agree with what the speaker has done,’ Cheney said.”

NBC Nightly News (7/21, 6:41 p.m. EST, story 6, 1:43, Snow, 4.8M) reported “the committee’s first hearing featuring DC and Capitol police officers is still scheduled for Tuesday morning, now likely with five empty seats on the Republican side.” The Washington Post (7/21, 10.52M) says that the committee’s meeting will focus “on law enforcement’s experience” during the attack on Jan. 6. The Post says that when “asked about the possibility of McCarthy pulling all Republicans, besides Cheney, from investigating, Pelosi said: ‘We have a bipartisan quorum. We can proceed.’”

Biden: Don’t Listen To Those Portraying January 6 As “Peaceful March.” On CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360 (7/21, 886K), President Biden was shown saying during the town hall regarding the January 6 riot, “I don’t care if you think I’m Satan reincarnated, the fact is you can’t look at that television and say nothing happened on the sixth. You can’t listen to people who say this was a peaceful march.” CNN’s Kaitlan Collins said, “He was saying you have to have a clear-eyed view of what actually happened on January sixth. As we know some of the Republicans that Kevin McCarthy wanted to put on that panel were ones that have denied reality, some of them have tried to whitewash or down-play the riot that happened on the capitol that day. So he [Biden] seemed to be supportive of Speaker Pelosi’s moves.”

Dionne: GOP Extremism Necessitated Pelosi’s Break With Normal Procedure. E.J. Dionne writes in his column for the Washington Post (7/21, 10.52M) that by rejecting Banks and Jordan, “Pelosi drew a thick line under a central reality of our politics: It is no longer possible to proceed normally when Republicans answer to a leader and his loyal base for whom reality is an inconvenience, fairly counted elections are a hindrance and outright lies are an accepted currency of politics.”

Lawrence: Pelosi’s Veto Of Banks, Jordan Safeguard Gravity Of Committee Proceedings. In her column for USA Today (7/21, 12.7M), Jill Lawrence says, “Pelosi is right to safeguard the gravity of” the Jan. 6 committee’s proceedings by blocking the participation of Reps. Banks and Jordan. Lawrence argues, “Democrats and responsible Republicans must dig deep

and wide into what happened on Jan. 6. We need a definitive account of the events of that day, who was behind them and how the government and all its protectors could have allowed thousands to breach the famous building that not only symbolizes but actually is the beating democratic heart of the United States of America.”

WSJournal: Pelosi’s Veto Of McCarthy Appointments Exposes Jan. 6 Committee’s Partisan Purpose. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/21, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) editorializes that Pelosi’s unprecedented decision to exclude the minority leader’s appointments to the select committee investigating the Jan. 6 riots exposes Pelosi’s intention to use the committee as a partisan weapon against the GOP in the 2022 midterm elections.

Milley Refuses To Deny Reported Coup Worries. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/21, 6:43 p.m. ET, story 5, Muir, 5.93M) reported Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley “[spoke] for the first time after the bombshell reporting that he was concerned at one point about a possible coup attempt by President Trump to stay in power.” While General Milley “would not talk specifics, neither did he deny the reports.” Milley said, “All of us in uniform, we take an oath, an oath to a document, an oath to the constitution of the United States.” He added, “And our oath is to the constitution, not to any individual at all. And the military did not and will not and should not ever get involved in domestic politics. We don’t arbitrate elections.”

Austin Says Milley Is Apolitical. [Politico](#) (7/21, Forgey, 6.73M) reports that on Wednesday at the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Austin “said he had ‘tremendous faith and confidence’ in Gen. Mark Milley following reports that the Joint Chiefs chair sought to prevent former President Donald Trump from perpetrating a coup in the aftermath of the 2020 election.” Austin is quoted as saying: “I’ve known the chairman for a long time. We’ve fought together. We’ve served a couple of times in the same units. I’m not guessing at his character. He doesn’t have a political bone in his body.” Politico says “the remarks from the secretary come as Milley has faced heightened criticism from some conservatives for revelations in forthcoming books about the end of Trump’s presidency. ... Following the revelations, conservatives including Fox News host Tucker Carlson accused Milley of being overly political and said he should be fired.”

Capitol Siege Probe Puts Focus On Ad Hoc Extremist Groups. [CNN](#) (7/21, Polantz, 89.21M) reports, “When officers arrested Robert Morss of Pennsylvania on charges related to the January 6 Capitol riot, they found in his car a notebook with a page titled, ‘Step by Step to Create Hometown Militia.’ Beneath it Morss allegedly scribbled bullet point reminders, fleshing out the idea of forming a violent cell – ‘bring assault rifle’ and ‘set up your kit’ – and notes on ‘formation.’” CNN adds, “In the Morss case and others, the Justice Department repeatedly has documented the emergence of what could be called small, right-wing extremist groups. This comes along with rising warnings from US intelligence about violence from right-wing extremists. Since January, prosecutors have alleged that several people who are charged with participating in the insurrection or with planning politically motivated violence also showed interest in organizing others, according to an extensive review of Capitol riot and other Justice Department cases by CNN.”

