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From: [redacted] (OGC) (FBI)
Subject: [redacted]
To: Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC) (FBI); Prest, Erin M. (OGC) (FBI)
Sent: August 25, 2021 8:52 PM (UTC-04:00)

b6 -1
b7C -1
b5 -2

Thank you. This is all very confusing.

b5 -1,2
b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -30

From: Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC) (FBI) [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 8:16 PM
To: Prest, Erin M. (OGC) (FBI) [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: [redacted]

b6 -1
b7C -1
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b5 -2

FYI.

Stephen

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 7:10:27 PM
To: Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC) (FBI) [redacted]; McNally, Richard (OGC) (FBI) [redacted]
[redacted]
Subject: [redacted]

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3
b5 -2

Hi Stephen, Rick, and [redacted]

b5 -1,2
b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -30

Thanks.

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

b6 -1
b7C -1
b7E -3

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From: Bulletin Intelligence
Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - FBI Public Affairs - Director's AM News Briefing Thursday, August 26, 2021
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: August 26, 2021 5:00 AM (UTC-04:00)
Attached: FBIDirBriefing210826.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, AUGUST 26, 2021 5:00 AM EDT

House Committee Demands Records Over Capitol Insurrection. Reuters (8/25) reports that “the congressional committee investigating the deadly Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol demanded a range of documents on Wednesday from American agencies, including communications records from former President Donald Trump’s White House.” Reuters says “the House of Representatives Select Committee asked for White House communications records on and leading up to Jan. 6. The panel also requested documents from the departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Interior and Justice, the FBI, the National Counterterrorism Center and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.” Chairman Bennie Thompson (D-MS) “gave the agencies two weeks to produce the materials.”

The New York Times (8/25, Broadwater, 20.6M) reports the committee’s series of requests “show that as they ramp up their inquiry, investigators are looking closely at efforts by the former president to overturn the results of the 2020 election and any connections he or his administration had to the rioters.” The investigators “are also looking into the potential involvement of at least one top aide to a Republican member of Congress who helped publicize the ‘Stop the Steal’ rallies.” The panel “sought communications among top Trump administration officials about attempts to place politically loyal personnel in senior positions as Mr. Trump sought to invalidate President Biden’s victory in the run-up to the attack. Investigators are also focused on the planning, organization and funding of pro-Trump rallies on Jan. 5 and Jan. 6 and other attempts to stop or slow the process of Mr. Trump handing over the presidency to Mr. Biden.”

The Washington Post (8/25, Wagner, 10.52M) reports, “In letters demanding materials from the National Archives and seven other agencies, Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-Miss.), the committee chairman, signaled that an expansive investigation is underway, touching not only on what happened Jan. 6 but also on matters such as ‘the former President’s knowledge of the election results and what he communicated to the American people about the election.’” Thompson “asked Archivist of the United States David Ferriero to use his authority under federal regulations to swiftly address the request for records from the Trump White House.”

Roll Call (8/25, Marquette, 130K) reports, “The panel asked the archives office...for a trove of Trump administration information, including Trump’s schedule the day his supporters assaulted police and broke into the Capitol. It is also seeking White House visitor records and information about White House efforts to impede the count of votes in the Electoral College.” The committee “is seeking information, such as call logs and schedules, of specific people, including former Vice President Mike Pence, former chief of staff Mark Meadows, former Trump aide Hope Hicks, members of Trump’s family – including his daughter, Ivanka Trump, and son, Donald Trump Jr. – and members of Congress who communicated with the White House on Jan. 6.” Axios (8/25, Saric, 1.26M) reports, “Earlier this week, Thompson said that the committee will ask telecommunications companies to turn over the phone records of several hundred people, including members of Congress.”

The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Peterson, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that Trump said in a statement Wednesday evening, “Unfortunately, this partisan exercise is being performed at the expense of long-standing legal principles of privilege. Executive privilege will be defended, not just on behalf of my Administration and the Patriots who worked beside me, but on behalf of the Office of the President of the United States.” NPR (8/25, Grisales, 3.69M) reports, “In a statement, Trump said: ‘The Leftist “select committee” has further exposed itself as a partisan sham and waste of taxpayer dollars with a request that’s timed to distract Americans from historic and global catastrophes brought on by the failures of Joe Biden and the Democrats.’”

CNN International (8/25, Cohen, Nobles, Grayer, Wild) reports, “The list of targets is long and varied, ranging from information about attempts to either carry out or defy Trump’s orders, invoke the insurrection act, martial law or the 25th Amendment, as well as for communications regarding members of the Trump White House, campaign, January 5 and January 6 rally organizers, and even alleged members of far-right extremist groups such as the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers.”

The Hill (8/25, Beitsch, 5.69M) reports, “The Jan. 6 panel is also seeking White House communications with other key names in Trump’s orbit, including Roger Stone, Steve Bannon, Michael Flynn, Trump’s onetime attorney Rudy Giuliani and My Pillow CEO Mike Lindell. The sweeping requests show the committee is focused not just on the events of the day but placing the riot in the broader context of Trump’s months-long effort to contest the election.”

Politico (8/25, Wu, Swan, 6.73M) reports, “‘I think it is unlikely that the House committee witch hunt is going to find any documents or evidence that the FBI could not find,’ Stone told POLITICO. ‘I say again: any claim, implication, insinuation or assertion that I either knew about or had anything to do with the events of January 6 is categorically false and there is no evidence to the contrary.’” Politico adds, “The FBI request relates to the agency’s preparation for the attack and intelligence-

gathering and communications with the Trump White House. It also asks for records related to election investigations and communications with individuals including Giuliani, Powell and other supporters of Trump's push to overturn the election results."

Newsweek (8/25, Klapper, 2.67M) reports, "Phone logs may be requested from House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy, who had been in touch with Trump from the Capitol on January 6. McCarthy dismissed the committee's investigation again as 'so political.' When asked if he would turn over his own phone logs from that day, he said, 'I told the American public who I talked to that day,' referring to his television news appearances on January 6."

The Guardian (UK) (8/25, Yang, 5.53M) reports, "Wednesday's announcement comes a month after law enforcement officers delivered harrowing testimonies of their experiences during the 6 January attacks. In July, the Department of Justice declined to assert executive privilege over some of the testimonies, allowing former officials from the Trump administration to testify to Congress about Donald Trump's role in the deadly attacks."

Among news outlets also reporting are CNBC (8/25, Wilkie, 7.34M), CBS News (8/25, Hudak, 5.39M), ABC News (8/25, Siegel, 2.44M), NBC News (8/25, Edelman, 4.91M), Insider (8/25, Panetta, 2.74M), and the Washington Times (8/25, McLaughlin, 626K).

Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA) told CNN's New Day (8/25, 448K), "We're working off of our work plan. And when we have something to share and we have something that goes out, the chairman will speak for the committee. I understand that a lot of folks are interested in this topic and I hope that they share our concern that we need to get to the truth of what happened January 6th. And that means we need to understand the federal agency's response, we need to understand law enforcement agency's response, we need to understand what the President was doing that day."

Michigan Man Sentenced To Six Years In Plot To Kidnap Michigan Governor. The AP (8/25, Eggert, White) reports from Grand Rapids, Michigan, "A man upset over state-ordered coronavirus restrictions was sentenced to just over six years in prison Wednesday for planning to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a significant break that reflected his quick decision to cooperate and help agents build cases against others." Ty Garbin "admitted his role in the alleged scheme weeks after his arrest last fall. He is among six men charged in federal court but the only one to plead guilty so far. It was a key victory for prosecutors as they try to prove an astonishing plot against the rest. The government, noting Garbin's exceptional cooperation, asked U.S. District Judge Robert Jonker to give him credit for helping investigators reinforce their case against his co-defendants."

The New York Times (8/25, MacFarquhar, 20.6M) reports, "Garbin, 25, an airplane mechanic, was the first defendant to be sentenced for what prosecutors have described as an extremist plot driven by anger at the governor's efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus. The 14 men arrested in October face charges in federal and state courts in one of the most significant domestic terrorism plots ever to come to trial in the United States. The defendants, many of them members of an antigovernment paramilitary group in Michigan called the Wolverine Watchmen, coalesced around protests against Covid-19 lockdown measures." Garbin "cooperated extensively with the prosecutors, who called his 'wide-ranging insider's view' a significant contribution to the case. Among other issues, he testified about plans to deploy a homemade explosive device as well as other illegal weapons."

The Detroit Free Press (8/25, 2.16M) reports, "Whitmer elaborated on the impact of" the kidnapping plot "and hateful rhetoric more broadly in a victim impact statement, filed recently with a Michigan federal court ahead of the sentencing of the first person to plead guilty in connection to the purported scheme to take the governor hostage. 'My gratitude for the brave law enforcement officers of the Michigan State Police and the FBI is enormous. But even now we have not reached the far shore,' Whitmer wrote in the statement, portions of which were released Wednesday by a spokesman. 'Threats continue. I have looked out my windows and seen large groups of heavily armed people within 30 yards of my home. I have seen myself hung in effigy. Days ago at a demonstration, there was a sign that called for "burning the witch." For me, things will never be the same.'"

MLive (MI) (8/25, Tunison, 828K) reports that Garbin, who has "no previous criminal record, also said he was selfish for not taking into account the trauma his actions would take on his family." MLive adds, "Federal prosecutors had recommended a nine-year prison sentence for Garbin but acknowledged his considerable cooperation with authorities and his early admission to wrongdoing. Garbin is expected to testify against his federal co-defendants at an Oct. 12 trial in Grand Rapids. 'He didn't hold back. He would come right out and say, "We planned to do this and I was a part of it,"' Assistant U.S. Attorney Nils Kessler said."

NBC News (8/25, Williams, 4.91M) reports that Garbin "expressed a desire to continue to 'deradicalize' himself and help prevent others from becoming radicalized and going down the same path. In explaining why he was granting a shorter sentence than federal guidelines called for, Jonker cited Garbin's 'concrete' actions that showed he was taking responsibility for his actions. 'That's what's more impressive to me here, and not just the words of Mr. Garbin that he's abandoning this path, but the things he's done, concrete things he's done, to demonstrate that he means it.'"

Newsweek (8/25, Strozewski, 2.67M) reports, "The FBI last October said it broke up a scheme to kidnap the Democratic governor by anti-government extremists who were upset over Whitmer's coronavirus restrictions. Six men were charged in federal court, while others were charged in state court with aiding them."

Reuters (8/25, Clifford) reports, "In the plea, Garbin said he and co-defendants were a part of a Michigan-based anti-government militia group known as the Wolverine Watchmen. The six were arrested and charged by federal authorities last October." Among other news outlets also reporting are the New York Post (8/25, Fitz-Gibbon, 7.45M), ABC News (8/25, Jacobo, 2.44M), WDIV-TV Detroit (8/25, Ley, Clarke, 568K), WXMI-TV Grand Rapids, MI (8/25, 105K), and WGBA-TV Green Bay, WI (8/25).

FBI Searches Detroit City Hall Offices, Homes Of Two City Council Members. The AP (8/25) reports from Detroit, "FBI agents on Wednesday searched offices at Detroit City Hall and the homes of two City Council members, just a few weeks after another councilman was charged in an alleged bribery scheme. Agents and state police were seen at the homes of Janeé Ayers and Scott Benson. Agents also were seen leaving City Hall with boxes. 'The citizens of Detroit have a right to a city government that is free of corruption,' Tim Waters, head of the FBI in Detroit, told reporters outside City Hall. 'No one is being charged today. Simply what we're doing today is collecting evidence.'"

The Detroit News (8/25, Snell, Rahal, Hunter, 1.16M) reports, "A widening public corruption investigation focused on Detroit towing operations and bribery allegations emerged Wednesday as FBI agents raided Detroit City Hall and the homes of City Council members Janeé Ayers and Scott Benson, the latest development in a scandal that has led to charges against Councilman André Spivey." According to the News, "The full scope of the investigation was unclear, but FBI agents were focused on municipal towing operations and accusations city officials received bribes, according to two sources. Federal agents on Wednesday also searched the homes of several City Council employees, including Ricardo Silva and Carol Banks, chiefs of staff for Ayers and Benson, respectively, though search warrant documents listing probable cause to search the locations remained sealed in court and no criminal charges were filed Wednesday."

The Detroit Free Press (8/25, Guillen, Afana, Witsil, 2.16M) reports, "The searches came less than a month after federal prosecutors charged Councilman Andre Spivey with conspiracy to commit bribery. Spivey's lawyer said last month that the councilman has been cooperating with federal authorities for more than a year." The Free Press adds, "On Wednesday afternoon, a parade of about 20 FBI agents – many carrying boxes loaded into SUVs – exited city hall. Meanwhile, more agents searched the homes of Councilman Scott Benson and Councilwoman Janeé Ayers. The FBI also searched the East English Village home of Benson's chief of staff, Carol Banks. Despite the dramatic show of force by federal agents, little is known about what actions council members may have taken to target them in the FBI probe." The Free Press notes, "The FBI did not visit the 11th floor of city hall, the location of Mayor Mike Duggan's office, or any other administration office, according to Duggan spokesman John Roach."

Fox News (8/25, Colton, 23.99M) reports, "The raids are the largest federal investigation into Detroit city hall corruption since former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick was convicted eight years ago on racketeering conspiracy charges. More than 100 politicians, union bosses and police officers have been charged with corruption in Michigan's eastern district since 2008. 'Clearly, there is a culture of corruption that doesn't stop at the city line or the county line,' Erik Gordon, a professor at the University of Michigan's Ross Business School, told The Detroit News." Among news outlets also reporting are The Hill (8/25, 5.69M), Newsweek (8/25, Hutzler, 2.67M), the Dearborn (MI) Patch (8/25, Siwicki, 1.44M), the Washington Examiner (8/25, Notheis, 888K), WDIV-TV Detroit (8/25, 568K), WDET-FM Detroit (8/25, Newman, 3K), and WJBK-TV Detroit (8/25, Langton, 381K).

Plea Deal Offered To Virginia Man Accused Of Attacking Police During Capitol Siege. Reuters (8/25) reports, "Prosecutors have proposed a plea bargain to a Virginia man accused of attacking police with a large stick during the Jan. 6 U.S. Capitol riot, lawyers for the government and defendant told a court hearing on Wednesday." Reuters adds, "Details of the plea deal offered to Jonathan Mellis, 34, of Williamsburg, Virginia, were not disclosed during the public portion of a status hearing on the case before U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan. Mellis faces ten riot-related charges, including assaulting officers using a dangerous weapon. One or more of the charges are felonies, court records indicate." According to Reuters, "Court records also show that Mellis has been detained without bond since his arrest in February. In May, Judge Sullivan denied a defense request that Mellis be released from custody for a week so he could attend his father's funeral."

Secret Service Reportedly Warned Capitol Police About Threats Before Capitol Siege. The Hill (8/25, Schnell, 5.69M) reports, "The Secret Service warned Capitol Police about threats of violence on Jan. 5, one day before rioters descended on the Capitol complex and injured a number of officers, according to newly revealed documents." The Hill

adds, "One day before the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, the Secret Service, from the Protective Intelligence Operations Center's (PIOC) account, sent an email to a recipient associated with the Capitol Police informing it of a tip sent in by a 'concerned citizen' at the Denver Field Office regarding people who were flying to the Washington, D.C., area to 'attend tomorrow's rally and 'incite violence.'"

Appeals Court Upholds Dylann Roof's Conviction, Death Sentence. The AP (8/25, Kinnard, Lavoie) reports a three-judge panel of the 4th US Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia on Wednesday unanimously "upheld Dylann Roof's conviction and death sentence for the 2015 racist slayings of nine members of a Black South Carolina congregation, saying the legal record cannot even capture the 'full horror' of what he did." Reuters (8/25) reports Roof "argued that he was not competent to stand trial and represent himself and that the U.S. District Court where he was found guilty abused its discretion."

The Greenville (SC) News (8/25, Gross, 165K) reports, "Roof had appealed his convictions and death sentence in January 2020, arguing he had schizophrenia and suffered from other psychological disorders." The News adds, "In his appeal, Roof's attorneys argued that he was wrongly allowed to represent himself during sentencing, a critical phase of his trial. Roof successfully prevented jurors from hearing evidence about his mental health, 'under the delusion,' his attorneys argued, that 'he would be rescued from prison by white-nationalists – but only, bizarrely, if he kept his mental-impairments out of the public record.'"

CBS News (8/25, 5.39M) reports, "The 4th Circuit found that the trial judge did not commit an error when he found Roof was competent to stand trial, and the panel issued a scathing rebuke of Roof's crimes. 'Dylann Roof murdered African Americans at their church, during their Bible-study and worship. They had welcomed him. He slaughtered them. He did so with the express intent of terrorizing not just his immediate victims at the historically important Mother Emanuel Church, but as many similar people as would hear of the mass murder,' the panel wrote in its ruling. 'No cold record or careful parsing of statutes and precedents can capture the full horror of what Roof did. His crimes qualify him for the harshest penalty that a just society can impose,' the judges wrote."

Biden Receives Classified Intelligence Briefing On COVID Origins. The Hill (8/25, Samuels, 5.69M) reports President Biden has been briefed "on a classified report on the intelligence community's investigation into the origins of COVID-19, the White House said Wednesday." The intelligence community "this week concluded its 90-day review of evidence surrounding how the virus originated. Biden was briefed on Tuesday, press secretary Jen Psaki said." Psaki added, "It was a classified briefing, so of course that's not information we would provide publicly." The intelligence community is "preparing an unclassified summary of its findings, which will be released in the coming days." Top intelligence officials, including DNI Haines "have previously acknowledged that it's possible the virus could have originated via a laboratory accident, but they have cautioned it would be difficult to come to a definitive conclusion."

CBS News (8/25, Gazis, 5.39M) reports a White House official acknowledged on Wednesday that the intelligence community "has delivered findings from its 90-day investigation into the origins of COVID-19 to President Biden." The official said, "The President was briefed on the classified report. We look forward to having an unclassified summary of key judgments to share soon."

The Washington Examiner (8/25, Dunleavy, 888K) reports that the Administration's "classified version of an intelligence community report on the origins of COVID-19 should be declassified, according to" Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL). Rubio said on Wednesday that the "American people deserve to know what our government does and does not know about the origins of COVID-19," and that the Administration "needs to immediately transmit the classified report to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and provide a declassified version for the American people."

