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 FBI News Briefing

TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2021 6:30 AM EDT

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LEADING THE NEWS

Attorneys Make Opening Statements As Chauvin Trial Begins.

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (3/29, Walsh, 855K) reports attorneys on Monday made their opening arguments in the murder trial of Derek Chauvin "before jurors who will decide the fired Minneapolis police officer's fate in the killing of George Floyd 10 months ago." The Star Tribune says prosecutor Jerry Blackwell "turned to what could be prosecution's most crucial piece of the evidence: the viral bystander video of Floyd's arrest and showed it in full to the jurors, others in the courtroom and millions watching on the livestream." The [AP](#) (3/29, Karnowski, Forliti) says the footage of Floyd "gasping for breath was essentially Exhibit A as the former Minneapolis police officer who pressed his knee on the Black man's neck went on trial...on charges of murder and manslaughter."

[CNN](#) (3/29, Levenson, 89.21M) reports on its website that Blackwell "broke down the timing of Chauvin's kneeling into three sections: 4 minutes and 45 seconds as Floyd cried out for help, 53 seconds as Floyd flailed due to seizures and 3 minutes and 51 seconds as Floyd was non-responsive."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, A1, Bailey, Bellware, 10.52M) reports Blackwell "told the jury that Chauvin 'didn't let up' and 'didn't get up' even after Floyd repeatedly complained of struggling to breathe, cried out for his mother and ultimately went limp," and said the former officer "betrayed his badge." Blackwell also "described Floyd as 'defenseless' and 'completely in control of the police.'" The Post says Chauvin's attorney, Eric Nelson, pointed to Hennepin County Medical Examiner Andrew Baker's "interviews with prosecutors and the FBI - in which he called attention to the high level of drugs in Floyd's system."

In addition, Jamie Yuccas reported on the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (3/29, lead story, 4:35, O'Donnell, 4.18M) that three witnesses for the prosecution testified on Monday, "including one who shot seven videos of the incident, and another who says he heard Floyd plead for his life. But nothing may have been more impactful on the jury than those opening statements." The [New York Post](#) (3/29, Rosenberg, Fitz-Gibbon, 7.45M) reports 911 dispatcher Jena Lee Scurry, the first witness called in the trial, "said she saw city officers pin the dead man down for so long that she thought 'the screen was broken.'" [Axios](#) (3/29, 1.26M) reports Scurry "said she felt a 'gut instinct' that 'something was not right' as she watched police officers hold George Floyd on the ground with a knee on his neck."

[Fox News](#) (3/29, Wallace, 23.99M) reports on its website that another witness, Alisha Oyler, "told jurors she took seven video clips on her phone" because the police were "messing with someone," while Donald Williams, "a wrestler and mixed martial artist who said he has worked with athletes and off-duty Minneapolis police officers," testified about "various chokeholds and how they are used."

However, [Reuters](#) (3/29, Allen) says Chauvin's lawyers "responded by saying that the former officer was simply following training from his 19 years on the force, even as they acknowledged that the arrest, caught in videos from multiple angles, was distressing to watch." [CNBC](#) (3/29, Higgins, Breuninger, 7.34M) reports on its website that Chauvin's attorney Eric Nelson "aimed to separate the case from Floyd's status as an activist symbol while introducing the concept of a reasonable doubt to the jurors."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Ailworth, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports Nelson called for the jury to look beyond the videos and consider other evidence before making their decision. On [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (3/29, lead story, 3:50, Holt, 5.9M), Gabe Gutierrez reported Nelson "pointed to other videos, the body cameras worn by the officers which he said will show the full interaction between Floyd and the police." The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Martínez, Arango, 20.6M) says that legal experts believe "the defense's best tool to minimize the impact of that video, which spurred the largest protests in the United States since the Civil Rights era, may be calling on Mr. Chauvin to testify."

Meanwhile, the [New York Daily News](#) (3/29, Oliveira, 2.51M) reports that as the trial was ongoing, "prominent civil rights leaders joined George Floyd's family in downtown Minneapolis to highlight the importance of this moment in U.S. history." According to [USA Today](#) (3/29, Keveney, 12.7M), "The level of TV coverage reflected the significance of the May 25 killing of

Floyd while in police custody, which became the catalyst for protests and a larger cultural conversation about racial injustice and police brutality." USA Today adds that ABC, CBS, and NBC "broke into regular programming to cover the opening statements in the trial, as did cable and streaming networks CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, HLN, Newsmax, Court TV and Law & Crime Network."

On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (3/29, lead story, 7:30, Muir, 7.27M), Alex Perez reported, "Security is very tight. The rest of the building is shut down and surrounded by National Guardsmen. Jurors are escorted in and out of the building by security every day. We expect this to last about three to four weeks." Perez added the judge "says he's allowing this trial to be broadcast so that the rest of the world can watch and follow along."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) editorializes that Chauvin's lawyer "argued there is more to the case than the video," but "we hope no jury can accept that a police officer would be trained to be so willing to cause harm and so indifferent to human suffering." Eugene Robinson writes in his [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) column that the opening statements "made clear that much will be made of Floyd's medical cause of death." Chauvin's attorney "indicated he will claim that Floyd died of an overdose of opioids. We can expect testimony from dueling experts on the question." Robinson adds, "We should know by now...that it is all too possible to convince juries to blame the victim if the victim is a Black man. It is not possible, however, to erase the video of Floyd's final minutes. The world has seen it; and it will never, ever be unseen."

James A. Gagliano, a retired FBI Supervisory Special Agent, writes at the [New York Post](#) (3/29, Gagliano, 7.45M) that "it is necessary to balance the revulsion for disgraced former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin's mistreatment of George Floyd – an appalling case of police brutality – with recognition that prosecutors may have made a critical error by overcharging the case." He predicts an "acquittal on the murder charges and found guilty of second-degree manslaughter."

Also reporting are [Reuters](#) (3/29) and [NBC News](#) (3/29, 4.91M).

New York's Eastern District To Expand Civil Rights Unit To Probe Bias Crimes.

[Newsday \(NY\)](#) (3/29, 776K) reports that "federal prosecutors on Long Island on Monday announced an expanded effort to investigate alleged hate crimes in the wake of an increase in violence targeting Asian Americans." Acting US Attorney Mark Lesko for the Eastern District "said the office's existing Civil Rights Section will double in size as a result" from three to six prosecutors, "though more will be assigned on an as-needed basis." The head of the FBI in New York, William Sweeney, said of the EDNY's expanded unit: "We can't investigate what we don't know, however, so I would urge anyone who has been the victim of a hate crime, or anyone who has witnessed a hate crime, to report this information to the FBI by calling 1-800-CALL-FBI or submitting a tip online at tips.fbi.gov. Victims should know that information may be reported anonymously and in their native language."