Judge Forces Capitol Siege Defendant To Unlock Laptop Seized By FBI. [CNN](#) (7/21, Rabinowitz, Cohen, 89.21M) reports, “A federal judge forced a US Capitol rioter to unlock his laptop Wednesday after prosecutors argued that it likely contained footage of the January 6 insurrection from his helmet-worn camera.” US District Judge Dabney Friedrich “granted the Justice Department’s request to place Capitol riot defendant Guy Reffitt in front of his laptop so they could use facial recognition to unlock the device. The maneuver happened after the hearing ended and Reffitt’s lawyer confirmed to CNN that the laptop was unlocked. Investigators seized the laptop and other devices earlier this year pursuant to a search warrant.” Reffitt “has been in jail since his arrest in January. His case received national attention after his son spoke publicly about how Reffitt had threatened to kill family members if they turned him into the FBI.”

Mississippi Man Charged With Attacking Police During Capitol Siege. The [AP](#) (7/21) reports from Jackson, Mississippi, “A Mississippi man has been charged with assaulting an officer and other crimes during the January U.S. Capitol insurrection, federal prosecutors said Wednesday.” Michael Leon Brock, 54, of Walls, Mississippi, “used a 4-foot rod to hit and push at least two police officers trying to protect the Capitol about two hours after protestors first broke in the building on Jan. 6, according to a sworn statement from a FBI agent.” FBI agents “began investigating Brock after getting an anonymous tip after releasing a picture of the man with the rod taken from police body camera footage, court records said. Brock is at least the third person from Mississippi charged during the Jan. 6 unrest. Two other people face curfew violations.”

Judge Says Ex-Army Ranger Used His Training In Capitol Riot. [The Hill](#) (7/21, Schnell, 5.69M) reports, “A federal judge on Tuesday said a former Army Ranger who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6 used his training or

experience to organize the other rioters, which made their actions ‘more effective, more forceful and more violent.’” CNN “reported that Robert Morss, an alleged Capitol rioter who is facing nine charges in connection to the attack, was ordered to remain in jail before his trial after a federal judge ruled that he was too dangerous to be released. The Justice Department released new video of Morss this week, which showed him taking a lead in coordinating the rioters during the attack, according to CNN.” Magistrate Judge Michael Harvey “said Morss was ‘willing to use his training or experience to organize with the rioters on January 6 ... thereby making their actions more effective, more forceful and more violent,’ according to CNN.”

Arizona Man Charged In Capitol Siege Probe Is Released. The [Arizona Republic](#) (7/21, Vandell, 1.05M) reports that a Cottonwood, Arizona man “accused of joining the Jan. 6 raid on the U.S. Capitol while dressed as a gladiator – meant to evoke a warrior figure from the Book of Mormon – was ordered to be released from custody on Tuesday after he was arrested last week.” The FBI “arrested Nathan Wayne Entrekin on July 15 after he recorded videos inside and outside the U.S. Capitol where he narrated his actions addressed to his mother according to an affidavit an FBI agent filed in federal court. The affidavit claims Entrekin gave an FBI agent access to his phone during an interview in Cottonwood. The videos contradicted Entrekin’s initial claims that he entered the U.S. Capitol not knowing he was doing anything wrong and left as soon as he saw damage and looting.”

Virginia Man Sentenced For Making Explosive Device. [WJHL-TV](#) Johnson City, TN (7/21, Teague, 158K) reports from Abingdon, Virginia, “A man who showed up at a hospital with severe injuries sustained in an explosion was sentenced to prison Wednesday for making an explosive device.” Cole Carini, 24, of Richlands, Virginia, “was sentenced in U.S. District Court to 84 months in federal prison, according to the U.S. attorney’s office. Carini pleaded guilty in January to one count of possessing and manufacturing an unregistered explosive device.” Prosecutors “say Carini showed up at a Richlands hospital in June 2020 with severe injuries to his hands and fingers and shrapnel wounds to his neck and throat. He told authorities that he was injured in a lawnmower accident at his home. While searching Carini’s home, investigators noticed the lawn was overgrown and found no evidence that suggested that a lawnmower had recently been used. However, they did find evidence of an explosion in Carini’s bedroom that was consistent with the injuries he had sustained.”

US Indo-Pacific Command Official Pleads Guilty To Removing Classified Documents. The [Honolulu Star-Advertiser](#) (7/21, 409K) reports, “An executive assistant at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command’s Joint Intelligence Operation Center who was temporarily assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Manila pleaded guilty in federal court Tuesday to removing classified national security information and transporting it to an unauthorized location, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.” Asia Janay Lavarello, 31, “pleaded guilty before U.S. District Court Chief Judge J. Michael Seabright to one count of knowingly removing classified information concerning U.S. national defense or foreign relations and retaining it at an unauthorized location, according to a news release. ‘Government employees are entrusted with a responsibility to ensure classified information is properly handled and secured. Asia Janay Lavarello failed in her duty when she removed classified documents from the U.S. Embassy Manila,’ FBI Special Agent in Charge Steven B. Merrill said in a statement.”

Tom Barrack Indictment Could Open “Pandora’s Box” For Former Trump Officials. [Raw Story](#) (7/21, Reed, 404K) reports Former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe told CNN’s Erin Burnett Tuesday Tom Barrack’s indictment could pose issues for former Trump officials. McCabe said, “The indictment itself puts the government in a position of enormous leverage over Tom Barrack, and one of the ways he might try to resolve this big problem he’s got is to provide information or evidence to the government on any other investigation. That could include the ongoing investigation of the inaugural committee or really anything else. So it really could open up a Pandora’s box for other people in the administration.”

