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 FBI News Briefing

TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF

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CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

Capitol Hill Investigation Expands To 400 Suspects, 150 Charged.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Balsamo, Richer, Long) reports that a prevalence of social media activity among those who stormed Capitol Hill on January 6 "and their friends' willingness to turn them in has helped authorities charge about 150 people as of Monday with federal crimes." However, "investigators must still work rigorously to link the images to the vandalism and suspects to the acts...in order to prove their case in court," in addition to deploying agents to track suspects "because so few were arrested at the scene." As a result, "federal prosecutors are focusing on

the most critical cases and the most egregious examples of wrongdoing” in order to save manpower and cost.

[USA Today](#) (1/26, 12.7M) reports that “the far-reaching investigation into the deadly Jan. 6 Capitol siege continues to grow, as more than 400 suspects have been identified by federal authorities who expect to bring sedition charges against some of those linked to the insurrection.” The US Attorney for the District of Columbia Michael Sherwin said prosecutors “are working on” sedition cases, “adding that officials expected the investigations to ‘bear fruit very soon.’” Sherwin said numbers of arrests are “growing by the hour” and “cases are moving at a very rapid clip.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, O'Brien, Viswanatha, Ailworth, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that the FBI’s investigation is shifting focus toward assembling cases that some rioters coordinated the attack, based on evidence from over 200,000 tips, public testimony, confidential sources, local news coverage, surveillance, grand jury subpoenas, and search warrants.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Hsu, Weiner, Barrett, 10.52M) reports, “U.S. authorities have opened case files on at least 400 potential suspects and expect to bring sedition charges against some ‘very soon’ in the sprawling investigation into the Jan. 6 breach of the U.S. Capitol, officials said.” Sherwin said that new arrests will likely “plateau” as investigations into “militia groups [and] individuals from different several states” continue. When “asked about the potential of related future violence,” FBI Assistant Director Steven D’Antuono “said the FBI is ‘determining if there are any viable leads we can follow.’”

[NBC News](#) (1/26, 4.91M) reports D’Antuono “said more than 150 criminal cases have been filed so far.” Additionally, “the FBI is offering a \$75,000 reward to help identify whoever planted two pipe bombs near the headquarters of the Republican and Democratic National Committees near the Capitol.” [Bloomberg](#) (1/26, Strohm, Kinery, 3.57M) reports D’Antuono said, “This case is unique in its magnitude and the number of suspect.”

Katrina Vanden Heuvel writes in the [Washington Post](#) (1/26, 10.52M) that President Biden’s inauguration last week on the same steps that had been “overrun by insurrectionists” sent the message that “democracy had been tested, and democracy had prevailed.” But, “it would be a mistake to think the fight to preserve and revive our flawed democracy concluded on Inauguration Day. In fact, it has only begun.” Vanden Heuvel adds, “The Capitol siege was just the latest and most brazen instance of politicians leading efforts to delay democracy when it threatens their power – by suppressing the votes of political opponents, giving corporate funding undue influence over the people’s representatives and structuring Congress so that favored factions can hold on to outsize power.”

Additional coverage includes [CNN](#) (1/26, Polantz, Cohen, Perez, 89.21M), [NPR](#) (1/26, 3.69M), [Reuters](#) (1/26, Chiacu), [The Hill](#) (1/26, Neidig, 5.69M), and [ABC News](#) (1/26, Mallin, Barr, 2.44M).

“Murder the Media” Man Arrested In Connection To Capitol Violence. The [Houston Chronicle](#) (1/26, Wu, 982K) reports Nicholas DeCarlo of Texas was arrested on Tuesday. A FBI special agent’s account says that DeCarlo and another man were photographed in front of a door inside the Capitol with the phrase “murder the media” etched on the door. The [Dallas Morning News](#) (1/26, 772K) reports that in the picture, DeCarlo is wearing a “Murder the Media” shirt and hat; he says his employer is “MT Media News,” which stands for Murder the Media News. The [AP](#) (1/26) reports the other man in the photo is “Nicholas Ochs, one of the founders of Hawaii’s chapter of the Proud Boys, neofascist group.”

Two New York Men Charged In Connection To Attack. The [AP](#) (1/26) reports Brian Gundersen of New York was charged in connection with the storming of the Capitol. “The FBI said multiple individuals in the community around the high school in Armonk saw” him wearing his Byram Hills “Bobcats” High School jacket in images of the crowd during the attack. Also charged was William Vogel, who the FBI said “can be heard on the audio supporting the actions of others who were engaged in disorderly conduct.”

Texas Man Waives Preliminary Hearings. The [San Antonio Express-News](#) (1/26, Zavala, 685K) reports Matthew Carl Mazzocco of Texas "was scheduled to appear in federal court Tuesday morning before U.S. Magistrate Judge Richard B. Farrer for preliminary hearings, but those were waived." The Express-News adds, "Three people reported Mazzocco to authorities, based on photos that showed up on his social media pages."

Capitol Rioter Who Smoked Joint During Violence Charged. The [New York Post](#) (1/26, Feuerherd, 7.45M) reports James Bonet of New York was arrested "after investigators tracked down photos of him inside the building – including one snap that showed him smoking a joint." His co-workers reported him to the FBI "after they shared a screenshot of a Facebook video that showed him smoking the joint." Additional coverage includes the [Daily Beast](#) (1/26, Melendez, 933K).

New Jersey Man Arrested After Posting Videos Of Himself In Capitol Siege. [The Hill](#) (1/26, Gstalter, 5.69M) reports in its "Blog Briefing Room" blog that Hector Emmanuel Vargas Santos of New Jersey "was charged with four federal counts accusing him of unlawfully and violently entering the Capitol, as well as disorderly and disruptive conduct." The Hill adds, "The FBI received a tip from someone who knew Vargas from a community group in Jersey City and saw he had posted photographs and videos on social media from inside the Capitol on the day of the deadly insurrection." Additionally, Vargas posted videos showing himself walking through the Rotunda.

Man Who Livestreamed Capitol Storming Turns Himself In. The [Baltimore Sun](#) (1/26, Fenton, 629K) reports the FBI said that Andrew Ryan Bennett, who "who reportedly livestreamed inside the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6," turned himself in to authorities.

Judge Orders Capitol Rioter Remain In Jail. The [Teller County \(CO\) Mountain Jackpot](#) (1/26, Phipps) reports Federal Magistrate Judge Scott Varholak ruled that Robert Gieswein will "remain in jail on federal charges throughout the court process due to his role in the recent Capitol Hill riots." Varholak said that Gieswein was "armed to do battle."

Pennsylvania Man Who Livestreamed Capitol Violence Arrested. The [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (1/26, Roebuck) reports Kenneth Grayson of Pennsylvania was arrested by the FBI on Tuesday. He livestreamed his storming of the Capitol on Facebook, and previously posted on Facebook "I'm with a group going to fight, not hang out."

Continuing Coverage: WalkAway Campaign Founder Arrested. In continuing coverage, [NBC News](#) (1/26, 4.91M) reports #WalkAway social media campaign founder Brandon Straka was arrested after "the FBI received multiple tips about his presence at the deadly siege" of the Capitol.

Alabama Man Charged With Capitol Violence To Remain In Jail. [Birmingham \(AL\) News](#) (1/26, Robinson, 656K) reports that US Magistrate Judge John H. England, III on Wednesday ruled that Joshua Matthew Black of Alabama will remain behind bars; he was arrested for his role in the storming of the Capitol. England's order "said there is clear and convincing evidence, that 'no condition or combination of conditions of release will reasonably assure the safety of any other person and the community.'" During the hearing, FBI Special Agent Darius Hill testified that Black "told me mainly God led him there to plead the blood of Jesus in the Senate."

Attorney: FBI Did Not Recover Pelosi's Laptop.

The [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (1/26, Roebuck) reports that on Tuesday, A.J. Kramer, the public defender for Riley Williams, said during a hearing with US Magistrate Judge Zia Faruqui that the FBI did not recover House Speaker Pelosi's laptop after searching her car and apartment. Williams "surrendered to authorities last week, two days after they first accused her of stealing it in an attempt to sell it to the Russian security services." The Inquirer says, "It remains unclear whether Pelosi's laptop was ever in Williams' possession at all," after prosecutors said "she boasted about" taking the device "on the social media platform Discord." However, "they

clarified that at this point they have only lodged charges against her for aiding and abetting the theft."

[BuzzFeed News](#) (1/26, O'Connor) reports Kramer said that all the allegations against his client "were all lies all made up by an ex." However, the FBI affidavit, includes screenshots of what appears to be Williams' account on the social media platform Discord saying, "I DOMT CARE I TOOK NANCY POLESIS HARD DRIVES I DONT CARE KILL ME," and "screenshots of a video that tipsters told the FBI Williams livestreamed on her own social media account show the hands of people in the process of taking a laptop from a congressional desk."

Additional coverage includes the [AP](#) (1/26) and [Fox News](#) (1/26, Ruiz, 23.99M).

Growing Scrutiny On Proud Boys In Investigation Of Capitol Assault.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Feuer, Robles, 20.6M) reports federal law enforcement officials say that as they seek to determine how closely Proud Boys members communicated during the storming of the Capitol "and to what extent they might have planned the assault in advance," the group's leadership "has come under increased scrutiny." Although "investigators have yet to unearth clear-cut evidence suggesting there was a widespread conspiracy to assault the Capitol," a federal law enforcement official said they "turned their attention" toward two Proud Boy organizers on the West Coast – Ethan Nordean and Eddie Block – "and have started executing a series of search warrants connected to the group." Meanwhile, the FBI "is conducting a similarly serious inquiry into the Oath Keepers, a group largely composed of law enforcement and military personnel, and the Three Percenters, which emerged from the extremist wing of the gun rights movement."

FBI Searches Home Of Man Charged In Capitol Siege.

[WSFA-TV](#) Montgomery, AL (1/26, Scarpino, 34K) reports that the FBI and law enforcement partners searched the home of Lonnie Coffman, who was arrested in connection to the Capitol riot. "Caution tape marked off the area as ATF and FBI agents spent around six hours searching Coffman's home." Coffman's truck, found just south of the Capitol Building, was found to contain 11 Molotov cocktails and multiple firearms.

FBI Seeks Capitol Siege Tips Through Billboard Ads.

The [Springfield \(MO\) News-Leader](#) (1/26, Holman, 44K) reports that in its efforts to encourage tips on the January 6 storming of the Capitol, the FBI placed ads on thousands of billboards across the US. A Kansas City-based FBI spokesperson "characterized the billboards as an 'extremely effective tool,' not just to seek out tips to identify suspects, but also to find fugitives and missing persons or to issue public safety alerts." The News-Leader adds, "Provided at no cost to the taxpayer, the ads run when space is available."

FBI "Reviewing" Congressional Requests For Social Media Investigation.

[Fox News](#) (1/26, Singman, 23.99M) reports the FBI said it is "reviewing these requests from members of Congress" to investigate the role social media played in the storming of the Capitol. House Oversight Committee Chair Maloney requested a probe of Parler's "role" as a "potential facilitator" of planning or inciting the violence, and Republicans on the committee requested such a probe also include Facebook and Twitter.

Teen, Now In Hiding, Discusses Alerting FBI About Father's Alleged Role In Capitol Siege.

[ABC News](#) (1/26, Winsor, Coulson, Becker, 2.44M) reports that Texas teenager Jackson Reffitt, who alerted the FBI to his father's alleged role in the storming of the Capitol, says he wants others to know that "it's OK to come forward." He added, "Your moral compass is going to be absolutely just the right thing." Reffitt also "told ABC News that he is now in hiding and has cut ties with his family, who he said is upset with him for calling the FBI tip line weeks before the

Capitol siege to alert them about his father." Guy Reffitt's wife informed investigators that both their son and daughter informed her he told them, "If you turn me in, you're a traitor and you know what happens to traitors...traitors get shot."

Acting Capitol Police Chief Apologizes For January 6 Failures.

On the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 4, 1:35, O'Donnell, 4.76M), Kris Van Cleave reported, that Acting Capitol Police Chief Yogananda Pittman made "a stunning admission" that "leaders knew days before the January 6th attack [that] armed militia groups and white supremacists were coming to Washington, with Congress as a target." Pittman "told lawmakers Capitol Police knew there was a strong potential for violence, but officers were still not properly armed and failed to adequately lock down the building." Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH) said, "It's time to start figuring out why some of this intelligence information was not acted upon."

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi}'s (1/26, story 8, 0:25, Muir, 7.57M) David Muir reported that Pittman issued "a formal apology...for failures during the deadly riots at the Capitol." Pittman testified "before Congress that police knew that militia groups and white supremacists would be there, and that there was strong potential for violence." Pittman also "says National Guard troops were requested two days before the riots, but that the request was rejected by their supervising board." Muir said that "one member of that board [is] denying the claim."

[Politico](#) (1/26, Zanona, 6.73M) reports that on Tuesday, Pittman "apologized to Congress for the security failures at the complex the day of the deadly Jan. 6 riots, acknowledging in an extraordinary statement that the department 'failed to meet its own high standards as well as yours.'" Politico says Pittman "also admitted that a Capitol police board denied a request on Jan. 4 for additional support from the National Guard," and it "wasn't until the building was overrun by a pro-Trump mob the panel relented, an hour after another plea was made."

[USA Today](#) (1/26, Duret, Mansfield, Penzenstadler, 12.7M) reports that despite a \$54 million budget boost in February 2020, including an additional \$7 million "to upgrade equipment and supplies," Capitol Police "were sent into the chaos" on January 6 "with little if any protective gear," raising "questions of how [they] could be overrun by a loosely knit group of far-right mob, other rioters and hangers on." Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) said, "They should've had everything they needed to protect the Capitol." While Pittman said in her testimony that the agency did not do enough to prepare, "she also expressed the belief that nothing could have prepared them to prevent a protest of that size overrunning the Capitol," which "was made to be open and welcoming to citizens."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Levy, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro said after the hearing, "It is now obvious that intelligence agencies had ample evidence an angry mob would descend on Washington, with Congress' meeting to certify the presidential election as the intended target. The law-enforcement agencies tasked with protecting the Capitol did not act on this intelligence or adequately prepare for the looming threat."

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Wagner, Itkowitz, Sonmez, 10.52M) reports that Pittman is "one of several officials testifying before members of the House Appropriations Committee about the events and decisions that led to rioters storming the Capitol on Jan. 6, and the steps that security outfits are taking to ensure such a breach is not repeated." The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Broadwater, Cochrane, Goldman, 20.6M) and [Reuters](#) (1/26, Staff) have more on the testimony.

DC National Guard Commander Says Pentagon Tied His Hands Prior To January 6. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Sonne, 10.52M) reports that Maj. Gen. William J. Walker, the commanding general of the District of Columbia National Guard, says the Pentagon "restricted his authority ahead of the riot at the U.S. Capitol, requiring higher-level sign-off to respond that cost time as the events that day spiraled out of control." According to the Post, "Local commanders typically have the power to take military action on their own to save lives or prevent significant property damage in an urgent situation," but Walker "said the Pentagon

essentially took that power and other authorities away from him ahead of a pro-Trump protest on Jan. 6.," which "meant he couldn't immediately roll out troops when he received a panicked phone call from the Capitol Police chief warning that rioters were about to enter the U.S. Capitol."