No Evidence Colorado Shooting Suspect Entered Country, Bought Gun, Illegally Despite Internet Claims.

In a fact check piece, [USA Today](#) (3/29, Rouan, 12.7M) reports on the claim that "the suspect in the mass shooting in a Boulder, Colorado, grocery store entered the U.S. illegally through Mexico and bought a stolen gun." However, the "man accused of killing 10 people in a Colorado grocery store on March 22 was born in Syria, and law enforcement officials said he bought the gun days before carrying out the mass shooting." Meanwhile, "no evidence has emerged to suggest Ahmad Al Aliwi Alissa, 21, of Arvada, Colorado, entered the U.S. illegally or illegally purchased the gun police said he used."

CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

Man Photographed In Capitol With Zip-tie Cuffs, His Mother Win Pretrial Release.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Weiner, 10.52M) reports that "a man photographed inside the U.S. Capitol during the Jan. 6 riot with a handful of plastic handcuffs and the mother with whom he traveled to Washington will be released from jail to home confinement ahead of their trial after weeks of debate over how dangerous they might be." Prosecutors said "Eric Munchel, 30, and his mother, Lisa Marie Eisenhart, 57, both accused of trespassing at the Capitol and obstructing the congressional confirmation of President Biden's victory, can await trial on home confinement in Tennessee." The Post says "Their decision came after a federal appeals court on Friday sided with the two accused rioters' request for release from jail, drawing a distinction between violent and nonviolent rioters."

The [Tennessean](#) (3/29, 645K) reports "Munchel and Eisenhart are to be released with conditions established by Middle Tennessee District U.S. Magistrate Judge Jeffrey S. Frensey, similar to those ordered in other Capitol riot cases about GPS monitoring, lack of drug or excessive alcohol use and a ban on travel except for legal proceedings."

Holocaust Group: Capitol Attack Shows Far-Right "Mainstreaming" Anti-Semitism.

[Newsweek](#) (3/29, 2.67M) reports that "the rise of America's far-right is helping mainstream anti-Semitism in U.S. politics, according to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance – a global intergovernmental organization that promotes Holocaust education and tracks extremism." Kathrin Meyer, the IHRA permanent secretary general, said "there is a growing trend of extremism and anti-Semitism across the world, exacerbated by the disruption of the coronavirus pandemic and shaped by transnational social media platforms." FBI Director Christopher Wray has "recently warned Congress that the far-right threat in the U.S. is 'metastasizing,' and that the January 6 Capitol attack will serve as inspiration for future agitation."

Capitol Riot Suspect Arrested While Wearing "I Was There" T-shirt.

[The Hill](#) (3/29, 5.69M) reports that "a Dallas man who was arrested in late January and charged with involvement in the riot that overtook the Capitol on Jan. 6 was reportedly wearing a shirt that declared his participation in the siege during his arrest." Federal prosecutors "wrote in a court filing Monday that Garret Miller was clad in a shirt bearing the message 'I Was There, Washington D.C., January 6, 2021,' when he was arrested on Jan. 20." Meanwhile, "despite his shirt's apparent admission and evidence submitted by prosecutors Monday indicating that Miller had tweeted 'assassinate AOC' at Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) in the days following the riot, he reportedly told his mother 'I don't feel that I've done anything wrong and now I'm being locked up.'" The FBI "is still looking for information on numerous individuals seen at the Capitol and around Washington, D.C. related to the Capitol siege."

[WTTG-TV](#) Washington (3/29, 168K) reports that "like many of the more than 300 people facing federal charges in connection with the siege, Miller thoroughly documented and commented on his actions that day in a flurry of social media posts."

The [Daily Caller](#) (3/29, 375K) also reports.

Kentucky Man Charged With Participating In Capitol Riot.

The [Louisville \(KY\) Courier-Journal](#) (3/29, 554K) reports that "a Louisville man charged earlier this month with participating in the Jan. 6 riots at the U.S. Capitol is the 13th with ties to Kentucky to be arrested, and authorities say more are expected." The Courier-Journal says "Michael Orangias is charged with entering restricted grounds, entering with the intent to impede government business, demonstrating on Capitol grounds and disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds." During a phone interview with the FBI, he "acknowledged being at the Capitol on Jan. 6 for the Trump rally" and "during a second interview – in-person with an FBI agent – he admitted to going into the building for about 5 to 7 minutes before going back outside, authorities said."

At least 17 Ohioans Facing Charges In US Capitol Siege.

The [AP](#) (3/29) reports that "more than 300 supporters of former President Donald Trump have been charged in the storming of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, including members of far-right extremist groups." Meanwhile, "at least 17 of those cases, including one announced Monday, involve Ohio residents identified through social media posts and surveillance footage and often turned in by friends or family members." The AP detail the Ohioans charged in the Capitol breach and the FBI's efforts to investigate those individuals.

Florida Man Arrested In Connection To Capitol Riot Seeks Release Due To Risk Of COVID.

The [Naples \(FL\) Daily News](#) (3/29, 238K) reports that "an attorney representing an East Naples man suspected of participating in the U.S. Capitol riot in January filed an emergency motion on Friday stating the suspect has cancer and is at risk of COVID-19 exposure while in custody." Christopher Worrell "was arrested after FBI agents executed a search and arrest warrant at his home on March 13." According to the prosecution, "Worrell assaulted a line of law enforcement officers with pepper spray gel outside the U.S. Capitol building during the riot in Washington D.C. on Jan. 6."

Michigan Man Charged In Capitol Riot Will Fight For Bond.

The [Detroit News](#) (3/29, 1.16M) reports that "the first Michigan resident charged with a federal crime stemming from the Capitol riot pleaded not guilty to five charges Monday and will fight for bond later this week, his lawyer said." Karl Dresch, "of Calumet was arraigned in front of U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson in Washington, D.C., almost two months after being indicted on five charges related to the Jan. 6 riot." The News says "the charges include obstructing an official proceeding, entering a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building, disorderly conduct in a Capitol building and parading, demonstrating or picketing in a Capitol building." In its complaint against Dresch, the FBI "supported its allegations of unlawful entry into the Capitol with pictures the Upper Peninsula man posted on social media as the mob stormed the building in Washington, D.C."