WPost Analysis: Barrack’s Alleged Illegal Lobbying Helped Shape Trump’s Policies In Middle East. The [Washington Post](#) (7/21, DeYoung, 10.52M) reports, “Writing in Fortune magazine two weeks before the 2016 election, Donald Trump’s old friend and fundraiser, Thomas J. Barrack, outlined a new U.S. policy for the Middle East. The ‘best hope’ for America and the Arab world, he said, was U.S. support for the new, ‘brilliant young leaders’ in places such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.” Barrack, “who would soon become head of the president-elect’s inaugural committee, was already acting on behalf of one of those leaders, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohamed bin Zayed, the de facto ruler of the United Arab Emirates, according to a federal indictment unsealed against him in California on Tuesday. Charged with failing to register as a foreign agent and lying to the FBI, Barrack allegedly used his close relationship with Trump to push UAE-sought actions on both the campaign and during the first two years of the administration.”

CIA Veteran To Lead Havana Syndrome Task Force. The Wall Street Journal (7/21, Strobel, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports CIA Director Burns selected an agency veteran who had participated in the hunt for Osama bin Laden to lead a task force investigating the “Havana Syndrome” afflicting US diplomats and intelligence agents around the globe. The CIA officer is taking over leadership of the task force from Cynthia Rapp, who is retiring from the agency.

Reuters (7/21) reports a CIA official who was “involved in the search for Osama bin Laden has been chosen to head an agency task force investigating cases of an ailment known as ‘Havana Syndrome’ among US spies and diplomats, a government source said on Wednesday.” The Wall Street Journal “said that a panel organized by the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine reported last December that some type of ‘directed energy’ beams were strongly suspected as causing the ailment, which includes dizziness, headaches and nausea.” The memo read by Reuters “said intelligence indicated that such a weapon was ‘designed to bathe a target’s living quarters in microwaves, causing numerous physical effects, including a damaged nervous system.’” The NSA “said in a 2014 memo to one intelligence officer who said he had suffered possible symptoms that an unnamed ‘hostile country’ to which the official traveled” in the late 1990s had a “high powered microwave system weapon that may have the ability to weaken, intimidate or kill an enemy over time and without leaving evidence.” The memo read by Reuters “said intelligence indicated that such a weapon was ‘designed to bathe a target’s living quarters in microwaves, causing numerous physical effects, including a damaged nervous system.’”

NBC News (7/22, Mitchell, 4.91M) reports the task force head, “a 10-year counterterrorism veteran, is still undercover.” The National Security Council is “now coordinating two administration task forces on the syndrome, including the one at the CIA, as the administration says it is committed to an all-out effort to find the cause and protect personnel posted overseas.” The CIA task force “includes intelligence analysts, clandestine officers, clinicians, and specialists from across the agency. A senior official said outside experts are also being brought in for additional technical and medical expertise.”

The Washington Post (7/21, 10.52M) reports Burns “handpicked the officer, who is undercover and a veteran of counterterrorism and counternarcotics operations, these people said, speaking like others on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive assignment.” A CIA spokesperson said Burns is “personally engaged with personnel affected by anomalous health incidents and is highly committed to their care and to determining the cause of these incidents.” While some intelligence officials “believe Russia is responsible, they also think Cuba bears responsibility.” One official “said privately that it defied belief that the Cuban government would be unaware of a Foreign Service using a weapon on American personnel within its own borders.”

FBI Informants Reportedly Played Key Role In Whitmer Kidnap Plot Investigation. Insider

(7/21, Musumeci, 2.74M) reports, “The conspiracy to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer was full with FBI informants, BuzzFeed News reported. At least 12 confidential FBI informants reportedly assisted the investigation into the extremist group. Some of the informants, including an Iraq war veteran, reportedly took leading roles in the scheme.” Insider adds, “The anti-government extremist group accused of conspiring to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer had been infiltrated by at least a dozen FBI informants – some of whom took leading roles in the scheme, BuzzFeed News reported.”

The Washington Examiner (7/21, Chakraborty, 888K) reports, “Fourteen members tied to the paramilitary militia group Wolverine Watchmen were arrested in connection to the 2020 scheme to kidnap the Democratic governor after she refused to loosen coronavirus restrictions in the state. The plan was brainstormed at a militant-group training camp in August. Within a few short weeks, the defendants began surveilling Whitmer’s vacation house and ‘drew a map’ that ‘noted approximate distances from the home to police first responders,’ according to an indictment. The group also allegedly planned to attack infrastructure near Whitmer’s house, including blowing up a bridge to slow the response from law enforcement officers.”

Harvey Weinstein Pleads Not Guilty Ahead Of Los Angeles Rape Trial. Reuters (7/21,

Sergeant) reports from Los Angeles that former Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein “pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to charges of rape and sexual assault involving five women in Los Angeles ahead of a second trial.” Weinstein, 69, “arrived at Los Angeles Superior Court for his first appearance there in a wheelchair, wearing a brown jail uniform, after being extradited from New York on Tuesday where he was serving 23 years in prison for rape and other sexual offenses.” If convicted, “Weinstein could spend the rest of his life in prison.” NBC Nightly News (7/21, 6:45 p.m. EST, story 8, 0:18, Snow, 4.8M) reported that Weinstein pleaded “not guilty to 11 counts of sexual assault against five women.”