ABC News (8/25, Pezenik, Salzman, Folmer, 2.44M) also reports.

China Slams US Intelligence Report On COVID Origins. The Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) reports that "Beijing rolled out a multipronged attack on U.S. intelligence agencies on Wednesday after President Biden received a long-anticipated intelligence report that is reported to be inconclusive about the origins of the novel coronavirus." Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin "accused the United States of using coronavirus origin-tracing to suppress other countries, and he called the report political instead of scientific." Wang "also pushed back against criticism from U.S. officials that China has obstructed international efforts to get information about the earliest days of the pandemic." He said, "The United States says it lacks information from China. I can tell the United States that this is just an excuse to cover up the failure of its intelligence in origin tracing."

Reuters (8/25, Crossley) reports that on Wednesday, "the Chinese embassy in Washington posted the calls for World Health Organization investigations at Fort Detrick and at the University of North Carolina to its website after it said U.S.

media had rejected its editorial submissions.” Fu Cong, director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ arms control department, said during a briefing, “Scapegoating China cannot whitewash the US.”

Fox News (8/25, Aitken, 23.99M) and Newsweek (8/25, 2.67M) also report.

WHO Scientists Warn Window To Gather Evidence In COVID Probes Is Closing. The New York Times (8/25, Mueller, 20.6M) reports scientists “studying the origins of the coronavirus for the World Health Organization warned on Wednesday that the inquiry had ‘stalled’ and that further delays could make it impossible to recover crucial evidence about the beginning of the pandemic.” They wrote in editorial published in *Nature*, “The window is rapidly closing on the biological feasibility of conducting the critical trace-back of people and animals inside and outside China.” As debate about whether SARS-CoV-2 originated in nature or in a lab continues, “the editorial amounted to a defense of the team’s work and an appeal for follow-up studies.”

The AP (8/25, Cheng) reports “the WHO-recruited experts said the origins investigation is at ‘a critical juncture’ requiring urgent collaboration but has instead come to a standstill. They noted among other things that Chinese officials are still reluctant to share some raw data, citing concerns over patient confidentiality.” They “noted among other things that Chinese officials are still reluctant to share some raw data, citing concerns over patient confidentiality.” The AP says the researchers concluded in their March analysis of SARS-CoV-2 origins that “the virus probably jumped to humans from animals, and they described the possibility of a laboratory leak as ‘extremely unlikely.’” However, “the WHO experts said their report was intended only as a first step.”

CNBC (8/26, Lee, 7.34M) reports Singaporean Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan told CNBC’s “Squawk Box Asia” on Thursday that, “What we need is radical and complete transparency. Without everyone sharing the data and being able to analyze it critically, it will be almost impossible to really get down to the bottom of this.”

Meanwhile, the Washington Post (8/25, Diamond, Abutaleb, Achenbach, 10.52M) adds that many of the experts “said the question of the virus’s origin is important to understand, stressing that the lessons would be vital for preventing future pandemics.” However, “they lamented that the search for an origin has become highly politicized.” In addition, many indicated “they were not surprised the report” the President received from the intelligence community “was inconclusive and remained skeptical there would ever be a definitive answer.”

Among other news outlets covering the story are the Wall Street Journal (8/25, McKay, Marcus, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) and The Hill (8/25, Choi, 5.69M).

New York Man Sentenced For Anti-Semitic Harassment. The Pearl River (NY) Patch (8/25, Taliaferro, 1.44M) reports from Blauvelt, New York, “A Blauvelt man was sentenced Wednesday to 36 months of imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release, for making repeated anti-Semitic death threats to a Jewish resident of Stratford, Connecticut whom he met through his mom.” Christopher Rascoli, 49, “threatened a woman through text messages, voicemails and Facebook posts for seven months, prosecutors said. The woman lived in the same housing community as his mother, The Journal News reported. In text messages and voicemails, from November 2019 through June 2020, Rascoli threatened to murder or seriously injure the victim. He also threatened to blow up the victim’s house and car, Leonard C Boyle, Acting United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, and David Sundberg, Special Agent in Charge of the New Haven Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation said in an announcement about the sentence.”

US Charges Tennessee Man In Church Arson Probes. The Washington Examiner (8/25, Deese, 888K) reports, “A man from Nashville, Tennessee, was charged with civil rights violations Tuesday following an arrest for allegedly setting fires to four churches in 2019.” Alan Douglas Fox, 28, “was charged with setting four churches – the Crieveview United Methodist Church, the Crieveview Baptist Church, the Saint Ignatius of Antioch Catholic Church, and the Priest Lake Community Baptist Church – on fire in June 2019. Fox intentionally set fire ‘because of the religious character of the churches,’ the criminal information Fox was charged with alleged, according to a press readout from the Department of Justice.” The Examiner adds, “Officials who investigated the case include the FBI, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the Metro Nashville Police Department, and the Nashville Fire Department.”

Long-Suppressed Video Shows Violent Encounter Between Louisiana State Trooper, Black Motorist. The AP (8/25, Bleiberg, Mustian) reports that “body camera video kept secret for more than two years shows” Louisiana State Police trooper Jacob Brown, who is white, “pummeling” Aaron Larry Bowman, a black motorist, “18 times with a flashlight.” The AP says that while Brown has since resigned and now “faces state charges of second-degree battery and malfeasance in Bowman’s beating,” the State Police “didn’t investigate the attack on Bowman until 536 days after it occurred...and only did so weeks after Bowman brought a civil lawsuit.” The AP adds that “Bowman’s encounter...came less than three weeks after troopers from the same embattled agency punched, stunned and dragged another Black motorist, Ronald

Greene, before he died in police custody on a rural roadside in northeast Louisiana.” And federal prosecutors “are examining both cases in a widening investigation into police brutality and potential cover-ups involving both troopers and state police brass.”

Ex-Charleston, South Carolina Employee Pleads Guilty To City Contract Kickbacks. The Charleston (SC) Post and Courier (8/25, Garrison, 299K) reports, “A former project manager with the city of Charleston’s Department of Housing and Community Development admitted Aug. 25 he accepted kickbacks to steer housing repair contracts to local builders.” Brian D. Herndon “pleaded guilty to bribery at a hearing in U.S. District Court in Charleston. He admitted in court he accepted a total of \$15,000 in bribes to provide non-public information about city housing projects to Charles Mincey, operator of Palmettos at Folly.” Herndon “admitted in court he told Mincey how much money to bid on approximately 30 city housing projects contracted between February 2014 and March 2020. Many of the contracts were for roofing work that was paid for in part by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.”

South Dakota Man Faces Federal Bank Fraud Charges. The Mitchell (SD) Daily Republic (8/25, Duntelman, 36K) reports that federal prosecutors said on Tuesday that a Glenham, SD man “is facing federal charges of bank fraud after the Federal Bureau of Investigation says he profited from a loan scheme.” Gabe Outtrim, 42, “made two nominee loans of an undisclosed amount in the name of an unknowing customer between 2015 and 2019, while serving as the bank manager and vice-president of CorTrust Bank’s Leola branch.” Outtrim “faces up to 30 years in federal prison, a million dollar fine, five years of supervised release and up to \$200 to the Federal Crime Victims Fund.”

Prosecutors Say Glitch In FBI Software Program Allowed Unauthorized Access To Private Data. The New York Post (8/25, Feuerherd, 7.45M) reports, “A computer glitch in a secretive software program used by the FBI allowed some unauthorized employees to access private data for more than a year, prosecutors revealed in a new court filing.” According to the Post, “The screw-up in the Palantir program – a software created by a sprawling data analytics company co-founded by billionaire Peter Thiel – was detailed in a letter by prosecutors in the Manhattan federal court case against accused hacker Virgil Griffith. Data recovered from Griffith’s Facebook and Twitter accounts, which was obtained through a federal search warrant in March 2020, was accessed on Palantir for more than a year by at least four FBI employees, all of whom work outside New York and were not investigating the case, prosecutors wrote.”

Tech CEOs Pledge Action On Cybersecurity At White House Summit. The AP (8/25, Tucker) reports leaders of top technology companies, including Google, Apple, and Microsoft, have “committed to investing billions of dollars to strengthen cybersecurity defenses and to train skilled workers, the White House announced Wednesday following President Joe Biden’s private meeting with” the executives. In public remarks prior to the meeting, Biden called cybersecurity a “core national security challenge” for the US. Biden said the “reality is most of our critical infrastructure is owned and operated by the private sector, and the federal government can’t meet this challenge alone.” The AP writes that the “broad cross-section” of participants underscored how cyberattacks “have cut across virtually all sectors of commerce.”

The Hill (8/25, 5.69M) reports Biden met with officials from “over two dozen groups from a range of fields, including the leaders of Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, IBM, Microsoft, Bank of America, JPMorgan, Duke Energy, PG&E, Travelers insurance, and the University of Texas System.”

Reuters (8/25, Shalal) reports the US plans to “work with industry to hammer out new guidelines to improve the security of the technology supply chain,” as Biden urged the executives to “raise the bar on cybersecurity.” Citing the rising frequency of high-profile ransomware attacks and US efforts to gain Russian cooperation fighting their perpetrators, Biden said, “We have a lot of work to do.” After the meeting, Amazon “said it would make its cybersecurity training available to the public for free, and it would give multi-factor authentication devices to some cloud computing customers, starting in October.” IBM also “said it will train more than 150,000 people in cybersecurity skills over three years and will partner with historically black colleges and universities to create a more diverse cyber workforce.”

Bloomberg (8/25, Kern, 3.57M) reports the meeting focused “on ransomware, the root causes of malicious cyber activity, and how to ensure that cybersecurity is baked into technology sold by industry from the start, according to [a] senior official.” After the meeting with Biden, “several key cabinet secretaries led three breakout sessions with the industry participants.” The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Volz, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports DHS Secretary Mayorkas and Energy Secretary Granholm met with executives from water and electric utilities and the banking sector to discuss information sharing across their sectors, according to Southern Company CEO Tom Fanning.

FBI Urges More Hate Crime Reporting.

KDRV-TV

Medford, OR (8/25, Ridgie) reports from Medford, Oregon, "The FBI begins its hate crime awareness campaign for Oregon on September 1. Special Agent in Charge of the Portland Field Office Kieran Ramsey spoke to Ashland City Council about the initiative." KDRV-TV adds, "Ashland City Councilor, Gina DuQuenne is active with social justice groups throughout the Rogue Valley and told Newswatch 12 during the meeting with SAC Ramsey that she made her own suggestions to get other community members behind the campaign. DuQuenne suggested the FBI reach out to Jefferson Public Radio about the campaign because of its broad audience. She also hoped the hate crime awareness campaign would reach Southern Oregon University in Ashland."

WHBQ-TV

Memphis, TN (8/25, 69K) reports from Memphis, Tennessee, "FBI Memphis and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Tennessee are encouraging the public to report hate crimes, the pair announced Wednesday. 'Investigating hate crimes is the highest priority of the FBI's Civil Rights program due to the devastating impact they have on families and communities,' said Douglas M. Korneski, Special Agent in Charge of the Memphis Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. 'The FBI is committed to protecting the civil rights of all people, and we will aggressively pursue those who commit criminal offenses based on bias.'"

FBI Sending More Agents To Louisville, Kentucky In Crackdown On Violence, Gangs.

The Hill

(8/25, Vakil, 5.69M) reports, "More FBI agents are being sent to Louisville, Ky., to assist police in tackling gangs and violent criminals." The Hill adds, "The additional law enforcement is a part of a larger initiative between the Louisville Metro Police Department and the FBI called the Safe Streets Task Force aimed at going after violent crime, NBC News reported on Tuesday. 'Our hope is that these additional resources will help identify, apprehend, and ultimately convict individuals involved in violent crime around Louisville. Our focus will be on federal violations – such as carjackings, Hobbs Act robberies, and gun related charges,' Tim Beam of the FBI's Louisville office told The Hill in a Wednesday email. The Safe Streets Task Force initiative has allegedly already netted some results. Agents were able to recover around 1,200 grams of illegal controlled substances and 17 firearms in a drug bust last week, the Justice Department said in a press release."

Springfield, Illinois SAC To Retire.

The Springfield (IL) State Journal-Register (8/25, 149K) reports, "Special Agent in Charge Sean M. Cox of the FBI's Springfield division will retire in September, according to a news release issued Tuesday." Cox served in the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis, and Springfield field offices, as well as FBI headquarters in Washington, DC, in a career spanning more than 22 years. Acting US Attorney for the Central District of Illinois Douglas J. Quivey said Cox "has dedicated his career with the FBI to protecting us all and is a true public servant. His leadership of the Springfield Field Office set the standard and he acted as a mentor to many."

RFK Assassin Sirhan Sirhan Seeks Parole With No Opposition From Prosecutors.

The Washington Post (8/25, Jackman, 10.52M) reports Sirhan B. Sirhan, "convicted of the 1968 assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, will face a California parole board for the 16th time Friday in a prison outside San Diego," but "unlike the first 15 times, no prosecutor will stand to oppose the release of Sirhan, who is now 77." The Post adds, "When California abolished the death penalty, Sirhan's sentence was reduced to life with the possibility of parole. And now Sirhan, who has been incarcerated for 53 years, may benefit from a new push among progressive prosecutors to seek the release, or not oppose the release, of convicts who have served decades behind bars, no longer pose a threat to society and will be costly to treat medically in their later years."

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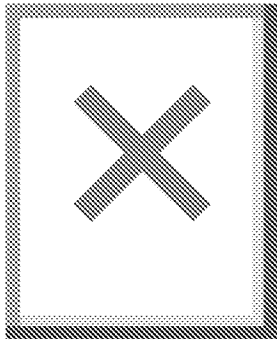
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TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF
DATE: THURSDAY, AUGUST 26, 2021 6:30 AM ET

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LEADING THE NEWS

House Committee Demands Records Over Capitol Insurrection.

Reuters (8/25) reports that "the congressional committee investigating the deadly Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol demanded a range of documents on Wednesday from American agencies, including communications records from former President Donald Trump's White House." Reuters says "the House of Representatives Select Committee asked for White House communications records on and leading up to Jan. 6. The panel also requested documents from the departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Interior and Justice, the FBI, the National Counterterrorism Center and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence." Chairman Bennie Thompson (D-MS) "gave the agencies two weeks to produce the materials."

The New York Times (8/25, Broadwater, 20.6M) reports that the committee series of requests "show that as they ramp up their inquiry, investigators are looking closely at efforts by the former president to overturn the results of the 2020 election and any connections he or his administration had to the rioters." The investigators "are also looking into the potential involvement of at least one top aide to a Republican member of Congress who helped publicize the 'Stop the Steal' rallies." The panel "sought communications among top Trump administration officials about attempts to place politically loyal personnel in senior positions as Mr. Trump sought to invalidate President Biden's victory in the run-up to the attack. Investigators are also focused on the planning, organization and funding of pro-Trump rallies on Jan. 5 and Jan. 6 and other attempts to stop or slow the process of Mr. Trump handing over the presidency to Mr. Biden."

The Washington Post (8/25, Wagner, 10.52M) reports, "In letters demanding materials from the National Archives and seven other agencies, Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-Miss.), the committee chairman, signaled that an expansive investigation is underway, touching not only on what happened Jan. 6 but also on matters such as 'the former President's knowledge of the election results and what he communicated to the American people about the election.'" Thompson "asked Archivist of the United States David Ferriero to use his authority under federal regulations to swiftly address the request for records from the Trump White House."

Roll Call (8/25, Marquette, 130K) reports, "The panel asked the archives office...for a trove of Trump administration information, including Trump's schedule the day his supporters assaulted police and broke into the Capitol. It is also seeking White House visitor records and information about White House efforts to impede the count of votes in the Electoral College." The committee "is seeking information, such as call logs and schedules, of specific people, including former Vice President Mike Pence, former chief of staff Mark Meadows, former Trump aide Hope Hicks, members of Trump's family – including his daughter, Ivanka Trump, and son, Donald Trump Jr. – and members of Congress who communicated with the White House on Jan. 6." Axios (8/25, Saric, 1.26M) reports, "Earlier this week, Thompson said that the committee will ask telecommunications companies to turn over the phone records of several hundred people, including members of Congress."

The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Peterson, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that Trump said in a statement Wednesday evening, "Unfortunately, this partisan exercise is being performed at the expense of long-standing legal principles of privilege. Executive privilege will be defended, not just on behalf of my Administration and the Patriots who worked beside me, but on behalf of the Office of the President of the United States." NPR (8/25, Grisales, 3.69M) reports, "In a statement, Trump said: 'The Leftist "select committee" has further exposed itself as a partisan sham and waste of taxpayer dollars with a request that's timed to distract Americans from historic and global catastrophes brought on by the failures of Joe Biden and the Democrats.'"

CNN International (8/25, Cohen, Nobles, Grayer, Wild) reports, "The list of targets is long and varied, ranging from information about attempts to either carry out or defy Trump's orders, invoke the insurrection act, martial law or the 25th Amendment, as well as for communications

regarding members of the Trump White House, campaign, January 5 and January 6 rally organizers, and even alleged members of far-right extremist groups such as the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers."

The Hill (8/25, Beitsch, 5.69M) reports, "The Jan. 6 panel is also seeking White House communications with other key names in Trump's orbit, including Roger Stone, Steve Bannon, Michael Flynn, Trump's onetime attorney Rudy Giuliani and My Pillow CEO Mike Lindell. The sweeping requests show the committee is focused not just on the events of the day but placing the riot in the broader context of Trump's months-long effort to contest the election."

Politico (8/25, Wu, Swan, 6.73M) reports, "'I think it is unlikely that the House committee witch hunt is going to find any documents or evidence that the FBI could not find,' Stone told POLITICO. 'I say again: any claim, implication, insinuation or assertion that I either knew about or had anything to do with the events of January 6 is categorically false and there is no evidence to the contrary.'" Politico adds, "The FBI request relates to the agency's preparation for the attack and intelligence-gathering and communications with the Trump White House. It also asks for records related to election investigations and communications with individuals including Giuliani, Powell and other supporters of Trump's push to overturn the election results."

Newsweek (8/25, Klapper, 2.67M) reports, "Phone logs may be requested from House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy, who had been in touch with Trump from the Capitol on January 6. McCarthy dismissed the committee's investigation again as 'so political.' When asked if he would turn over his own phone logs from that day, he said, 'I told the American public who I talked to that day,' referring to his television news appearances on January 6."