Former Army Secretary Says National Guard Response Didn't Affect Violence At Capitol. The [Military Times](#) (1/26, Shane III, 845K) reports, "Former Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy testified on Tuesday that Defense Department officials could have done little to prevent security failures surrounding the" storming of the Capitol. He said, "We had no indication from the federal and local agencies that the 6th would be any different in size, composition or threat levels than what we witnessed during [previous] demonstrations." McCarthy "said that by the time a formal request arrived for the Guard to assist with crowd control, rioters were already entering the building."

Biden Administration Overhauling Government Approach To Domestic Extremism.

[MSNBC](#) (1/26, Benen, 8.1M) reports, "Late last week, the Biden administration committed to" overhauling the government's approach to domestic terrorism. White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said, "The rise of domestic violent extremism is a serious and growing national security threat. The Biden administration will approach this threat with the necessary resources and resolve." The Administration will develop a capability to counter domestic violent extremism, launch a policy review on better sharing information in the threat, and seek to address domestic radicalization. "These are common-sense measures that may very likely make a difference in addressing one of the nation's most serious security threats," and which the executive branch wasn't doing "between 2017 and 2020."

[Fox News](#) (1/26, Singman, 23.99M) reports that when asked about riots in the Pacific Northwest, White House press secretary Jen Psaki on Tuesday said, "All violence happening around the country will be reviewed by the tasking by the national security team" on domestic violent extremism.

Human Rights Groups Concerned About Expanding Terrorism Laws. [Public Radio International](#) (1/26, Shenoy, 15K) reports, "135 human rights groups have written a joint letter to lawmakers opposing an expansion of terrorism laws," citing concerns that they will be used not against white supremacists but minorities. However, Jason Blazakis, former director of the State Department's counterterrorism office, said, "I think there is an important symbolic value to a domestic terrorism update that would allow for the United States to start considering, quite frankly, white people as terrorists, to not just brown or Black people or people who may worship a certain faith."

Oregon GOP Claims Siege Was A "False Flag" To "Discredit" Trump. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Peiser, 10.52M) reports that the Oregon "Republican Party isn't just backing former president Donald Trump – its official position falsely claims that the entire episode was a 'false flag' operation staged to discredit the GOP and silence Trump's supporters." The Oregon GOP last week "released a resolution passed by its executive committee that says the supposedly fake operation was meant to undermine Trump and give more power to President Biden, citing websites by John Solomon and the Trump-friendly Epoch Times." The Post says, "State Republican parties nationwide have been castigating members for opposing Trump, voting to impeach him and certifying Biden's victory."

COUNTER-TERRORISM

Texas Man Pleads Guilty To Planning Terror Attack.

The [New York Daily News](#) (1/26, Greene, 2.51M) reports Jaylyn Christopher Molina of Texas "pleaded guilty to a role in a terrorist plot to attack the White House and Trump Tower." He and Kristopher Sean Matthews of South Carolina "discussed traveling to Syria to fight with the

Islamic State group and talked about carrying out attacks at Trump Tower, the White House, the New York Stock Exchange or buildings housing the CIA or FBI.”

Columnist: Church Bombing Hindering Anti-Hate Efforts.

Gustavo Arellano, in a column in the [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/26, 3.37M), writes that supporters of the First Works Baptist Church, which espouses “antigay rhetoric of the vilest kind imaginable,” are “condemning Keep El Monte Friendly, the main group behind” an effort against the church and its founder, Delfin Bruce Mejia, in the wake a bomb being set off in front of the church. This is despite El Monte Police Chief David Reynoso saying, “it wouldn’t be fair in any way, shape or form to link” the explosion and demonstrators. Now members of the movement are “upset that Mejia is now playing the martyr, and that their activism against a proud hater needs to lay low for a while.”

Appeals Court Considers Constitutionality Of Terrorism Screening Database.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Barakat) reports that the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals on Tuesday “expressed concerns about ordering wholesale changes to” the Terrorism Screening Database, “a government watchlist of roughly 1 million individuals labeled as ‘known or suspected terrorists,’ despite a lower court finding that the list was constitutionally flawed.” While government lawyers at the hearing “said the problems encountered by those on the list...were too insignificant to merit intervention,” an attorney for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Gadeir Abbas, cited examples of plaintiffs “being shackled and having guns pointed at them.” Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson “suggested it might be better for individual plaintiffs to file suits based on their own experiences” and “questioned whether the judiciary branch was able or qualified to require revisions to a program that the government insists is vital to national security.”

TSA Recovered Record Rate Of Firearms In 2020.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, 10.52M) reports, “The Transportation Security Administration said Tuesday that it detected twice as many firearms per million passengers at airport security checkpoints in 2020 than it did in 2019.” The TSA “announced that it found about 10 firearms per million passengers screened last year, compared with about five firearms per million passengers screened a year earlier,” though the overall “number of firearms found decreased – 3,257 in 2020 compared with a record 4,432 in 2019.” However, “the rate per passenger was the highest since the agency was founded in 2001.”

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

Rep. Swalwell: No New Information On Christine Fang.

[Fox News](#) (1/26, 23.99M) reports that when asked about his contact with suspected Chinese spy, Christine Fang, Rep. Eric Swalwell (D-CA) “insisted that the FBI said he did nothing wrong and he learned nothing new since” Axios reported in December that Fang allegedly attempt to target up-and-coming local politicians. He added, “Republicans were briefed on this conduct, that this individual was trying to do with me and many other members of congress, back in 2015.”

Opinion: Scrutiny Of Chinese-Born Researchers In The US Risks Delays In Innovation.

In a commentary in [The Conversation](#) (1/26, 162K), Caroline Wagner writes, “The arrest of MIT engineering professor Gang Chen on January 14 has drawn attention to the role of China in US science and technology system. No evidence of spying has been made public, but a Department of Justice criminal complaint expressed suspicions that Chen’s loyalty may not be aligned with American interests.” She argues, “These kinds of investigations risk damaging one of the US’

most important assets: open inquiry. The US government's scrutiny of Chinese Americans and Chinese scholars runs up against the value of open scientific exchange." She contends, "My research on international collaboration in science has shown that open nations have strong science. Nations that accept visitors and send researchers abroad, those that engage richly in cross-border collaborations and fund international projects produce better science and excel in innovation. Closing doors inhibits the very trait that makes the US innovation system the envy of the world."

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

California Man Charged With Threatening Family Members Of Congressman, Journalist.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Neumeister) reports Robert Lemke of California was charged with threatening "family members of a New York congressman and a journalist in text messages sent during the attack on the Capitol." William F. Sweeney Jr., the head of New York City's FBI office, said Lemke's threats "crossed a bright line."

[USA Today](#) (1/26, Culver, 12.7M) reports Sweeney said, "The FBI's New York Joint Terrorism Task Force is always on watch, and we act with speed to stop violence – whether the threat comes from within our borders or from outside them. That's how we do it."

[Politico](#) (1/26, Choi, 6.73M) reports Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) "identified himself on Tuesday as the lawmaker in the complaint." He "said his brother received the message just as members were being evacuated from the Capitol as armed rioters stormed the building."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Rosman, 20.6M) reports Lemke "told Representative Jeffries's brother in the texts that he was part of a group of 'active/retired law enforcement or military,' and that the group had 'armed members near your home.'"

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (1/27, Hernández, 2.44M) reports, "Phone records reviewed by FBI detectives found that Lemke's phone was subscribed 'under the name 'Alameda County Sheriffs Department,' and with an email address 'info@acgov.org,' the domain of which is used by the Alameda County government," but "sheriff's officials said on Twitter that Lemke was never employed by the sheriff's office."

Michigan Man Charged With Threatening Inauguration Shootings.

[MLive \(MI\)](#) (1/26, Keefer, 828K) reports Richard Maurer of Michigan was "charged after police say he threatened to shoot Democrats and other individuals in the nation's capital during the inauguration of President Joe Biden." Chief Kevin Lenkart said that on day after the FBI informed Owosso Public Safety it was investigating Mauer, at a protest in Lansing Maurer "spoke with the New York Times and other news outlets, making specific threats to individuals in Washington D.C., which police deemed credible."

Massachusetts Man Pleads Guilty To Firing On Police.

The [Boston Herald](#) (1/26, 327K) reports John Boamong will "plead guilty to interfering with a law enforcement officer during the commission of a civil disorder; receipt of a firearm by a person under indictment for a felony offense; and assaulting, resisting, or impeding officers." He "faces from 3 1/2 to more than five years in prison according to terms of a plea deal." The incident "took place in the early morning hours of June 1 when what started as peaceful protests turned violent."

Continuing Coverage: FBI Searching For Alabama Man In Connection To Synagogue Vandalism.

The [New York Post](#) (1/26, Eustachewich, 7.45M) reports that an unidentified one-legged man "is being hunted in Alabama for scrawling hateful graffiti across a pair of synagogues in the"

Huntsville area. He "was caught on video in April targeting Etz Chayim Synagogue and the Chabad of Huntsville." The FBI is offering an \$18,000 reward for information leading to his capture.

Former Baltimore Police Officer Sentenced Over Stolen Contraband.

The [Baltimore Sun](#) (1/26, Fenton, 629K) reports former Baltimore Police officer Victor Rivera was sentenced Tuesday to 14 months in prison over lying to FBI agents investigating the 2009 theft and sale of cocaine. He had "stolen three kilograms of cocaine from a drug bust, then sold it back onto the streets using one of his confidential informants."

[WBAL-TV](#) Baltimore (1/26, 219K) reports that the federal prosecutors "said Rivera volunteered to be interviewed by the FBI and he made a number of false statements and material omissions."

Additional coverage includes [WMAR-TV](#) Baltimore (1/26, Ingram) and [WJZ-TV](#) Baltimore (1/26, 74K).

New York IRS Agent Arrested Over Identity Theft.

The [New York Daily News](#) (1/26, Greene, 2.51M) reports IRS agent Bryan Cho was arrested Tuesday by FBI agents in connection to an identity fraud investigation. The identity "belonged to a man Cho was investigating as part of his job as a special agent with the Internal Revenue Service's criminal division."

Continuing Coverage: Former West Virginia VA Doctor Sentenced For Abusing Veterans.

[Stars And Stripes](#) (1/26, 39K) reports former VA Dr. Jonathan Yates "was sentenced Monday to 25 years in prison for depriving veterans of their civil rights under color of law by sexually abusing them." He had "pleaded guilty on Sept. 17, 2020, to three felony counts of deprivation of rights under color of law," and he admitted that he "rubbed the genitals of two veterans and digitally penetrated a third veteran's rectum under the guise of legitimate medicine, when in fact he acted without a legitimate medical purpose."

[FierceHealthcare](#) (1/26, 150K) reports that the case "was investigated by the FBI, the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General, and the Veterans Affairs Police Department."

Connecticut Business Evacuated Following Bomb Threat.

The [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (1/26, 76K) reports that Electric Boat employees "were evacuated from their workspaces after a bomb threat was made Tuesday morning against two submarines undergoing maintenance at the company's Groton shipyard." The FBI and NCIS are investigating the case.

Michigan School Board Meeting Disrupted By Bomb Threat.

[Adrian \(MI\) Daily Telegram](#) (1/26, Durham, 26K) reports that the FBI is "investigating bomb threats made during an Addison school board meeting Monday night." The threats "were made over the district's Zoom meeting," where an unidentified digital attendee "sent a chat message threatening to bomb Addison and Madison schools that would 'kill you all.'"

Massachusetts Man Sentenced Over Threat To Bomb Courthouse.

The [Springfield \(MA\) Republican](#) (1/26, 592K) reports Nathan Allen Danforth "was sentenced Tuesday for threatening to blow up a federal courthouse and harm federal agents."

Massachusetts Man Arrested In Vermont On Weapons Charges.

The [Rutland \(VT\) Herald](#) (1/26, Correspondent, 34K) reports Varian C. Lefebvre "is due in U.S. District Court on Wednesday on charges of carrying a firearm during a drug trafficking offense

and for possession with intent to distribute fentanyl.”

New Hampshire Man Sentenced Over Bank Robbery.

[Foster's Daily Democrat \(NH\)](#) (1/26, 13K) reports Thomas Hegarty “has been sentenced to nearly nine years in prison for robbing a Rochester gas station and a Dover bank on the same day while out on supervised release for a different bank robbery.” He had “pleaded guilty to both crimes on Oct. 5, 2020.”

FBI Investigating Indiana Bank Robbery.

[WTTV-TV](#) Indianapolis (1/26) reports that the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department and the FBI are “asking the public to help identify a man suspected in robbing a bank.” They “said on Tuesday, January 19, around 11:05 a.m., officers responded to the 5100 block of 82nd Street for a reported bank robbery.”

FBI Investigating California Bank Robbery.

The [Times of San Diego](#) (1/26, 12K) reports that the FBI “reached out to the public Tuesday for help in identifying a man who robbed a Scripps Ranch bank three weeks ago.” The suspect “was described as a thin, roughly 5-foot-9-inch white man wearing blue jeans, a button-up shirt, a knit cap and a dark-colored bandana over the lower part of his face.”

[KGTV-TV](#) San Diego (1/26, 131K) also reports.

FBI Investigating Texas Cold Case.

[KSAT-TV](#) San Antonio (1/26, Patton, Venema, Salazar, 440K) reports that the FBI is “offering a \$10,000 reward for information that leads to the arrest or grand jury indictment of the person responsible” for the 2010 disappearance of 18-month-old Joshua Davis Jr, who “was last seen at the family home in the 2600 block of Savannah Hill Circle in New Braunfels.”

Illinois Mayor Indicated Over Corruption.

The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (1/26, 970K) reports that Crestwood Mayor Louis Presta’s trial over federal bribery and tax charges would begin next December. Prosecutors “said Presta sought and received benefits from SafeSpeed representatives while SafeSpeed sought to expand its services in Crestwood.”

Indicted Michigan Prosecutor To Attend Plea Hearing.

The [Detroit News](#) (1/26, 1.16M) reports former Macomb County prosecutor Eric Smith “is scheduled to appear Wednesday morning in U.S. District Court for a plea hearing in a corruption case involving alleged misuse of county forfeiture funds.” The plea hearing has “been moved several times, including in November when he was diagnosed with COVID-19 and hospitalized.”

New Jersey Man Pleads Guilty To Attempting Arson During Protest.

[Daily Voice](#) (1/26, 292K) reports Killian F. Melecio “old a U.S. District Court Judge in Trenton via videoconference that he stuffed a shirt he’d gotten from another man into the gas tank of the vehicle and tried to ignite it last May 31.” The FBI complaint charges him with “attempting to damage or destroy by fire a vehicle owned or possessed by an institution receiving federal financial assistance” and “attempting to damage or destroy by fire a vehicle used in and affecting interstate commerce.”

Seven Alleged Gang Members Facing Federal Charges.

The [Southeast Missourian](#) (1/27, Reeves, 46K) reports, “Seven alleged members of the Gangster Disciples gang, including four from Southeast Missouri,” have been indicted on federal charges. Among other things, the indictment in this case “alleges acts of drug trafficking by the gang’s members, including an ongoing scheme to smuggle” a synthetic drug into state prisons

in Missouri. The Missourian adds, "This case was investigated by" the FBI and a number of other organizations. An online [WGEL-FM](#) Greenville, IL (1/26) article quotes "Sean Cox, FBI Springfield Special Agent in Charge," who said this case shows "how effective our law enforcement alliances are in pursuing and eradicating violent street gangs to make our communities safer."