Court Records Detail FBI Shooting Of Suspect. Albuquerque (NM) Journal (7/21, Reisen, 188K)

reports on the events surrounding the shooting of Marquez Floyd, 31, by FBI agents in Albuquerque last Wednesday. Floyd was allegedly involved in selling guns and drugs and the prostitution business as a member of “Kirk Town Piru” and a leader of “The Firm Family Movement.” FBI agents found “numerous guns, marijuana and alleged gang notes and documents during searches

at Floyd's home and a 'stash house.'" An agent wrote in the affidavit, "As agents approached... Floyd suddenly reached for and obtained a firearm and fired one or more rounds at the agents. The agents returned fire striking Floyd." Investigators found "four bullet fragments and one Winchester 9mm Luger round inside the vehicle. However, there was no gun listed in the items seized from Floyd's SUV."

Suspended Georgia Insurance Commissioner Claims Innocence. [AP](#) (7/21, Amy) reports suspended Georgia insurance commissioner Jim Beck told jurors Wednesday he was being unfairly targeted by federal investigators. Beck was indicted on "charges of wire fraud, mail fraud, money laundering and tax fraud months after he took office in 2019." Beck testified the Georgia Underwriting Association charged customers more to cut the costs the agency paid others to share in its risk, transforming the GUA into a profitable entity. The man behind the computer work needed to perform this was Jerry Jordan, but Beck "admitted he didn't know where Jordan was, didn't know the proper name of Jordan's company, didn't have a written contract with Jordan, didn't have the laptop computer Beck said Jordan provided him, didn't even have a Jordan business card. Beck said he lost track of Jordan after he moved 'out West' to pursue a woman he met online."

Former Illinois School Superintendent Sentenced To 44 Months For Embezzlement. [AP](#) (7/21) reports Daniel Brue, 48, former Illinois school superintendent, was sentenced Tuesday to 33 months in prison and ordered to repay \$343,000 he embezzled from the districts. Brue created a shell company and "fraudulently sent invoices to the districts for work that was never performed. After the schools paid those bills, he deposited the checks into a personal account."

Biden To Discuss Cybersecurity Measures With Executives Next Month. The [AP](#) (7/21, Tucker) reports President Biden and his national security advisors intend to meet with private industry representatives on August 25 to discuss strengthening the country's cybersecurity. The AP says the White House is "scrambling to help companies protect against ransomware attacks from Russia-based criminal syndicates and as the administration also confronts an aggressive cybersecurity threat from the Chinese government." According to the AP, a National Security Council spokesperson "disclosed the meeting, but did not identify the business leaders who would be participating."

[Bloomberg](#) (7/21, Jacobs, 3.57M) reports that "in a virtual briefing with members of Congress last week, Deputy National Security Adviser Anne Neuberger said that the White House had created a ransomware task force and that the administration's strategy involved efforts to disrupt ransomware operations, confront the use of cryptocurrencies in attacks and work with allies to encourage other nations not to harbor attackers, according to people familiar with the discussion." According to [Reuters](#) (7/21), "A pilot program focused on industrial controls launched in April has seen more than 145 of 255 priority electricity entities adopt cybersecurity monitoring technologies, and that number is growing."

UK Man Arrested In Spain For Role In 2020 Twitter Hack. [Reuters](#) (7/21, Lynch) reports, "A 22-year-old British citizen was arrested in Spain on Wednesday in connection with a July 2020 Twitter hack which compromised the accounts of high-profile politicians and celebrities, the U.S. Justice Department said on Wednesday." The department "named the British man as Joseph James O'Connor and said he faced multiple charges. He was also accused in a criminal complaint of computer intrusions related to takeovers of TikTok and Snapchat accounts, including one incident involving sextortion, as well as cyberstalking a 16-year-old juvenile." Reuters adds, "An unnamed second person, identified only as 'Juvenile 1' in the criminal complaint, was also charged in connection with the hack on July 30, 2020, in the Northern District of California for playing a 'central role' in the Twitter attack and used the moniker Kirk#5270. The teen was later identified as Graham Ivan Clark, 18."

Grassley Seeks Probe Of DOJ Grants System. [Reuters](#) (7/21, Lynch) reports that Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA) "has demanded an investigation into new Justice Department grant-management software, after Reuters reported that technological glitches in the system have delayed funding programs from police departments to victims' service providers." Grassley, the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, "in a letter on Wednesday asked Justice Department Inspector General Michael Horowitz to launch a formal probe into the department's roll-out of the new software, known as JustGrants, which manages a \$4.7 billion grant program. In his letter, Grassley cited a variety of reports from Horowitz's office that have documented troubles with JustGrants, including a May 6 alert in which Horowitz said problems with JustGrants had even hampered his own staff's ability to access vital information needed to oversee the grants to root out waste, fraud or abuse."

Senate Passes Bill To Send More Money To Crime Victims' Fund. [Bloomberg](#) (7/21, Avi-Yonah, 3.57M) reports that on Tuesday, the US Senate "unanimously passed a bill...that will send more money to the Crime Victims' Fund, which has seen a 35% drop in its coffers since 2019." Bloomberg explains, the fund "funnels dollars from federal criminal

penalties and forfeitures to domestic violence shelters, legal services and charities across the country” but its “balance and appropriation have both significantly dropped in recent years because of lowered rates of prosecution during the pandemic and broader criminal justice reforms.”