Tipster Turns In Michigan Man To FBI After Bragging About "Storming U.S. Capitol."

The [Southgate \(MI\) News Herald](#) (3/29, 57K) reports that according to statements in a Federal Bureau of Investigations complaint, Anthony Williams, of Southgate, has been named as being in the Capitol building by an online tipster to the FBI. The tip "identified Williams by name and told authorities there were screenshots of Williams in the building on his Facebook account." The News Herald says "after getting records from his Facebook account, agents found pictures from inside the building, likely taken on a device that Williams held while he was inside, according to their report."

[MLive \(MI\)](#) (3/29, 828K) also reports.

Lawmakers Pressure Capitol Police To Make Report Public.

The [Miami Herald](#) (3/29, 647K) reports that "two lawmakers in charge of determining Capitol Police funding levels are pressuring the notoriously secretive department to publicly release an upcoming inspector general report on the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol." House Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Tim Ryan (D-OH) and ranking member Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA) wrote to the Capitol Police Board, "In the wake of the January 6th attack that shook the confidence of so many Americans, taking a more open and transparent approach isn't just the right thing to do, it will be the most effective as we seek to restore citizens' confidence that the heart of America's government is secure." The Herald says the board "is now composed of House Sergeant-at-Arms William J. Walker, Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Karen Gibson and Architect of the Capitol J. Brett Blanton."

[The Hill](#) (3/29, Marcos, 5.69M) reports "the lawmakers asked that members of the Capitol Police Board hold press conferences to provide updates on any threats to Congress and progress on efforts to protect the Capitol complex and the people who work and visit there."

Oregon Man Arrested In Attack On US Capitol.

The [AP](#) (3/29) reports that "an Oregon man has been arrested in Florida on criminal charges in connection with the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol, court records show." The AP says "a grand jury indicted Richard Harris, 40, and federal law enforcement officers took him into custody March 18." Federal prosecutors "charged Harris with five counts related to the Capitol riots, including assaulting, resisting or impeding officers; obstruction of an official proceeding; and entering and remaining in a restricted building."

Capitol Police Provide More Than 14,000 Hours Of Capitol Riot Footage To Lawmakers.

[Politico](#) (3/29, Cheney, 6.73M) reports that "the Capitol Police shared thousands of hours of Jan. 6 surveillance camera footage with two key congressional committees investigating the mob attack on the building – and provided 'numerous' clips to the Democrats prosecuting Donald Trump's impeachment, the department's top lawyer revealed Monday." Politico says "the department provided the footage to the impeachment managers in response to a request from top House lawyer Douglas Letter, according to Capitol Police General Counsel Thomas DiBiase, who made the disclosures in a sworn affidavit he submitted in one of the criminal cases stemming from the Jan. 6 riot." DiBiase "said the department also provided more than 14,000 hours of surveillance camera footage – encompassing the hours of noon to 8 p.m. on Jan. 6 – to two key committees investigating the Capitol assault: The House Administration Committee and the Senate Rules Committee."

Small Virginia Town Divided Over Local Police Officers Involved In Capitol Riot.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Kindy, 10.52M) reports Black Lives Matter activist Bridgette Craighead exposed Rocky Mount, Virginia, police officers Jacob Fracker and Thomas "T.J." Robertson "proudly posing inside the nation's Capitol during the Jan. 6 insurrection," which is "inflaming a culture war in this southwest Virginia town of 5,000 people, a microcosm of the schisms across America." According to the Post, people are "quarreling over who was treated with kid gloves – Black Lives Matter protesters or the largely White throng that stormed the U.S. Capitol. They are arguing over the fairness of the presidential election. ... And there's a simmering standoff between activists such as Craighead who see this as the moment to redress injustices, and those who believe the activists are fomenting racial tensions by pushing too hard and too fast."

Analysis: Many Capitol Rioters Unlikely To Serve Jail Time.

[Politico](#) (3/30, Gerstein, Cheney, 6.73M) reports that "many of those who invaded the halls of Congress on Jan. 6 are likely to get little or no jail time." Politico says "while public and media attention in recent weeks has been focused on high-profile conspiracy cases against right-wing, paramilitary groups like the Oath Keepers and the Proud Boys, the most urgent decisions for prosecutors involve resolving scores of lower-level cases that have clogged D.C.'s federal district court." A Politico "analysis of the Capitol riot-related cases shows that almost a quarter of the more than 230 defendants formally and publicly charged so far face only misdemeanors." Meanwhile, "in recent days, judges, prosecutors and defense attorneys have all indicated that they expect few of these 'MAGA tourists' to face harsh sentences." This is because "the actions of many of the individual rioters often boiled down to trespassing. And judges have wrestled with how aggressively to lump those cases in with those of the more sinister suspects."

COUNTER-TERRORISM

Connecticut Middle School Bomb Threat A Hoax.

[Fairfield \(CT\) Daily Voice](#) (3/29, Reakes) reports a bomb threat at a middle school in Ansonia, CT was "deemed unfounded after a search of the facility by bomb-sniffing dogs, state police, and the FBI." The search began after Ansonia police were informed by the FBI that they had received a report of a threat. The threat was tracked down to neighbors who were having a dispute.

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

Privacy Advocates Express Concern NSA Moving Toward Domestic Internet Spying.

The [Daily Beast](#) (3/29, 933K) reports privacy advocates say moves to expand NSA authorities "jeopardizes an already weakened four-decade old compromise of national-security surveillance." NSA access to the digital trails of US persons and foreigners transiting domestic communications infrastructure is "supposed to require a warrant from a secret court specifying specific suspected worrisome activity." But it's unclear how "early detection of foreign-borne digital threats, particularly at scale, could operate within the same legal paradigm." NSA chief Gen. Paul Nakasone "did not offer any such answers in recent congressional testimony about the devastating SolarWinds hack." Instead, Nakasone "highlighted to legislators what he described as a dangerous blindness in cyberspace created by holding the domestic internet off-limits to him."

Opinion: The Military Needs Better Understanding Of Its Extremism Problem.

In a commentary in the [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M), Daniel Milton, Andrew Mines, Andangelina Maleska write, "In the wake of the attack on the Congress, it seemed to some that the military community was stumped for solutions and unable to size the problem of extremism among its own. While the military-wide stand-down issued by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was undoubtedly a step in the right direction, it will take more time, effort and ingenuity to develop both a deeper understanding and a coherent strategy toward combating extremism in the largest workforce in the world." They conclude, "To combat it, we need a longitudinal, preemptive approach that takes ownership for those who fail to honor the highest values for which the military stands, past and present."