North Carolina Minor Found Safe Following AMBER Alert.

[WHNS-TV](#) Greenville, SC (1/26, 191K) reports that North Carolina authorities successfully rescued Breanne Marie Jones, who was kidnapped by suspects Johnathan Jones and Christina Edge. Jones "has been charged with injury to real property and misdemeanor child abuse while Christina Edge is charged with probation violation."

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

Vaccine Fraud Said To Be Increasing In US.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 7, 2:00, Muir, Gutman, 7.57M) reported, "Cases of alleged vaccine fraud growing in this country. This suspect accused of selling fake COVID shots, and in another case, the paramedic accused of stealing doses after making up fake patients, now claiming his supervisor wanted the doses for his own family." ABC's Matt Gutman added, "In Florida, paramedic Joshua Colon accused of hoarding doses, claiming a supervisor wanted them for his family. A tough-talking sheriff making an example of the pair." ABC added, "He's being charged with multiple counts, including forgery and falsifying medical records. Authorities say they are now investigating whether the supervisor played any role, as well." In Washington state, a man is being charged "for posing as a biotech expert, claiming to have a COVID vaccine and offering to inject patients for between \$400 and \$1,000 each."

Pharmacist Pleads Guilty To Spoiling COVID-19 Vaccine Doses. [The Hill](#) (1/26, Choi, 5.69M) reports Wisconsin pharmacist Steven R. Brandenburg "pled guilty in federal court to spoiling hundreds of" COVID-19 vaccine doses. FBI Milwaukee Special Agent in Charge Robert Hughes said, "The FBI takes allegations of consumer product tampering very seriously and will use all available resources to bring those to justice who intentionally put the public's health at risk." The [New York Post](#) (1/26, Rosenberg, Fitz-Gibbon, 7.45M) reports Brandenburg "believed the vaccine would alter human DNA." Additional coverage includes the [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (1/26, Vielmetti, 844K).

Washington Man Pleads Guilty In Scheme To Defraud Distressed Homeowners.

The [Puget Sound \(WA\) Business Journal](#) (1/26, Stiles, Subscription Publication, 877K) reports Edwin Josue Herrera Rosales of Washington state "pleaded guilty Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Seattle to conspiracy to defraud approximately 1,000 distressed homeowners facing foreclosure." He and his co-conspirators sent solicitation mailers promising to reduce homeowners' mortgage debts and lower their monthly payments, then "put them through a phony 'underwriting' process and told the callers that the company's legal and underwriting staff had determined it could negotiate a favorable mortgage modification in exchange for an upfront fee of \$3,000."

Two Plead Guilty To Healthcare Kickback Conspiracy.

The [McKinney \(TX\) Courier-Gazette](#) (1/26, 14K) reports Kimberly Willette and Edwin Chad Isbell, both of Texas, pleaded guilty to conspiring to pay and receive kickbacks in exchange for the referral of, and arranging for pharmacogenetic tests. "More than \$28 million in illegal kickback payments were exchanged by the defendants and others during the conspiracy" involving the referral of pharmacogenetic tests to clinical laboratories in California.

Texas Couple Sentenced For Faking Addiction In Bid To Reduce Jail Time.

[WJHL-TV](#) Johnson City, TN (1/26, 158K) reports that Stacey and Kurt Pomrenke were sentenced for Stacey Pomrenke pretending while in prison "to have an alcohol addiction and us[ing] the recovery program offered to reduce her sentence." Stacey Pomrenke "was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison and ordered to pay a fine of \$10,000," while Kurt Pomrenke "was sentenced to 12 months and one day in federal prison and ordered to pay a \$5,000 fine." Acting US Attorney Daniel P. Bubar said, "Instead of simply accepting and serving her original prison sentence, Stacey Pomrenke, with the assistance of her husband, carried out an additional fraud scheme to exploit a drug treatment program to shorten her sentence. We hope today's sentences will serve as a deterrence to others, and greatly appreciate the hard work of the FBI and IRS-CI to again bring the Pomrenkes to justice."

CYBER DIVISION

How The SolarWinds Hack Happened.

[CNBC](#) (1/26, 7.34M) reports in a video that, "in December, cybersecurity firm FireEye discovered that it had been compromised by a sophisticated hack." SolarWinds, an IT firm that FireEye used, "was the victim of a supply-chain attack that gave hackers access to potentially thousands of targets, including FireEye." A separate [CNBC](#) (1/26, Howard, 7.34M) report adds that Microsoft, Google and several US government agencies "were among those compromised by the intrusion." Jacob Williams, founder of Rendition InfoSec, said, "What's unique about this or special about this particular intrusion is that they use the access they got by compromising SolarWinds itself to insert malware into the build process. This then allowed them to target SolarWinds [and] customers that deployed this back door update." The repercussions of the SolarWinds hack "are still being unraveled."

Vaccine Distribution Creates Cybersecurity Risks.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Riley, 10.52M) reports in its 'Cybersecurity 202' column that security experts and government officials are "bracing for a wave of cyberattacks targeting the coronavirus vaccine distribution process." The complex supply chain "behind making and delivering vaccines is creating a plethora of opportunities for hackers." The attacks could be "from criminal hackers motivated by financial incentives or nation-states looking to cause economic and civil disruption."

North Korea Using Hackers To Infiltrate Cybersecurity Researchers.

[Bloomberg](#) (1/26, Mehrotra, 3.57M) reports hackers from North Korea have "embarked on a sweeping intelligence gathering campaign aimed at cybersecurity researchers who hunt for vulnerabilities in corporate networks." According to Google, the North Korean government "mounted a social engineering operation for several months in hopes of engaging with the researchers." According to a Monday blog post by Google's Threat Analysis Group, essential to the attack were "several research blogs, YouTube videos, LinkedIn profiles and chat groups used by the hackers to build credibility in the hopes of duping the researchers." [CNBC](#) (1/26, 7.34M) reports Google announced that its Threat Analysis Group "has 'identified an ongoing campaign targeting security researchers working on vulnerability research and development at different companies and organizations.'" It attributed the campaign "to a government-backed entity based in North Korea." [Forbes](#) (1/26, Brewster, 10.33M) reports Google "says North Korean hackers have been masquerading as cybersecurity bloggers in order to target researchers in the field." They're doing so by "exploiting mysterious weaknesses in computers running the most up-to-date versions of Microsoft Windows and Google Chrome." Adam Weidemann, a researcher at Google's Threat Analysis Group, "said the attacks have been

ongoing over the last three months." The hackers set up "fake Twitter accounts to show off security research and link to a blog."

North Korea Targets COVID-19 Vaccine Data Through Hacking. The [New York Post](#) (1/26, Brown, 7.45M) reports North Korea has "started human trials on a COVID-19 vaccine – using info stolen from Western drugmakers by a dedicated team of hackers." An informant told Daily NK North Korea is "already at phase 3 in trials for its shot, produced even as the secretive nation refuses to admit to any confirmed cases." The insider "confirmed to the outlet that it was based on the work of a specialist 'hacking organization' devoted to stealing vaccine info, raising the alarm in the US, UK and South Korea starting last year." The hacking unit – called Bureau 325 – "operates under the Reconnaissance General Bureau while receiving direct orders from the Central Committee."

Opinion: America Not Prepared For A Catastrophic Cyberattack.

In a commentary in the [Washington Times](#) (1/26, 626K), Clifford D. May, founder and president of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, writes, "The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that became law on January 1 includes 25 legislative measures recommended to Congress by the Cyberspace Solarium Commission (CSC), a bipartisan panel established two years ago to develop a 'strategic approach to defending America in cyberspace against cyberattacks of significant consequences.'" He contends, "Nevertheless, effective deterrence is a process, not a posture. Those who see themselves as our enemies will respond, adapt, and innovate in pursuit of superior offensive cyber capabilities. They will probe for our weaknesses, for ways to damage and diminish us. Additional thinking and planning is essential. Prudently, the NDAA extends the CSC's mandate for two more years." He concludes, "What's critical right now is for President Biden to prioritize this threat. In particular, he should quickly nominate someone highly skilled as national cyber director."

Commerce Secretary Nominee Won't Promise To Maintain Huawei On US Blacklist.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (1/26, Dunleavy, 888K) reports President Biden's nominee to "lead the Commerce Department would not commit to keeping Huawei on the US entities blacklist after the Trump Administration deemed the Chinese telecom company a national security threat and sought to limit its sway worldwide and its access to US markets." Gina Raimondo often took "a strong rhetorical stance on China throughout her Tuesday confirmation hearing before the Senate Commerce Committee, but she declined to promise that Huawei would remain on the Commerce Department's 'entities list' for companies deemed to be national security threats." When pressed about Huawei, she said, "I will review the policy, consult with you, consult with industry, consult with our allies, and make an assessment as to what's best for American national and economic security."

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Ghislaine Maxwell Seeks Dismissal Of Case.

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Stempel) reports Ghislaine Maxwell requested the dismissal of the case accusing her of recruiting teenage girls for Jeffrey Epstein to sexually abuse. Her attorneys argued that Florida nonprosecution agreement with Epstein, "now widely viewed as a sweetheart arrangement," shielded her. They also argued "that not enough Black and Hispanic grand jurors were used to indict her, and that parts of the indictment were too vague and should be thrown out." Additional coverage includes the [Daily Caller](#) (1/26, Olohan, 375K).

LAWFUL ACCESS

Nonprofit Warns Against Demonizing Anti-Surveillance Tools.

Human Rights Foundation Chief Strategy Officer Alex Gladstein, in an op-ed in [TIME](#) (1/26, 18.1M), warns of a narrative that “we should be wary of privacy-protecting platforms because they can help extremists and criminals,” including articles about how “mass surveillance-busting tools like Signal and Bitcoin are being used by domestic extremists.” Gladstein adds, “In an open society, the ability to buy political books, have discreet medical procedures, and build communities without government surveillance is essential.” He warns that attacking innovation and expanding the surveillance state “are the tactics of tyrants,” and argues that instead “we can fight domestic extremism through better national leadership, citizen journalism and police reform.” Gladstein warns of a police state if we “turn to mass surveillance to fight extremism. As anyone who lives in a dictatorship will say, that’s when you’ll need privacy the most.”

OTHER FBI NEWS

Senators Make US Attorney Recommendations For State Of Washington.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Johnson) reports Sens. Patty Murray (D-WA) and Maria Cantwell (D-WA) have recommended Nick Brown and Vanessa Waldref “for Washington state’s two US attorney posts.” During the time in which Brown served as Washington Gov. Jay Inslee’s general counsel, Brown helped Inslee “navigate a thicket of issues,” including ones related to “tension with the federal government after Washington and Colorado became the first states to legalize the sale of marijuana for adults.” The [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (1/26, 187K) runs a similar story.

Former FBI Agent Asks Court To Enforce Subpoena Against Trump Campaign.

[Law360](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 9K) reports that former FBI agent Peter Strzok, “who sued the FBI in August 2019 for allegedly punishing him for expressing his political opinions,” asked US District Judge Amy Berman Jackson to compel former President Donald Trump’s “campaign to comply with a request for documents in an unfair termination suit against the agency, adding that the organization should also explain why it shouldn’t be held in contempt.”

Rep. Greene Called For Executing FBI Agents, Democratic Politicians.

[CNN](#) (1/26, Steck, Kaczynski, 89.21M) reports on its website that Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA) “repeatedly indicated support for executing prominent Democratic politicians in 2018 and 2019 before being elected to Congress.” She also “liked comments about executing FBI agents” and “frequently posted far-right extremist and debunked conspiracy theories on her page.”

[Forbes](#) (1/26, Solender, 10.33M) cites CNN in reporting that, “Greene liked a Facebook comment from Jan. 2019 arguing ‘a bullet to the head would be quicker’ for removing [Pelosi], in addition to liking comments about executing FBI agents seen as working for the ‘deep state.’”

[The Hill](#) (1/26, Gangitano, 5.69M) adds that Everytown for Gun Safety is pushing Greene to resign “following reports that she expressed support for violence against Democrats before running for Congress.”

Additional coverage includes the [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Thebault, 10.52M).

Call For Investigation Of FBI Racist Practices.

The Revolution Podcast host Akin Olla, in an op-ed in [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (1/26, 5.53M), writes, that in order to address “the threat of white supremacist infiltration of American institutions, the FBI needs to be held accountable for its past and present actions.” The agency “has a long history of fulfilling the function of white supremacy in the United States,” from J Edgar Hoover’s “war on the civil rights movement” – for which no member of the FBI has been held accountable – to in 2017 creating “a new counter-terrorism designation in response to the rise of Black Lives Matter and a new wave of the Black Liberation Movement.” Olla concludes, “The

FBI, like our country's military and police departments, needs to be thoroughly investigated and its racist practices, past and present, brought to light."

Biden Orders DOJ To End Reliance On Private Prisons.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Madhani) reports President Biden on Tuesday "ordered the Department of Justice to end its reliance on private prisons." Biden said, "This is a first step to stop corporations from profiting off of incarceration." Biden said. The order to not renew contracts with privately operated criminal detention facilities – "effectively revert[ing]" to Obama-Administration policy – move comes as Biden said the US government needs to change "its whole approach" on racial equity. However, private-prison operation company GEO Group called the Biden order "a solution in search of a problem. "

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Biden Says US Ordering 200M More Vaccine Doses, Increasing Shipments To States.

David Muir reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (1/26, lead story, 4:55, 7.57M) that President Biden said Tuesday that "he hopes to have enough vaccine for 300 million Americans by the end of the summer, ordering another 100 million doses from Pfizer and 100 million doses additional from Moderna. It comes as the global pandemic now reaches a staggering new toll: more than 100 million cases worldwide and more than two million dead. Here at home, more than 25 million Americans have now tested positive." The President "again [told] Americans this is 'a wartime effort,' requiring, quote, 'aggressive steps,' saying, 'Keep the faith, we will get there,' and that he will always level with you." ABC's Stephanie Ramos: "After weeks of frustration over a slow vaccine rollout and desperate calls for more supply, the President saying help is on the way." Biden: "We will both increase the supply in the short term by more than 15%, and give our states and local partners more certainty about when the deliveries will arrive." Ramos: "The Biden Administration now promising to buy an extra 100 million doses of both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for a total of 600 million – enough to vaccinate 300 million Americans by the end of this summer."

Norah O'Donnell said in opening the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, lead story, 3:00, 4.76M), "President Biden says the US is buying 200 million more doses of the two approved coronavirus vaccines, giving the government enough shots by the end of the summer for all Americans to get vaccinated." Biden "also says he's immediately increasing the number of vaccines the government is shipping to states and will give governors details and shipping schedules. ... The CDC says 44 million of the shots have been already given to states, but fewer than 24 million of them have actually been put in people's arms. That's because some states and hospitals are holding doses back, trying to make sure that they have enough to give those second shots. Still, the President says it will take months before enough people are vaccinated to make a real dent in the pandemic, and that Americans must keep wearing masks and social distancing."