AP Analysis: Blacks And Latinos Are Losers In The 50-Year-Old “War On Drugs.” The [AP](#) (7/21, Morrison) reports, “Fifty years ago this summer, President Richard Nixon declared a war on drugs,” yet “today, with the U.S. mired in a deadly opioid epidemic that did not abate during the coronavirus pandemic’s worst days...the loser is clear: Black and Latino Americans, their families and their communities.” According to the AP, “A key weapon was the imposition of mandatory minimums in prison sentencing,” which “led to an increase in the prison industrial complex.” The AP adds, “Following the passage of stiffer penalties for crack cocaine and other drugs, the Black incarceration rate in America exploded from about 600 per 100,000 people in 1970 to 1,808 in 2000. In the same timespan, the rate for the Latino population grew from 208 per 100,000 people to 615, while the white incarceration rate grew from 103 per 100,000 people to 242.”

States Announce \$26 Billion Settlement To Resolve Opioid Lawsuits. [CBS Evening News](#) (7/21, 6:41 p.m. ET, story 6, O'Donnell, 3.65M) reported that in a “landmark” deal, “a group of state attorneys general reached a \$26 billion settlement with Johnson & Johnson and three other American companies that distributed opioid painkillers.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (7/21, A1, Randazzo, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) continues that a bipartisan group of state attorneys general have revealed a \$26 billion dollar settlement with three drug distributors and a pharmaceutical company to resolve thousands of opioid lawsuits across the country.

[Politico](#) (7/21, 6.73M) reports the agreement is the result of a “yearslong effort by state and local governments in the U.S. to force the pharmaceutical industry to help pay to fix a nationwide opioid addiction and overdose crisis.” Politico says that “under the deal, Johnson & Johnson would not produce any opioids for at least a decade. And AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson share prescribing information under a new system intended to stop the avalanches of pills that arrived in some regions about a decade ago.”

The [Washington Post](#) (7/21, Kornfield, Bernstein, 10.52M) reports that the agreement “with three major drug distributors – McKesson, Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen – and pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson,” may potentially release “the companies from current and future litigation if a critical mass of communities across the country agree to drop their cases.”

The [New York Times](#) (7/21, Hoffman, 20.6M) explains “the offer will now go out to every state and municipality in the country for approval.” If enough localities formally sign the deal, “billions of dollars from the companies could begin to be released to help communities pay for addiction treatment and prevention services and other steep financial costs of the epidemic.” The Times adds that the settlement only binds the four companies, “leaving thousands of other lawsuits against many other pharmaceutical defendants, including manufacturers and drugstore chains, in the mammoth nationwide litigation still unresolved.”

[Reuters](#) (7/21, Raymond) reports attorneys general from 15 states were involved in brokering the deal, while some others “were cool on the agreement.” Connecticut Attorney General William Tong said, “There’s not enough money in the world frankly to address the pain and suffering,” but he added that the money will “help where help is needed.” States have 30 days to examine the agreement and “local governments have up to 120 days to join.” North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein said, “The expectation is north of 40 and well north of 40 will sign on.” Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry proclaimed “States that don’t sign on are being irresponsible...We don’t want perfect to be the enemy of the good.” In order “To receive the full payout, the agreement needs support from at least 48 states, 98% of litigating local governments and 97% of the jurisdictions that have yet to sue.”

The [AP](#) (7/21, Finley, Mulvihill) reports the distribution companies said in a statement: “While the companies strongly dispute the allegations made in these lawsuits, they believe the proposed settlement agreement and settlement process it establishes ... are important steps toward achieving broad resolution of governmental opioid claims and delivering meaningful relief to communities across the United States.”

Record Numbers Of Children Suffer Overdoses From Consuming Edible Marijuana Gummies, Sweets. The [CBS Evening News](#) (7/21, 6:41 p.m. ET, story 7, O'Donnell, 3.65M) reported that “gummies and other sweets containing” marijuana “are sending kids to emergency rooms in record numbers.” CBS continued, “The number of children 12 and under who have ingested THC edibles at home jumped from 132 in 2016 to almost 2500 last year. Those requiring medical care jumped astronomically too.” CBS said the surge comes as “more states around the country legalizing marijuana and as these edibles become more common in households with kids.”

AG Garland Issues New Directive Limiting Contacts With The Executive Branch.

USA Today

(7/21, Johnson, 12.7M) reports Attorney General Merrick Garland “issued a long-anticipated directive restricting Justice Department contact with the White House as a firewall against potential political interference” on Wednesday. The directive “marks a sharp pivot from the Trump era when the former president casually broke with institutional norms, repeatedly calling on the department to launch investigations of his political rivals, including President Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton and former FBI Director James Comey.” Garland wrote, “Trust must be earned every day, and we can do so only through our adherence to the long-standing departmental norms of independence from inappropriate influences, the principled exercise of discretion and the treatment of like cases alike.” He also “referred to necessary ‘safeguards’ that have regulated communications between Justice and the White House as ‘designed to protect our criminal and civil law enforcement decisions, and our legal judgments from partisan or other inappropriate influences, whether real or perceived, direct or indirect.’”