Supreme Court Leaves In Place A Ruling Blocking Hillary Clinton Deposition Over Private Email Server.

[CNN](#) (3/29, Vogue, Cole, 89.21M) reports the Supreme Court on Monday "left in place a lower court order that blocked the conservative group Judicial Watch from deposing former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton about her use of a private email account in a lawsuit related to the 2012 attack on the US consulate in Benghazi, Libya." A federal appeals court "ruled last August that Clinton cannot be compelled to appear for a deposition in a lawsuit about State Department emails, a ruling that came after a federal judge said earlier in 2020 that the former secretary must appear for a deposition in the case." The court's denial on Monday "was unsigned."

The [Washington Times](#) (3/29, Swoyer, 626K) reports it would have taken "four justices to vote to grant review on the matter." David Kendall, who represented Mrs. Clinton, "said the Supreme Court's decision 'speaks for itself.'" Also reporting on the story are the [Washington Examiner](#) (3/29, 888K) and [Breitbart](#) (3/29, 1.26M)

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Ghislaine Maxwell Charged With Sex Trafficking In Expanded Indictment.

The [AP](#) (3/29, Neumeister) reports that "sex trafficking charges and another alleged victim were added to a superseding indictment returned Monday in the criminal case against financier Jeffrey Epstein's ex-girlfriend as prosecutors alleged that a conspiracy to sexually abuse girls stretched over a decade." The AP says "the charges contained in a rewritten indictment returned by a grand jury in Manhattan federal court alleged that a conspiracy between Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell occurred between 1994 and 2004." The indictment "returned after Maxwell's July arrest limited crimes to a three-year period in the 1990s."

[Reuters](#) (3/29, Stempel) reports that "it is unclear whether the new charges could lead to a postponement of Maxwell's scheduled July 12 trial before U.S. District Judge Alison Nathan in Manhattan, though prosecutors said Maxwell should have 'ample time' to prepare." Prosecutors "said they have given Maxwell's lawyers the month and year when the fourth victim was born and key evidence about her."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Jacobs, 10.52M) reports David Boies, an attorney for Epstein accuser ██████████, who is part of Maxwell's case, said Monday's development "demonstrates that the prosecution is continuing to build its case." He added, "I think it's certainly an important addition to the case because of the age of the victim and the length of time she was trafficked." Meanwhile, "Maxwell now faces eight counts in total, including perjury charges for allegedly lying during depositions in a defamation lawsuit brought against her by another Epstein accuser, ██████████."

Also reporting are the [New York Times](#) (3/29, Weiser, 20.6M) and [CNN](#) (3/29, Scannell, 89.21M).

Judge Orders Three Men To Stand Trial Over Plot To Kidnap Whitmer.

The [AP](#) (3/29, Williams) reports Jackson County District Court Judge Michael Klaeren on Monday "ordered three men to stand trial in a plot to kidnap Democratic Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer over her coronavirus restrictions." The AP says Klaeren "ruled there was enough evidence and bound over Paul Bellar, Joe Morrison and Pete Musico to circuit court to stand trial," but "dismissed a charge of threat of terrorism against Musico and Morrison. Bellar didn't face that charge." The AP says "the FBI in October said it broke up a plot to kidnap Whitmer by anti-government extremists upset over her coronavirus restrictions."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (3/29, Moran, Marini, 2.16M) reports that while their lawyers had "argued, at various times, that the men had disengaged from those making trouble in the group," Klaeren "wasn't on board with that argument. He said they were never fully disengaged or considered crazy and therefore not listened to by others." The Free Press says "the Michigan Attorney General's Office laid out in early March its case against the men - anti-government social media posts, at least one featuring a grenade, FBI testimony on surveillance of the men and their training and attendance of protests, and eyewitness testimony from an FBI informant."

[The Hill](#) (3/29, Coleman, 5.69M) reports "the FBI has previously said it became aware of the group early last year and used undercover agents and confidential informants for months for the investigation."

Also reporting are [USA Today](#) (3/29, Moran, 12.7M), [PBS NewsHour](#) (3/29, 792K), [NBC News](#) (3/29, 4.91M), the [Washington Examiner](#) (3/29, Deese, 888K), [WDIV-TV](#) Detroit (3/29, Ley, Clarke, 568K), [MLive \(MI\)](#) (3/29, 828K), and [WUOM-FM](#) Ann Arbor, MI (3/29, Carmody, Tribou, 24K).

FBI Offers \$50,000 Reward In 1998 Kansas Cold Case Killing.

The [AP](#) (3/29) reports that "the FBI is offering a reward of up to \$50,000 in the death of a Kansas City-area woman who died more than 22 years ago." The AP Rhonda Tribue was a mother of six from Kansas City, Kansas and "was found dead on Oct. 8, 1998" in the roadway near Edwardsville, Kansas. Authorities said she died of blunt force trauma at the age of 34. The

FBI "says Tribue had been at the Firelight Lounge in Kansas City, Kansas, hours before her death."

Also reporting are [Wyandotte Daily \(KS\)](#) (3/29) and [WDAF-TV](#) Kansas City, MO (3/29, 349K).

Man Captured After Firing On Park Rangers In Everglades.

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (3/29, 982K) reports an unnamed man was taken into custody after firing a gun at rangers in the Everglades National Park in Florida. He had been involved in a domestic dispute earlier the same day, but left before rangers arrived. The FBI was among the agencies assisting the park rangers.

[Newsweek](#) (3/29, Dutton, 2.67M) reports the attack seemed to be unprovoked. There were no injuries. This is the same area of south Florida as Sunrise, where "two FBI agents were killed and three were wounded after a standoff with a shooter" February 2 when "FBI agents had come to an apartment complex in a middle-class neighborhood...to serve a federal search warrant in connection with a case involving violent crimes against children."

Murderer Dies Awaiting Execution In Indiana.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/29, Wigglesworth, 3.37M) reports Joseph Edward Duncan III, formerly of Fargo, ND, died Sunday in Terre Haute IN while awaiting execution for the murders of five people. He was suffering from brain cancer. After he was arrested for the murder and kidnapping of members of an Idaho family in 2005, Duncan "reportedly told FBI agents that he was also connected to the 1997 killing of Anthony Martinez, 10."

Washington Man Sentenced For Torching Police Car At Protest.