Tom Costello said on [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, lead story, 3:35, Holt, 6.26M) that there is "a major White House push to surge vaccine doses to every state and territory, increasing by 16% the weekly vaccine supply that's sent to states, from 8.6 million doses to at least 10 million for the next three weeks, and giving states three weeks' notice on how many doses they'll receive so they can adjust their distribution plans." Jim Sciutto reported on [CNN](#)^{Vi} (1/26, 1.07M), "President Biden is raising the bar for his goal of vaccinations in the US. The President says he hopes the country will soon be able to administer 1.5 million shots a day, up from a million shots a day, therefore, raising a goal of 150 million vaccinations in his first 100 days in office."

The [AP](#) (1/26, Drew, Miller) reports that Biden, "answering growing frustration over vaccine shortages," said the US "is ramping up deliveries to hard-pressed states over the next three weeks and expects to provide enough doses to vaccinate 300 million Americans by the

end of the summer or early fall. ... Governors and top health officials have been increasingly raising the alarm about inadequate supplies and the need for earlier and more reliable estimates of how much vaccine is on the way so that they can plan." The President's team "held its first virus-related call with the nation's governors on Tuesday and pledged to provide states with firm vaccine allocations three weeks ahead of delivery." The [New York Daily News](#) (1/26, Sommerfeldt, Slattery, 2.51M) reports, "Many state leaders complained that the Trump administration had kept them in the dark about how many shots they could expect each week, hampering distribution efforts."

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Hunnicutt) reports the Administration "will purchase 100 million doses each of the vaccines made by Pfizer Inc and BioNTech, and Moderna Inc, increasing the overall total doses to 600 million, with delivery expected by summer. The previous purchase target was 400 million doses." The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, A1, Stanley-Becker, 10.52M) reports both companies were "cautious in public statements, though people knowledgeable about the negotiations said formal deals were imminent because the government was using options built into contracts negotiated by the Trump administration to receive the additional doses. Those people, like several others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe internal matters."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, A1, Stolberg, Weiland, LaFraniere, 20.6M) says that while Biden "said the moves were 'going to allow millions more Americans to get vaccinated sooner than previously anticipated,' that was likely not the case. Next week's increase to the states was expected as vaccine makers ramp up manufacturing. And the replenishing over the summer...was anticipated under contracts signed by the Trump administration, which gave the government options to continue increasing its commitments in increments of 100 million doses." Still, experts said the Administration "was wise to lock down as many doses as it could as soon as possible, even if the vials would only be delivered later in the year."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/26, Megerian, 3.37M) reports admitting that "even the increased number of doses is unlikely to meet the vast demand for the vaccine, Biden urged patience and encouraged people to continue to wear masks to limit the spread of the coronavirus." He said, "The brutal truth is, it's going to take months before we can get the majority of Americans vaccinated. ... In the next few months, masks – not vaccines – are the best defense against COVID-19." [Bloomberg](#) (1/26, Wingrove, Parker, 3.57M) reports Biden "cautioned that the vaccination effort is an overwhelmingly difficult logistical effort." The President said, "A lot of things can go wrong along the way."

Chief of Staff Klain said on [CNNVi](#) (1/26, 2.74M), "We've been here seven days. We've ramped up capacity higher than it's ever been. We're moving it to the states faster, with more certainty and clarity, but there are just some limitations on this process." Klain added, "We need more vaccine, we need more vaccinations, we need more places to give the vaccinations. We are working on all three of those things."

White House Senior COVID Response Adviser Andy Slavitt said on [CNN's Cuomo Prime TimeVi](#) (1/26, 3.11M), "We're giving states predictability. Every state and territory will now have at least a three-week window to know how many vaccines are coming so they can plan appropriately. ... So more of those vaccines will get in people's arms and more people will have their expectations met." Slavitt added, "The second thing we learned is we did not have enough vaccines contracted to give everybody who needs a vaccine a vaccine. We've taken care of that today, so it's been a good first week. We're still learning as we go along."

Asked on [Fox News' America's Newsroom](#) (1/26, 896K) about the timeline for vaccinating the general population, NIAID Director Fauci said, "By the time you get to April, you will have gotten to the point where...wherever you are in a priority, you can start getting the doses. Logistically, by the time you get doses into everyone who might want it, it will take several months...and I've been saying that probably by the end of the summer, you could get everybody vaccinated."

[CNN](#) (1/26, Lee, Sullivan, 89.21M) reports on its website, "The new efforts come one day after the President said he expects the US will soon be able to vaccinate 1.5 million people a

day, which is a notable increase from the administration's previously stated target of 1 million per day. The President said that the US could surpass that initial target in about three weeks, and said that he thinks anyone who wants a vaccine will be able to get it by this spring." [Roll Call](#) (1/26, Kopp, 130K) says "the biggest unknown, even at the highest levels of officials overseeing the vaccination effort, had been when and how much vaccine supply will become available." [USA Today](#) (1/26, Groppe, Jansen, Behrmann, Wu, 12.7M), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, A1, Armour, Siddiqui, Restuccia, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), [Politico](#) (1/26, Cancryn, Roubein, 6.73M), and [The Hill](#) (1/26, Sullivan, Samuels, 5.69M) also have reports.

Johnson & Johnson Expects To Report Vaccine Data Next Week. [Reuters](#) (1/26, Mishra, O'Donnell) reports that on Tuesday, Johnson & Johnson "said it expected to report eagerly-awaited data on its COVID-19 vaccine early next week, and that it would be able to meet the delivery target for doses to countries with which it had signed supply agreements." Health officials "are increasingly counting on single-dose options like the one being tested by J&J to simplify and boost inoculations given the complications and slower-than-hoped rollout of authorized vaccines" from Pfizer and Moderna. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Grossman, Loftus, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports J&J discussed its vaccine plans Tuesday as it reported fourth-quarter earnings.

Eli Lilly Reports Positive Findings On Antibody Drug. The [AP](#) (1/26, Marchione) reports recent study results "extend hopes for drugs that supply antibodies to fight COVID-19, suggesting they can help keep patients out of the hospital and possibly prevent illness in some uninfected people." On Tuesday, Eli Lilly said that a "two-antibody combo reduced the risk of hospitalizations or death by 70% in newly diagnosed, non-hospitalized COVID-19 patients at high risk of serious illness because of age or other health conditions." [USA Today](#) (1/26, Weintraub, 12.7M) reports Lilly's drug bamlanivimab was authorized by the FDA "late last year and has been used by 125,000 high-risk patients nationwide based on early-stage data suggesting it could be effective."

Biden Credits Previous Administration For Role In Vaccination Process, But Criticizes Program. [Fox News](#) (1/26, De Lea, 23.99M) reports on its website that the President on Tuesday "gave credit to former President Donald Trump's administration for its role in getting the coronavirus vaccination process off the ground, before criticizing it over a lack of transparency." Biden said credit "was 'absolutely due' to the Trump administration, as well as the medical and scientific communities." Biden "quickly added, however, that in the final days of the transition his team discovered 'the vaccine program [was] in worse shape than we anticipated or expected.'"

Harris Receives Second Dose Of Moderna Vaccine. [Reuters](#) (1/26) reports Vice President Harris received her second dose of the Moderna vaccine on Tuesday at the National Institutes of Health. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Wagner, 10.52M) reports Harris "thank[ed] the doctors and scientists for their lifesaving work and urg[ed] Americans to get the vaccine when they can." [CNN](#) (1/26, Zeleny, Collins, 89.21M) reports on its website that "several hundred White House employees had been vaccinated for Covid-19 as of Tuesday, two Biden administration officials told CNN, with more expected in the coming weeks."

Vaccine Rollout Forces States To Make Stark Moral Choices. The [AP](#) (1/26, Flaccus, Cline) reports that with a "mass vaccination campaign underway, the U.S. is facing a moral dilemma as officials from California to New Jersey decide who gets the shots first." In Oregon, one 75-year-old "was shocked when the state started vaccinating teachers this week before senior citizens in a push to get children back into classrooms." She said, "The thing that is so upsetting to me is that seniors don't matter, the elderly don't matter. And it's painful to hear that implication."

New COVID Variants May Increase Risk Of Spread. [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 2, 1:55, Holt, 6.26M) reported on the risk from "new and more contagious strains of the virus." NBC's Miguel Almaguer added, "Roughly half the country, including states like New York, Illinois, and California, have already confirmed cases of the highly contagious and perhaps

deadlier UK strain and are now bracing for dangerous mutations from Brazil and South Africa." NBC also reported that "officials fear the virus variants can easily spread," while "epidemiologists warn with the new variants, even brief interactions, like an outdoor chat without a mask or having a cup of coffee indoors, can increase your transmission by up to 70%." So "authorities," are recommending "wearing two masks," and "skipping that next trip to the grocery store or coffee shop."

Vilsack Says Pandemic Will Be A USDA Priority. The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Severson, 20.6M) reports Agriculture Secretary-designate Vilsack "said in an interview on Friday that he has already sketched out his agenda. ... Topping the list is protecting Agriculture Department employees and people who process the nation's food from the virus, and figuring out which land-grant universities, government laboratories and other department offices might be able to store and administer vaccines."

Biden Calls Roy's Rejection On Mask-Wearing "Not Very American." [Bloomberg](#) (1/26, Sink, 3.57M) reports the President remarked Tuesday on comments by Rep. Chip Roy (R-TX) that "profanely dismiss[ed] the president's call to wear a mask to prevent the spread of the coronavirus." Biden said, "He used a very colorful term to say, 'Wearing a mask, tell them to kiss my ear, I'm not going to wear a mask.' Well, guess what? Not very American. The fact is, you want to be patriotic, you're going to protect people." Roy "defended the comment to RealClearPolitics, saying it was 'not my most Christian statement but it's very American.'"

CDC Says Schools Can Resume In-Person Learning With Precautions.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 3, 2:30, Holt, 6.26M) reported, "The pandemic has had a profound impact on our children, cut off from friends and schools. But CDC experts said today in-person learning can resume if proper precautions are taken." NBC's Kate Snow added, "The leaders of the COVID response team at the CDC concluding school-related cases of COVID-19 have been reported, but there has been little evidence that schools have contributed meaningfully to increased community transmission," and that is "more ammunition for those pushing to reopen schools for in-person learning." Still, "there are heated debates over whether to return kids to classrooms, from Chicago to Atlanta to Maryland." According to the CDC, "schools will still need to require face masks, increase physical distance, and do testing."

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 2, 0:25, Muir, 7.57M) reported, "News tonight from the CDC coming in about the safety of children going back to school." ABC's Stephanie Ramos added, "The study looked at 17 schools where masks were worn and social distancing rules were followed. Even though there was community spread of the virus at the time, researchers found that there wasn't much spread of the virus in schools when those precautions were followed."

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Meckler, 10.52M) reports that according to the CDC "schools operating in person have seen scant transmission of the coronavirus, particularly when masks and distancing are employed." CDC researchers also concluded that "there has been little evidence that schools have contributed meaningfully to increased community transmission."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Rabin, 20.6M) reports, "On Tuesday, federal health officials weighed in with a call for returning children to the nation's classrooms as soon as possible," yet "local officials also must be willing to impose limits on other settings – like indoor dining, bars or poorly ventilated gyms – in order to keep infection rates low in the community at large, researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention wrote in the journal JAMA."

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Chander) reports the CDC researchers, writing in the Journal of the American Medical Association, "said that mitigation measures such as universal mask use, social distancing, and ventilation were key to avoiding infection." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Abbott, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) and [USA Today](#) (1/26, Aspegren, Bacon, Ortiz, 12.7M) also report the news.

Administration Considers Requiring Negative COVID Test For Domestic Flights.

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Shepardson) reports that according to Marty Cetron, Director for the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine at CDC, "the Biden administration is 'actively looking' at expanding mandatory COVID-19 testing to travelers on U.S. domestic flights." Cetron added that "there's been a dramatic evolution and increase in both testing platforms and testing capacity."

Experts Say Rapid Testing, Masks, And Ventilation Are Best Bet To Reopen Safely.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, A1, Hernandez, Toy, McCabe, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that public health experts and researchers have concluded that rapid COVID tests, masks, and ventilation are most helpful to reopening businesses and other public institutions during the pandemic.

Vaccines Being Made Available To Teachers In At Least 22 States And DC.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, A1, Natanson, St. George, Stein, 10.52M) reports that while "in many places, educators have been moved toward the front of the line for shots," that "has not gone hand-in-hand with efforts to return students to classrooms." The Post adds that "some officials are explicitly refusing to link vaccination and reopening." According to the Post, "vaccines are available this week for teachers in at least 22 states and the District," and some governors "are prioritizing teachers beyond what the CDC recommends." Still, in some areas, officials and teachers unions are linking vaccinations and school reopening.

Newsom Lifts Stay-At-Home Orders, Hopes California Can Avoid Another Surge.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/26, Luna, Karlamangla, Lin II, Fry, 3.37M) reports the "abrupt move" by California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) "to lift stay-at-home orders – allowing outdoor dining and other business activities to resume – represents a gamble that California can avoid another deadly coronavirus surge in the coming months" as people await the vaccine, even with "the looming threat of more contagious strains." The Times says that "lifting the stay-at-home order should be a boost to some restaurant owners and other merchants," though "experts said it would not take a lot for the situation to spiral out of control again."

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (1/26, Williams, 2.44M) reports, "Each of the nine Bay Area counties remained in the most restrictive tier of California's color-coded reopening blueprint on Tuesday," and statewide, "54 California counties stayed in the most restrictive purple tier," while three "were in the red tier, and only Sierra County was in the orange tier." None have been declared "eligible to be in the least restrictive yellow tier."

Chicago Schools Stop In-Person Classes Wednesday.

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (1/26, Leone, Pratt, 2.03M) reports, "Chicago Public Schools will halt in-person classes Wednesday as the city makes a last-ditch effort to reach a deal with its teachers union to reopen schools for elementary students on Monday and avoid" a teachers' strike. The Chicago Teachers Union "said its members will still refuse to report to schools." Mayor Lori Lightfoot "cast her decision to reopen schools as consistent with federal public health guidance," and "repeatedly argued that she was doing everything she could to reach a deal."

The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (1/26, Issa, 970K) reports "the Chicago Teachers Union has told its members to work from home Wednesday and prepare for a strike Thursday if city officials ban remote teaching in response."

Portland Mayor Uses Pepper Spray On Man Who Harassed Him About Masks.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Cramer, 20.6M) reports Portland, Oregon Mayor Ted Wheeler "used pepper spray on a man who berated him for not wearing a mask at a restaurant and then followed him to his car Sunday night, according to a police report."

[The Oregonian](#) (1/26, Kavanaugh, 1.02M) reports Wheeler "blasted with pepper spray an unmasked man who confronted him and former Mayor Sam Adams with a video camera as the

two left a pub Sunday night." Wheeler said, "He had no face mask on and got within a foot or two of my face while he was videoing me."

Senate Confirms Blinken As Secretary Of State On 78-22 Vote.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Lee) reports the Senate on Tuesday in a [78-22 vote](#) "confirmed Antony Blinken as America's top diplomat, tasked with carrying out President Joe Biden's commitment to reverse the Trump administration's 'America First' doctrine that weakened international alliances." The AP says that Blinken, "a longtime Biden confidant," had previously "served as deputy secretary of state and deputy national security adviser during the Obama administration," while [Reuters](#) (1/26, Zengerle) says Blinken had been "a committee staff director – when Biden, who spent decades in the Senate, was chairman – before he joined the Obama administration." According to [Axios](#) (1/26, Chen, 1.26M), "Blinken is a French-speaker and step-son of a Holocaust survivor whose stories he credits with shaping his worldview." Axios adds that like Biden, "Blinken is a committed multilateralist and advocate for the United States as a leading force for good in the world."