The Wall Street Journal (7/21, Viswanatha, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) explains the guidelines underscore Garland’s interest in shielding DOJ from the sort of problematic political influence that some believe occurred during the Trump Administration.

Reuters

(7/21, Wolfe, Lynch) reports that Garland “said in a statement that the new policies further ‘longstanding Departmental norms of independence from inappropriate influences’ and ‘the principled exercise of discretion.’” Reuters adds, “The new rules, which follow criticism of Justice Department actions under Republican former President Donald Trump, generally prohibit prosecutors from discussing pending or contemplated law enforcement investigations with White House officials, although there are exceptions for matters of national security, according to a memo released by the Justice Department.”

FBI Agent In Whitmer Kidnap Plot Probe Allegedly Assaulted Wife After Swinger’s Party.

The Detroit News (7/21, Brand-Williams, 1.16M) reports, “An FBI agent at the center of the investigation into the plot to kidnap and kill Gov. Gretchen Whitmer is accused of smashing his wife’s head against a nightstand and choking her after a dispute stemming from their attendance at a swingers’ party, according to court records.” According to the News, “Special Agent Richard Trask, 39, of Kalamazoo, was charged Monday with assault with intent to do great bodily harm, less than murder following the alleged incident Sunday. An affidavit filed by the Kalamazoo County Sheriff’s Office in Kalamazoo County District Court said Trask’s wife had bloody lacerations to the right side of her head and ‘blood all over chest, clothing arms and hand,’ as well as ‘severe’ bruising to her neck and throat.”

The AP (7/21) reports from Kalamazoo, Michigan, “She ended the attack Sunday by grabbing Trask’s groin, investigators said. Trask is charged with assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder. The FBI has declined to comment about his job status since Monday when he appeared in court and was released on bond.”

MLive (MI)

(7/21, Weidmayer, 828K) reports, “Blood was actively running down the side Trask’s wife’s head when police arrived at their home on North 10th Street in Oshtemo Township on July 18, the affidavit said.” Trask “joined the FBI in 2011 as a special agent, according to his LinkedIn page. He is the lead agent in the case against the people accused of plotting to kidnap Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.” Also reporting are the New York Post (7/21, Lungariello, 7.45M), WWJ-TV Detroit (7/21), and the Washington Examiner (7/21, Dima, 888K).

At Town Hall, Biden Says Pandemic Is Impacting The Unvaccinated.

CNN

(7/21, Vazquez,

Liptak, 89.21M) reports that the President “began the town hall event at Mount St. Joseph University by telling moderator Don Lemon that the current pandemic is one of the unvaccinated.” The President said, “It’s real simple. We have a pandemic for those who haven’t gotten a vaccination. It’s that basic,” adding, “If you are vaccinated, you’re not going to be hospitalized, you’re not going to be in an ICU unit, and you’re not going to die. So it’s giantly important that we all act like Americans care about our fellow Americans.”

The AP (7/21, Jaffe, Madhani) reports, President Biden “expressed pointed frustration” over “the slowing COVID-19 vaccination rate in the U.S. and pleaded that it’s ‘gigantically important’ for Americans to step up and get inoculated against the virus as it surges once again.” Biden said, “We have a pandemic for those who haven’t gotten the vaccination — it’s that basic, that simple.” Reuters (7/21, Shalal) reports that the President added, “Ten thousand people have recently died. Nine thousand nine hundred and fifty of them, thereabouts, are people who hadn’t been vaccinated.” The President’s message on vaccinations led both of the wire services’ coverage of the town hall.

Following the town hall, on CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360 (7/21, 886K), Dr. Leana Wen said, “I was actually disappointed by President Biden’s...answers tonight because I actually thought he was answering questions as if it were a month ago. He’s not really meeting the realities of what’s happening on the ground. ... He was talking about how if you get the vaccine you’re well-protected from having severe disease. That’s true. But we actually don’t know how well you’re protected from mild illness, and

whether with the delta variant if you're vaccinated could you still be contagious to other people?" However, David Axelrod said Biden's job "was to go in there and try and calm the country down a little and say there's an answer, the answer is to get vaccinated."

US COVID Cases Tripled Over Past Two Weeks. The [AP](#) (7/21, Hollingsworth, Salter) reports that, according to the latest John Hopkins University COVID data, new cases "tripled in the U.S. over two weeks amid an onslaught of vaccine misinformation that is straining hospitals, exhausting doctors and pushing clergy into the fray." The seven-day rolling average for new cases "rose...to more than 37,000 on Tuesday, up from less than 13,700 on July 6." The massive increase comes as federal vaccination efforts continue to stagnate with only an estimated 56.2 percent of Americans partially vaccinated. The [CBS Evening News](#) (7/21, 6:32 p.m. ET, story 1, 3.65M) reported that the CDC "is predicting that the rate of COVID deaths in the US will rise well into August" because nearly one-third of US counties "are experiencing a rapid spread of the virus." [NBC Nightly News](#) (7/21, 6:31 p.m. EST, lead story, 3:00, Snow, 4.8M) reported that the US now "sees a thousand new COVID infections every hour."