The Guardian (UK) (8/25, Yang, 5.53M) reports, "Wednesday's announcement comes a month after law enforcement officers delivered harrowing testimonies of their experiences during the 6 January attacks. In July, the Department of Justice declined to assert executive privilege over some of the testimonies, allowing former officials from the Trump administration to testify to Congress about Donald Trump's role in the deadly attacks."

Among news outlets also reporting are CNBC (8/25, Wilkie, 7.34M), CBS News (8/25, Hudak, 5.39M), ABC News (8/25, Siegel, 2.44M), NBC News (8/25, Edelman, 4.91M), Insider (8/25, Panetta, 2.74M), and the Washington Times (8/25, McLaughlin, 626K).

Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA) told CNN's New Day (8/25, 448K), "We're working off of our work plan. And when we have something to share and we have something that goes out, the chairman will speak for the committee. I understand that a lot of folks are interested in this topic and I hope that they share our concern that we need to get to the truth of what happened January 6th. And that means we need to understand the federal agency's response, we need to understand law enforcement agency's response, we need to understand what the President was doing that day."

Michigan Man Sentenced To Six Years In Plot To Kidnap Michigan Governor.

The AP (8/25, Eggert, White) reports from Grand Rapids, Michigan, "A man upset over state-ordered coronavirus restrictions was sentenced to just over six years in prison Wednesday for planning to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a significant break that reflected his quick decision to cooperate and help agents build cases against others." Ty Garbin "admitted his role in the alleged scheme weeks after his arrest last fall. He is among six men charged in federal court but the only one to plead guilty so far. It was a key victory for prosecutors as they try to prove an astonishing plot against the rest. The government, noting Garbin's exceptional cooperation, asked U.S. District Judge Robert Jonker to give him credit for helping investigators reinforce their case against his co-defendants."

The New York Times (8/25, MacFarquhar, 20.6M) reports, "Garbin, 25, an airplane mechanic, was the first defendant to be sentenced for what prosecutors have described as an extremist plot driven by anger at the governor's efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus. The 14 men arrested in October face charges in federal and state courts in one of the most significant domestic terrorism plots ever to come to trial in the United States. The defendants, many of them members of an antigovernment paramilitary group in Michigan called the Wolverine Watchmen, coalesced around protests against Covid-19 lockdown measures." Garbin "cooperated extensively with the prosecutors, who called his 'wide-ranging insider's view' a significant contribution to the case."

Among other issues, he testified about plans to deploy a homemade explosive device as well as other illegal weapons."

The Detroit Free Press (8/25, 2.16M) reports, "Whitmer elaborated on the impact of" the kidnapping plot "and hateful rhetoric more broadly in a victim impact statement, filed recently with a Michigan federal court ahead of the sentencing of the first person to plead guilty in connection to the purported scheme to take the governor hostage. 'My gratitude for the brave law enforcement officers of the Michigan State Police and the FBI is enormous. But even now we have not reached the far shore,' Whitmer wrote in the statement, portions of which were released Wednesday by a spokesman. 'Threats continue. I have looked out my windows and seen large groups of heavily armed people within 30 yards of my home. I have seen myself hung in effigy. Days ago at a demonstration, there was a sign that called for "burning the witch." For me, things will never be the same.'"

MLive (MI) (8/25, Tunison, 828K) reports that Garbin, "an aircraft mechanic with no previous criminal record, also said he was selfish for not taking into account the trauma his actions would take on his family." MLive adds, "Federal prosecutors had recommended a nine-year prison sentence for Garbin but acknowledged his considerable cooperation with authorities and his early admission to wrongdoing. Garbin is expected to testify against his federal co-defendants at an Oct. 12 trial in Grand Rapids. 'He didn't hold back. He would come right out and say, "We planned to do this and I was a part of it,'" Assistant U.S. Attorney Nils Kessler said."

NBC News (8/25, Williams, 4.91M) reports that Garbin "expressed a desire to continue to 'deradicalize' himself and help prevent others from becoming radicalized and going down the same path. In explaining why he was granting a shorter sentence than federal guidelines called for, Jonker cited Garbin's 'concrete' actions that showed he was taking responsibility for his actions. 'That's what's more impressive to me here, and not just the words of Mr. Garbin that he's abandoning this path, but the things he's done, concrete things he's done, to demonstrate that he means it.'"

Newsweek (8/25, Strozewski, 2.67M) reports, "The FBI last October said it broke up a scheme to kidnap the Democratic governor by anti-government extremists who were upset over Whitmer's coronavirus restrictions. Six men were charged in federal court, while others were charged in state court with aiding them."

Reuters (8/25, Clifford) reports, "In the plea, Garbin said he and co-defendants were a part of a Michigan-based anti-government militia group known as the Wolverine Watchmen. The six were arrested and charged by federal authorities last October." Among other news outlets also reporting are the New York Post (8/25, Fitz-Gibbon, 7.45M), ABC News (8/25, Jacobo, 2.44M), WDIV-TV Detroit (8/25, Ley, Clarke, 568K), WXMI-TV Grand Rapids, MI (8/25, 105K), and WGBA-TV Green Bay, WI (8/25).

Blinken: About 1,500 Americans Still In Afghanistan, Efforts To Contact Them Underway.

Bloomberg (8/25, 3.57M) reports Secretary of State Blinken said in an update on Wednesday that the US knows of about 1,500 Americans still in Afghanistan, and have spoken to about 500 of them. Blinken said, "We continue to be relentless in our outreach." The New York Times (8/25, Jakes, Schmitt, 20.6M) reports that Blinken said some of the remaining 1,000 may not want to leave as he described "an ever-changing estimate that the Biden administration has tried to pin down." The number "does not include legal permanent American residents or green card holders, he said." Politico (8/25, Monnay, 6.73M) says that the "update on the numbers follows an earlier bungling of exactly how many Americans remain in Afghanistan, a move that frustrated lawmakers."

ABC World News Tonight (8/25, 6:32 p.m. EST, lead story, 9:30, Muir, 5.99M) showed Blinken saying, "Let me be crystal clear about this. There is no deadline on our work to help any remaining American citizens who decide they want to leave to do so, along with the many Afghans who have stood by us over these many years." Martha Raddatz later reported for ABC World News Tonight (8/25, 6:32 p.m. EST, lead story, 9:30, Muir, 5.99M), "It remains unclear how this will work and it most certainly will be dangerous."

NBC Nightly News^{*} (8/25, 6:31 p.m. EST, lead story, 3:30, Holt, 5.37M) reported, "The Biden Administration tonight doing the tough math. Six days to meet the Afghanistan exit deadline. As many as 1,500 American civilians in need of a way out and thousands of US troops also subject to that withdrawal deadline. The President unwavering in his determination to abide by the August 31st date, but publicly the administration sending different signals about options for Americans who may not make it under the wire in time."

USA Today (8/25, Brook, 12.7M) reports that earlier on Wednesday, the White House "said about 19,000 people were evacuated from Afghanistan by U.S. and allied military forces on Tuesday." Reuters (8/25, Ali, Brunnstrom) reports Army Major General William Taylor, "with the U.S. military's Joint Staff, told a news briefing more than 10,000 people were at Kabul airport waiting to be evacuated from Afghanistan." He said that the total number of people evacuated so far is about 88,000.

Politico (8/25, Monnay, 6.73M) reports that Blinken "said that the U.S. government, especially the State Department, would remain committed to helping vulnerable Afghan women, children and others who have worked with the U.S. government in the past even after the military withdraws on the Aug. 31 deadline." However, he "did not provide concrete details on what this support would look like in practice." White House press secretary Jen Psaki said, "We are having those discussions." The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Youssef, Shah, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that top Administration officials are bracing for the likelihood that many Afghans, and perhaps others, will be left behind. Blinken said, "They will not be forgotten," and that the US and its allies would work to "ensure that those who want to leave Afghanistan after the 31st are able to do so."

Nancy Cordes reported for The CBS Evening News^{*} (8/25, 6:31 p.m. EST, lead story, 3:50, O'Donnell, 3.65M) that Blinken "insisted today that the US will continue to help Americans and qualified Afghans get out of the country even after the US military departs in six days. But he was intentionally vague about how the US plans to pull that off once all the troops are gone."

The Los Angeles Times (8/25, Wilkinson, 3.37M) reports that Blinken's assurances about Afghan allies "rang hollow, though, for thousands of Afghans desperate to leave and swamping the airport in Kabul. Also left behind, so far, are several hundred core staff members from the U.S. Embassy in Kabul and related State Department programs who say they were not summoned to the early evacuations that cleared the embassy of its U.S. citizen personnel and who now feel abandoned." Similarly, The Hill (8/25, Samuels, 5.69M) reports that the promises "from the administration are drawing intense criticism on Capitol Hill, where both Democrats and Republicans have called for the president to back off the Aug. 31 deadline and to reject assurances from the Taliban."

USA Today (8/25, Brook, Cimini, 12.7M) reports the US withdrawal "is likely to conclude with U.S. warplanes blowing up weaponry used to safeguard the evacuation, U.S. officials told USA TODAY. Though thousands of Afghans have left, many will not make it out because there won't be enough time or space on planes, they said."

Reuters (8/25) reports the Taliban "have told Germany that Afghans with legal documents will be able to travel on commercial flights beyond the Aug. 31 cut-off date after which evacuations from Kabul airport will no longer be allowed, a senior German diplomat said on Wednesday."

Some coverage continued to highlight the poor conditions at the airport. ABC World News Tonight^{*} (8/25, 6:32 p.m. EST, lead story, 9:30, Muir, 5.99M) reported "newly emerging images tonight, what's becoming a familiar scene there, some evacuees being helped to climb over barbed wire to get into the airport. While others were wading through sewage, just awful conditions there, holding up their documents hoping to get on one of those planes." More broadly, the Wall Street Journal (8/25, Donati, Restuccia, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that critics say Biden is painting a rosier picture of the evacuation efforts than the situation warrants.

US, UK, Australia Issue Security Alert, Tell Citizens To Move Away From Airport. Reuters (8/25) reports that "pressure to complete the evacuations has intensified amid concerns about the security situation outside the airport, where the Taliban are in control." In a Wednesday evening alert, the US Embassy "advised U.S. citizens to avoid traveling to the airport. It said those already at a number of the airport's gates should leave immediately. It did not give a reason why

the alert was issued." The Washington Post (8/25, Pannett, 10.52M) reports Australia and Britain "also issued comparable warnings to their citizens, with Australian foreign affairs officials saying that there was 'an ongoing and very high threat of terrorist attack' — language that was mirrored in a statement by the British Foreign Office." BBC World News (UK) (8/26, 6.59M) reports the UK advised those at the airport to "move away to a safe location and await further advice."

CNN (8/25, Sciutto, Lister, 89.21M) reports that concerns "about security around Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul have increased based on 'a very specific threat stream' from ISIS-K about planned attacks against crowds outside the airport, a US defense official has told CNN." The US believes ISIS-K "wants to create mayhem at the airport and has intelligence streams suggesting it is capable and planning to carry out multiple attacks, according to the official." The New York Times (8/25, Schmitt, 20.6M) reports a "senior U.S. official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe confidential assessments, confirmed that the United States was tracking a 'specific' and 'credible' threat at the airport from ISIS-K, which has carried out dozens of attacks in recent years."

Earlier, The CBS Evening News (8/25, 6:31 p.m. EST, lead story, 3:50, O'Donnell, 3.65M) reported in its lead, "the biggest threat to this historic evacuation is a real and immediate threat. US officials warning the terrorist group ISIS-K has the ability to attack the airport." Reuters (8/25) reports a "Western official said flight operations had slowed on Wednesday but the pace of evacuations would hasten on Thursday." The White House "said President Joe Biden was briefed on Wednesday about the threat from the ISIS-K militant group as well as contingency plans for the evacuation."

WSJournal: CIA Conducting Clandestine Extraction Missions. The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Lubold, Strobel, Youssef, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports the CIA and the military are conducting extraction operations to get Americans out Afghanistan. According to US and other officials, the CIA has launched clandestine operations to rescue Americans both in Kabul and elsewhere in the last few days.

The Washington Post (8/25, Demirjian, 10.52M) reports that Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said Wednesday that the US military has the ability to extract Americans who are outside Kabul, but "relatively close by." Kirby said, "I don't want to set the expectation that we're going to be able to fly all over the country to pick up people ... but when we can help, and we need rotary wing aircraft to help, we will do it." The New York Times (8/25, Jakes, Schmitt, 20.6M) reports that for "the third time in a week, American military helicopters rescued Americans inside Kabul. On Tuesday, about 20 American citizens who were flown onto the airfield from a location inside the city, Maj. Gen. William Taylor told reporters."

Roll Call: Cut-Off For Evacuation Civilians Is Friday. Roll Call (8/25, Oswald, 130K) reports that while "the official deadline for U.S. military evacuation efforts in Kabul is Aug. 31, in reality, the cut-off, as it has been conveyed to aid agencies, for evacuating civilians is Friday, Aug. 27."

However, the AP (8/25, Knickmeyer, Lee) reports the US military airlift "will continue until the final hours of President Joe Biden's Aug. 31 deadline for ending the frantic evacuation from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, Pentagon officials said Wednesday." Pentagon spokesman John Kirby "said the U.S. military will preserve as much military airlift capacity at the Kabul airport as possible in the coming days." Still, the Wall Street Journal (8/25, Youssef, Shah, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that many of the military personnel will shift in the coming days from evacuating civilians to loading the remaining US military personnel and essential equipment.

Ambassador Won't Comment On Future Diplomatic Presence, Says Americans Were Warned To Leave. In an interview with Norah O'Donnell for The CBS Evening News (8/25, 6:35 p.m. EST, story 2, 3:20, O'Donnell, 3.65M), Acting Ambassador to Afghanistan Ross Wilson was asked if US diplomats will remain behind after the evacuation. He responded, "I'm not sure I want to give you a firm answer on that. There are still decisions to be made in Washington about the future shape of our presence and our activities here. And I will just leave it at that." Regarding warnings to Americans prior to the Taliban's conquest, Wilson said, "We put out repeated warnings. Every three weeks to Americans going back to I think March or April. Each one in stronger terms, leave now. Leave immediately. Never in my 40 years of working since I began

working at the State Department have I seen such strong, such strong language used. People chose not to leave, that's their business." The Hill (8/25, 5.69M) reports that in the interview, Wilson said, "We believe that there will be possibilities for Americans to be able to get out of this country. That's been part of the nascent conversations, many of which have been taking place in Doha with the Taliban, about potential ways forward."

Private Rescue Efforts Grow Desperate In Kabul. The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Nissenbaum, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports on private efforts to evacuate Afghans as they face increasing obstacles like Taliban checkpoints and bureaucratic hurdles. After reporting on the successful evacuation of an Afghan interpreter and his family, Martha Raddatz reported for ABC World News Tonight (8/25, 6:32 p.m. EST, lead story, 9:30, Muir, 5.99M), "There are vast networks of veterans, civilians and agency people trying to help the stranded Afghans and they say they will keep at it until they are all out of there. They have really done heroic work."

Europeans Making Progress With Evacuation Efforts. Reuters (8/25) reports the UK "said on Wednesday it has evacuated more than 11,000 people from Afghanistan, adding that the evacuation process will run as long as the security situation allows and that no firm date had been set for the end of evacuation flights." The UK Ministry of Defence said in a statement, "11,474 individuals have been evacuated from Afghanistan under Operation PITTING, which commenced on Friday 13 August. More than 1,000 UK Armed Forces personnel deployed in Kabul."

Reuters (8/25) reports Germany "will keep evacuating people from Afghanistan as long as it is responsible to do so, Chancellor Angela Merkel told conservative lawmakers on Wednesday, adding, however, that this is only possible with the United States, two sources said." Germany's Bundeswehr "has so far flown more than 4,500 people out of Afghanistan, tweeted the foreign ministry. Around 3,700 of them are Afghan nationals, with women and girls making up about half the number."

Reuters: Taliban Has Asked Turkey To Aid Them In Running Airport. Reuters (8/25, Coskun, Gumrukcu) reports the Taliban "have asked Turkey for technical help to run Kabul airport after the departure of foreign forces but insist that Ankara's military also withdraw fully by the end-August deadline, two Turkish officials told Reuters." The "conditional request...leaves Ankara with a difficult decision over whether to accept a hazardous job, one official said." In a later report, Reuters (8/25) says that Turkey's military has begun to withdraw from the airport, but Turkish experts may remain to provide technical support, officials told them.

Psaki Blasts Blackwater Co-Founder For Seeking To Profit From Evacuations. The Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) reports White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki "blasted Blackwater co-founder Erik Prince on Wednesday after a Wall Street Journal report alleged that he is offering to evacuate people out of Afghanistan for \$6,500 each." According to the Journal, Prince "is charging \$6,500 per person to get those hoping to leave Afghanistan safely to the Kabul airport and on a charter flight." Psaki said, "We are evacuating tens of thousands of people every day for free, and that's the focus that our military on the ground, our diplomats have on the ground." Asked about Prince, she said, "I don't think any human being who has a heart and soul would support efforts to profit off of people's agony and pain as they're trying to depart a country and fearing for their lives."

USA Today Calls On Biden To Act With "Conviction And Courage." In an editorial, USA Today (8/25, 12.7M) says that there are "moments in American history when the hopes of a nation turn on the next critical move a president makes," adding that is now Biden's turn. USA Today adds, "To Biden's credit, since the collapse of the Afghan government, the president has orchestrated one of the largest airlifts of refugees in American history" but "that success illustrates how much of this frenzied exit could have been accomplished sooner, under safer conditions, if undertaken in the weeks after Biden's decision in April to pull U.S. forces out of Afghanistan." Regarding those Americans that remain, the piece concludes, "Mr. President, you will bear responsibility for their fate. Like presidents before you, this is your moment to lead with conviction and courage. History will be your judge."

More Commentary. In an op-ed for the Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M), Rep. Jake Auchincloss (D-MA) writes that President Biden "made the right decision" on Afghanistan. Auchincloss writes, "There's no glory in it, but there is integrity. He saw above the politics in

Washington, beyond the news cycle, through the challenges of the withdrawal," and "looked, instead, to the national interest. The United States must focus its foreign policy on countering the Chinese Communist Party and on leading coalitions to address the climate and pandemic emergencies."