[KING-TV](#) Seattle (3/30, 417K) reports Kelly Thomas Jackson of Edmonds, WA was sentenced to 40 months in prison "for setting two Seattle police cars on fire by throwing Molotov cocktails at them during a protest" on May 2020. Jackson "was identified...after an anonymous tip to police." The FBI was among the investigating agencies.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/29, Dima, 888K) reports "several videos reviewed by law enforcement showed a white male suspect, who was later identified as Jackson...'jumping up and down with excitement after his crime.'" FBI Special Agent in Charge of the Seattle Field Office Donald Voiret said, "This instigator researched his arsons and, on multiple occasions, endangered the safety of those nearby, as he helped to overshadow peaceful protests and escalate the environment into violence."

The [AP](#) (3/29) reports Jackson "was identified in surveillance video because of unique clothing and other identifying marks and arrested several days later."

Arrest Made In 1979 Colorado Murder.

[WPXI-TV](#) Pittsburgh (3/29, Bonvillain, 149K) reports James Herman Dye of Wichita, KS "is charged with two counts of first-degree murder in the Nov. 26, 1979, death of Evelyn Kay Day" in Greeley, CO. Dye was identified after Weld County Sheriff's Office cold case investigator Detective Byron Kastilahn requested that DNA from Day's killer be run through the FBI's combined DNA Index System, or CODIS. FBI agents also assisted in Dye's arrest in Wichita on March 22.

Elder Abuse Increasing In California and Elsewhere.

The [Palo Alto \(CA\) Patch](#) (3/29, Reese, 1.44M) reports elder and dependent adult abuse has been rising in Santa Clara County, CA since 2013, with the number of cases rising 7% to over 6300 in 2020. National statistics are even more striking. The FBI received about 320,000 complaints by May 2020, "nearly the same number they had for the entirety of 2019." Part of the case is "COVID-related schemes."

Long Missing Murderer Eubanks Spotted Outside Los Angeles.

The [Mansfield \(OH\) News Journal](#) (3/29, Whitmire, 47K) reports the Marshals Service is searching in South Los Angeles, CA for Lester Eubanks, who was convicted of killing a 14-year-old girl in 1965 and walking from a shopping trip in 1973. Both Eubanks and his victim were from Mansfield, OH. Eubanks was identified in photographs recently taken in Gardena, CA. A retired Mansfield detective said he was recently contacted by the producers of "America's Most Wanted" in connection with the case.

Last Suspect In Michigan Murder Caught In Tennessee.

The [Macomb \(MI\) Daily](#) (3/29, Hotts, 135K) reports six people were arrested in connection with the Dec. 9 "execution-style" killing of Jason Leon Foster of Macomb, MI, who is thought to be "responsible for the shooting death of a Detroit man that took place the night before Foster was attacked." While five of the suspects were apprehended in Michigan in December or January, one, Larry Bell Jr., was only captured March 9, in Tennessee. Macomb Public Safety Director George Rouhib said, "We were able to contact the FBI in Tennessee to secure their involvement."

Members Of Prison Drug Ring Charged.

[Georgia Sun](#) (3/29, Chandler) reports four inmates at two Georgia prisons and an outside accomplice "are facing federal charges stemming from a scheme to smuggle narcotics into Hays State Prison by bribing a corrections officer, FBI officials say." For several months in 2018, the defendants allegedly smuggled methamphetamine, cocaine base, and marijuana, and other contraband into the prison with the help of a corrections officer, using "contraband cellphones and...coded emails." Special Agent in Charge of FBI Atlanta Chris Hacker said, "Prisons should be a place of rehabilitation, not a place to continue committing crimes. ... Illegal cellphones have emboldened inmates and their associates to engage in criminal conduct, sometimes with the help of law enforcement officials. It threatens both inmates and staff and the FBI will pursue these investigations no matter who is involved."

FBI Turns To Google In Investigation Of Racist Vandalism At Knoxville Church.

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (3/30, 379K) reports that "federal agents are asking Google for help to figure out who wrote a racial slur on a bottle and tossed it through the window of one of Knoxville's oldest historically black churches." The News Sentinel says "records filed in U.S. District Court show authorities still don't know who tossed the bottle through the window of Logan Temple AME Zion in early February or why." Records show "with no fingerprint evidence to point to a suspect, the FBI is asking Google to help identify any cellular devices that might have been in use near the church at the time." FBI agent Jason Malkiewicz in his request for a search warrant wrote, "Nearly every cellular phone using the Android operating system has an associated Google account, and users are prompted to add a Google account when they first turn on a new Android device."

Portland Man Gets 17 Years For Online Abuse Of Teen Boy.

The [Oregonian](#) (3/29, 1.02M) reports that "a Portland man who served a dozen years in prison for sexually abusing a child in California was sentenced Monday to serve 17 more years after using Facebook Messenger to convince a 16-year-old boy to take sexually explicit videos of himself." According to prosecutors, "Scott Andrew Lawrence, 57, was on supervised release for failing to register as a sex offender in Oregon when he posed online as a woman named Mary and communicated with the teenager from South Dakota." The Oregonian says "the FBI investigated the case as part of Project Safe Childhood, a national program started by the U.S. Department of Justice in 2006 to combat child sexual abuse and exploitation."

Maine Woman Charged By FBI With Involvement In Massachusetts Drug Ring.

The [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (3/30, 178K) reports that “a Trenton woman arrested Friday on federal drug trafficking and firearms charges could face a life sentence related to her role in a drug ring that brought fentanyl, cocaine and methamphetamine from Massachusetts to eastern Maine, according to court documents.” The Daily News says “the FBI is accusing Shelby Kleffman, 31, of participating in the drug ring that brought large quantities of the drugs to eastern Maine. Federal law enforcement on Friday identified Kleffman and two Massachusetts men – Armani Minier-Tejada, 22, of Salem, and Miguel Minier, 55, of Lynn – as being part of the alleged drug distribution ring.” Meanwhile, “Kleffman and Minier-Tejada were arrested Friday in Maine and appeared Monday morning via video before a federal judge in Maine.”