[USA Today](#) (1/26, Shesgreen, 12.7M) says the margin of the bipartisan vote for Blinken's confirmation is "particularly notable given" his predecessors under former President Trump, Rex Tillerson "was confirmed 55 to 43," and Mike Pompeo "took the helm of the State Department on a vote of 57 to 42." USA Today notes Senate Minority Leader McConnell was among the Republicans to vote for Blinken, whereas Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) "emerged as Blinken's most vocal opponent." [The Hill](#) (1/26, Chalfant, 5.69M) reports Blinken is the President's fourth nominee to be confirmed by the Senate.

[Politico](#) (1/26, Toosi, 6.73M) says that Blinken's confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week "went relatively smoothly, with Republicans expressing delight at times at how often Blinken agreed with them." Politico highlights that Blinken "said...Trump was right to take a tougher stance on China, although he disagreed with some of the tactics used by the previous administration. He also indicated that he would support keeping some terrorism-related sanctions on the Islamist-led government in Iran, despite the Biden administration's goal of rejoining the Iran nuclear deal, which Trump quit in 2018." In addition, [Bloomberg](#) (1/26, Wadhams, 3.57M) reports Blinken "called China the 'the most significant challenge of any nation-state to the United States' and said any re-entry to the Iran nuclear deal must be followed by a stronger, better agreement."

While Blinken "signaled he is prepared to roll back a number of State Department policies that were set under" Trump, the [New York Times](#) (1/26, Jakes, 20.6M) reports he "inherits a State Department where many diplomats say they are demoralized within an agency made up of about 1,000 fewer employees than when he left as its deputy secretary in early 2017." The Times adds that Blinken "told senators last week that he will view his plans to ensure diversity and multiculturalism in the diplomatic corps 'as a significant measure of whether I succeeded or failed, however long I'm in the job,'" in "another difference between his approach and that of [Pompeo], who derided multiculturalism as 'not who America is' just hours before Mr. Blinken's defense of it."

Harris Swears In Yellen As Treasury Secretary.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Crutsinger) reports that on Tuesday, Janet Yellen was "sworn in...as the nation's 78th Treasury secretary and the first woman to hold the office" by Vice President Harris "at a ceremony performed outside on the East Wing entrance to the White House in view of the department Yellen will now lead." The AP says Yellen's husband, George Akerlof, "winner of the 2001 Nobel prize in economics, and their son Robert, also an economist, were present for the brief ceremony." The AP reports that on Monday night, Yellen "became the third of President Joe Biden's Cabinet nominees to win Senate approval on a vote of 84-15." The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Rappeport, 20.6M) says Yellen "will quickly be thrust into fraught negotiations over how

to design and pass a robust stimulus package to help revive an economy that has been hammered by the coronavirus pandemic.”

During Confirmation Hearing, Raimondo Vows To Be Tough On China.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Freking) reports Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo (D), President Biden’s pick to lead the Commerce Department, on Tuesday “focused her testimony” in her confirmation hearing before the Senate Commerce Committee “on the need to help those sectors of the economy and the workers hit hardest by the coronavirus pandemic,” and she “took a tough line on China in her confirmation hearing,” but “stopped short of singling out which Chinese companies should remain on a list that limits their access to advanced U.S. technology.”

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Shepardson) reported Raimondo said she intends to “use the full toolkit at my disposal to the fullest extent possible to protect Americans and our network from Chinese interference or any kind of back-door influence.” The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Rappeport, 20.6M) says Raimondo “declined to commit to keeping Huawei or other Chinese companies on the entity list when pressed to do so” by Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX), “but she vowed to use the powers of the Commerce Department ‘to protect Americans and our network from Chinese interference,’ adding, ‘that’s Huawei, ZTE, or any other company.’” Raimondo said, “China’s actions have been anti-competitive, hurtful to American workers and businesses, coercive, and...they are culpable for atrocious human rights abuses. Whether it’s the entity list, or tariffs, or countervailing duties, I intend to use all those tools to the fullest extent possible to level the playing field for the American workers.” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, McKinnon, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) article titled “Commerce Nominee Pledges Tough China Stance, But Mum On Huawei Blacklist” provides similar coverage.

Meanwhile, [The Verge](#) (1/26, Kelly, 1.54M) reports Raimondo “told lawmakers that she will pursue changes to Section 230 if confirmed.” According to The Verge, Raimondo told Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) that she “would use the tools available through the Commerce Department’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to convene stakeholders, industry leaders, lawmakers and others to identify the means of reform to the pivotal internet law.”

The [Providence \(RI\) Journal](#) (1/26, Gregg, Anderson, 376K) says that although the hearing “tested...Raimondo’s knowledge and, at times, forced her to defend her much-touted Rhode Island record,” Senate Commerce Chairman Roger Wicker told her, “I do not believe you will be serving as governor of the state of Rhode Island for very much longer.” He added, “I look forward to working with you.” However, the [New York Times](#) (1/26, Swanson, 20.6M) says Raimondo “has faced a bit of backlash from progressive Democrats, who have criticized her close ties with venture capital and big tech firms.”

Senate Panel Backs DHS Pick Mayorkas.

[Politico](#) (1/26, Rodríguez, 6.73M) reports the Senate Homeland Security Committee in a 7-4 vote on Tuesday “voted to move forward Alejandro Mayorkas’ nomination to lead the Department of Homeland Security.” According to Politico, “Senate Democrats and the Biden administration had pushed to get Mayorkas confirmed before President Joe Biden’s inauguration, but it was delayed” by Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO) last week. Politico adds that although “Senate leadership has not yet weighed in on when Mayorkas’ nomination will come up for a floor vote,” he is “widely expected to be confirmed.”

Garland Names Coley To Lead Public Affairs At DOJ, Sources Say.

[Axios](#) (1/26, Nichols, 1.26M) reports President Biden’s Attorney General-designate Judge Merrick Garland “has tapped Anthony Coley, an Obama-era Treasury Department official, to serve as a senior adviser and to lead public affairs at the Department of Justice, according to people familiar with the matter.” Axios says Coley will “join chief of staff Matt Klapper, who held

the same role for Sen. Cory Booker, and Dena Iverson, a DOJ veteran, who will serve as principal deputy director of public affairs.”

CIA Warns Ex-Officers Against Working For Foreign Government, Speaking Publicly.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Barnes, Haberman, 20.6M) reports CIA Assistant Director for Counterintelligence Sheetal T. Patel on Monday “sent a note to retired officers this week warning against working for foreign governments either directly or indirectly,” and it “urges retired officers to take care in speaking publicly on television, podcasts, panels or social media.” According to the Times, “Former officials and C.I.A. historians said they could not remember such a broad warning being sent previously to the agency’s retirees in the form of an email.”

Democrats Prepare To Pass Biden’s COVID Relief Plan With Or Without GOP.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Mascaro, Boak) reports Senate Democrats are preparing to move quickly on President Biden’s COVID relief package “even if it means using procedural tools to pass the legislation on their own, leaving Republicans behind.” Senate Majority Leader Schumer “told senators to be ready to vote as soon as next week on a budget reconciliation package that would lay the groundwork for swift passage.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, DeBonis, Werner, 10.52M) reports that the Administration “is courting Republican support publicly,” and Schumer “held out hope of GOP backing. But a number of leading Republicans including [Senate Minority Leader] McConnell have panned Biden’s plan as too costly, and behind the scenes Democrats are making plans to move forward without them.” [Reuters](#) (1/26) reports that Schumer said Tuesday, “We want to work with our Republican colleagues to advance this legislation in a bipartisan way. But the work must move forward, preferably with our Republican colleagues, but without them if we must.”

Phil Mattingly said on [CNNVi](#) (1/26, 1.68M) that “while the President has repeatedly said he wants bipartisan support, he wants unity, Democrats are very clear right now that they are willing to give Republicans a couple weeks to come on board, but they are not willing to cut down their package in a significant manner.” John Harwood reported on [CNNVi](#) (1/26, 1.27M) that although Biden will “try to get the 10 Republican votes he would need to break a filibuster...that goal is less important to the Biden White House than getting something very close to the package that they’ve proposed.” Harwood added that the White House is “determined to pass a big package. They think they can hold their 50 Democratic votes together to do that.”

White House Office of Public Engagement Director Cedric Richmond said on [CNNVi](#) (1/26, 2.27M), “Congress sent out \$600, and we need to make sure that we push for the other \$1,400, which is why the American Rescue Plan is so important for Congress to pass it, so that we can get that number to \$2,000, and we need them to act before March 15, when unemployment insurance and all the other benefits, the eviction and foreclosure moratorium, expire. We’re in a dire crisis here, and we need to help these American families.” Asked on [MSNBCVi](#) (1/26, 2.78M) about the possibility of advancing proposals to the floor now, Richmond said, “This pandemic is not picking people based on party affiliation, color, or income level, and we want and expect Congress to come along and help us help the American people. And so we’re not going to compromise our values in an effort to reach a bipartisan compromise, but we promised that we would reach out and extend our hand of bipartisanship. ... So right now, we’re doing both.”

[Bloomberg](#) (1/26, Litvan, Wasson, 3.57M) says while a budget resolution “is the first step toward a so-called reconciliation bill,” the “catch...is that not all of Biden’s \$1.9 trillion plan is likely to qualify for that route. The \$160 billion for Covid-19 vaccines and testing would likely be out because discretionary spending is excluded from the process, while the proposed minimum-wage hike may also be disqualified for having insufficient budget impact.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Duehren, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says reconciliation is generally limited

to tax and spending measures so the stimulus checks, the child tax credit and unemployment insurance in the Biden plan would like be qualify.

[CNN](#) (1/26, Barrett, 89.21M) reports on its website while many Republicans “have signaled they can’t support” Biden’s \$1.9 trillion proposal “just a month after they passed a \$900 billion bill, senators are still having conversations with their Democratic colleagues.” Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS) “told reporters on Tuesday that White House officials had just reached out to him again to follow up. Other Republicans” such as Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) “said it would be ‘irresponsible’ for Democrats to move ahead with reconciliation so soon.” [Politico](#) (1/26, Everett, Emma, Ferris, 6.73M) says while progressives “are itching to wield control...and are skeptical that talks between a bipartisan group of senators and President Joe Biden will bear fruit,” moderates “say the party needs to be more patient and give the centrists some space to work.” [The Hill](#) (1/26, Carney, 5.69M) and [Roll Call](#) (1/26, Krawzak, Lerman, 130K) provide similar coverage.

Deese: White House May Agree To Restrict Eligibility For \$1,400 Checks. [CNBC](#) (1/26, Franck, 7.34M) reports on its website that in an interview for [CNBC’s Squawk Box](#) from the White House Tuesday morning, NEC Director Deese indicated that the Biden Administration “could be open to adjusting eligibility levels for the next round of coronavirus stimulus checks to ensure the relief flows to families who need the emergency funds the most.” Deese said, “When it comes to the checks, we put forward a proposal that...passed the House with 275 votes – 44 Republicans voted for it. ... Certainly, if there are ways to make that provision, and other provisions, more effective, that’s something that we’re open to, that we’ll have conversations about.” CNBC reports that on Monday, President Biden also “said he would consider curbing eligibility for the checks if it could help secure Republican support.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Long, 10.52M) reports there are growing calls “to target the aid solely to low- and moderate-income families, and new data suggests that would provide the most needed and effective boost for the economy.” An “analysis of how Americans are using the \$600 economic impact payments this month by Opportunity Insights, a nonprofit research organization,” found that families earning around \$75,000 tend to spend the money quickly while families earning above the amount typically save it, “which provides little help to the overall economy and signals the money was not as urgently needed.”

SBA Says \$35B In Additional Pandemic Loans Approved As It Tries To Fix PPP Glitches.

[Reuters](#) (1/26) reports the SBA said Tuesday “it had approved 400,000 more pandemic relief loans worth \$35 billion and was trying to fix issues operational snags with the program raised by lenders.” The agency “launched the third round of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) this month, but significant changes to its rules, process and technology platform, has caused problems that were slowing approvals,” according to the American Bankers Association. The group said companies applying for a second PPP loan experienced technical issues and lenders are receiving a “high number of incorrect error messages” when submitting loan applications. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Omeokwe, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says the SBA will issue guidance to lenders and it is instructing field offices on how to assist borrowers and lenders who have issues when submitting second-time applications.

Yellen Says Treasury Will Play Major Role In Addressing COVID’s Economic Impact.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Crutsinger) reports Treasury Secretary Yellen, who was sworn in Tuesday as the first woman to hold the office, “said in a message to the department’s 84,000 employees that they would play a major role in addressing the country’s biggest economic challenges.” Yellen wrote, “In addition to the pandemic, the country is also facing a climate crisis, a crisis of systemic racism and an economic crisis that has been building for fifty years. ... I believe our department can play a major role in addressing each of these crises.” In the message, Yellen “said she would be conducting a virtual listening tour in the next few weeks to meet with

employees to get their views on how the department can do a better job of addressing the crises facing the country.”

Congress Expected To Probe Allegations That Big Tech Engages In Anti-Competitive Behavior.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Kang, 20.6M) reports that “many Democrats, as well as some Republicans, want to take on Big Tech with laws and regulations to address issues like market power, data privacy, and disinformation and hate speech.” The Times says Facebook and Google are already “fighting federal and state regulators in court over allegations of anticompetitive conduct,” and “regulators continue to investigate Amazon and Apple over antitrust violations.” Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), who chairs the Senate Commerce Committee’s subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet, is quoted as saying, “We have a major monopoly and competition problem. People have just finally had it.”

EU’s Von Der Leyen Asks For Biden Administration’s Help In Regulating Big Tech.

The [AP](#) (1/26) reports that on Tuesday, the European Union urged the Biden Administration “to help draw up a common rule book to rein in the power of big tech companies like Facebook and Twitter and combat the spread of fake news that is eating away at Western democracies. In a speech to the Davos World Economic Forum, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen urged the Biden administration to join forces against ‘the darker sides of the digital world,’ which she said was partly behind the ‘shock’ storming of Capitol Hill on Jan. 6. ‘The business model of online platforms has an impact and not only on free and fair competition, but also on our democracies, our security and on the quality of our information,’ von der Leyen said.”

NYTimes Analysis: Small Share Of Trump Pardons And Commutations Were Fully Vetted By DOJ.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Vogel, 20.6M) reports that “of the nearly 240 pardons and commutations issued by” former President Trump, “only 25 came through the rigorous process for identifying and vetting worthy clemency petitions overseen by the Justice Department, according to a tally kept partly by Margaret Love, who ran the department’s clemency process from 1990 to 1997 as the United States pardon attorney.” The Times adds that “the system has a backlog of 14,000 applications.” According to the Times, “The other pardons and commutations came through an ad hoc White House process that favored applications benefiting or pushed by Mr. Trump’s allies, friends and family.”