In an op-ed for the Wall Street Journal (8/25, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), Paula J. Dobriansky, a senior fellow at Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and a former undersecretary of state for global affairs, and Paul Saunders, a senior fellow in U.S. foreign policy at the Center for the National Interest and a former State Department senior adviser, write that there is not enough time for Americans, allied personnel and Afghans to be evacuated from Afghanistan ahead of the Aug. 31 deadline President Biden has agreed to. They argue that the Administration should propose a UN Security Council resolution calling on the Taliban to ensure safe access to the airport.

Farah Stockman writes in the New York Times (8/25, Stockman, 20.6M) that the US "has a moral responsibility to evacuate the Afghans we put in harm's way," but "the most consequential decisions in the days ahead involve how we will help the millions of Afghans who will be left behind and how we will relate to their new leaders." The Biden Administration must decide whether to "try to thwart any government the Taliban create or use whatever shred of leverage America has left to encourage them to govern as inclusively and moderately as possible. If we care about the people of Afghanistan, we will try the latter."

In his Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) column, George Will says Administration officials' "gaseous talk" about Afghanistan "envelops in abstract, obfuscating vocabularies things that are awkward to defend." Will writes that while it may be that "few 2022 voters will cast ballots with today's scenes from Kabul's airport on their minds," because of "those mortifying scenes, a significant number of voters might have a more jaundiced view of government's extravagant 2021 pretensions regarding its ability to rearrange the nation's economy and transform its moral premises. And perhaps many will remember the government's often self-serving and disgraceful rhetoric about Afghanistan."

In an op-ed for Politico (8/25, 6.73M), Seth Masket, a professor of political science and director of the Center on American Politics at the University of Denver, writes that President Biden's "critics seem to smell blood in the water over the catastrophic situation in Afghanistan" and "a fair number of prominent Democrats are worried that the Taliban takeover is the kind of overseas disaster that will hurt their party in upcoming elections." But, "politically, for a number of reasons, it's not likely to substantially harm Biden or other Democrats at the ballot booth." Masket argues that "for all the horrors happening in Afghanistan today, it just won't remain on the front pages for very long, and it's unlikely to be central to elections next year, never mind three years from now."

Daniel Henninger writes in the Wall Street Journal (8/25, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) that President Biden's has no foreign policy and instead of waiting to see whether former President Trump will run again in 2024, Republicans should offer an alternative foreign policy doctrine immediately.

In an op-ed for the Wall Street Journal (8/25, Epstein, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), author Joseph Epstein says it is difficult to believe anything President Biden says. Biden, Epstein writes, does not have the earnestness that world leaders require and he gives the impression of little self-reflection or understanding of the world's problems.

CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

Plea Deal Offered To Virginia Man Accused Of Attacking Police During Capitol Siege.

Reuters (8/25) reports, "Prosecutors have proposed a plea bargain to a Virginia man accused of attacking police with a large stick during the Jan. 6 U.S. Capitol riot, lawyers for the government and defendant told a court hearing on Wednesday." Reuters adds, "Details of the plea deal offered to Jonathan Mellis, 34, of Williamsburg, Virginia, were not disclosed during the public portion of a status hearing on the case before U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan. Mellis faces ten riot-related

charges, including assaulting officers using a dangerous weapon. One or more of the charges are felonies, court records indicate." According to Reuters, "Court records also show that Mellis has been detained without bond since his arrest in February. In May, Judge Sullivan denied a defense request that Mellis be released from custody for a week so he could attend his father's funeral."

Secret Service Reportedly Warned Capitol Police About Threats Before Capitol Siege.

The Hill (8/25, Schnell, 5.69M) reports, "The Secret Service warned Capitol Police about threats of violence on Jan. 5, one day before rioters descended on the Capitol complex and injured a number of officers, according to newly revealed documents." The Hill adds, "One day before the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, the Secret Service, from the Protective Intelligence Operations Center's (PIOC) account, sent an email to a recipient associated with the Capitol Police informing it of a tip sent in by a 'concerned citizen' at the Denver Field Office regarding people who were flying to the Washington, D.C., area to 'attend tomorrow's rally and 'incite violence.'"

COUNTER-TERRORISM

Appeals Court Upholds Dylann Roof's Conviction, Death Sentence.

The AP (8/25, Kinnard, Lavoie) reports a three-judge panel of the 4th US Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia on Wednesday unanimously "upheld Dylann Roof's conviction and death sentence for the 2015 racist slayings of nine members of a Black South Carolina congregation, saying the legal record cannot even capture the 'full horror' of what he did." Reuters (8/25) reports Roof "argued that he was not competent to stand trial and represent himself and that the U.S. District Court where he was found guilty abused its discretion."

The Greenville (SC) News (8/25, Gross, 165K) reports, "Roof had appealed his convictions and death sentence in January 2020, arguing he had schizophrenia and suffered from other psychological disorders." The News adds, "In his appeal, Roof's attorneys argued that he was wrongly allowed to represent himself during sentencing, a critical phase of his trial. Roof successfully prevented jurors from hearing evidence about his mental health, 'under the delusion,' his attorneys argued, that 'he would be rescued from prison by white-nationalists – but only, bizarrely, if he kept his mental-impairments out of the public record.'"

CBS News (8/25, 5.39M) reports, "The 4th Circuit found that the trial judge did not commit an error when he found Roof was competent to stand trial, and the panel issued a scathing rebuke of Roof's crimes. 'Dylann Roof murdered African Americans at their church, during their Bible-study and worship. They had welcomed him. He slaughtered them. He did so with the express intent of terrorizing not just his immediate victims at the historically important Mother Emanuel Church, but as many similar people as would hear of the mass murder,' the panel wrote in its ruling. 'No cold record or careful parsing of statutes and precedents can capture the full horror of what Roof did. His crimes qualify him for the harshest penalty that a just society can impose,' the judges wrote."

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

Biden Receives Classified Intelligence Briefing On COVID Origins.

The Hill (8/25, Samuels, 5.69M) reports President Biden has been briefed "on a classified report on the intelligence community's investigation into the origins of COVID-19, the White House said Wednesday." The intelligence community "this week concluded its 90-day review of evidence surrounding how the virus originated. Biden was briefed on Tuesday, press secretary Jen Psaki said." Psaki added, "It was a classified briefing, so of course that's not information we would provide publicly." The intelligence community is "preparing an unclassified summary of its findings, which will be released in the coming days." Top intelligence officials, including DNI Haines "have previously acknowledged that it's possible the virus could have originated via a laboratory accident, but they have cautioned it would be difficult to come to a definitive conclusion."

CBS News (8/25, Gazis, 5.39M) reports a White House official acknowledged on Wednesday that the intelligence community "has delivered findings from its 90-day investigation into the

origins of COVID-19 to President Biden." The official said, "The President was briefed on the classified report. We look forward to having an unclassified summary of key judgments to share soon."

The Washington Examiner (8/25, Dunleavy, 888K) reports that the Administration's "classified version of an intelligence community report on the origins of COVID-19 should be declassified, according to" Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL). Rubio said on Wednesday that the "American people deserve to know what our government does and does not know about the origins of COVID-19," and that the Administration "needs to immediately transmit the classified report to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and provide a declassified version for the American people."

ABC News (8/25, Pezenik, Salzman, Folmer, 2.44M) also reports.

China Slams US Intelligence Report On COVID Origins. The Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) reports that "Beijing rolled out a multipronged attack on U.S. intelligence agencies on Wednesday after President Biden received a long-anticipated intelligence report that is reported to be inconclusive about the origins of the novel coronavirus." Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin "accused the United States of using coronavirus origin-tracing to suppress other countries, and he called the report political instead of scientific." Wang "also pushed back against criticism from U.S. officials that China has obstructed international efforts to get information about the earliest days of the pandemic." He said, "The United States says it lacks information from China. I can tell the United States that this is just an excuse to cover up the failure of its intelligence in origin tracing."

Reuters (8/25, Crossley) reports that on Wednesday, "the Chinese embassy in Washington posted the calls for World Health Organization investigations at Fort Detrick and at the University of North Carolina to its website after it said U.S. media had rejected its editorial submissions." Fu Cong, director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' arms control department, said during a briefing, "Scapegoating China cannot whitewash the US."

Fox News (8/25, Aitken, 23.99M) and Newsweek (8/25, 2.67M) also report.

WHO Scientists Warn Window To Gather Evidence In COVID Probes Is Closing. The New York Times (8/25, Mueller, 20.6M) reports scientists "studying the origins of the coronavirus for the World Health Organization warned on Wednesday that the inquiry had 'stalled' and that further delays could make it impossible to recover crucial evidence about the beginning of the pandemic." They wrote in editorial published in *Nature*, "The window is rapidly closing on the biological feasibility of conducting the critical trace-back of people and animals inside and outside China." As debate about whether SARS-CoV-2 originated in nature or in a lab continues, "the editorial amounted to a defense of the team's work and an appeal for follow-up studies."

The AP (8/25, Cheng) reports "the WHO-recruited experts said the origins investigation is at 'a critical juncture' requiring urgent collaboration but has instead come to a standstill. They noted among other things that Chinese officials are still reluctant to share some raw data, citing concerns over patient confidentiality." They "noted among other things that Chinese officials are still reluctant to share some raw data, citing concerns over patient confidentiality." The AP says the researchers concluded in their March analysis of SARS-CoV-2 origins that "the virus probably jumped to humans from animals, and they described the possibility of a laboratory leak as 'extremely unlikely.'" However, "the WHO experts said their report was intended only as a first step."

CNBC (8/26, Lee, 7.34M) reports Singaporean Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan told CNBC's "Squawk Box Asia" on Thursday that, "What we need is radical and complete transparency. Without everyone sharing the data and being able to analyze it critically, it will be almost impossible to really get down to the bottom of this."

Meanwhile, the Washington Post (8/25, Diamond, Abutaleb, Achenbach, 10.52M) adds that many of the experts "said the question of the virus's origin is important to understand, stressing that the lessons would be vital for preventing future pandemics." However, "they lamented that the search for an origin has become highly politicized." In addition, many indicated "they were not surprised the report" the President received from the intelligence community "was inconclusive and remained skeptical there would ever be a definitive answer."

Among other news outlets covering the story are the Wall Street Journal (8/25, McKay, Marcus, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) and The Hill (8/25, Choi, 5.69M).

Report: 70% Of Federal Election Security Funding Unspent By States.

The AP (8/25, Hegeman) reports a recently released federal report "says the states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories had spent a little more than \$255 million of \$805 million in election security grants through Sept. 30 of last year, the latest figures available." A state-by-state snapshot "the commission released last month shows that as of the end of the federal fiscal year on Sept. 30, when early voting was already happening in the presidential election, the nation's 50 states plus the District of Columbia and five territories had spent roughly 31% of the election security funding." The grant money came "in two chunks since 2018 under the Help America Vote Act."

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

New York Man Sentenced For Anti-Semitic Harassment.

The Pearl River (NY) Patch (8/25, Taliaferro, 1.44M) reports from Blauvelt, New York, "A Blauvelt man was sentenced Wednesday to 36 months of imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release, for making repeated anti-Semitic death threats to a Jewish resident of Stratford, Connecticut whom he met through his mom." Christopher Rascoli, 49, "threatened a woman through text messages, voicemails and Facebook posts for seven months, prosecutors said. The woman lived in the same housing community as his mother, The Journal News reported. In text messages and voicemails, from November 2019 through June 2020, Rascoli threatened to murder or seriously injure the victim. He also threatened to blow up the victim's house and car, Leonard C Boyle, Acting United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, and David Sundberg, Special Agent in Charge of the New Haven Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation said in an announcement about the sentence."

US Charges Tennessee Man In Church Arson Probes.

The Washington Examiner (8/25, Deese, 888K) reports, "A man from Nashville, Tennessee, was charged with civil rights violations Tuesday following an arrest for allegedly setting fires to four churches in 2019." Alan Douglas Fox, 28, "was charged with setting four churches – the Crieviewood United Methodist Church, the Crieviewood Baptist Church, the Saint Ignatius of Antioch Catholic Church, and the Priest Lake Community Baptist Church – on fire in June 2019. Fox intentionally set fire 'because of the religious character of the churches,' the criminal information Fox was charged with alleged, according to a press readout from the Department of Justice." The Examiner adds, "Officials who investigated the case include the FBI, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the Metro Nashville Police Department, and the Nashville Fire Department."

Long-Suppressed Video Shows Violent Encounter Between Louisiana State Trooper, Black Motorist.

The AP (8/25, Bleiberg, Mustian) reports that "body camera video kept secret for more than two years shows" Louisiana State Police trooper Jacob Brown, who is white, "pummeling" Aaron Larry Bowman, a black motorist, "18 times with a flashlight." The AP says that while Brown has since resigned and now "faces state charges of second-degree battery and malfeasance in Bowman's beating," the State Police "didn't investigate the attack on Bowman until 536 days after it occurred...and only did so weeks after Bowman brought a civil lawsuit." The AP adds that "Bowman's encounter...came less than three weeks after troopers from the same embattled agency punched, stunned and dragged another Black motorist, Ronald Greene, before he died in police custody on a rural roadside in northeast Louisiana." And federal prosecutors "are examining both cases in a widening investigation into police brutality and potential cover-ups involving both troopers and state police brass."

FBI, Albuquerque Police Search For Bank Robber.

The Albuquerque (NM) Journal (8/25, 188K) reports the FBI and Albuquerque police are searching for a man who robbed a bank inside a Northeast Albuquerque Walmart on Tuesday. According to the Journal, the FBI said the man "displayed a handgun and robbed the First Convenience Bank inside the Walmart at 2266 Wyoming NE, near Menaul, just before 6 p.m." In a news release, the FBI said, "The suspect approached tellers, showed them a handgun in his waistband, and demanded money. The teller handed over an undisclosed amount of money to the suspect, who left the bank." KOB-TV Albuquerque, NM (8/25, 69K) also reports the FBI is searching for the suspect.

Pennsylvania Fugitive Shot In Gunfire Exchange With Police.

The Vineland (NJ) Daily Journal (8/25, 28K) reports Arthur Disanto Jr., "a fugitive from Pennsylvania, was shot three times during an exchange of gunfire with police" in Deptford, NJ. Disanto "is charged in Pennsylvania with attempted murder, aggravated assault, simple assault and harassment, according to the FBI, which said Disanto was taken into custody in Washington Township."

Former Texas Teacher Pleads Guilty To Child Pornography Charge.

The Dallas Morning News (8/25, 772K) reports Jason Sherod Baldwin, a former teacher at Dallas' elite Hockaday School, pleaded guilty Tuesday to "one federal count of receipt of child pornography" for "buying sexually explicit images of children online." He is also charged with "four counts of advertising for child pornography and one additional count of receipt of child pornography." He faces five to 20 years in federal prison after "FBI agents who searched his Love Field-area apartment found a pair of iPhones that contained hundreds of files of child pornography."

FBI Assists In Homicide Investigation Into Death Of Couple In Utah.

Fox News (8/25, Conklin, 23.99M) reports, "Utah authorities and the FBI are still searching for suspects a week after the shooting deaths of two young women who were on a camping trip when they died." The couple's bodies were found August 18th by a friend searching for them after days of no contact. The Grand County Sheriff's Department wrote in a Facebook post Tuesday that they, "along with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the State of Utah Special Bureau of Investigation and multiple law enforcement partners are conducting a double homicide investigation into the death of two female campers from the South Mesa area of the La Sal Mountains."

Out Magazine (8/25, Padgett, 69K) also reports that the FBI and Utah State Bureau of Investigation "are now working with the Grand County Sheriff's Office to help solve the murder of Kylen Schulte and wife Crystal Turner after the two were found shot dead in their van after going missing for four days while on a camping trip in Utah." Schulte and Turner had reported to family they noticed a man behaving strangely near them at a campsite right before going missing.

Former Delaware Political Candidate Pleads Guilty To Sending Death Threats By Mail.

The AP (8/25) reports, "A former Delaware political candidate who unsuccessfully sought the Republican nominations for governor and U.S. Senate has pleaded guilty to federal charges of mailing threats to a lawyer who represented his wife in a divorce case." An FBI affidavit noted Michael Protack sent death threats to lawyer Patrick Boyer after Boyer began working with Protack's wife in 2018 to help her get "protection from abuse."

Delaware Business Now (8/25) reports Thomas J. Sobocinski, special agent in charge of the FBI Baltimore Field Office, said, "We consider any threat to life a serious threat. These were disturbing, calculated messages sent by Protack and he now faces up to 10 years in prison for his actions. These types of cases are aggressively investigated by the FBI, Postal Inspectors and our law enforcement partners, and those who violate federal law will be held accountable."

Mississippi Man Gets 60 Years For Child Porn.

Laurel (MS) Leader Call (8/25, 22K) reports that on Friday, a federal court in Mississippi sentenced Michael Allen Long 60 years in prison after he previously pleaded "guilty to two counts of production of child porn." The Leader Calls says the case – which was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in 2006 by DOJ to combat child sex crimes – "was investigated by the FBI Jackson's Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force, the Hinds County Sheriff's Office and the Mississippi Attorney General's Office."

California Couple Admits To Forcing Guatemalan Relatives To Work Long Hours In Poor Conditions.

KXTV-TV Sacramento, CA (8/25, Soublet) reports that on Tuesday, Nery Martinez Vasquez and his wife, Maura Martinez, "pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit forced labor." KXTV explains the California couple "are naturalized U.S. citizens originally from Guatemala who promised their relative a better life if she came to America in 2016. Instead, they forced family members to overstay their visas and work long hours for little to no pay at their" businesses. They also prevented their relative's two daughters from attending school "with threats that they would be deported." Sean Ragan, special agent in charge of the FBI's Sacramento field office said in the press release, "This case highlights how the dream of coming to the United States to begin a new, promising life can become a nightmare. ... The FBI is committed to identifying and investigating human trafficking. We seek justice for victims, regardless of immigration status."

Feds Charge Three In New York Trip-And-Fall Scam That Used Homeless As Pawns.