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

SCOTUS Hears Securities Fraud Case Against Goldman Sachs.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Liptak, 20.6M) reports the Supreme Court “heard arguments on Monday in a securities fraud class-action case against Goldman Sachs.” The Times describes the justice as “frustrated” and says several indicated “puzzlement about what they were meant to do in light of both parties seeming to agree about the governing legal standard.” Pension funds brought the case, arguing “they had lost as much as \$13 billion as a consequence of what they called false statements about the investment bank’s sales of complex debt instruments before the 2008 financial crisis.” Goldman’s lawyer Kannon K. Shanmugam said the case involved “exceptionally generic and aspirational statements” that could not have impacted its stock price. But “he conceded as a general matter that courts could take account of generic statements in deciding whether investors had relied on them.” the pension funds’ lawyer Thomas C. Goldstein “said the firm’s statements in context justified certifying a class action,” but “conceded that the generic nature of the statements was ‘relevant evidence.’” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Bravin, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says the tone of Monday’s argument indicated the Court is inclined to support a small clarification instead of a major change to class action procedures.

Chicago Precinct Captain Charged With Deceiving FBI.

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (3/29, Meisner, 2.03M) reports that “a longtime precinct captain for indicted Chicago Ald. Edward Burke and aide to former state Sen. Martin Sandoval was charged Monday with misleading the FBI in its sprawling federal political corruption investigation.” The Tribune says “Rudy Acosta Jr., 70, was charged in a criminal information with one count of willfully deceiving the FBI about the criminal activity of others when he was interviewed in 2017 and 2018.” According to the charge, “Acosta failed to disclose in interviews with agents benefits both he and Sandoval received from another person – identified only as Individual A – including ‘free services, meals and travel.’”

The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (3/29, 970K) reports that “beyond the corruption charges leveled against Burke and Sandoval, Acosta is the father of a onetime reputed drug kingpin whose own case has been pending for more than five years.” Meanwhile, “he also has ties to a Summit bar operator who admitted bribing public officials there.”

[WBEZ-FM](#) Chicago (3/29, 29K) reports that “Sandoval died of COVID-19 in December” and “had pleaded guilty to bribery and tax evasion charges relating to his support of the red light camera industry, and was cooperating with the federal government in its corruption investigation.”

Chicago-based Marijuana Cultivator Part Of Federal Pay-to-play Investigation.

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (3/29, Meisner, Long, 2.03M) reports that “a Chicago-based marijuana cultivator and dispenser that has rapidly grown into one of the nation’s biggest pot firms is under federal investigation for possible pay-to-play violations during its push for coveted state

licenses, sources said." The Tribune says "investigators have been scrutinizing campaign donations and other steps Green Thumb Industries took as it sought to secure growing and distribution licenses in Illinois and several other states." Spokeswoman Linda Marsicano said, "Green Thumb takes compliance very seriously and operates with the highest standards of ethical business conduct. We are not aware of any such investigation."

Mosby Investigation A Distraction For Baltimore City Council.

The [Baltimore Sun](#) (3/29, Opilo, 629K) reports that since it was revealed last week that federal officials are investigating City Council President Nick Mosby and his wife, Baltimore State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby's "finances, the task of council members to concentrate on the city's business has gotten a whole lot harder." The Sun says "unlike past probes of City Hall that have focused attention on the mayor's office, one of the targets of the current one is the head of their legislative body." meanwhile, "neither Mosby has been criminally charged" and "their attorney has denounced the investigation as a 'political witch hunt.'"

FBI Warns Of Rise Of "Deepfakes" In Coming Months.

[Business Insider](#) (3/29, Civieta, Ravindran, 2.74M) reports the FBI has issued a stark warning saying "malicious actors almost certainly will leverage synthetic content for cyber and foreign influence operations in the next 12-18 months." In the statement issued March 10, the FBI said "Russian, Chinese, and Chinese-language actors are using synthetic profile images derived from GANs [generative adversarial networks]." The FBI said they had "identified multiple campaigns which have leveraged synthetic content" since late 2019, and the number looks set to grow.

FBI Issues Warning About COVID-19 Scams.

In a piece for [Forbes](#) (3/29, Rash, 10.33M), Wayne Rash writes that scammers are "targeting small businesses, claiming to be able to provide small business loans such as the SBA's economic disaster relief loans or the payroll protection program loans. They'll ask for your bank account information so that the money can be directly deposited. You'll be asked to pay their fees with gift cards, wire transfers or sometimes cryptocurrency. They may even ask you to mail cash." Rash encourages people to be aware of scammers, adding "you never have to pay a fee for stimulus payments or for the small business funding." Forbes says "the FBI is also focusing on Covid-19 scams, and has issued a warning of things that indicate a Covid-19 scam."

Biggest Blowups Among Financial Funds Detailed.

[Reuters](#) (3/29) reports that "financial institutions Nomura and Credit Suisse faced billions of dollars in losses after a highly leveraged U.S. investment fund called Archegos Capital defaulted on margin calls, triggering a fire sale of stocks on Friday, a source familiar with the matter said." Reuters offers a list of "some of the biggest failures among hedge funds that have rippled through the financial markets."

Raleigh Real Estate Investor Agrees To Plea Deal.

The [Triangle \(NC\) Business Journal](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 854K) reports Leonid Teyf, a Russian national-turned Raleigh real estate investor who, last week, agreed "to a plea deal after months of back-and-forth court arguments and years of FBI investigations." The Business Journal says "in a matter of months, Teyf could be sentenced to prison time, as prosecutors – even with the plea – are arguing for a 60-month sentence." Initially facing a slew of charges, "following the plea deal Teyf now faces just bribery of a public official, visa fraud and providing false statements on a tax return." Meanwhile, "recently released court transcripts paint a picture of what's alleged to have happened – a scheme purportedly scanning two continents, where the danger was in a phone call."

Fraudsters Using Online Investment Platforms To Launder Illicitly-Gained Pandemic Relief Funds.

[NBC News](#) (3/29, Zamost, 4.91M) reports fraudsters “stealing from the government’s Covid pandemic relief programs to help businesses have found a convenient way to launder the money: they’re opening accounts with at least four online investment platforms, law enforcement officials said.” The digital platforms, “investigators said, are easy to dump the money into by setting up accounts with stolen identities.” Already, “more than \$100 million in fraudulent funds passed through investment accounts since Congress passed the CARES Act last March, according to authorities.” The fraudsters “have used Robinhood, TD Ameritrade, E-Trade and Fidelity to launder the money, a law enforcement source said.”

Na Leo CEO To Go On Leave Following Allegations Of Fraud, Bribery.