Doctors Warn Of Growing Number Of Young COVID Patients. [NBC Nightly News](#) (7/21, 6:34 p.m. EST, story 2, 1:49, Snow, 4.8M) reported that US hospitals are "seeing disturbing and eerily familiar scenes as they see an influx of COVID patients, most of them unvaccinated, most of them young." The segment focuses on the growing surge in South Carolina, where hospitalizations "have increased by 103% in less than a month."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (7/21, 6:32 p.m. ET, story 1, Muir, 5.93M) reported that 23,000 new pediatric cases were "reported just in the past week," and it "[is] twice as many as we were seeing just a couple of weeks ago at the end of June." The growing infection rate among minors comes as the American Academy of Pediatrics is now "recommending masks for all children and adults in school even those who are vaccinated to protect everyone."

Meanwhile, [CNN](#) (7/21, Cole, 89.21M) reports that the President, at the CNN town hall on Wednesday night, said that children under the age of 12 could be eligible for the vaccine "soon." He predicted "that the government could green light the rollout for young Americans in the next few months."

White House, Biden Administration Officials Mulling Whether To Expand Mask Guidance. The [Washington Post](#) (7/21, Linskey, Diamond, Pager, Sun, 10.52M) reports, "Top White House aides and Biden administration officials are debating whether they should urge vaccinated Americans to wear masks in more settings as the delta variant causes spikes in coronavirus infections across the country, according to six people familiar with the discussions." These debates "are in a preliminary phase and their result could be as simple as new messaging from top White House officials." However, "some of the talks include officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who are separately examining whether to update their masking guidance, according to a Biden administration aide and a federal health official."

Analysis: White House Not Keeping Biden's Pledge To Be Transparent About COVID-19. [CNN](#) (7/21, Cillizza, 89.21M) reports that this week, Axios broke a story about "a White House aide [who] had tested positive for Covid-19 despite having been fully vaccinated against the virus." The article adds, "The White House had said nothing about it. Not a word – until after, of course, the news had been reported." This is problematic, given that "candidate Joe Biden bashed President Donald Trump on transparency during the 2020 campaign." Biden vowed "to be far BETTER than Trump on issues of transparency. And that matters when we are talking about people who work in and around the White House."

Biden Engaged In Battle Over COVID-19 Misinformation After Failing To Heed Calls For A Dedicated Czar Or Task Force.

[Politico](#) (7/21, Levine, 6.73M) reports President Biden failed to "heed pleas from activists and congressional Democrats last year that he put a dedicated czar or task force in charge of countering falsehoods about Covid vaccines – despite warnings that conspiracy theories about public health were creating 'tragic consequences.'" And now, the battle over "vaccination misinformation has become central to his administration's struggles to inoculate the vast majority of Americans, as vaccination rates plateau, the highly contagious Delta variant spreads and the specter of new lockdowns or mask mandates threatens the nation's return to normal life."

Henry Olsen writes in the [Washington Post](#) (7/21, 10.52M) that President Biden "is venturing into troubling territory as he attempts to push Facebook to censor anti-vaccination speech." While he "may be on the moral high ground on the facts of the issue," by "pursuing this strategy, he is posing a threat to the principles of the First Amendment." Biden "is correct that people who believe the falsehoods are harming themselves, perhaps even leading to their deaths. He's free to promote the opposite viewpoint far and wide, combating false speech with more speech. What he's not permitted to do is try to shut speech down." Olsen argues Biden "should immediately reverse course on his efforts to coerce Facebook to restrict speech. All Americans should take note if he doesn't."

Anti-Vaccine Groups Using Subterfuge To Counter Facebook Censorship.

NBC Nightly News

(7/21,

6:49 p.m. EST, story 9, 2:01, Snow, 4.8M) reported that anti-vaccine groups “are trying to stop Facebook from removing their posts by using code words and fake profile names related to dance.” While Facebook “says it’s working hard to fight misinformation, removing 18 million COVID-19 falsehoods so far, this new tactic could make that tougher.”

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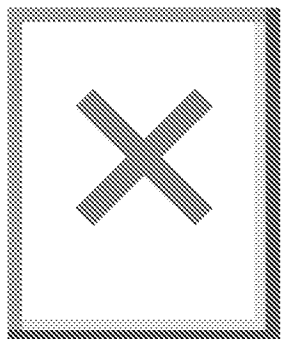
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LEADING THE NEWS

Pelosi Vetoes McCarthy Picks For Capitol Riot Panel.

ABC World News Tonight (7/21, 6:40 p.m. ET, story 4, Muir, 5.93M) reported that a "political storm" is "unfolding on Capitol Hill" after Speaker Pelosi (D-CA) made "an unprecedented move" and "rejected two Republicans" that Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) had selected to serve on the "select committee that will now investigate what led to the attack" on the US Capitol

The AP (7/21, Jalonick) continues Pelosi "cited the 'integrity' of the probe in refusing to accept the appointments of" Rep. Jim Banks (R-IN), "picked by McCarthy to be the top Republican on the panel," and Rep. Jim Jordan. (R-OH). The AP says, "the two men are outspoken allies of former President Donald Trump, whose supporters laid siege to the Capitol that day and interrupted the certification of President Joe Biden's win." Politico (7/21, Beavers, Caygle, Wu, 6.73M) adds that both Banks and Jordan "voted to challenge certification of President Joe Biden's electoral wins earlier this year." And the CBS Evening News (7/21, 6:35 p.m. ET, story 2, O'Donnell, 3.65M) reported that the two lawmakers had "both criticized the" formation of the select committee "calling it another attempt to impeach Trump."