AP (8/25, Neumeister) reports a "racket in which corrupt lawyers and doctors generated over \$20 million in lawsuit settlements by manipulating hundreds of homeless individuals and other desperate people to feign trip-and-fall accidents has been shut down with an indictment." On Wednesday, charges against lawyer Marc Elefant and two doctors – Andrew Dowd and Sady Ribeiro – "were unveiled by authorities who detailed a scam in which people allegedly agreed to undergo needless surgeries sometimes to boost the value of lawsuits seeking compensation for fake accidents." "Michael J. Driscoll, a New York FBI official, called the scheme 'beyond reprehensible.'"

FBI Marks One-Year Anniversary Of Yonkers Murder As Suspect Remains At Large.

The Port Chester (NY) Patch (8/25, Edwards, 1.44M) reports that the FBI and local police "are marking the one-year anniversary of the coldblooded slaying of a man on a Yonkers street by reminding the public that the suspect wanted in the killing is armed, dangerous and still at large." The Patch explains that police believe "Jerome Wilson fatally shot Chazz Mitchell...on August 25, 2020" and in March, "the FBI Westchester County Safe Streets Task Force and the Yonkers Police Department offered a \$5,000 reward for any tips that might help law enforcement to nab the wanted fugitive." However, Wilson remains at large. He "has strong ties to Yonkers, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle and Poughkeepsie" and "is also thought that he has close family and associates in Albany and Niagara Falls, as well as Fayetteville, North Carolina and Scranton, Pennsylvania."

Colorado Officials Urge Clerk In Federal Investigation To Return Home.

The AP (8/25) reports, "Rural Colorado county officials pled with community members to pass along a message to their missing-in-action county clerk who is being investigated for an election security breach: 'Come home.'" The AP explains that "Mesa County commissioners made their plea Tuesday during a meeting attended by supporters of Mesa County Clerk Tina Peters, who has not made any local appearances since Colorado's Secretary of State Jena Griswold opened an investigation into the county elections office in early August." The AP adds a "second investigation by the FBI and Mesa County district attorney is also ongoing for possible criminal actions."

Family Of Missing Idaho Boy Marks One-Month Anniversary Of Disappearance.

Fox News (8/25, Sorace, 23.99M) reports that the family of Michael Joseph Vaughan, a 5-year-old

boy "who vanished from their small Idaho town one month ago has addressed the disappearance, saying that while their 'family is broken right now,' they have not given up hope that investigators and the community will help bring their child home." Fox explains that the boy "went missing near his home in Fruitland on the evening of July 27," but investigators "still don't know what happened to the child despite an exhaustive month-long search effort involving more than a dozen law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, K-9 units, dive teams, paragliders and drones."

Maryland Men Face Federal Charges For \$900K Fraud.

WMDT-TV Salisbury, MD (8/25) reports that Stephen Franklin and Duane "are being indicted in federal court for stealing and embezzling nearly \$900,000" from two businesses in Salisbury, Maryland. WMDT explains "the men leveraged the ability of" Shore Appliance Connection to receive loans from banks that they had no intention of paying back. They then "invested the money on the stock market, declared it as income for other businesses such as Accurate Optical, all while impersonating and stealing the identity of the owner of Shore Appliance."

New Mexico Corrections Officer Faces Child Porn Charges.

The Albuquerque (NM) Journal (8/25, 188K) reports that federal authorities have charged Craig Barnish – a corrections officer for the Metropolitan Detention Center in Bernalillo County, New Mexico – "with possession of child pornography." The Journal explains "an undercover FBI agent found a group chat dedicated to 'trading sexually explicit conduct depicting minors' on the Kik messenger app" and observed an account upload child pornography. The FBI was able to trace account to Barnish and executed a search warrant against his home where they found child pornography.

Reward Increased In Brandon Shirley Case After Donation From Local Police Group.

The Louisville (KY) Courier-Journal (8/25, 554K) reports that the "reward for information in connection with the killing of Jefferson County Sheriff's Deputy Brandon Shirley has increased again after another local group donated to the fund." The Courier-Journal explains that the Elizabethtown Police Foundation "is adding \$5,000 towards the reward for 'information leading to the identification, arrest and conviction of the individual(s) responsible' for Shirley's death ... With EPF's donation, the reward now stands at \$80,000." The Courier-Journal adds that the FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives "had previously announced a \$50,000 reward in the case, and the Louisville Metro Police Foundation said soon after they were putting \$25,000 towards the reward."

Sources: FBI Is Investigating Nevada's Marijuana Licensing Process.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal (8/25, Kane, 372K) reports Chad Christensen, who co-owns a dispensary in Las Vegas, and two anonymous individuals said they have been interviewed by FBI agents who are investigating Nevada's marijuana licensing process.

Man Facing Drug Charges After He Allegedly Attempted To Evade Police In Utah.

In online coverage, KTVX-TV Salt Lake City (8/25, Facer) reports a recently unsealed indictment alleges that James Klein "led police on a high-speed chase" in Utah earlier this year. The FBI is involved with the investigation of the case against Klein, who has been arrested and "charged with possession with intent to distribute, possession of a firearm to further a narcotics offense, discharge of a narcotics-related firearm, carjacking, discharge of a firearm in a violent crime, and possession of a firearm by a felon."

Former Detective Pleads Guilty To Drug Charges.

McClatchy (8/25, 29K) reports Thomas Dwayne Reif, a former "detective with the Klamath Falls Police Department" in Oregon, has "pleaded guilty to two counts of possession of a controlled substance by misrepresentation, fraud, forgery, deception or subterfuge." The indictment in this federal case alleged that Reif "removed meth and fentanyl from an evidence container in a

secured locker and left with the drugs before coming back and returning the container" to that locker.

Kentucky Man Arrested In Connection With Meth Seizure.

In coverage that is behind a paywall, the [Mountain Eagle \(KY\)](#) (8/26) reports the FBI and the Kentucky State Police conducted an operation that led to a recent methamphetamine seizure. The meth was allegedly found in the home of Kentucky resident Larry W. Bentley, who has been arrested.

Arizona Man Sentenced To More Than 11 Years In Prison At End Of Drug Case.

A Nexstar Media article that is posted to the [KLFY-TV Lafayette, LA](#) (8/25, 110K) website says Arizona resident Delgado Frazer of Phoenix has been "sentenced to eleven years and three months" in prison for "leading an international cocaine trafficking operation." Acting US Attorney Williams thanked the DEA for participating in the investigation that led to Frazer's sentence.

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

FBI Searches Detroit City Hall Offices, Homes Of Two City Council Members.

The [AP](#) (8/25) reports from Detroit, "FBI agents on Wednesday searched offices at Detroit City Hall and the homes of two City Council members, just a few weeks after another councilman was charged in an alleged bribery scheme. Agents and state police were seen at the homes of Janeé Ayers and Scott Benson. Agents also were seen leaving City Hall with boxes. 'The citizens of Detroit have a right to a city government that is free of corruption,' Tim Waters, head of the FBI in Detroit, told reporters outside City Hall. 'No one is being charged today. Simply what we're doing today is collecting evidence.'"

The [Detroit News](#) (8/25, Snell, Rahal, Hunter, 1.16M) reports, "A widening public corruption investigation focused on Detroit towing operations and bribery allegations emerged Wednesday as FBI agents raided Detroit City Hall and the homes of City Council members Janeé Ayers and Scott Benson, the latest development in a scandal that has led to charges against Councilman André Spivey." According to the News, "The full scope of the investigation was unclear, but FBI agents were focused on municipal towing operations and accusations city officials received bribes, according to two sources. Federal agents on Wednesday also searched the homes of several City Council employees, including Ricardo Silva and Carol Banks, chiefs of staff for Ayers and Benson, respectively, though search warrant documents listing probable cause to search the locations remained sealed in court and no criminal charges were filed Wednesday."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (8/25, Guillen, Afana, Witsil, 2.16M) reports, "The searches came less than a month after federal prosecutors charged Councilman Andre Spivey with conspiracy to commit bribery. Spivey's lawyer said last month that the councilman has been cooperating with federal authorities for more than a year." The Free Press adds, "On Wednesday afternoon, a parade of about 20 FBI agents – many carrying boxes loaded into SUVs – exited city hall. Meanwhile, more agents searched the homes of Councilman Scott Benson and Councilwoman Janeé Ayers. The FBI also searched the East English Village home of Benson's chief of staff, Carol Banks. Despite the dramatic show of force by federal agents, little is known about what actions council members may have taken to target them in the FBI probe." The Free Press notes, "The FBI did not visit the 11th floor of city hall, the location of Mayor Mike Duggan's office, or any other administration office, according to Duggan spokesman John Roach."

[Fox News](#) (8/25, Colton, 23.99M) reports, "The raids are the largest federal investigation into Detroit city hall corruption since former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick was convicted eight years ago on racketeering conspiracy charges. More than 100 politicians, union bosses and police officers have been charged with corruption in Michigan's eastern district since 2008. 'Clearly, there is a culture of corruption that doesn't stop at the city line or the county line,' Erik Gordon, a professor at the University of Michigan's Ross Business School, told The Detroit News." Among news outlets also reporting are [The Hill](#) (8/25, 5.69M), [Newsweek](#) (8/25, Hutzler, 2.67M), the [Dearborn \(MI\)](#)

Patch (8/25, Siwicki, 1.44M), the Washington Examiner (8/25, Notheis, 888K), WDIV-TV Detroit (8/25, 568K), WDET-FM Detroit (8/25, Newman, 3K), and WJBK-TV Detroit (8/25, Langton, 381K).

Chicago Alderwoman Resigns Key Committee Role Amid Federal Charges.

WFLD-TV Chicago (8/25, 280K) reports that on Tuesday, Chicago Ald. Carrie Austin resigned as chair of the City Council's Committee on Contracting Oversight and Equity. WFLD explains that Austin "was indicted on federal charges of lying to the FBI and taking bribes for allegedly conspiring to receive home improvements from construction contractors seeking assistance for a development project in her Far South Side ward." She faces charges of "conspiring to use interstate facilities to promote bribery...using interstate facilities to promote bribery and...willfully making false statements to the FBI." Austin has pleaded not guilty.

SEC Accuses Georgia Investment Adviser Of Running \$110M Ponzi Scheme.

Reuters (8/25) reports that the Securities and Exchanges Commission (SEC) "has accused a Georgia investment adviser in a \$110 million Ponzi scheme that drew money from more than 400 investors in 20 states, according to a statement on Wednesday." The SEC "obtained a temporary restraining order and asset freeze from the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia against John Woods and two entities he controls, the commission statement said."

Ex-Charleston, South Carolina Employee Pleads Guilty To City Contract Kickbacks.

The Charleston (SC) Post and Courier (8/25, Garrison, 299K) reports, "A former project manager with the city of Charleston's Department of Housing and Community Development admitted Aug. 25 he accepted kickbacks to steer housing repair contracts to local builders." Brian D. Herndon "pleaded guilty to bribery at a hearing in U.S. District Court in Charleston. He admitted in court he accepted a total of \$15,000 in bribes to provide non-public information about city housing projects to Charles Mincey, operator of Palmettos at Folly." Herndon "admitted in court he told Mincey how much money to bid on approximately 30 city housing projects contracted between February 2014 and March 2020. Many of the contracts were for roofing work that was paid for in part by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development."

South Dakota Man Faces Federal Bank Fraud Charges.

The Mitchell (SD) Daily Republic (8/25, Duntelman, 36K) reports that federal prosecutors said on Tuesday that a Glenham, SD man "is facing federal charges of bank fraud after the Federal Bureau of Investigation says he profited from a loan scheme." Gabe Outtrim, 42, "made two nominee loans of an undisclosed amount in the name of an unknowing customer between 2015 and 2019, while serving as the bank manager and vice-president of CorTrust Bank's Leola branch." Outtrim "faces up to 30 years in federal prison, a million dollar fine, five years of supervised release and up to \$200 to the Federal Crime Victims Fund."

Eight Face Federal Charges In San Diego "Grandparent Fraud" Scam.

KSWB-TV San Diego (8/25, 214K) reports that eight people – Tracy Adrine Knowles, Adonis Alexis Butler Wong, Timothy "Bleezy" Ingram, Anajah Gifford, Lyda Harris, Joaquin Lopez, Jack Owuor, and Tracy Ginton – "are facing federal charges for what prosecutors say was a criminal enterprise making hundreds of thousands of dollars at the expense of elderly victims in San Diego County and beyond." KSWB explains that law enforcement officials "say the team of scammers took more than \$2 million from more than 70 older people across the nation, including at least 10 victims in the San Diego area. The scheme fed them 'phony stories that their grandchildren were in terrible trouble and needed money fast.'" KSWB adds that six of the eight accused are in custody while Knowles and Wong remain at large.

California Cannabis Retailer Arraigned On Bribery, Tax Charges In Federal Court.

KSBY-TV San Luis Obispo, CA (8/25) reports that on Wednesday, Helios Raphael Dayspring, owner of the Natural Healing Center, a cannabis retailer, "surrendered to federal authorities" and was

arraigned on charges of "bribery and failing to report millions of dollars in income to the IRS." KSBY explains that Dayspring has "admitted to bribing San Luis Obispo County District 3 Supervisor Adam Hill to further his cannabis businesses." According to DOJ officials, Dayspring "has agreed to plead guilty to both felony charges, pay \$3.4 million in restitution to the IRS, and cooperate in an ongoing government investigation."

CYBER DIVISION

Prosecutors Say Glitch In FBI Software Program Allowed Unauthorized Access To Private Data.

The New York Post (8/25, Feuerherd, 7.45M) reports, "A computer glitch in a secretive software program used by the FBI allowed some unauthorized employees to access private data for more than a year, prosecutors revealed in a new court filing." According to the Post, "The screw-up in the Palantir program – a software created by a sprawling data analytics company co-founded by billionaire Peter Thiel – was detailed in a letter by prosecutors in the Manhattan federal court case against accused hacker Virgil Griffith. Data recovered from Griffith's Facebook and Twitter accounts, which was obtained through a federal search warrant in March 2020, was accessed on Palantir for more than a year by at least four FBI employees, all of whom work outside New York and were not investigating the case, prosecutors wrote."

Tech CEOs Pledge Action On Cybersecurity At White House Summit.

The AP (8/26, Tucker) reports leaders of top technology companies, including Google, Apple, and Microsoft, have "committed to investing billions of dollars to strengthen cybersecurity defenses and to train skilled workers, the White House announced Wednesday following President Joe Biden's private meeting with" the executives. In public remarks prior to the meeting, Biden called cybersecurity a "core national security challenge" for the US. Biden said the "reality is most of our critical infrastructure is owned and operated by the private sector, and the federal government can't meet this challenge alone." The AP writes that the "broad cross-section" of participants underscored how cyberattacks "have cut across virtually all sectors of commerce."

The Hill (8/25, 5.69M) reports Biden met with officials from "over two dozen groups from a range of fields, including the leaders of Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, IBM, Microsoft, Bank of America, JPMorgan, Duke Energy, PG&E, Travelers insurance, and the University of Texas System."

Reuters (8/25, Shalal) reports the US plans to "work with industry to hammer out new guidelines to improve the security of the technology supply chain," as Biden urged the executives to "raise the bar on cybersecurity." Citing the rising frequency of high-profile ransomware attacks and US efforts to gain Russian cooperation fighting their perpetrators, Biden said, "We have a lot of work to do." After the meeting, Amazon "said it would make its cybersecurity training available to the public for free, and it would give multi-factor authentication devices to some cloud computing customers, starting in October." IBM also "said it will train more than 150,000 people in cybersecurity skills over three years and will partner with historically black colleges and universities to create a more diverse cyber workforce."

Bloomberg (8/25, Kern, 3.57M) reports the meeting focused "on ransomware, the root causes of malicious cyber activity, and how to ensure that cybersecurity is baked into technology sold by industry from the start, according to [a] senior official." After the meeting with Biden, "several key cabinet secretaries led three breakout sessions with the industry participants." The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Volz, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports DHS Secretary Mayorkas and Energy Secretary Granholm met with executives from water and electric utilities and the banking sector to discuss information sharing across their sectors, according to Southern Company CEO Tom Fanning.

DHS Launching New Civil Service Designation To Meet Demand For Cybersecurity Workers.

NextGov (8/25, Baksh) reports DHS is officially establishing a "recruitment and retention system it

says re-envision the federal government's current talent management to meet its demand for cybersecurity workers." According to a notice "set to publish in the Federal Register" on Thursday, "With [the Cyber Talent Management System], DHS is creating a new type of Federal civil service position, called a qualified position, and the cadre of those positions and the individuals appointed to them is called the DHS Cybersecurity Service (DHS-CS)." The new DHS system "will base hiring and compensation decisions on individuals' skills, which will be assessed through relevant tests, instead of having to adhere to formats such as the General Schedule" which "ties advancement and pay levels to how many years an employee has been with the government."

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

FBI Urges More Hate Crime Reporting.

KDRV-TV Medford, OR (8/25, Ridgie) reports from Medford, Oregon, "The FBI begins its hate crime awareness campaign for Oregon on September 1. Special Agent in Charge of the Portland Field Office Kieran Ramsey spoke to Ashland City Council about the initiative." KDRV-TV adds, "Ashland City Councilor, Gina DuQuenne is active with social justice groups throughout the Rogue Valley and told Newswatch 12 during the meeting with SAC Ramsey that she made her own suggestions to get other community members behind the campaign. DuQuenne suggested the FBI reach out to Jefferson Public Radio about the campaign because of its broad audience. She also hoped the hate crime awareness campaign would reach Southern Oregon University in Ashland."

WHBQ-TV Memphis, TN (8/25, 69K) reports from Memphis, Tennessee, "FBI Memphis and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Tennessee are encouraging the public to report hate crimes, the pair announced Wednesday. 'Investigating hate crimes is the highest priority of the FBI's Civil Rights program due to the devastating impact they have on families and communities,' said Douglas M. Korneski, Special Agent in Charge of the Memphis Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. 'The FBI is committed to protecting the civil rights of all people, and we will aggressively pursue those who commit criminal offenses based on bias.'"

FBI Sending More Agents To Louisville, Kentucky In Crackdown On Violence, Gangs.