The [Hawaii Tribune-Herald](#) (3/29, 47K) reports that “the president and CEO of Na Leo ‘O Hawaii public access television will be placed on a leave of absence after allegations were made against him in a federal plea agreement by a former associate.” According to a statement from Na Leo, “the nonprofit corporation’s board agreed to allow Stacy K. Higa, a former County Council chairman and unsuccessful mayoral candidate last year, to take a leave of absence from his position, effective this Thursday.” The statement said the leave would allow the 57-year-old Higa “to address these allegations while limiting any interference or disruption to Na Leo ‘O Hawaii’s operations.” The Tribune-Herald says “Na Leo’s Hilo offices and studios were raided by the FBI in early October 2020, and the feds charged Aipoalani in December.”

CYBER DIVISION

White House Assesses Potential Responses To Major Hack.

[Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Jacobs, 3.57M) reports Jake Sullivan, President Joe Biden’s national security adviser, “said the White House is in ‘the closing stages’ of deciding how to respond to a hack that compromised popular software by Texas-based SolarWinds Corp.” Sullivan “said the US is considering ‘seen and unseen’ responses to the attack, suspected of being carried out by Russian hackers and affecting at least 100 US companies and nine federal agencies.” Sullivan said in an interview with Bloomberg News. “We’re in the closing stages of that process with options that will be presented at the highest levels here.” Sullivan “said the Administration continues to be focused intensively on remediation.” He said, “Meaning, making sure that we’ve address the vulnerabilities of federal networks in particular.”

US Banking Regulators Seek Information On How Financial Institutions Use AI.

[Reuters](#) (3/29, Schroeder) reports that in a joint statement on Monday, US banking regulators “announced...they were soliciting public input on the growing use of artificial intelligence by financial institutions.” The regulators “said they wanted feedback on the use of the technology by banks to policy fraud, underwrite loans and for other purpose, and what perks and challenges it presents.” The regulators added that they were looking to identify any areas where they may be able to provide clarification around existing rules on the use of AI.

[American Banker](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 27K) reports that the banking regulators seeking information on the topic included the Federal Reserve, FDIC, CFPB, OCC, and the National Credit Union Administration.

Also reporting is [Law360](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 9K).

Opinion: Cybersecurity Needs A New Alert System.

In a commentary in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), V.S. Subrahmanian, director of Dartmouth College’s Institute for Security, Technology and Society, argues that the US needs to develop an early warning system to alert government agencies and

the private sector of major cyber threats. He contends it takes a long time to talk to the vendor, estimate its severity, and enact a patch. He argues an alert system would discover new weaknesses before adversaries do. Then the goal would be to improve oversight of known vulnerabilities.

Malicious Software Attacks "Spiraling Out Of Control," Report Warns.

The [Financial Times](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 1.48M) reports, "The UK government has been urged to stop criminals from carrying out malicious software attacks with "impunity", after research revealed..."

Opinion: The Need To Establish A Global Standard To Protect And Share Data.

In a commentary on [CNN](#) (3/29, 89.21M), Yan Carrière-Swallow, an economist in the IMF's Strategy, Policy and Review Department, and Vikram Haksar, an assistant director in the IMF's Monetary and Capital Markets Department, write, "Just as data have helped us monitor, adapt and respond to Covid-19, the pandemic has brought into focus two fundamental problems with how information flows in the global economy. First, the data economy is opaque and doesn't always respect individual privacy. Second, data are kept in private silos, reducing its value as a public good to society." They contend, "Clarifying the rules of the data economy is a good place to start. ... People should have more agency over their individual data." They conclude, "Global coordination is always a challenge, especially in an area as complex as data policy, where there is a multitude of interests and regulators even within individual countries, let alone across borders."

Cyberattack Pushes Australian TV Channel Off Air.

[CNN](#) (3/29, Guy, Business, 89.21M) reports Australian broadcaster 9 News "suffered a cyberattack that forced a number of live shows off air on Sunday, as the country's federal parliament also reported an attack on its computer network." 9 News, a CNN affiliate, tweeted on Sunday, "A cyber-attack on our systems has disrupted live broadcasts today however, we have put processes in place to ensure we're able to resume our normal broadcast schedule." The incident "knocked out news production systems for more than 24 hours." 9 Network's live broadcasts "were disrupted by Sunday's attack." Damian Cronan, 9 News' chief information and technology officer, "described the incident as a 'significant, sophisticated and complex cyber-attack' in a note to staff."

SolarWinds Hackers Gained Access To Head Of DHS' Emails.

The AP/[NBC News](#) (3/29, 4.91M) reports that those behind the SolarWinds breach – suspected to be Russian hackers – gained access to the emails of the Department of Homeland Security, including the emails of the department's cybersecurity staff and former acting secretary Chad Wolf. The [AP](#) (3/29) reports their accounts were "accessed as part of what's known as the SolarWinds intrusion, and it throws into question how the US government can protect individuals, companies and institutions across the country if it can't protect itself." The short answer for many security experts and federal officials "is that it can't – at least not without some significant changes." [Reuters](#) (3/29) reports the AP report "said the intelligence value of the hacking of Chad Wolf, the former acting secretary of the DHS, and of email accounts belonging to officials in the department's cybersecurity staff, was not publicly known."

[Business Insider](#) (3/29, Sheth, 2.74M) reports that, "in addition to Wolf, hackers may have also gained access to the email accounts of senior members of the DHS's cyber division, which is responsible for identifying and rooting out foreign threats to the US's national security and cybersecurity infrastructure."

[CNBC](#) (3/29, 7.34M) reports the Biden Administration has "tried to keep a tight lid on the scope of the SolarWinds attack as it weighs retaliatory measures against Russia." But an inquiry by the AP "found new details about the breach at DHS and other agencies." The AP "interviewed

more than a dozen current and former US government officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the confidential nature of the ongoing investigation into the hack." The vulnerabilities at Homeland Security, in particular, "intensify the worries following the SolarWinds attack and an even more widespread hack affecting Microsoft Exchange's email program." In both cases, the hackers were "detected not by the government but by a private company." Also providing similar coverage are [CNET News](#) (3/29, Hautala, 3.77M) and [WTOP-FM](#) Washington (3/29, 164K).

Biden Faces Few Strong Options For SolarWinds Retaliation. [Politico](#) (3/29, Geller, 6.73M) reports in its Weekly Cybersecurity newsletter that, "as President Biden considers how to hit back at Russia and China for massive cyberattack campaigns tied to their regimes...the reality is that his options may be limited to a well-worn playbook that has failed to stem digital threats during multiple previous administrations." Biden's dilemma is the "same one that vexed former President Obama after Russia intervened in the 2016 election, even as observers said the US needs to respond or risk tacitly condoning the SolarWinds and Exchange compromises." A cyber expert in the Biden White House has "shared that concern about the digitally dependent US' unique vulnerabilities." Biden's best option "may be to take a page out of the Trump Administration's book, deploying US Cyber Command to degrade Russian and Chinese hackers' own capabilities."