Meanwhile, the [New York Times](#) (1/26, Closson, 20.6M) reports that of the “dozens of pardons and commutations...Trump issued before leaving office, one name has left some law enforcement officials reeling: Jaime A. Davidson, notorious in upstate New York for planning a 1990 robbery that ended in the murder of a police officer.” The Times says that while the commutation “bypassed the typical federal process for seeking clemency,” the case “is complex, and he was long championed by lawyers and relatives as a candidate for clemency.” The Times adds that “amid a national push to reduce incarceration rates that disproportionately affect Black men, some experts and advocates said the case was remarkable only because such decisions have been too rare.”

Trump’s Pardon Of Bannon Enables Testimony Against Co-Defendants. The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Weiser, 20.6M) says that out of all of Trump’s pardons “in the hours before he left office, perhaps none was as galling to his critics, government watchdog groups and even some of his allies as the pardon of his former chief strategist, Stephen K. Bannon,” who was “charged with conspiring to swindle donors to a private fund to build a wall along the Mexican border, siphoning off more than \$1 million for personal and other expenses, the indictment said.” The Times adds Bannon’s pardon “also left three other men who were indicted with Mr. Bannon in an unusual and unenviable predicament. None of them received pardons and so they

still must face a trial in May. What's more, legal experts said, Mr. Bannon could now be called as a government witness to testify against them, potentially increasing their legal jeopardy."

Floyd Trial Judge Denies Request To Use Past Incidents Against Former Officers

[USA Today](#) (1/26, Hauck, 12.7M) reports Hennepin County Judge Peter Cahill in an order made public on Tuesday ruled "evidence related to 16 incidents involving former Minneapolis police officers charged in George Floyd's death, as well as evidence related to Floyd's prior arrest and conviction, cannot be brought up at trial." USA Today adds Cahill "did not explain his decision but said an opinion would follow."

Minneapolis Settles First Lawsuit Against Police Response To Floyd Protests The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (1/26, Furst, 855K) reports the city of Minneapolis last week "settled the first lawsuit by a demonstrator injured by a police projectile in the aftermath of George Floyd's death." The Star Tribune says the City Council approved \$57,900 payment to Graciela Cisneros, 22, who "suffered an eye injury when a police officer fired a projectile at her on May 29 as she and her partner were walking home after a demonstration," and her attorneys.

Federal Judge Temporarily Lifts Biden's Deportation Ban.

[CBS News](#) (1/26, Montoya-Galvez, 5.39M) reports on its website that on Tuesday, US District Judge Drew Tipton of the Southern District of Texas "temporarily halted the Biden administration's 100-day moratorium on certain deportations of immigrants already in the U.S." According to CBS, Tipton "agreed to pause the policy for at least 14 days while he considered a lawsuit filed by Texas' Republican attorney general, Ken Paxton, who argued in a complaint on Friday that the deportation freeze violated immigration law and a legal agreement the state brokered with the Trump administration before Mr. Biden took office." CBS reports that "on January 8, Ken Cuccinelli, who was then the second-in-command at the Department of Homeland Security, signed an agreement committing the department 'to consult Texas and consider its views' before changing policies governing the enforcement of federal immigration law."

The [AP](#) (1/26, Merchant) reports that Tipton said that while the nationwide order was not based on the agreement with the state, the Administration did not "provide any concrete, reasonable justification for a 100-day pause on deportations." The decision "is an early blow to the Biden administration, which has proposed far-reaching changes sought by immigration advocates," though the order only "bars enforcement of a moratorium for 14 days" and "does not require deportations to resume at their previous pace." The White House "issued a statement saying the moratorium was 'wholly appropriate'" and that the President "remains committed to taking immediate action to reform our immigration system." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Hackman, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that Tipton, a Trump appointee, said he will also consider whether to announce a preliminary injunction that would extend the ban beyond two weeks.

The [Dallas Morning News](#) (1/26, Briseno, Solis, 772K) reports that Tipton "said Texas had a 'substantial likelihood' of prevailing in two of its six claims," including that the moratorium "violated a federal immigration law" placing a 90-day timeframe on final deportation orders, as well as "the state's argument that Texas would be at significant risk of suffering imminent and irreparable harm if a temporary restraining order was not granted." An attorney for the ACLU of Texas, Kate Huddleston, called the lawsuit an attempt to "follow Trump's xenophobic policies" and said, "The administration's pause on deportations is not only lawful but necessary to ensure that families are not separated and people are not returned to danger needlessly." [Fox News](#) (1/26, Lea, 23.99M) reports on its website that "it is unclear" whether terms of the federal agreement with Texas "are enforceable, but similar agreements were struck with several other states under the former administration."

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (1/26, Goldenstein, 982K) reports that the "nationwide order marks Paxton's first win in what he's predicted will be a string of legal action against the Biden

administration." The Chronicle calls the ruling "a bright spot...for Paxton," who tweeted, "Within 6 days of Biden's inauguration, Texas has HALTED his illegal deportation freeze. *This* was a seditious left-wing insurrection. And my team and I stopped it."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Jordan, 20.6M) reports, "Immigration advocates challenged many of Mr. Trump's policies in federal court, and the decision by Judge Tipton on Tuesday signaled that immigration hawks might also sue to stymie Mr. Biden's initiatives." Immigration lawyer Stephen Yale-Loehr said, "The court's order shows the uphill battle President Biden has in trying to reverse the prior administration's immigration restrictions. A single judge can halt a federal agency's effort to review and reprioritize its immigration enforcement policies." The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Miroff, 10.52M) reports that Boston College of Law immigration scholar Kari Hong called the ruling "baffling" and said it "seems to invite states to be litigating matters of national policy, which is a slippery slope that will end in chaos."

Wilkinson Overturns "Zero Tolerance" Trump-Era Immigration Policy.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Balsamo, Long) reports that Acting Attorney General Wilkinson on Tuesday "rescinded a Trump-era memo that established a 'zero tolerance' enforcement policy for migrants" crossing the US-Mexico border, which resulted "in thousands of family separations." The new memo was issued "to federal prosecutors across the nation, saying the department would return to its longstanding previous policy and instructing prosecutors to act on the merits of individual cases." The AP says that while the move "is in part symbolic, it undoes the Trump administration's massively unpopular policy responsible for the separation of more than 5,500 children from their parents" at the border.

Lawmakers Call On Biden To Protect Immigrants In Sanctuary.

The [Boston Globe](#) (1/26, Ulloa, 1.04M) reports that "more than two dozen congressional Democrats are asking President Biden to grant temporary protection from deportation to 40 immigrants living in houses of worship as part of his pledge of a new approach to immigration." Immigrant families in churches and synagogues "were initially granted so-called stays of removal during the Obama administration but became targets of federal immigration officials under President Trump." In a letter to the President, 27 lawmakers led by Sens. Ed Markey (D-MA) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-TX), wrote that "those in sanctuary have suffered enough. Your administration's actions can bring them the relief they need and deserve."

Biden Issues Executive Orders Aimed At Racial Equity.

[Politico](#) (1/26, Niedzwiedz, 6.73M) reports that on Tuesday, President Biden "rolled out an additional slate of executive actions to address racial equity." Politico says Biden "directed the Department of Justice to not renew contracts with private prison operators and signed a presidential memorandum acknowledging the role the federal government has played in discriminatory housing policy." In addition, Biden is "instructing the Department of Housing and Urban Development to reassess moves implemented under former President Donald Trump, including making it harder for plaintiffs to meet the legal threshold for proving unintentional discrimination, known as the disparate impact rule." Biden "said that Tuesday's actions are a direct response to the groundswell of protests that emerged following the killing of George Floyd."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/26, Stokols, 3.37M) says Biden "took action...to disavow another aspect of his predecessor's legacy – racial animus toward Asian Americans." One of Biden's orders "called for providing the Justice Department with additional guidance and resources to more accurately track hate crimes and harassment of Asian Americans." In his remarks, Biden "referred to an increase in xenophobic attacks against Asian Americans," which he said "is unacceptable and it's un-American." [The Hill](#) (1/26, Johnson, 5.69M) says the order "comes in response to former President Trump regularly referring to COVID-19 as the 'China

virus,' which was widely criticized as xenophobic." Nancy Cordes reported on the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 2, 1:40, O'Donnell, 4.76M), "Since the pandemic started, advocacy groups have logged nearly 3,000 reports of racism and discrimination against Asian Americans."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Tankersley, Karni, 20.6M) says the orders "are incremental pieces of Mr. Biden's broader push for racial equity – an initiative that is expected to be a centerpiece of his administration and that follow an executive order last week directing federal agencies to review policies to root out systemic racism."

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Lynch, Hunnicutt) reports Biden "said he believes the vast majority of Americans believe in equality." Biden said, "We've never fully lived up to the founding principles of this nation – to state the obvious – that all people are created equal and have a right to be treated equally throughout their lives. ... And it's time to act now, not only because it's the right thing to do, but because if we do we'll all be better off for it." [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 5, 1:25, Holt, 6.26M) showed Biden saying, "I'm not promising we can end it tomorrow, but I promise you we're going to continue to make progress to eliminate systemic racism."

[Bloomberg](#) (1/26, 3.57M) reports White House Domestic Policy Council Director Susan Rice "said at a briefing earlier Tuesday that Biden also intends to address moves by Republican-led state legislatures to roll back voting expansions that contributed to Donald Trump's defeat." Rice said, "It's a matter of real concern because we ought to be in the business of encouraging and enabling all Americans who are eligible to vote, to be able to vote." In a separate story, [Reuters](#) (1/26) reports that Rice "said the White House would work with Congress on legislation to address voting rights."

[USA Today](#) (1/26, Groppe, Subramanian, Berry, 12.7M) reports Rice and the President "stressed that the equality agenda is not aimed solely at communities of color but is designed to help all marginalized communities, including people with disabilities, religious minorities, members of the LGBTQ community and anyone living in persistent poverty – whether in urban, rural or suburban areas."

Asked on [CNN](#)^{Vi} (1/26, 2.27M) whether the White House will pursue legislation on the executive orders, White House Office of Public Engagement Director Cedric Richmond said, "Yes, we want to put it in law. We want to work with the other side, both Republicans and Democrats, to make sure that we have that lasting, empowering transformational impact on Black and Brown and other marginalized communities." Richmond said on [MSNBC](#)^{Vi} (1/26, 2.78M), "For those things we can do by executive order, we're going to do by executive order because it's a priority. ... We're the first Administration to roll out a whole-of-government approach to racial equity, and it's going to create a very intentional movement by this Administration to make sure we tackle systemic racism across agencies and government-wide."

Cecilia Vega of [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 6, 1:40, Muir, 7.57M) reported Biden "is trying to make good on a campaign pledge to address these issues of racial equity in this country," and the [AP](#) (1/26, Madhani) says Tuesday's actions "reflect [Biden's] efforts to follow through with campaign pledges to combat racial injustice," while the [Washington Post](#) (1/26, 10.52M) says they "reflected the extent to which Biden's ascent to the presidency was wrapped up with the nation's racial struggles." The Post adds that "activists are making it clear they expect more from Biden than a diverse administration and rhetoric about justice. Tuesday marked his first major effort to respond, to mixed reviews from civil rights groups." [Axios](#) (1/26, Contreras, 1.26M) describes Biden's orders as "a down payment on racial equity."

Biden To Impose "Wide-Ranging Moratorium" On Oil And Gas Leases.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Daly) reports that on Wednesday, President Biden will "announce a wide-ranging moratorium on new oil and gas leasing on U.S. lands, as his administration moves quickly to reverse Trump administration policies on energy and the environment and address climate change." According to the AP, "The move follows a 60-day suspension of new drilling permits for U.S. lands and waters announced last week and follows Biden's campaign pledge to halt new

drilling on federal lands and end the leasing of publicly owned energy reserves as part of his plan to address climate change." The AP reports that "oil industry groups slammed the move, saying Biden had already eliminated thousands of oil and gas jobs by killing the Keystone XL oil pipeline on his first day in office."

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Volcovici, Resnick-Ault) reports that Biden's "orders will impact large swathes of acreage onshore in mostly Western states, as well as offshore drilling acreage located mainly in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico." However, "Tribal lands, which host significant reserves of oil and gas...will not be included in Biden's executive order." According to Reuters, "Biden's other climate-related executive orders on Wednesday will include beefing up the use of climate science in policy decisions and setting up an international summit on climate change for April." Reuters says "the push to end new federal drilling marks an easy target for the new administration: federal lands and waters produce roughly a quarter of the nation's oil and gas, and also account for around a quarter of its greenhouse gas emissions."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Puko, Restuccia, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that Biden has targeted the oil and gas industry with this policy and with his revoking of the Keystone XL pipeline permit.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Davenport, Friedman, 20.6M) reports that as Biden readies to announce the policy, "powerful and surprising forces are arrayed at his back," listing automakers; "large oil and gas companies"; corporate shareholders; "and a youth movement." On the other side, the Times says, are "senators from fossil-fuel states in both parties," specifically "Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, who will lead the Senate Energy Committee."

Biden To Focus On Environmental Justice In Climate Plan. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Eilperin, Dennis, Fears, 10.52M) reports that Biden "plans to make tackling America's persistent racial and economic disparities a central part of his plan to combat climate change." To do that, "Biden will direct agencies across the federal government to invest in low-income and minority communities that have traditionally borne the brunt of pollution," and "will sign an executive order establishing a White House interagency council on environmental justice, create an office of health and climate equity at the Health and Human Services Department and form a separate environmental justice office at the Justice Department."

Colorado Delegation Asks Biden To Keep Space Command Headquarters In State.

The [Denver Post](#) (1/26, 660K) reports Colorado's entire congressional delegation asked the Biden Administration Tuesday "to reconsider moving U.S. Space Command headquarters from Colorado Springs to Alabama." Two weeks ago, former President Donald Trump "said the agency's headquarters would move to Huntsville, Alabama, drawing bipartisan rebukes." The six Democrats and three Republicans in Colorado's delegation wrote in a letter Tuesday, "This move undermines our ability to respond to the threats in space and is disruptive to the current mission. ... Additionally, significant evidence exists that the process was neither fair nor impartial and that President Trump's political considerations influenced the final decision."

Schumer Says Senate Can Organize After Filibuster Standoff.

[CNBC](#) (1/26, Pramuk, 7.34M) reports on its website that Senate Majority Leader Schumer on Tuesday cited what he described as "notable progress" in his discussions with Senate Minority Leader McConnell and said, "We're finally able to get the Senate up and running." According to CNBC, "a breakthrough did not come until two of the chamber's most conservative Democrats said they would vote against getting rid of the legislative filibuster." Sens. Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) have "said they would not vote to get rid of the filibuster, effectively ending the standoff."

[Axios](#) (1/26, Perano, 1.26M) says McConnell "on Tuesday condemned Democratic support for abolishing the legislative filibuster, arguing that it would" result in a "scorched-earth Senate." McConnell said on the Senate floor, "If your legislation can't pass the Senate, you don't scrap the rules or lower the standards. You improve your idea, take your case to the people, or

both. ... Four years ago, Republicans had just won unified control. President Trump and others pressured us heavily, me in particular, to scrap this rule when it was protecting the Democratic minority. ... But we stood firm. I stood firm, endured many tweets on the subject. I said we would not do that to our colleagues in the minority. No short term policy win justifies destroying the Senate as we know it."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Hulse, 20.6M) says the skirmish over the filibuster "foreshadowed an epic battle ahead over what Democrats should do if Republicans obstruct President Biden's agenda." While McConnell "abandoned his insistence that Democrats commit to keeping the filibuster," his "surrender did not mollify progressive activists who have long clamored for Senate Democrats to curb the procedural weapon. They promised to keep the pressure on in their campaign to end the filibuster." The Times cites "several Democrats" who "said it was up to Mr. McConnell and his fellow Republicans to determine whether the filibuster comes under threat, arguing that if the minority party sought to block Mr. Biden's agenda at every turn, it would be at fault for destroying the storied Senate weapon."