The Hill (8/25, Vakil, 5.69M) reports, "More FBI agents are being sent to Louisville, Ky., to assist police in tackling gangs and violent criminals." The Hill adds, "The additional law enforcement is a part of a larger initiative between the Louisville Metro Police Department and the FBI called the Safe Streets Task Force aimed at going after violent crime, NBC News reported on Tuesday. 'Our hope is that these additional resources will help identify, apprehend, and ultimately convict individuals involved in violent crime around Louisville. Our focus will be on federal violations – such as carjackings, Hobbs Act robberies, and gun related charges,' Tim Beam of the FBI's Louisville office told The Hill in a Wednesday email. The Safe Streets Task Force initiative has allegedly already netted some results. Agents were able to recover around 1,200 grams of illegal controlled substances and 17 firearms in a drug bust last week, the Justice Department said in a press release."

Feds Intend To Expand Use Of Facial Recognition In Spite Of Growing Concerns.

The Washington Post (8/25, Harwell, 10.52M) reports the US government intends "to expand its use of facial recognition to pursue criminals and scan for threats, an internal survey has found, even as concerns grow about the technology's potential for contributing to improper surveillance and false arrests." Several departments, including "Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Interior, Justice, State, Treasury, and Veterans Affairs – told the Government Accountability Office that they intend to grow their facial recognition capabilities by 2023, the GAO said in a report posted to its website Tuesday." Many of these departments "use face-scanning technology so employees can unlock their phones and laptops or access buildings, though a growing number said they are using the software to track people and investigate crime."

Axios (8/25, Garfinkel, 1.26M) also covers the story.

WPost: Biden Should Create A Task Force On Criminal Justice Reform.

A [Washington Post](#) (8/25, 10.52M) editorial calls for "a national strategy" on criminal justice reform. The Post cites a letter from "more than 100 former and current prosecutors and law enforcement officials" to President Biden "urging him to establish a task force that would be charged with reimagining the work of local prosecutors to make the justice system less punishing and more equitable." The Post says local prosecutors "play critical and crucial roles in the judicial system but have been largely overlooked in the national debate about how to reform the system." Biden, the Post argues, "should make good on his campaign promise to examine how crimes are prosecuted and create this much needed task force."

OTHER FBI NEWS

Springfield, Illinois SAC To Retire.

The [Springfield \(IL\) State Journal-Register](#) (8/25, 149K) reports, "Special Agent in Charge Sean M. Cox of the FBI's Springfield division will retire in September, according to a news release issued Tuesday." Cox served in the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis, and Springfield field offices, as well as FBI headquarters in Washington, DC, in a career spanning more than 22 years. Acting US Attorney for the Central District of Illinois Douglas J. Quivey said Cox "has dedicated his career with the FBI to protecting us all and is a true public servant. His leadership of the Springfield Field Office set the standard and he acted as a mentor to many."

RFK Assassin Sirhan Sirhan Seeks Parole With No Opposition From Prosecutors.

The [Washington Post](#) (8/25, Jackman, 10.52M) reports Sirhan B. Sirhan, "convicted of the 1968 assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, will face a California parole board for the 16th time Friday in a prison outside San Diego," but "unlike the first 15 times, no prosecutor will stand to oppose the release of Sirhan, who is now 77." The Post adds, "When California abolished the death penalty, Sirhan's sentence was reduced to life with the possibility of parole. And now Sirhan, who has been incarcerated for 53 years, may benefit from a new push among progressive prosecutors to seek the release, or not oppose the release, of convicts who have served decades behind bars, no longer pose a threat to society and will be costly to treat medically in their later years."

Drug Offender, Michigan Company Partnering To Launch Marijuana Brand.

The [Detroit Metro Times](#) (8/25, DeVito, 228K) reports drug offender Richard Wershe Jr., who has filed a lawsuit that alleges the FBI and the Detroit Police Department bear responsibility for his imprisonment, is "partnering with the Michigan-based Pleasantrees Cannabis Company." The partnership will launch a marijuana brand called The 8th, which "refers to a standard" marijuana measurement and the US Constitution's Eighth Amendment. Some of the brand's proceeds will be used to help seek the release of people who are deemed to have been "wrongfully or excessively imprisoned for drug offenses." [Deadline Detroit](#) (8/25, Lengel) also covers this story.

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

While Pfizer Starts Process For Approval Of COVID Booster Shot, Moderna Finalizes Application For Full Approval Of Its Vaccine.

[Bloomberg](#) (8/25, Griffin, 3.57M) reports that Pfizer and BioNTech "are seeking full U.S. approval for a Covid-19 booster shot for people 16 and older, asking regulators to sign off on a third dose to quell a rise in infections among vaccinated people."

The [New York Times](#) (8/25, LaFraniere, Zimmer, 20.6M) says the firms will "submit all their supporting data by the end of this week." The pharmas "said that a third shot of the vaccine sharply increased the levels of antibodies against the virus," with researchers observing an antibody response "more than three times higher than the level after the second dose." [The Hill](#) (8/25, Williams, 5.69M) says "Pfizer and BioNTech's announcement comes days after the FDA

granted full approval of Comirnaty for people aged 16 and older, a highly anticipated move after a roughly three-month review."

Reuters (8/25, Roy, Mishra, Beasley) reports that Pfizer "said 306 people given a third dose of its vaccine between five and eight months after their second shot showed levels of neutralizing antibodies that were 3.3 times the levels seen after their second shot." The companies "said they intend to file the data with the European Medicines Agency and other regulatory authorities around the world in coming weeks."

The AP (8/25, Murphy) adds that so far, "more than 200 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine have been administered in the U.S. – and hundreds of millions more worldwide – since it got the green light in December."

Meanwhile, Reuters (8/25, Roy) reports Moderna "has completed the real-time review process needed for a full approval for its COVID-19 vaccine in people aged 18 years and above, the company said on Wednesday." The vaccine maker's "completed submission includes data from a late-stage study that showed 93% vaccine efficacy, even through six months after administration of the second dose, the company said in a statement." The Hill (8/25, Sullivan, 5.69M) reports, "Stéphane Bancel, Moderna's CEO, said in a statement that the submission is an 'important milestone in our battle against COVID-19 and for Moderna.'"

CNN (8/25, Gumbrecht, 89.21M) reports, "Moderna said it has requested priority review from the agency," the same pathway used to evaluate Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccine, which received the FDA's approval Monday. However, "even with priority review, the approval process typically takes months; the FDA moved resources around in order to be able to approve the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine in less time." According to the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research Director Dr. Peter Marks, the FDA finished its review of Pfizer's vaccine "in about 40% of the normal clock time for a submission of this magnitude."

McArdle: FDA Bureaucracy May Be Exacerbating Health Crisis. Megan McArdle writes in the Washington Post (8/25, McArdle, 10.52M) that although "we don't expect a pandemic to hit every year, most of us might eventually get some life-threatening illness that we'd really rather cure. And the covid-19 pandemic has made clear how FDA procedure can hamper the United States' progress in the fight against disease." The agency "helped exacerbate the CDC's testing problems early on" and it has been "slow on approving vaccines – perhaps only by a matter of weeks but, in this pandemic, weeks kill." McArdle argues, "Any life-threatening condition is an emergency for the people who have it," and they "will be no less dead if they die waiting for a treatment for cancer or heart disease that has gotten bogged down in FDA review."

Sources Say Biden Administration May Shorten Time Between Second Jab, Booster. Reuters (8/25, Maddipati) reports that "U.S. health regulators could approve a third COVID-19 shot for adults beginning at least six months after full vaccination, instead of the previously announced eight-month gap, the Wall Street Journal reported on Wednesday," according to "a person familiar with the plans."

Studies Show J&J Booster Yields Stronger Response Than Single Dose.

ABC World News Tonight (8/25, 6:42 p.m. EST, story 2, 3:50, Muir, 5.99M) reported that Johnson & Johnson released "new data showing the booster, six months after getting that one shot vaccine, increased antibody protection nine-fold." NBC Nightly News (8/25, 6:38 p.m. EST, story 3, 2:10, Holt, 5.37M) continued that "new protection could be on the way for the 14 million Americans who received the one shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine." NBC explained that while last month, "J&J reported its single shot still provides protection against COVID strong and stable through eight months after immunization," the company has indicated "an extra booster shot increased protection by nine times."

The New York Times (8/25, Zimmer, 20.6M) explains that a booster shot "of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine dramatically raises the levels of antibodies against the coronavirus, the company reported on Wednesday." The company "will submit the data to the Food and Drug Administration, which is evaluating similar studies from Pfizer and Moderna."

The Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) reports that "in two studies that have not gone through scientific peer review, submitted to the preprint site Medrxiv, people who had a second shot of the

J&J vaccine produced a lot of immune molecules known as antibodies, which bind to and neutralize an invading virus." Mathai Mammen, head of research and development at Johnson & Johnson subsidiary Janssen, said the booster dose "further increases antibody responses among study participants who had previously received our vaccine. We look forward to discussing with public health officials a potential strategy for our Johnson & Johnson covid-19 vaccine."

Reuters (8/25, Steenhuysen) reports that the data indicated that "a second dose of the J&J vaccine delivered six months after the first resulted in a ninefold increase in binding antibody levels over those seen 28 days after the first dose." The CBS Evening News (8/25, 6:39 p.m. EST, story 3, 2:20, O'Donnell, 3.65M) added that "as early as next month, boosters could go in the arms of Johnson & Johnson's 14 million vaccine recipients."

Politico (8/25, Morello, 6.73M), Axios (8/25, Doherty, 1.26M), Bloomberg (8/25, Griffin, 3.57M), and the Wall Street Journal (8/25, Schwartz, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provide similar coverage of the studies on the J&J booster.

Pentagon Says Troops Must Get COVID Vaccines.

The AP (8/25, Baldor) reports that in a memo on Wednesday, Defense Secretary Austin set out a requirement for military troops to "immediately begin to get the COVID-19 vaccine...ordering service leaders to 'impose ambitious timelines for implementation.'" The AP continues that according to Pentagon data, "more than 800,000 service members have yet to get their shots. ... And now that the Pfizer vaccine has received full approval from the Food and Drug Administration, the Defense Department is adding it to the list of required shots troops must get as part of their military service." The memo "does not dictate a specific timeline for completing the vaccinations. But it says the military services will have to report regularly on their progress."

Reuters (8/25, Ali) adds "the U.S. military has said that around half the U.S. armed forces are already fully vaccinated, a number that climbs significantly when counting only active-duty troops and excluding National Guard and Reserve members."

Axios (8/25, Saric, 1.26M) quotes Austin as saying, "After careful consultation with medical experts and military leadership, and with the support of the President, I have determined that mandatory vaccination against coronavirus disease...is necessary to protect the Force and defend the American people."

Vaccine Mandates Become New Norm Across US. Bloomberg (8/25, Levin, Woodhouse, Wetzel, 3.57M) reports that vaccine mandates "are beginning a march across the U.S., constricting the places that people who have shunned the shots can work, shop and play." Bloomberg explains that one day "after the federal Food and Drug Administration approved the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine, institutions central to their regions announced tougher – perhaps bellwether – rules." By way of example, Bloomberg says "Goldman Sachs Group Inc. required bankers to prove they'd been vaccinated" and in "football-crazed Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University will demand vaccines or negative Covid tests to see a game at Tiger Stadium, capacity 102,000."

Texas Governor Bans Government Entities From Requiring COVID-19 Vaccinations. The AP (8/25, Wallace) reports that on Wednesday, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) issued an executive order "banning any state or local mandates requiring people to be vaccinated against COVID-19."

The Hill (8/25, Weixel, 5.69M) explains that Abbott's decision "marks a change from the governor's previous executive order, which banned mandates for vaccines administered under an emergency use authorization." The order, however, does "not mention employer mandates and preserves exceptions for places such as nursing homes, long-term care facilities and state-supported living centers."

Politico (8/25, Ward, 6.73M) reports, "Abbott added another agenda item to the legislative special session on Wednesday, asking the Legislature to consider taking action to address whether state or local entities can mandate the shots and, if so, what exemptions should be included in the mandate."

Many Unvaccinated Americans Still Not Persuaded To Get COVID-19 Shot After Full FDA Approval. The Washington Post (8/25, Diamond, 10.52M) reports that federal officials have

sought for months to persuade "some 85 million still-unvaccinated eligible Americans-- a largely entrenched population despite a range of incentives, political appeals and now mandates to get the shots." However, "hopes that many of those skeptics would be swayed by" full FDA approval for the vaccine "appear to have been unrealistic, according to interviews with 16 unvaccinated Americans -- including six who said earlier this year that they would be more likely to get vaccinated if the FDA approved the shots."

Delta To Add Health Insurance Charge For Unvaccinated Staff. Reuters (8/25) reports that Delta Air Lines "told unvaccinated employees on Wednesday they will have to pay an additional \$200 per month for their company-sponsored healthcare plan." CEO Ed Bastian "said the monthly surcharge would take effect on Nov. 1." He "said the surcharge is necessary to address the financial risk the Atlanta-based airline faces from the decision to not vaccinate." He added that "the average hospital stay for COVID-19 has cost the company \$50,000 per person."

Bloomberg (8/25, Schlangenstein, 3.57M) reports Bastian "said 75% of the carrier's workers already are vaccinated" and "increasing cases of coronavirus linked to a 'very aggressive' variant are driving the push for all employees to get the shots." Delta "also will require weekly testing for employees who aren't vaccinated by mid-September." Employees who are not "vaccinated must wear masks in all indoor settings, effective immediately." Also reporting are Axios (8/25, Saric, 1.26M) and the Wall Street Journal (8/25, A1, Sider, Subscription Publication, 8.41M).

New York Governor Adds 12K Deaths To COVID Tally.

The AP (8/25, Villeneuve) reports that in "another blow to what's left of former Gov. Andrew Cuomo's legacy," his newly installed successor, Gov. Kathy Hochul (D), "acknowledged on her first day in office that the state has had nearly 12,000 more deaths from COVID-19 than Cuomo told the public." Hochul said, "The public deserves a clear, honest picture of what's happening. And that's whether it's good or bad, they need to know the truth. And that's how we restore confidence." The AP says "in its first daily update on the outbreak Tuesday evening, Hochul's office reported that nearly 55,400 people have died of the coronavirus in New York based on death certificate data submitted to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention." This is "up from about 43,400 that Cuomo reported to the public as of Monday, his last day in office."

The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Fanelli, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) explains Cuomo based his total on data from adult-care facilities, hospital, and nursing homes. Meanwhile, the CDC includes COVID-19 deaths that occurred at any location.

The Washington Post (8/25, Bump, 10.52M) adds that during a Wednesday interview, Hochul "announced that her state was going to provide a more accurate accounting of fatalities related to covid-19 moving forward." She said, "There's a lot of things that weren't happening, and I'm going to make them happen."

Bloomberg (8/25, Kinery, 3.57M), Axios (8/25, Knutson, 1.26M), Reuters (8/25, Maan, Goldberg) and The Hill (8/25, Weixel, 5.69M) also report on Hochul's announcement.

Ford Delays Return To Office Until 2022.

Bloomberg (8/25, Naughton, 3.57M) reports that "Ford Motor Co. is delaying employees' return to the office for a second time due to the worsening spread of Covid-19, weighing a broader vaccine mandate and expanding remote work for salaried staff." Ford said "the return has been moved to January from October."

On its website, CNBC (8/25, Wayland, 7.34M) reports that Ford said, "The state of the COVID-19 virus remains very fluid and therefore we are adjusting the start of our hybrid work arrangement to no earlier than January 2022."

COVID Surge Taxes Emotional Health Of Medical Workers.

NBC Nightly News (8/25, 6:40 p.m. EST, story 4, 2:10, Holt, 5.37M) reported that the "new surge" in COVID infections is "taking an emotional toll on health care workers." NBC continued that "Americans who hesitate to get the vaccine asking nurses and doctors to shoulder the unbelievable weight of death and illnesses." NBC interviewed Julia Kleese, an ICU nurse at OHSU Hospital in Portland. She said, "It's really unnecessary. I mean it's totally avoidable. I think that's the most

heartbreaking part of it. I just wish people could hear it but if you're worried about side effects from the vaccine itself, your risks of what can happen to you or your loved one if you do not get vaccinated are astronomically higher."

As ICE Faces Calls For Reforms, Senate Prepares To Confirm Director.

The Los Angeles Times (8/25, Venkataramanan, 3.37M) reports ICE could see its "its first Senate-confirmed leader in nearly five years this fall – laying the groundwork for change at an agency long criticized for its treatment of immigrants in detention." The agency faces "mounting pressure to enact reforms" as the Senate prepares "to vote on President Biden's nominee, Texas Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, who has long worked with ICE but has also taken a moderate approach to immigration enforcement." While the Biden Administration has "already announced new guidelines for the agency, implementing them and others will fall to the new director."

Rental Assistance Program Has Distributed Just \$5.1B.

The New York Times (8/25, Thrush, Rappeport, 20.6M) reports that as the White House prepares for "a Supreme Court order that could strike down a new national moratorium on evictions," the \$46.5 billion Emergency Rental Assistance Program, which was "created to pay rent accrued during the pandemic continues to disburse money at a slow pace." The program "sputtered along in July, with just \$1.7 billion being distributed by state and local governments, according to the Treasury Department, which oversees the program." Figures released Wednesday showed that "the money meted out was a modest increase from the prior month, bringing the total aid disbursed to about \$5.1 billion...or roughly 11 percent of the cash allocated by Congress to avoid an eviction crisis that many housing experts now see as increasingly likely." Politico (8/25, O'Donnell, 6.73M) says the Treasury figures "indicat[e] that millions could be at risk of losing their homes once eviction protections end."

The Washington Post (8/25, Siegel, 10.52M) says the July numbers "barely picked up...compared to June, reflecting ongoing struggles for the White House, along with state and local governments, to help people catch up on payments and avoid eviction." The Post says the Administration issued guidelines Wednesday that "it says will further streamline application processes and make it easier for people to get help. But it's unclear whether the changes will be enough to solve the persistent issues that have snarled rental relief programs for months."

The CBS Evening News (8/25, 6:43 p.m. EST, story 5, 2:40, O'Donnell, 3.65M) called the Treasury Department number "shocking." The money "is meant for landlords whose tenants have stopped paying rent and cannot be evicted during the pandemic." CBS (Lenghi) added that a new report shows "that nearly 10% of landlords around the country collected less than half of their rent in 2020. Small landlords owning fewer than six units were most effected." The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Ackerman, Parker, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage.

Biden, Democrats Enter "September Sprint" To Pass His Economic Agenda.