Roll Call (7/21, Marquette, 130K) reports "the speaker said she was prepared to appoint" Reps. Rodney Davis (R-IL), Kelly Armstrong (R-ND), and Troy Nehls (R-TX), and also "asked McCarthy to put forth two additional picks" in place of Banks and Jordan. Reuters (7/21) reports that, nevertheless, McCarthy withdrew his remaining nominees from the committee.

The New York Times (7/21, Broadwater, 20.6M) continues that "a visibly agitated Mr. McCarthy called a rushed news conference to condemn Ms. Pelosi's decision and accused her of excessive partisanship. He pledged to carry out a Republican-only investigation into the events of Jan. 6 - and focus on whether Ms. Pelosi could have done more to protect the Capitol from violent supporters of Mr. Trump." The Hill (7/21, Wong, Lillis, 5.69M) quotes a statement from the minority leader as saying, the Speaker's decision "represents an egregious abuse of power and will irreparably damage this institution. ... Denying the voices of members who have served in the

military and law enforcement, as well as leaders of standing committees, has made it undeniable that this panel has lost all legitimacy and credibility and shows the Speaker is more interested in playing politics than seeking the truth."

However, Fox News (7/21, Schultz, 23.99M) says that Pelosi has "pointed out that even without McCarthy's five GOP members, the committee will still be bipartisan since she picked" Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY) "to serve alongside her seven Democratic picks." CNN (7/21, Grayer, Herb, Nobles, Diaz, 89.21M) adds that Cheney "issued a statement Wednesday on the steps of the Capitol defending" the speaker "and criticizing McCarthy for earlier objecting to the creation of a bipartisan independent commission to investigate the insurrection. She suggested that Jordan could be a 'material' witness to the investigation. 'I agree with what the speaker has done,' Cheney said."

NBC Nightly News (7/21, 6:41 p.m. EST, story 6, 1:43, Snow, 4.8M) reported "the committee's first hearing featuring DC and Capitol police officers is still scheduled for Tuesday morning, now likely with five empty seats on the Republican side." The Washington Post (7/21, 10.52M) says that the committee's meeting will focus "on law enforcement's experience" during the attack on Jan. 6. The Post says that when "asked about the possibility of McCarthy pulling all Republicans, besides Cheney, from investigating, Pelosi said: 'We have a bipartisan quorum. We can proceed.'"

Biden: Don't Listen To Those Portraying January 6 As "Peaceful March." On CNN's Anderson Cooper 360 (7/21, 886K), President Biden was shown saying during the town hall regarding the January 6 riot, "I don't care if you think I'm Satan reincarnated, the fact is you can't look at that television and say nothing happened on the sixth. You can't listen to people who say this was a peaceful march." CNN's Kaitian Collins said, "He was saying you have to have a clear-eyed view of what actually happened on January sixth. As we know some of the Republicans that Kevin McCarthy wanted to put on that panel were ones that have denied reality, some of them have tried to whitewash or down-play the riot that happened on the capitol that day. So he [Biden] seemed to be supportive of Speaker Pelosi's moves."

Dionne: GOP Extremism Necessitated Pelosi's Break With Normal Procedure. E.J. Dionne writes in his column for the Washington Post (7/21, 10.52M) that by rejecting Banks and Jordan, "Pelosi drew a thick line under a central reality of our politics: It is no longer possible to proceed normally when Republicans answer to a leader and his loyal base for whom reality is an inconvenience, fairly counted elections are a hindrance and outright lies are an accepted currency of politics."

Lawrence: Pelosi's Veto Of Banks, Jordan Safeguard Gravity Of Committee Proceedings. In her column for USA Today (7/21, 12.7M), Jill Lawrence says, "Pelosi is right to safeguard the gravity of" the Jan. 6 committee's proceedings by blocking the participation of Reps. Banks and Jordan. Lawrence argues, "Democrats and responsible Republicans must dig deep and wide into what happened on Jan. 6. We need a definitive account of the events of that day, who was behind them and how the government and all its protectors could have allowed thousands to breach the famous building that not only symbolizes but actually is the beating democratic heart of the United States of America."

WSJournal: Pelosi's Veto Of McCarthy Appointments Exposes Jan. 6 Committee's Partisan Purpose. The Wall Street Journal (7/21, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) editorializes that Pelosi's unprecedented decision to exclude the minority leader's appointments to the select committee investigating the Jan. 6 riots exposes Pelosi's intention to use the committee as a partisan weapon against the GOP in the 2022 midterm elections.

President Confident Senate Will Ultimately Pass Infrastructure Package.

The Cincinnati Enquirer (7/21, BeMiller, Coolidge, 223K), in its running coverage of the President's visit to the city, reports that on his way out of a union training center on Wednesday, Biden was asked if he and lawmakers will reach a deal on infrastructure. The President said, "Yes, we will." Reuters (7/21, Shalal) reports that during the later town hall, the President "expressed confidence" that the infrastructure package will ultimately pass. He said, "You had up to 20 Republicans sign the letter saying we think we need this deal. We think we need this deal. ... I come from a