Schumer Lists Goals For Country, New York, Impeachment.

[USA Today](#) (1/26, Spector, 12.7M) reports when Senate Majority Leader Schumer "has always prided himself on balancing his national role with his state responsibilities, never seemingly finding a local issue too small to take on or a place to visit for one of his well-known Sunday press conferences." Now, he "ticks off a lengthy list of goals he has for New York, the nation and, of course, moving forward with an historic impeachment trial of ex-President Donald Trump." Schumer "will look to reach a deal with President Joe Biden, Republicans and the Democratic-led House on a \$1.9 trillion stimulus package." In addition, he "has to guide the confirmation of Biden's cabinet members in advance of the Feb. 9 start of the impeachment trial." Also, "there are all the infrastructure projects that Schumer said he hopes to push through as majority leader."

[CNN](#) (1/26, Rogers, Raju, Barrett, 89.21M) says on its website that Schumer "will have to piece together a coalition from a diverse caucus to push legislation through the slow-moving chamber. Schumer, who has cut bipartisan deals in the past, will have to showcase those deal-cutting bonafides while keeping at bay restless liberals."

Leahy Sent Home From Hospital After Falling Ill.

The [AP](#) (1/26) reports Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) "was taken to a hospital Tuesday evening after not feeling well and later sent home after tests, a spokesman said, hours after the 80-year-old Democrat began presiding over the impeachment trial of former President Donald Trump." The President Pro Tempore of the Senate, who had "been in his Capitol office, was taken to George Washington University Hospital 'out of an abundance of caution' after being examined by Congress' attending physician," a spokesman said.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Cochrane, Gold, 20.6M) reports Leahy "has received both vaccine shots for the coronavirus, and it was unclear what his symptoms were." The [Burlington \(VT\) Free Press](#) (1/26, 85K) reports Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA), "who was the president pro tempore in the last Senate session as its most senior Republican, sent well wishes to his fellow octogenarian and colleague." [Politico](#) (1/26, Emma, 6.73M) and [The Hill](#) (1/26, Axelrod, 5.69M) also report.

All But Five GOP Senators Vote To Declare Trump Impeachment Trial Unconstitutional.

Lester Holt reported on [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 4, 1:20, 6.26M), "The impeachment trial of former President Trump is moving forward, but there's already a major new signal tonight that there are not enough votes for a conviction." NBC's Peter Alexander reported there was "an early blow to Democrats' hopes of a conviction" on Tuesday, with "just five Republicans voting with them that an impeachment trial of the former president is constitutional." Sen. Rand

Paul (R-KY): "Democrats are wasting the nation's time on a partisan vendetta against a man no longer in office. It's almost as if they have no ability to exist except in opposition to Donald Trump." Alexander: "Democrats firing back." Senate Majority Leader Schumer: "It is clearly and certainly constitutional to hold a trial for a former official."

Rachel Scott said on [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 3, 3:10, Muir, 7.57M) that Paul "forc[ed] senators to vote on whether the trial itself is unconstitutional, since Trump is already out of office." Paul: "This is not the trial of a president, but of a private citizen." Scott: "Democrats and many legal experts insist the Constitution does not exempt former presidents from impeachment. ... Still, today, nearly all the Republican senators, 45 of them, voted that the trial is unconstitutional." Kris Van Cleave said on the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 5, 0:50, O'Donnell, 4.76M), "With so many Republicans, including Mitch McConnell, moving to dismiss the trial, it makes it pretty clear Mr. Trump will be acquitted next month."

The [AP](#) (1/26, Mascaro, Jalonick) reports that "while the Republicans did not succeed in ending the trial before it began, the test vote made clear that Trump still has enormous sway over his party. ... Many Republicans have criticized Trump's role" in the January 6 Capitol "attack – before which he told his supporters to 'fight like hell' to overturn his defeat – but most of them have rushed to defend him in the trial." Senate Minority Whip Thune said, "I think this was indicative of where a lot of people's heads are."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Fandos, 20.6M) writes, "Senators could yet change their views. But for now, the vote signaled the likelihood that Mr. Trump would for the second time in a year be acquitted by the Senate in an impeachment trial. ... It would take two thirds of senators – 67 votes – to attain a conviction, meaning 17 Republicans would have to cross party lines to side with Democrats in finding him guilty." [USA Today](#) (1/26, Behrmann, 12.7M) also says the vote "suggests a lack of support for convicting Trump on the charge of inciting insurrection," while the [Washington Post](#) (1/26, DeBonis, 10.52M) says the "largely partisan vote indicated that, nearly three weeks after the Capitol attack, much of the GOP anger over Trump's actions immediately before and during the siege has faded."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/26, 3.37M) reports Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Mitt Romney (R-UT), Ben Sasse (R-NE), and Pat Toomey (R-PA) "joined Democrats against the Paul measure. ... Though many more GOP lawmakers have condemned Trump's actions in inciting the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol, the party has largely coalesced around the idea that an impeachment trial of a former president is unconstitutional." [Politico](#) (1/26, Desiderio, Everett, 6.73M) says that view "has been strongly challenged by legal scholars across the political spectrum."

[Roll Call](#) (1/26, McPherson, 130K) reports Collins said after the vote, "It's pretty obvious from the vote today that it is extraordinarily unlikely that [Trump] will be convicted. Just do the math." [Axios](#) (1/26, Treene, 1.26M) reports Collins and Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA) "are privately pitching their colleagues on a bipartisan resolution censuring former President Trump," according to "three sources familiar with the discussions."

Chief of Staff Klain said on [CNN](#)^{Vi} (1/26, 2.74M), "The reality is that the Senate has to do its constitutional duty. It has to hold this trial. Our focus...is on how we can get work done around that."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

US May Not Enforce Self-Quarantine Requirement For International Travelers.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, McMahon, 10.52M) reports under a "new Biden administration executive order that took effect Tuesday, the United States now requires all international entrants" to "secure a negative coronavirus test result," and "to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance to self-quarantine for at least seven days." The Post adds that

"it remains unclear how a self-quarantine would be enforced, and the CDC said in an email Monday that it will not enforce its guidelines for quarantine as a rule."

EU Says It Expects Drug Companies To Live Up To Vaccine Obligations.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Casert) reports that on Tuesday, the EU "warned pharmaceutical companies that have developed coronavirus vaccines with EU aid that it must get its shots on schedule, a day after the bloc threatened to impose export controls on vaccines produced within its borders." According to the AP, the EU "made it very clear that it is bent on getting all doses as quickly as their contracts provide for at a time when infections are surging, many hospitals are overwhelmed, and many of the 27 member states are struggling to get their vaccine rollout going at top speed." The AP says "the hardening of its position came days after it accused AstraZeneca of failing to guarantee the delivery of coronavirus vaccines without a valid explanation. It also had expressed displeasure over vaccine delivery delays from Pfizer-BioNTech."

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Cunningham, Morris, 10.52M) reports, "The European Union on Tuesday stepped up pressure on pharmaceutical companies it says have hobbled coronavirus vaccine rollouts, proposing tighter export controls and threatening potential legal action" towards AstraZeneca, "which said last week that it would supply 'considerably fewer' doses of its coronavirus vaccine to E.U. member states than originally planned." Also on Tuesday, "Germany's health minister said he supported restricting vaccine exports to ensure doses reserved for E.U. member states remain in the bloc."

European Public Upset Over COVID Restrictions.

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 7, 1:45, O'Donnell, 4.76M) reported, "Anger is rising in Europe as governments impose new COVID restrictions and vaccines are in short supply." CBS' Charlie D'Agata added, "Strict new lockdown measures triggered a backlash of violence that spread across the Netherlands for three nights running. Anger at a nighttime curfew drawing rioters on the streets. Countries across Europe resorting to extreme measures to stem the spread of a mutant variant of the virus first identified in the UK."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports there have been riots for three nights in Dutch cities over COVID restrictions including the new curfews. Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte denounced the rioters and defended the regulations.

UK Is Smallest Nation To Pass 100K COVID Deaths.

The [AP](#) (1/26) reports the UK is now "the smallest nation to pass the 100,000 mark" in COVID deaths, and "has one of the highest death tolls relative to its population." The AP reports on the grief being felt by many UK residents.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Landler, Castle, 20.6M) reports, "Britain on Tuesday surpassed 100,000 deaths from the coronavirus," which, it says, "laid bare the missteps in Prime Minister Boris Johnson's handling of the pandemic."

Italian PM's Resignation Raises Concerns About Pandemic Response.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, 20.6M) reports that Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte "resigned on Tuesday and triggered the collapse of the government." The Times adds, "The question is whether a government collapse in a country that has had more than 65 governments in the last 70-odd years actually matters when it comes to running the Covid response."

Venezuela's Maduro Touts COVID Treatment.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Rueda, Smith) reports Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro "appears to be counting on yet another 'miracle' to save his citizens from COVID-19, promoting a secretive solution with no published scientific evidence he claims will conquer the new coronavirus." On Sunday in a TV appearance, Maduro touted "a powerful antiviral, very powerful, that neutralizes

the coronavirus." The AP adds, "The local National Academy of Medicine said it appeared be derived from the common herb thyme." Maduro called the treatment "carvativir" and said that it "has been under testing for nine months among Venezuelans ill with the coronavirus."

NYTimes Analysis: Pandemic Shows Costs Of Inequality In Hong Kong.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Wang, May, Fei, 20.6M) reports, "Hong Kong has long been one of the most unequal places on Earth," and "during the coronavirus pandemic, its cost has become unmistakable." The Times adds, "Officials suggested that the dilapidated living conditions of many residents...fueled the virus's spread." The Times also reports that "the pandemic has exacerbated longstanding discrimination against South Asian residents."

Epidemiologist Argues US Needs To Help Poorer Countries Acquire Vaccine.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 9, 3:10, Holt, McFadden, 6.26M) reported, "Even with a vaccine struggle here at home, experts warn the US has to do more outside its borders because if people in other countries are not vaccinated, the pandemic could drag on for years." NBC's Cynthia McFadden added that epidemiologist Larry Brilliant "says the United States has a critical role to play in helping the world access the vaccine." NBC also reported, "Canada has already pre-ordered enough vaccine to inoculate every citizen nearly six times, and the US has enough purchase options to vaccinate everyone nearly five times, leaving much of the world scrambling."

Kerry Plans For US To Resume Leadership Role Against Climate Change.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Knickmeyer) reports climate envoy John Kerry "is talking the U.S. back into a leading role in global climate action, making clear the nation isn't just revving up its own efforts to reduce oil, gas and coal pollution but that it intends to push everyone in the world to do more, too." According to the AP, "Kerry's diplomatic efforts match the fast pace of domestic climate directives by the week-old Biden administration, which created the job Kerry now holds." However, the AP adds Kerry faces domestic "pushback from the oil and gas industry" and there is international "uncertainty about whether Biden's climate commitments can survive the United States' intensely divided politics, let alone the next presidential transition," but "environmentalists are pushing him to be aggressive – even demonstrating outside his house on his first full day on the job."

Biden Administration To Review Sanctions On ICC Officials.

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Lewis) reports a State Department spokesman on Tuesday announced the Biden Administration "will 'thoroughly review' U.S. sanctions on International Criminal Court officials imposed over investigations into U.S. forces in Afghanistan." Reuters says the Trump Administration last year "accused the Hague-based tribunal of infringing on U.S. national sovereignty when it authorized an investigation into war crimes committed by Afghan forces, the Taliban or U.S. troops."

Beijing Announces South China Sea Drills In Wake Of US Carrier Group's Entry.

[Reuters](#) (1/26) reports that on Tuesday, the Chinese government "said...it will conduct military exercises in the South China Sea this week, just days after Beijing bristled at a U.S. aircraft carrier group's entry into the disputed waters." According to Reuters, "A U.S. carrier group led by the USS Theodore Roosevelt entered the South China Sea on Saturday to promote 'freedom of the seas,' the U.S. military said, days after Joe Biden began his term as president." Reuters says "the U.S. military has steadily increased its activities there in recent years as China asserts its territorial claims in the area in conflict with neighbouring countries including Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Taiwan."

Taiwanese Jets Demonstrate Readiness To Repel Chinese Attack. [Reuters](#) (1/26, Lee) reports, "Armed and ready to go, Taiwan air force jets screamed into the sky on Tuesday in

a drill to simulate a war scenario, showing its fleet's battle readiness after dozens of Chinese warplanes flew into the island's air defence zone over the weekend." Reuters says Taiwan "has been on edge since the large-scale incursion by Chinese fighters and nuclear-capable bombers into the southwestern part of its air defence identification zone on Saturday and Sunday, which coincided with a U.S. carrier group entering the South China Sea." Reuters goes on to report that the government of China "has provided no public explanation for what its aircraft were doing at the weekend." Reuters says the Biden Administration "responded by calling on China to cease pressuring Taiwan and reaffirming its commitment to the democratic island."

Merkel Rejects Biden's Call For Anti-China Coalition. Under the headline "Merkel Sides With Xi On Avoiding Cold War Blocs," [Politico Europe](#) (1/26, 15K) reports that on Tuesday, German Chancellor Angela Merkel "rejected calls for Europe to pick sides between the U.S. and China, in a nod to the plea made by Chinese President Xi Jinping a day earlier." Politico says the Biden Administration is "looking to group together democracies to contain China," but Merkel was "pointedly wary about the formation of factions." Speaking to the World Economic Forum, Merkel said, "I would very much wish to avoid the building of blocs. I don't think it would do justice to many societies if we were to say this is the United States and over there is China and we are grouping around either the one or the other. ... The Chinese president spoke yesterday, and he and I agree on that. We see a need for multilateralism."

New Delhi Farmers Protest Turns Violent.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Mashal, Schmall, Kumar, 20.6M) reports, "Thousands of protesting farmers poured into New Delhi on Tuesday, using their tractors to pull apart barricades and challenging government forces who fired tear gas, blocked internet access and charged demonstrators with bamboo sticks to bring some order to a capital that felt under siege." The demonstration, which has resulted in at least one death, "was the most violent escalation in two months of general peaceful protests that have tested the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in unprecedented ways."

Biden And Putin Discuss Extending Last Remaining Nuclear Arms Deal.

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Hunnicutt, Holland) reports President Biden on Tuesday spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin "for the first time since taking office and raised concerns about Russian activities including the treatment of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny." White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki "announced the phone call between the two leaders at her daily briefing," and she revealed topics "included Biden's proposal to extend the New START nuclear arms treaty with Russia for five years and 'strong [US] support for Ukraine sovereignty' in the face of ongoing Russian aggression." In addition, Biden "also voiced concern about the massive Solar Winds cyber hack blamed on Russia and reports that Russians offered bounties to Taliban insurgents for killing U.S. troops in Afghanistan."

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Wagner, Itkowitz, Sonmez, 10.52M) reports the Kremlin "had a slightly different readout of the call" than the White House, "saying in a statement that the two leaders had discussed...cooperation on the coronavirus pandemic, trade and economic matters." According to the Post, "The Kremlin mentioned 'the Ukraine domestic settlement' but none of the hot-button issues listed by the White House. It said the two leaders discussed President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the Open Skies agreement and the preservation of the Iran nuclear deal."