In an analysis, the New York Times (8/25, Tankersley, Cochrane, 20.6M) describes a "September sprint" as President Biden, "his aides and his allies in Congress" seek "to secure a legislative victory that could define his early presidency." After Democratic leaders in the House "struck a deal to advance the two-track approach that Mr. Biden hopes will deliver a \$4 trillion overhaul of the federal government's role in the economy," Democrats "are racing the clock." The agreement "sets up a potentially perilous vote on one part of the agenda by Sept. 27: a bipartisan deal on roads, broadband, water pipes and other physical infrastructure. It also spurred House and Senate leaders to intensify efforts to complete a larger, Democrats-only bill...inside that same window." If Democrats "can bridge their differences in time, they could deliver a signature legislative achievement for Mr. Biden," but if they fail, Biden "could find both halves of his economic agenda dashed."

Pelosi Says House Will Write \$3.5T Budget Bill With Senate. Roll Call (8/25, McPherson, 130K) reports House Speaker Pelosi "said Wednesday that House committees, working with the Senate, are 'coming to closure on some of the particulars' of a \$3.5 trillion reconciliation package with the expectation that all panels involved will report out their pieces of the legislation

within three weeks." Pelosi said, "Some committees will be marking up before Sept. 15, but everyone by Sept. 15. ... We write a bill with the Senate because it's no use our doing a bill that is not going to pass the Senate."

Pelosi Downplays Deal With Democratic Centrists. The Hill (8/25, Marcos, 5.69M) says Pelosi "downplayed a deal struck this week with a group of centrist Democrats to move forward on plans to advance President Biden's infrastructure and spending plans as a 'clarification' on the time frame." She "said that there would have been a need to take up the Senate-passed \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill next month anyway because some surface transportation programs are expiring on Sept. 30." Pelosi said of the agreement to take up the infrastructure bill by Sept. 27, "It's a clarification. ... So, we're talking about a couple of days earlier."

Meanwhile, the Wall Street Journal (8/25, Duehren, Peterson, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says that in the wake of the internal battle over passing the \$3.5 trillion budget resolution, Democrats are bracing for even tougher negotiations in the fall as progressives and centrists battle over details of the budget bill. The Hill (8/25, 5.69M) says progressives "are digging in for a fall fight with centrists." According to The Hill, "leading progressives are signaling they plan to use their collective voting power to keep the pressure on leadership and their centrist colleagues to ensure the sweeping social benefits package passes Congress and becomes law."

McCarthy: Biden Spending Bills Will Pass "Over My Dead Body." On its website, CNBC (8/25, Breuninger, 7.34M) reports in an interview Wednesday with CNBC's Squawk Box, House Minority Leader McCarthy "vowed to do everything he can to stop Democrats in Congress from passing the multitrillion-dollar infrastructure and social spending plans backed by President Joe Biden." Asked if he expected the spending bills to pass Congress by September, McCarthy said, "It'll be over my dead body, because I'm going to do everything in our power to stop it." But, CNBC says that since "House Democrats appeared to have resolved their differences and voted to advance those plans, it's not clear what McCarthy can do."

Administration Will Resume Offshore Oil Leasing This Year.

Reuters (8/25, Groom) cites "court papers" which show that the Administration "said on Tuesday it would take steps to restart the federal oil and gas leasing program in the next week and plans to hold a Gulf of Mexico auction as soon as October." The filing in "a Louisiana federal district court on Tuesday was in response to a motion by the state of Louisiana and 12 other states from earlier this month that sought to compel Interior to restart the leasing program and to show why it should not be held in contempt for failing to comply with the order issued weeks earlier." Reuters says Interior "will take procedural steps by the end of this month to prepare for a sale of oil leases in the Gulf of Mexico. The auction itself is expected in October or November."

EPA Rejected Administration Criticism Of Auto Emissions Plan.

Bloomberg (8/24, Dlouhy, 3.57M) reports that White House and "other Administration officials" told the EPA its "industry-backed plan for tightening auto emissions limits was too lax, but the agency rebuffed those warnings and released the proposal with provisions that could lessen its bite." Bloomberg cites "thousands of pages of correspondence, analysis and drafts newly released from an interagency review of the measure the EPA unveiled earlier this month and is set to finalize by the end of the year," which it says highlight "tension within the administration over how aggressively to wield regulations to fight climate change, especially when the efforts are opposed by industry."

Senate Democrat Plan Would Increase Penalties For Shifting Profits Abroad.

Bloomberg (8/25, Davison, 3.57M) reports under a plan from Senate Democrats, US companies "would face steeper penalties for shifting profits abroad." Bloomberg says the plan "offers the clearest picture yet of the higher levies that big firms could be paying from next year." Draft legislation released Wednesday outlines Senate Finance Chair Ron Wyden's "vision for how to reform the global tax system for multinational corporations, which Democrats say have been subject to lax rules that for decades have allowed them to shift profits and jobs outside the U.S." Wyden said in a statement, "Overhauling the international tax code is central to our efforts to

restore fairness." Increased corporate taxes will "fund critical investments like the paid leave and the expanded child tax credit – Social Security for our children," Wyden said.

Infrastructure Bill's Cryptocurrency Measures Could Push Transactions Overseas.

The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Talley, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports some say the Senate-passed infrastructure bill contains regulation of the cryptocurrency that could push illicit cryptocurrency transactions into markets outside the US government's reach.

Biden Administration To Continue Challenging "Remain In Mexico" Policy.

Reuters (8/25, Hesson, Graham) reports the Biden Administration faced calls on Wednesday "to take new steps" to end a Trump-era immigration policy requiring asylum seekers to stay in Mexico while awaiting US immigration hearings after the Supreme Court ordered the reinstatement of the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP). The Supreme Court ordered that Biden must comply with an order "to revive the program, although federal officials retain some discretion on how to do that." The Administration could potentially "take a number of steps to slow-walk implementation of the MPP program, a Democratic congressional aide told Reuters." One option could be "to draw out negotiations with Mexico, the aide said." The US has "already been in touch with Mexico over the Supreme Court decision, senior Mexican foreign ministry official Roberto Velasco said on Twitter, calling the judicial process a 'unilateral measure.'" Mexico will "exercise sovereignty in designing and executing its migration policies, the Mexican foreign ministry said in a statement."

NBC Nightly News (8/25, 6:46 p.m. EST, story 7, 1:35, Holt, 5.37M) similarly reported that the US "can't simply restart the program on its own. It'll require the cooperation of Mexico which isn't happy about this development." NBC's Today (8/25, 2.98M) reported the Supreme Court said the "Administration likely violated federal law in its efforts to rescind the program formerly known as remain in Mexico." ABC's Good Morning America (8/25, 2.71M) reported that the Court delivered "a blow to the Biden Administration's move to cancel former President Trump's remain in Mexico policy." CBS This Morning (8/25, 2.14M) reported that Court said "the Administration did not provide an adequate reason to get rid of" the policy.

Roll Call (8/25, Simon, 130K) reports the Administration "vowed to continue fighting to end" the policy. In a statement after the Tuesday night ruling, DHS said that it "respectfully disagrees with the district court's decision and regrets that the Supreme Court declined to issue a stay," has "appealed the district court's order and will continue to vigorously challenge it." DHS "said it would comply with the district court's order 'in good faith' but will continue its appeal at the district court level even as it reinstates the policy" and has begun "diplomatic discussions" with Mexico over how to restart the program. Jennifer Ibañez Whitlock, policy counsel at the American Immigration Lawyers Association suggested DHS could "issue guidance to Customs and Border Protection outlining how to apply MPP to new arrivals, with room for exceptions, similar to how unaccompanied children are exempt from expulsion under Title 42, a Trump-era public health directive used to turn back migrants at the southern border."

Henry Olsen writes in the Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) that the Supreme Court's order "effectively overturning the Biden administration's efforts to date to do away with" the program was "a proper application of the relevant law and a defense of democratic governance."

In her Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) column, Ruth Marcus takes issue with the Supreme Court's refusal to "disturb [Texas federal court judge Matthew] Kacsmaryk's ruling." While Marcus says that is "bad policy," she argues that "who has the better policy, Trump or Biden, isn't the real issue here. It's what role the federal judiciary should play in flyspecking that policy and, in particular, what should happen while the legal questions are being sorted out." Marcus says the Court's "conservative justices like to opine on the limits of the judicial role, the importance of deference to the executive and the particular need to avoid having the judiciary insert itself into foreign affairs. Where, exactly, were those noble sentiments here?"

In an editorial, The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) argues that the practical impact of the ruling will be limited in the near-term, although the board defends the effectiveness of the policy in deterring migrants at the US-Mexico border.

Biden Approves California Disaster Declaration.

The New York Times (8/25, Taylor, 20.6M) reports President Biden has "approved California's request for a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration, a move that provides federal aid to four counties devastated by the Dixie and River fires." Gov. Gavin Newsom's (D) request on Monday included eight counties, but "his office said in a news release the next day that more blazes -- including the Caldor fire -- could be added after ongoing damage assessments are completed." Newsom said in a statement, "California is grateful for President Biden's swift approval of our request and the ongoing work of our heroic firefighters and emergency responders to protect communities across Northern California."

As Wildfires Burn, Smoke Creating Hazard In West. ABC World News Tonight® (8/25, 6:46 p.m. EST, story 3, 1:40, Muir, 5.99M) reported firefighters are "battling" the Caldor Fire in California, "trying to stop it as it burns towards Lake Tahoe. And a short time ago, the Fontana Fire breaking out in San Bernardino county, forcing people to flee their homes." ABC (Gutman) adds the firefighters "are unable to stop the thick slabs of smoke for more than 90 active wildfires fouling air quality for millions in the West. The air over Reno and Lake Tahoe so hazardous, officials closed schools. More than 60,000 students staying home Monday and Tuesday."

OCE Says Mooney Used Campaign Funds For Personal Expenses.

Roll Call (8/25, Marquette, 130K) reports the Office of Congressional Ethics has found that Rep. Alex W. Mooney (R-WV) "spent thousands of campaign dollars on personal expenses, including numerous fast food meals and family excursions to West Virginia resorts, while failing to properly report more than \$40,000 in expenditures." Mooney's "deficient reporting to the Federal Election Commission concealed additional instances of converting campaign funds for personal use, according to an OCE report, which was obtained by CQ Roll Call." The Ethics Committee "is now doing its own investigation to determine whether Mooney omitted required information from FEC reports or converted campaign funds for personal use, according to documents reviewed by CQ Roll Call."

Judge Orders Sanctions Against Lawyers Involved In Michigan Election Challenge.

The Hill (8/25, Neidig, 5.69M) reports US District court Judge Linda Parker on Wednesday "ordered sanctions against attorneys involved in bringing a legal challenge against Michigan's 2020 election results, including Trump allies Sidney Powell and Lin Wood." Parker "ordered the attorneys to pay the legal fees of the city and state elections officials involved in the case and referred them to disciplinary authorities in their home district for investigation into whether more serious penalties, including disbarment, are warranted."

The Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) says in a "scathing 110-page opinion," Parker "wrote that the lawyers had made assertions in court that were not backed by evidence and had failed to do the due diligence required by legal rules before alleging mass fraud in the Michigan vote." She wrote, "This case was never about fraud. ... It was about undermining the People's faith in our democracy and debasing the judicial process to do so."

South Dakota AG Will Take Plea Deal In Fatal Highway Crash.

The AP (8/25, Groves) reports South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg (R) will "take a plea deal on misdemeanor traffic charges in a crash last year in which he hit and killed a man who was walking along a rural highway, a prosecutor said Wednesday." Beadle County State's Attorney Michael Moore told the AP that "there won't be a trial and there will be a plea entered." Moore "declined to discuss further details of the arrangement," citing "a judge's order that bars state officials from discussing details of the investigation."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Moulton, Meijer Take Heat For Unannounced Trip To Kabul.

The AP (8/24, Baldor) reports that the "unannounced" trip to Kabul by Reps. Seth Moulton (D-MA)

and Rep. Peter Meijer (R-MI) is resulting in significant blowback from the Administration and the military. Three officials "familiar with the flight said that State Department, Defense Department and White House officials were furious about the incident because it was done without coordination with diplomats or military commanders directing the evacuation."

The Hill (8/25, Gangitano, 5.69M) reports White House press secretary said, "Our guidance continues to be to all American citizens, including elected officials, this is not the time to travel to Afghanistan," adding, "Our focus, our objectives, our resources, need to be laser-focused on evacuating Afghan partners, evacuating American citizens, and that's best done in the hands of the Department of Defense and State Department professionals who are on the ground."

Roll Call (8/25, Lesniewski, 130K) reports Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said that Defense Secretary Austin "would have appreciated the opportunity to have had a conversation before the visit took place." He added, "They certainly took time away from what we had been planning to do that day."

The New York Times (8/25, Edmondson, 20.6M) reports the trip by the pair, who have "emerged as two of the toughest critics of the Biden administration's withdrawal," has "infuriated administration officials who were already annoyed by the lawmakers' outspoken criticism and drew bipartisan rebukes from Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California and Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the Republican leader." Axios (8/25, Doherty, 1.26M) reports Pelosi said, "It's not just about them going to Afghanistan, but in going to the region, because there's a call on our resources diplomatically, politically, militarily in the region as well, so this is deadly serious."

The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Kesling, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that the two lawmakers said that part of the goal was to press the President to extend the evacuation deadline, but one they say the reality of the ground, they accepted the President's timeline. Still, they said they didn't think there would be time to get everyone out.

Concerns Mount Over US Counterterrorism Ability After Afghanistan Pullout.

Reuters (8/25) reports that "with no U.S. troops or reliable partners left, jails emptied of militants and the Taliban in control, doubts are mounting within President Joe Biden's administration over Washington's ability to stem a resurgence of al Qaeda and other extremists in Afghanistan, six current and former U.S. officials told Reuters." Officials said the Administration "cannot rely on neighboring countries because it has so far been unable to strike accords on bases for U.S. counterterrorism forces and drones." This "has left Washington dependent on staging counterterrorism operations from U.S. bases in the Gulf and counting on the Taliban to adhere to the 2020 U.S. pullout deal to stop militant attacks on the United States and allies." However, "flying military aircraft out of the Middle East, the nearest military hub Washington has in the region, may ultimately cost more than the 2,500 troops that had been in Afghanistan until earlier this year, the officials added."

Taliban "Scrambling" To Form Government With Former Officials.

The Washington Post (8/25, George, 10.52M) reports the Taliban is "scrambling" to come to an agreement with former Afghan officials to "establish a government that could gain international recognition, keep aid money flowing into the country and restore access to billions of dollars in international reserves." Taliban leaders "have shuttled between more than a dozen meetings over the past week with the few former Afghan officials who remain in Kabul, including" Hamid Karzai, Abdullah Abdullah and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

Taliban Spokesman Tell NYTimes Goals Is To Rebuild Country, Not Exact Vengeance. The New York Times (8/25, Aikins, Huylebroek, 20.6M) reports that in an interview with them, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Majahid "offered a portrait of a group intent on rebuilding a country shattered by decades of war." He told them, "We want to build the future, and forget what happened in the past," and "rejected widespread fears that the Taliban are already exacting vengeance on those who opposed them and want to reimpose the harsh controls on women that made them notorious when they ruled the country 20 years ago."

For NBC Nightly News (8/25, 6:34 p.m. EST, story 2, 3:30, Holt, 5.37M), Richard Engel interviewed Mujahid, asking him about the treatment of women. Mujahid said, "They are our

sisters. We must show them respect. They should not be frightened. The Taliban are humans and from this country. They fought for their country. Women should be proud of us, not scared." Mujahid also denied that Osama bin Laden was involved in the 9/11 attacks, saying, "There is no evidence even after 20 years of war, we have no proof he was involved."

Taliban Orders Banks To Open As Cash Crunch Hits Populace. The Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) reports residents of Kabul "struggled to find money Wednesday even after the Taliban ordered banks to reopen for the first time in more than a week amid rising prices and uncertainty." The Taliban has "reportedly ordered some mid-level bureaucrats at Afghanistan's Finance Ministry and central bank to resume work, as the new regime faces a cash squeeze and a looming humanitarian crisis." Analysts say "the hasty departure of trained officials, journalists, human rights advocates and others is leaving the war-torn country lacking in expertise needed to govern." The New York Times (8/25, Victor, Onishi, Hassan, 20.6M) reports that residents are "struggling to lead their daily lives in an economy that, propped up for the past generation by American aid, is now in free fall. Banks are closed. Cash is growing scarce, and food prices are rising. Fuel is becoming harder to find. Government services have stalled as civil servants avoid work, fearing retribution by the Taliban."

World Bank Suspends Aid To Afghanistan. Politico Europe (8/25, 15K) reports the World Bank "has halted financial aid to Afghanistan amid concerns about 'the country's development prospects, especially for women,' under the Taliban, a spokesperson told multiple media outlets Wednesday." The spokesperson said, "We have paused disbursements in our operations in Afghanistan and we are closely monitoring and assessing the situation in line with our internal policies and procedures." Politico says "the move, announced less than a week after the International Monetary Fund froze funds allocated for Afghanistan amid pressure from the U.S., is another hit to the country's economic prospects under Taliban rule."

In an editorial, the Wall Street Journal (8/25, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) raises concerns that the Taliban may have get access to International Monetary Fund loans, perhaps as part of a deal that results in the recognition of their government. While the Journal notes that IMF members have so far blocked access, it highlights the willingness of the group for finance other pariah regimes, particularly Belarus.

UN Warns Of Coronavirus Surge In Wake Of Taliban Takeover. The Washington Post (8/25, Cunningham, 10.52M) reports "aid agencies are warning that the overcrowded conditions" in parts of Afghanistan "could bring a new surge in coronavirus cases. The turmoil, the United Nations said this week, has already hindered its ability to respond." The health crisis comes "as the country's already struggling health-care system reels under the weight of conflict, supply shortages exacerbated by the choke point at Kabul airport, widespread displacement and a long-standing lack of resources."

Taliban Makes Appointments To Key Ministerial Posts.

Reuters (8/25) reports the Taliban "have appointed senior veterans to the posts of finance minister and defence minister, two members of the group said, as it switches focus from a stunning military conquest to how to run a country in crisis." Reuters says "the Taliban have not formally announced the appointments, which a commander said were provisional, but Afghanistan's Pajhwok news agency said on Tuesday that Gul Agha had been named as finance minister and Sadr Ibrahim acting interior minister." Meanwhile, "former Guantanamo detainee Mullah Abdul Qayyum Zakir was named acting defence minister, Al Jazeera news channel reported, citing a Taliban source."

UN Report Highlights Abuse Of Staff By Taliban.

In an "exclusive," Reuters (8/25, Parker, Zmaryalai, Nichols) reports that an internal UN security document they have seen records "dozens" of incidents of Taliban militants threatening and assaulting UN staffers and their families. Reuters adds that while the militants have "sought to reassure Afghans and Western powers that they will respect people's rights, reports of reprisals have undermined confidence, not least among those associated with foreign organisations."

Pentagon Has At Least \$6 Billion In Funds Originally Destined For Afghan Military.

Bloomberg (8/25, Capaccio, 3.57M) reports the US withdrawal from Afghanistan "is leaving the Pentagon with at least \$6 billion in unspent funds for the now-defunct Afghan Security Force – and a potential fight over how to spend the money." The Pentagon's Comptroller "is consulting with lawmakers and the White House Office of Management and Budget over the funds, which included \$600 million in previously approved but unspent fiscal 2020 funds, as well as \$2.3 billion in this fiscal year as of June plus \$3.3 billion requested for fiscal 2022."

Afghan General: Army Quit Because Of US "Abandonment."

In an op-ed for the New York Times (8/25, 20.6M), Gen. Sami Sadat, a commander in the Afghan National Army, writes that while it is "true that the Afghan Army lost its will to fight," it is "because of the growing sense of abandonment by our American partners and the disrespect and disloyalty reflected in [President] Biden's tone and words over the past few months. The Afghan Army is not without blame," but "we ultimately stopped fighting because our partners already had." Sadat writes, "This was not an Afghan war only; it was an international war, with many militaries involved. It would have been impossible for one army alone, ours, to take up the job and fight. This was a military defeat, but it emanated from political failure."

WPost: Biden Needs To Hasten Resettlement Of Afghan Refugees In US.

A Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) editorial says after making "inadequate preparations to evacuate U.S. allies in Afghanistan," the Biden Administration "now has what may be a fleeting chance to mitigate its missteps. After months of foot-dragging and pandemic-plagued inefficiency, it can hasten the resettlement of vetted, deserving Afghans in this country." The Administration "failed to execute an orderly departure" and it "failed to provide an efficient evacuation for Afghans vital to America's mission. Now comes another moment of testing: How will this country welcome those who manage to leave and seek a new life?"

Hohmann: Biden Needs To Make Case For Accepting Afghan Refugees. In his Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) column, James Hohmann predicts that "some Republicans who are rightly hammering [President] Biden this week for not doing enough to get more Afghan allies out will cynically criticize him next month for letting in too many. ... The Biden administration must preempt this disingenuous line of attack before it catches on." Hohmann cites the arrival of thousands of Cubans in 1980, including "pro-freedom activists" as well as "people who had either criminal records or mental illnesses." Hohmann suggests Biden has been "overly cautious for most of this year toward refugees because he remembers the episode and knows how that line of attack can be used against him." While "the Afghan refugees of 2021 are dramatically different than the Cubans of 1980," Hohmann says "Biden needs to talk more about not just the rigorous vetting process but also why it's so important that the United States welcomes Afghans at places such as Fort McCoy" in Wisconsin

WSJournal: Taliban Takeover Could Trigger Another Migrant Crisis In Europe.

The Wall Street Journal (8/25, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), in an editorial, warns that one of the secondary effects of the collapse of the Afghan government may be a new wave of Afghan migrants outside of the refugees currently being evacuated. The Journal warns that such a surge could play into the hands of skeptics of trans-Atlantic relations in nations like Germany, France and Italy.

Japan Raises Number Of Prefectures Under Emergency Measures.

The AP (8/25, Yamaguchi) reports Japan "expanded its coronavirus state of emergency on Wednesday for a second week in a row, adding eight more prefectures." Last week, the Japanese "government...extended the state of emergency until Sept. 12 and expanded the areas covered to 13 prefectures from six including Tokyo." Furthermore, "Eight prefectures were upgraded from quasi-emergency status to a full emergency." A total of "33 of Japan's 47 prefectures are now under some type of emergency measures."

Reuters (8/25, Kim) reports Japan's "top medical adviser blasted International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach on Wednesday for visiting Tokyo again when the country

is expanding emergency curbs to contain the COVID-19 pandemic." With nearly 80% of the population under emergency measures, "Dr. Shigeru Omi suggested Bach's decision to fly into Japan again for this week's Paralympics opening ceremony had undermined efforts to persuade people to avoid travel and work from home."

Harris Calls On Vietnam To Challenge China's "Bullying" In South China Sea.

The AP (8/25, Jaffe) reports Vice President Harris on Wednesday "called on Vietnam to join the U.S. in challenging China's 'bullying' in the South China Sea, continuing her sharp rhetoric against Beijing as she met with Vietnamese leaders on Wednesday." Harris "expressed support for sending an additional U.S. Coast Guard cutter to Vietnam to help defend its security interests in the disputed waterway, and pledged that the U.S. would 'maintain a strong presence in the South China Sea' to challenge China."

Bloomberg (8/24, Leonard, Wallbank, 3.57M) reports that at the commencement of a meeting with Phuc, the vice president said, "We need to find ways to pressure and raise the pressure, frankly, on Beijing to abide by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and to challenge its bullying and excessive maritime claims."

Reuters (8/25) says Harris' "trip to Singapore and Vietnam is part of a broader U.S. strategy to take on China globally," and on its website, Fox Business (8/25, Blitzer, 3.06M) says Harris' "strong stance against aggressive Chinese action in the South China Sea" comes "as the Biden administration continues reviewing the U.S.-China trade policy." Fox Business says US Trade Representative Tai "had a virtual meeting with the U.S. Chamber China Center Advisory Board and the leadership of the US-China Business Council to discuss trade issues involving the two countries. Tai noted that the administration was reviewing its China trade policy, stating that the U.S. needs to address its goals of creating jobs and raising wages while also dealing with Chinese unfair trade practices that undermine the U.S." Politico (8/25, 6.73M) and The Hill (8/25, Choi, 5.69M) provide similar coverage of Harris' comments.

Harris Visits McCain Memorial To Mark Third Anniversary Of His Death. The Hill (8/25, Samuels, 5.69M) reports Harris "paid tribute to the late Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) on the third anniversary of his death" Wednesday "by visiting a monument in Vietnam where his plane was shot down in 1967." Speaking at the monument at Truc Bach Lake, Harris said, "John McCain was an extraordinary American hero. ... I was honored and privileged to serve with him for a short time in the United States Senate. John McCain, he loved our country. He was so courageous and really lived the life of a hero -- the sacrifices he made that were on every scale imaginable, loved our country and really always fought for the best of who we are. And it turns out today is the anniversary, so there we are." On its website, Fox News (8/25, Stimson, 23.99M) says Harris laid flowers at the memorial.

Gan: Singapore A "Natural Partner" For US To Strengthen Supply Chain. Singapore Business Review (8/25) reports Singapore's Minister for Trade and Industry Gan Kim Yong said in a roundtable meeting with Harris on Tuesday that Singapore "can be a natural partner for the US and its companies to strengthen supply chain resilience and deepen regional engagement. Trust, diversity, and connectivity are strong reasons why the US and Singapore can continue to work on joint approaches to address common supply chain challenges." Harris "said COVID-19 and climate change has led to demand greatly outpacing the supply of goods." she said, "Families are feeling the impact of this, be it the rising cost of shipping or congestion at ports, or just the reduced production...if you want to have Christmas toys for your children, now might be the time to start buying them, because the delay may be many, many months."

Harris Says US Is Offering To Host 2023 APEC Summit. Politico (8/25, Heath, 6.73M) reports Vice President Harris "announced in Singapore that the United States is offering to host the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in 2023."

WPost Analysis: Havana Syndrome Scare Exposes Challenges US Faces In Competing With China For Influence. In an analysis, the Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) says Harris "got a taste of the intensifying rivalry between the United States and China as she flew into Vietnam." She was "en route Wednesday to announce, among other things, a donation of 1 million coronavirus vaccine doses to the pandemic-hit country," but the delay "handed China a

window of opportunity." Beijing "sent its envoy in Hanoi to meet with Vietnam's prime minister and pledged a donation of 2 million vaccine doses, undercutting the subsequent U.S. announcement." The Post says the incident "underscored the challenges facing the Biden administration as Harris has made her way through Southeast Asia this week, along with Chinese sensitivity about her visit."

WPost Details Massacre By Burma's Military.

In a more than 3,400-word story, the Washington Post (8/25, 10.52M) reports on April 9 massacre in the Burmese city of Bago, in which Burma's military, "known as the Tatmadaw, and police officers had killed at least 82 people, according to groups tracking protest deaths – making it the deadliest single crackdown since the military seized power." The Post says its investigation into the events of that day "reveals the use of counterinsurgency tactics, specialized military units and military-grade weaponry against civilian protesters – resulting in a high number of casualties."

Russia To Deliver Missile Systems To Burma. Reuters (8/25) reports that Russia "will deliver Pantsir missile defence systems to Myanmar on schedule as outlined in the relevant sales contract, the RIA news agency cited the head of Russia's Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation as saying on Wednesday." Rights activists have accused Russia "of legitimising the junta, which seized power in a Feb. 1 coup, by continuing bilateral visits and arms deals."

Duterte Says He'll Run For Philippines VP Next Year.

The AP (8/25, Rosario, Rising) reports Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte "has confirmed rumblings that he will run next year for vice president, in what critics say is an attempt at an end-run around constitutional term limits." Duterte "said in comments broadcast Wednesday that he will run for vice president to 'continue the crusade.'" He said, "I will run for vice president. I'm worried about the drugs, insurgency. Well, number one is insurgency, then criminality, drugs." Manila-based political analyst Richard Heydarian said "polls suggest that running Duterte in tandem with his daughter, Sara Duterte, currently the mayor of Davao City, as the presidential candidate would be a strong pairing."

Justice Department Brands Chinese-Owned US Newspaper A Foreign Agent.

Axios (8/25, Markay, 1.26M) reports the DOJ "has forced a major Chinese-owned newspaper's U.S. subsidiary to register as a foreign agent, records show." Axios says "Sing Tao disputes its status as a foreign agent, but according to filings this week under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, the DOJ determined the newspaper's U.S. operations qualified as foreign influence efforts."

President Biden To Meet With Israeli PM Bennett Thursday.

Bloomberg (8/25, Wingrove, Avis, 3.57M) reports President Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett "plan to discuss what both countries consider to be an alarming acceleration of Iran's nuclear program as the leaders meet Thursday at the White House." Biden expects to "emphasize his strong support for Israel, U.S. officials said." The AP (8/25) reports that it is Bennett's "first state visit overseas since taking office." On Wednesday, he "met separately Wednesday with" Defense Secretary Austin and Secretary of State Blinken.

The Los Angeles Times (8/25, Megerian, 3.37M) reports the pair "seem to share no political positions and will likely remain at odds over whether to rejuvenate the nuclear agreement with Iran," but they are "also looking for an opportunity to normalize U.S.-Israeli relations after several years in which Israel has increasingly become a partisan issue in American politics." Similarly, Axios (8/25, Ravid, 1.26M) reports that Biden and Bennett "want to use their meeting on Thursday to project that the U.S.-Israeli relationship is off to a fresh start, Israeli and U.S. officials involved in the visit tell Axios."

The Hill (8/25, Gangitano, Kelly, 5.69M) reports the meeting is, "in part, an effort by the Biden administration to show it can handle multiple foreign policy issues at once."

Taliban Ascendance Helps Cash-Strapped Iran.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/25, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan could help relieve the financial pressures on Iran due to a burgeoning trade relationship between the two.

Nigeria, Russia Sign Military Cooperation Agreement.

[Reuters](#) (8/25) reports that "Nigeria and Russia have signed a military cooperation deal providing a legal framework for the supply of equipment and the training of troops, the Nigerian embassy in Moscow said on Wednesday." The Nigerian embassy said, "The Agreement on Military-Technical Cooperation between both countries provides a legal framework for the supply of military equipment, provision of after sales services, training of personnel in respective educational establishments and technology transfer, among others."

Attacker Kills Four Near French Embassy In Tanzania.

[Reuters](#) (8/25) reports an attacker with an assault rifle "was shot dead after killing three police and an employee of a private security company near the French embassy in the Tanzanian commercial capital Dar es Salaam on Wednesday, President Samia Suluhu Hassan said." Police "gave no immediate details on the motive or target of the attacker."

THE BIG PICTURE

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Delta Air Lines To Impose \\$200 Monthly Charge On Unvaccinated Employees, Add Testing Requirements](#)

[US Still Searching For Americans In Afghanistan As Deadline Closes In](#)

[Western Digital In Advanced Talks To Merge With Kioxia In \\$20 Billion-Plus Deal](#)

[Biden Administration Likely To Approve Covid-19 Boosters At Six Months](#)

[Toddlers Can't Shake Pandemic Habits. Parents Are Rattled.](#)

[Israel's Bennett Seeks New Political Order. Netanyahu Stands In The Way.](#)

New York Times:

[US Says 1,500 Americans Remain In Afghanistan As Evacuation Enters Final Days](#)

[The Real Winner Of The Afghan War? It's Not Who You Think.](#)

['They Were Bullies': Inside The Turbulent Origins Of The Collapsed Florida Condo](#)

['The Worst Thing I Can Ever Remember': How Drought Is Crushing Ranchers](#)

[In First Interview From Jail, An Upbeat Navalny Discusses Prison Life](#)

[Biden, Needing A Win, Enters A Sprint For His Economic Agenda](#)

Washington Post:

[US, Allies Speed Evacuations](#)

[Targeted Online Ads Aid Push For Vaccination](#)[Corporate America's \\$50 Billion Vow](#)

[Survey Finds American Teens Weary But Optimistic](#)

[Perilous Departure Revives Heartache For Gold Star Families](#)

[Cash-Strapped Taliban Seeks Political Deal To Legitimize Government](#)

Financial Times:

[UK's FCA Says It Is 'not Capable' Of Supervising Crypto Exchange Binance](#)

[Delta Air Lines To Impose \\$200 Surcharge On Unvaccinated Staff](#)

[France's Online 'Fascist-Sphere' Feeds Rightwing Electoral Hopes](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Afghanistan Evacuations; US COVID Surge; US Wildfires; US Heatwave; Video Of State

Trooper Beating Black Man; Shark Sightings; Black Soldiers Of 369th Infantry Regiment Honored.
CBS: Afghanistan Evacuations; Interview With Ambassador Ross Wilson; US COVID Surge; Public School Enrollment Dropping; US Evictions; US Heatwave/Wildfires; US Open/Tennis; Melissa Stockwell/Paralympics.

NBC: Afghanistan Evacuations; Interview With Taliban Official; US COVID Update; US COVID Surge; Video Of State Trooper Beating Black Man; US Heatwave; Supreme Court Orders 'Remain In Mexico' Reinstated; US Wildfire; Little League World Series.

Network TV At A Glance:

Afghanistan Evacuations – 16 minutes, 50 seconds

US COVID Surge – 10 minutes, 30 seconds

US Wildfires – 3 minutes, 50 seconds

Interview With Taliban Official – 3 minutes, 30 seconds

Interview With Ambassador Ross Wilson – 3 minutes, 20 seconds

US Evictions – 2 minutes, 40 seconds

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

President Biden — receives the President's Daily Brief, meets with his national security team to hear intelligence, security, and diplomatic updates on the evolving situation in Afghanistan, participates in a bilateral meeting with His Excellency Naftali Bennett, Prime Minister of the State of Israel, meets virtually with a bipartisan group of Governors from across the country who have raised their hands to temporarily house or help resettle vulnerable Afghans and welcome them to their new communities.

Vice President Harris — meets with change makers who are driving social change in Vietnam, participates in an Embassy meet and greet with Embassy personnel at the U.S. Embassy in Vietnam, delivers remarks and take questions from press, participates in a troop engagement event at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

US Senate: The Senate is on recess from August 10 to September 13.

US House:

- House Oversight and Reform Committee roundtable on 'Achieving Environmental Justice for Frontline Communities' – House Committee on Oversight and Reform holds hybrid roundtable on 'Tackling Peak Pollution: Achieving Environmental Justice for Frontline Communities'

Location: New York, NY; 11:15 AM

General Events:

- Wilson Center discussion on the implications of Afghanistan withdrawal for South Asia – 'Hindsight Up Front: Implications of Afghanistan Withdrawal for South Asia' Wilson Center virtual event, with featured speakers including former U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan, to Lebanon, and to Jordan David Hale, former Pakistan Ambassador to the U.S. and to the United Nations Maleeha Lodhi, Rashtriya Raksha University School of International Cooperation Associate Professor Venkateswaran Lokanathan, Observer Research Foundation Distinguished Fellow Nandan Unnikrishnan, and Dawn columnist Huma Yusuf

Location: Virtual Event; 9:00 AM

- Hudson Institute discussion with U.S. Strategic Command Commander – Hudson Institute hosts virtual event with U.S. Strategic Command Commander Adm. Charles Richard in conversation with Hudson Institute Senior Fellow Rebecca Heinrichs, discussing China's nuclear program, what their strategic breakout portends for the U.S. and its allies, and how integrated deterrence must meet the challenges of today's varied nuclear threat environment

Location: Virtual Event; 12:00 PM

- Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Financial Advisory Board meeting

Location: Virtual Event; 12:00 PM

- USCC hosts 'Path Forward' event with U.S. Surgeon General Murthy (virtual) – U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosts a 'Path Forward' event with U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, discussing the fight against coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it will impact businesses

Location: Virtual Event; 1:00 PM

- Jewish Democratic Council of America hosts Dem Rep. Andy Kim for discussion on Afghanistan – 'Escaping the Taliban: Evacuating Americans, Afghan Refugees and Partners' Jewish Democratic Council of America virtual event, with Democratic Rep. Andy Kim and HIAS President and CEO Mark Hetfield discussing the ongoing efforts to evacuate Americans and Afghan allies

Location: Virtual Event; 1:00 PM

- SEC Closed Meeting

Location: U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F St NE, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM

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