[USA Today](#) (1/26, Shesgreen, 12.7M) says Biden and Putin "have a long history of engagement – much of it frosty," while [CNN](#) (1/26, Liptak, 89.21M) reports on its website that the call "amounted to Biden's opening bid at diplomacy with one of his chief adversaries, whom he has met previously but not dealt with as an equal."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Troianovski, 20.6M) characterizes the call as "the opening act of what promises to be a deeply adversarial relationship between the two leaders, and most likely the sharpest turn in American foreign policy since...Trump left office one week ago." On

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 6, 1:40, 7.57M), David Muir concurred that the call "signal[s] a very different tone than what we saw with...Trump."

[Fox News](#) (1/26, McFall, 23.99M) reports on its website that Biden had "accused his predecessor of being weak on Russia, calling Trump 'Putin's puppy' during the first presidential debate last year, criticizing him for not taking decisive action after reports surfaced regarding bounties placed on American soldiers in Afghanistan." Fox News adds that Biden also confirmed the US stance "on supporting Ukraine's sovereignty, condemned the poisoning of Russian opposition leader Aleksei Navalny."

According to [Politico](#) (1/26, Leonard, 6.73M), "Biden's agenda for his call with Putin struck a decidedly different tone than...Trump, who was the subject of significant criticism for his relatively soft rhetoric toward Russia, especially relative to his broader America-first approach to foreign policy." On the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (1/26, story 2, 1:40, O'Donnell, 4.76M), Nancy Cordes said the discussion of "Russian hacking and interference in the 2020 election" were "the kind of topics Mr. Trump was often reluctant to discuss with his Russian counterpart." [Reuters](#) (1/26, Gardner, Hunnicutt) reports Psaki "said on Tuesday that...Biden continues to believe the Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline is a bad deal for Europe," and "the Biden administration will be reviewing measures, which have been taken to date relating to the pipeline."

However, the [AP](#) (1/26, Lemire) says Biden and Putin "on a positive note...agreed to have their teams work urgently to complete an extension of New START, the last remaining U.S.-Russian arms control treaty, before it expires next month." According to the AP, Biden has "looked to establish a break from the warm rhetoric often displayed toward Putin by" Trump, but is also "looking to preserve room for diplomacy." [Reuters](#) (1/26, Tétrault-Farber, Hunnicutt) reports the Kremlin "said Putin and Biden "expressed satisfaction" that diplomatic notes between the two nations had been exchanged earlier on Tuesday confirming the pact would be extended and that procedures required for the pact to come into force before it expires would be completed in the coming days."

The [AP](#) (1/26, Isachenkov) says the treaty, which was "signed in 2010 by President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, limits each country to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers, and envisages sweeping on-site inspections to verify compliance." The AP adds that during the 2020 campaign, Biden "indicated...he favored the preservation of the New START treaty, which was negotiated during his tenure as U.S. vice president."

Citing "US officials," the [AP](#) (1/26) reports that the Russian government "reached out last week to request the call." The AP says Biden "agreed but wanted first to prepare with his staff and speak with European allies, including the leaders of Britain, France and Germany." [Bloomberg](#) (1/26, Parker, Wadhams, 3.57M) says that although the call "took place before Biden has spoken with leaders of several allied nations, underscoring the importance that he attaches to confronting the challenge from Russia," Biden on Tuesday also spoke with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg "in another signal aimed at showing U.S. unity with its allies against Russia," and they "discussed 'dealing with a more assertive Russia,' the North Atlantic Treaty Organization said in a statement." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Thomas, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage.

Navalny Ally Pledges To Continue To Seek Release. The [AP](#) (1/26, Litvinova) reports Lyubov Sobol, "a top ally of Alexei Navalny," on Tuesday "vowed...to keep up the fight to free the jailed Russian opposition leader and his battle to influence this year's parliamentary election despite a government crackdown on nationwide protests and its attempts to create a climate of fear." The AP adds Sobol, a "lawyer and politician," told reporters that Navalny's Foundation for Fighting Corruption "and his team's regional offices will continue to operate even amid the 'arrests of our followers and allies, open criminal probes (and) criminal probes that are yet to come.'" Meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Grove, Kantchev, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says the protests over Navalny's arrest appear to be coalescing into a broader opposition movement against the Russian government.

Administration Restores Relations With Palestinians.

The [AP](#) (1/26, Lederer) reports that on Tuesday, the Biden Administration “announced...it was restoring relations with the Palestinians and renewing aid to Palestinian refugees, a reversal of the Trump administration’s cutoff and a key element of its new support for a two-state solution to the decades-old conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.” The AP says Acting US Ambassador to the UN Mills “made the announcement of Biden’s approach to a high-level Security Council meeting, saying the new U.S. administration believes this ‘remains the best way to ensure Israel’s future as a democratic and Jewish state while upholding the Palestinians’ legitimate aspirations for a state of their own and to live with dignity and security.’”

[Bloomberg](#) (1/26, 3.57M) quotes Mills as saying, “President Biden has been clear in his intent to restore US assistance programs that support economic development and humanitarian aid for the Palestinian people, and to take steps to reopen diplomatic missions that were closed by the last US Administration.” According to Bloomberg, at the UN Security Council on Tuesday, Mills “said the U.S. will emphasize humanitarian issues, especially in Gaza, and seek to create the atmosphere needed for eventual peace talks, even as he conceded that Israel and the Palestinian leadership remain far apart for any immediate progress to be made.” [Reuters](#) (1/26) reports that also on Tuesday, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki indicated that Biden “believes a two-state solution is the only way forward for peace between Israel and the Palestinians.”

However, the [New York Times](#) (1/26, Crowley, 20.6M) reports analysts “and regional leaders say the prospects of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement are dimmer than they have been in decades.” According to the Times, “The parties have all but ceased communications, Palestinian leaders summarily rejected a peace plan offered by the Trump White House last year, and the issue is not among Mr. Biden’s top foreign policy priorities.”

Austin Planning To Review Trump’s Withdrawal Of Troops From Afghanistan, Iraq.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Lubold, Youssef, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports Defense Secretary Austin will review former President Trump’s decision to withdraw more than 3,000 US troops from Afghanistan and Iraq prior to leaving office, according to defense officials. However, Austin’s spokesman, John Kirby, “said officials hadn’t yet made a formal decision to review troop levels in either country.”

Yemenis Submit Petition Seeking Redress For US Drone Strikes.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Ryan, Mekhennet, 10.52M) reports the families of at least 34 Yemenis “alleged to have been killed in American military actions have asked an international human rights body to determine whether the deaths were unlawful, in a case that could draw attention to the human cost of overseas counterterrorism campaigns.” Per the Post, “The petition, the first of its kind to be submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, asserts that six drone strikes and one Special Operations raid targeting Yemen’s al-Bayda governorate during the Obama and Trump administrations inflicted catastrophic damage on two families.” The Post adds the filing “provides new visibility into a counterterrorism campaign that has mostly been shrouded in secrecy, as American military and intelligence officials conduct an extended effort against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and other militant threats.”

THE BIG PICTURE

Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Microsoft Earnings Jump On Pandemic-Driven Cloud, Videogame Demand](#)

[Most Republican Senators Reject Constitutionality Of Trump Impeachment Administration To Buy Enough Doses To Vaccinate Most Americans By End Of Summer](#)
[Walgreens Poaches Starbucks Executive Rosalind Brewer For CEO](#)
[200 Lemons, 30 Bananas: Online Shoppers Accidentally Buy Too Much](#)
[New Playbook For Covid-19 Protection Emerges After Year Of Study, Missteps](#)

New York Times:

[Republicans Rally Against Impeachment Trial, Signaling Likely Acquittal For Trump](#)
[Capitol Police Detail Failures During Pro-Trump Assault](#)
['Solidarity Is Failing': EU And UK Fight Over Scarce Vaccines](#)
[The Battle Lines Are Forming In Biden's Climate Push](#)
[Proud Boys Under Growing Scrutiny In Capitol Riot Investigation](#)
[Biden Pledges To Speed Flow Of Vaccines To The States](#)

Washington Post:

[Senate Signals Trump Acquittal](#)
[US Near Securing Millions Of Doses](#)
[Shots Don't Deliver Open Schools](#)
[Biden Signs Orders Seeking To Boost Racial Equity](#)
[Editor Who Led Post's Expansion Is Set To Retire](#)
[Before Riot, DC Guard Leader's Powers Diluted](#)

Financial Times:

[Companies Raise \\$400BN Over Three Weeks In Blistering Start To 2021](#)
[Apple Set To Post \\$100BN-Revenue Quarter After Strong Christmas](#)
[Germany Presses EU For Powers To Block Vaccine Exports](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump's Post-Presidency Clout Puts Republicans On Notice, Democrats On High Alert](#)
[Biden Tackles 'Racial Equity' Agenda By Ending Federal Contracts With Private Prisons](#)
[Biden's Goal To Reopen Schools In First 100 Days Opposed By Powerful Ally Of Democrats](#)
[Senate Republicans Signal Acquittal Looming For Trump](#)
[Declassified US Intelligence Bolsters Wuhan Lab Theory In Coronavirus Outbreak](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Vaccine Distribution; COVID-Schools; Impeachment; Alabama-Tornado; Severe Weather; Biden-Agenda; Vaccine Fraud; Capitol Police Chief Apology; FDA-Hand Sanitizers; Wyoming-Brother Protects Sister From Dog.

CBS: Vaccine Distribution; Biden-Agenda; COVID; Capitol Police Chief Apology; Impeachment; Alabama-Tornado; Europe-COVID; CBS Executives On Leave; Army-Cultural Sensitivity; Florida-Great White Shark Sighting; Minnesota-Teacher Battling Cancer Teaches Every Day.

NBC: Vaccine Distribution; COVID Variants; COVID-Schools; Impeachment; Biden-Agenda; Alabama-Tornado; Severe Weather; COVID-Restaurants; Worldwide Vaccine Distribution; Global Herd Immunity; Chicago-Woman Runs Own Food Pantry.

Network TV At A Glance:

Vaccine Distribution – 11 minutes, 30 seconds

Impeachment – 5 minutes, 20 seconds

Biden-Agenda – 4 minutes, 45 seconds

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

- President Biden — No public schedule released.
- Vice President Harris — No public schedule released.

US Senate:

- Senate committee considers energy secretary nominee – Nominations hearing considers Jennifer Granholm to be Secretary of Energy
Location: Rm 106, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC; 9:30 AM
- Senate committee votes on transportation secretary nominee – Executive Session, to consider the nomination of Pete Buttigieg to be Secretary of Transportation
Location: Rm 325, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM
- Senate Foreign Relations Committee considers U.S. ambassador to the U.N. nominee – Hybrid nominations hearing considers Linda Thomas-Greenfield to be U.S. Representative to the United Nations with the rank and status of ambassador, and the U.S. Representative in the U.N. Security Council and the U.S. Representative to the sessions of the U.N. General Assembly during her tenure of service * Held in Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building and via videoconference; *10:00 AM*
- Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters
Location: CVC 217, U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM
- Senate Veterans Affairs Committee organizational meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including 'The Committee Rules for the 117th Congress' and 'A resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee for the 117th Congress'
Location: Rm 106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 3:00 PM
- Senate committee considers VA secretary nominee – Nominations hearing considers Denis McDonough to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Location: Rm 106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 3:01 PM

US House:

- No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives

Cabinet Officers:

- No public schedules released.

Visitors:

- No visitors scheduled.

General Events:

- State of the Net Conference continues (virtual) – State of the Net Conference – Internet Policy in Transition continues. Day two speakers include Democrats Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Rep. Katie Porter, and NCTA – The Internet & Television Association President and CEO Michael Powell; *11:00 AM*
- Economic Club of Washington, DC, hosts panels on the Capitol Hill attack and COVID-19 (virtual) – Economic Club of Washington, DC, hosts online Congressional Panel, with Economic Club President David Rubenstein interviewing Democratic Rep. Debbie Dingell and Republican Rep. Tom Reed on the 6 Jan attack on the U.S. Capitol, the current political environment, potential reforms to security measures, and the way forward to national unity (*11:45 AM EST*) * Followed by Medical Panel, with Kaiser Permanente Markets Outside California Group President and Executive Vice President Kimberly Horn, Inova Health System President and CEO J. Stephen Jones, and MedStar Health President and CEO Kenneth Samet discussing the current surge in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases, including an update on area hospitals and the plan for vaccine allocation and distribution (*12:20 PM EST*); *11:45 AM*

- Brookings Institution and Mount Vernon host 'Leadership for a More Perfect Union' conference (virtual) – 'Leadership for a More Perfect Union' online conference hosted by the Brookings Institution and Mount Vernon, with speakers including Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine, Microsoft President Brad Smith, Wilson Center President Jane Harman, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, in conversation with Brookings Institution President Gen. (Ret.) John Allen, Mount Vernon President and CEO Douglas Bradburn, and The Carylyle Group co-founder and co-Executive Chairman David Rubenstein; 12:00 PM
- Axios hosts discussion on 'Global Data-Driven Change' (virtual) – Axios hosts 'Global Data-Driven Change' virtual event, on the social impact of Big Data and how it can help solve some of the biggest equity issues across the economy and society. Speakers include Democratic Rep. Yvette Clarke, Shift7 founder and CEO Megan Smith, and Intel Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer Sandra Rivera; 12:30 PM
- POLITICO Live discussion on 'Space Policy in the Biden Era' (virtual) – 'Ready to Launch – Space Policy in the Biden Era' POLITICO Live virtual event, on space policy and national security in the Biden era, with Democratic Rep. Jim Cooper, American Foreign Policy Council Defense Studies Senior Fellow Peter Garretson, and Secure World Foundation Washington Office Director Victoria Samson; 1:00 PM
- Interest rate decision – Federal Open Market Committee decision on interest rates, following two-day meeting and followed by press briefing with Chair Jerome Powell
Location: Federal Reserve, 1801 K St NW, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM
- HHS Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy quarterly webinar – Department of Health and Human Services Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy holds 'Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America' quarterly webinar; 2:00 PM
- Court hearing for man arrested near U.S. Capitol allegedly possessing a truckload of weapons – Status conference for Lonnie Leroy Coffman, charged with possession of an unregistered firearm; carrying a pistol without a license; carrying a rifle or shotgun; possession of a large capacity ammunition feeding device; and unlawful possession of ammunition, after U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) responded to reports of possible explosive devices in the U.S. Capitol area during the 6 Jan attack * While conducting a protective sweep of the area, USCP officers observed what appears to be a firearm in Coffman's vehicle. Prosecutors allege that the truck held components for 11 explosive devices, guns, smoke devices, and machetes, along with a note containing information about a Member of Congress * Held via teleconference before Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly * Case no. 1:21-cr-00004; 3:00 PM
- GOP Sen. John Boozman receives 2021 Walter Roberts Award (virtual) – George Washington University Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication holds virtual ceremony to present Republican Sen. John Boozman with the 2021 Walter Roberts Award, in recognition of his 'outstanding contributions to the field of public diplomacy through his active participation, advocacy, and legislative support for telling America's story to the world'; 5:00 PM

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