Tech Firms And Independent Shops Argue Over "Right To Repair" Hardware.

The [AP](#) (3/29) reports trade groups representing big tech companies "clashed with independent repair shop owners in Monday committee hearing in the Nevada Legislature over a proposal to require hardware manufacturers give repair shops the means to fix devices like computers, phones, tablets and printers." Whether government "should require companies to provide independent shops – rather than just authorized dealers – access to the parts and schematics needed to fix devices is one front in a larger societal battle over how to regulate the technology industry as their products become more and more necessary in everyday life." It distills anti-trust policy debates "down to how and where consumers can fix a broken smart phone and whether the companies that have transformed communication by producing them have a right to safeguard their intellectual property." Nevada's bill would "apply to consumer electronics worth less than \$5,000 wholesale and exempt equipment used for gambling."

Biden Says New Cybersecurity Czar Will Be Appointed Soon.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/29, McIntyre, 888K) reports creation of the cyber czar in the White House job "was one of the recommendations from the Cyberspace Solarium Commission that was included in the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act to increase coordination of the nation's defense against cyberattacks and cyberespionage." Sen. Angus King (I-ME), who was co-chairman of the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, "has expressed concern that the cyber director position has remained vacant months after cyberattacks from Russian and Chinese actors."

Grindr's US Security Review Disclosures Contradict Previous Statements.

[Reuters](#) (3/29) reports Reuters has "learned that, when Grindr's Chinese owner sold the popular dating app to an investor consortium last year to comply with a US national security panel order, the parties to the deal gave information to authorities that contradicted disclosures to potential investors and Chinese regulators." They "told CFIUS that James Lu, a Chinese-American businessman who is now Grindr's chairman, had no previous business relationship with a key adviser to the seller, a man named Ding'an Fei," according to a Reuters review of the parties' written submissions to CFIUS. However, when Lu was "raising funds to buy Grindr in the second half of 2019 and early 2020, potential investors were told by firms helping him raise the money that Fei was involved in the effort with him in various capacities," a review of four

different fundraising documents shows. The discrepancies and omissions in the parties' response to US authorities "could prompt a new review from CFIUS."

LAWFUL ACCESS

FBI Hopes Murder Suspect's iPhone Will Reveal Motive.

[Forbes](#) (3/29, Brewster, 10.33M) reports that "in January, police followed up a call about a stabbing in the Navajo Nation Indian Reservation, Arizona. The call had come from a woman who'd said her grandmother had been stabbed by her brother, a former Marine who'd served in communications off the coast of Iran and Syria." Meanwhile, "during a subsequent interview, the suspect said repeatedly that he'd snapped and started stabbing his grandmother for no reason, according to the warrant." Forbes says "with the interviewee providing no clear motivation for his alleged actions, the FBI are carrying out a search on the suspect's iPhone 11." At the top of the list of reasons for searching the iPhone is to find any signs of an "intent, plan, or motive to kill or harm any person, his mens rea, or his mental state."

OTHER FBI NEWS

Former GOP Officials: We Need Voting Rights Champion Like Vanita Gupta At Justice.

Christine Todd Whitman, former two-term Republican governor of New Jersey, and Greg Brower, former Assistant Director and Deputy General Counsel of the FBI, write at [USA Today](#) (3/29, Whitman, Brower, 12.7M) that "at a time when barriers to voting are being built through more than 250 bills across 43 states that seek to limit the freedom to vote, we need more leaders who are true champions of voting rights, especially at the Department of Justice." At her confirmation hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee this month, Vanita Gupta, President Joe Biden's nominee to serve as associate attorney general, said: "The fight for voting rights and to ensure that every eligible American can access their right to vote and exercise it is foundational to our democracy." They say "we need that kind of clear, strong leadership at DOJ, now more than ever."

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Administration Developing New Testing Techniques To Reopen Schools.

[Politico](#) (3/29, Quilantan, 6.73M) reports that the Biden Administration "is steering \$10 billion toward developing a national school coronavirus testing strategy as its latest bid to reopen schools." The planning "has turned to the practice of 'pooled' testing that uses a collection of swabs from a fixed group of kids attending classes together," and the process "is meant to limit the spread of a potential outbreak while minimizing the costs of the frequent large-scale testing." Massachusetts is currently the only state to "deploy a broad pooled testing program," and it covers 1 million students and teachers.

NYTimes: Many San Francisco Public School Students Will Not Return To School This Year. The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Fuller, Taylor, 20.6M) describes "infighting, public outrage and halting efforts to reopen schools" in San Francisco. The Times says it is clear "a large share of the city's public school students are unlikely to see the inside of their classrooms this academic year." While the district "has set dates in mid-to-late April to start bringing back elementary students and some high-needs older students," there is "no plan yet for the majority of middle or high school students to return." The Times says "the pandemic has reinforced the notion of a city divided by wealth and race. Around one-third of the city's schoolchildren, many of them white, go to private schools."

WPost Details How Cuomo Prioritized Family And Friends For COVID Testing.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Brittain, Dawsey, Ellison, 10.52M) reports that anonymous sources gave new information regarding how New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) provided special COVID testing treatment for his friends and relatives in the early days of the pandemic. The sources "said that some people with access to power were able to largely bypass the overburdened resources available to the general public when the pandemic first gripped New York last year," and they "described the behind-the-scenes operations and their feelings of discomfort with a system that they believed at times prioritized political connections over medical need."

Ohio LG Defends Continued Usage Of "Wuhan Virus."

The [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) (3/29, 1.22M) reports Ohio Lt. Gov. Jon Husted (R) "doubled down on his public use of the phrase 'Wuhan virus' to describe the coronavirus, dismissing those who said the term encourages bigotry against a backdrop of heightened concern over prejudice and violence against Asian-Americans." He told a Cincinnati radio host that his goal "was to criticize the Chinese government for not being more transparent about its possible role in the pandemic."

Kemp Announces Plan To Self-Quarantine.

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (3/29, 1.46M) reports Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp (R) "is in quarantine after he was exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19." Kemp's office "said he was exposed to the person Saturday while touring storm damage in Newnan."

WPost: Doctors Must Pivot Toward Understanding "Long-Haul" COVID Infections.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) argues that while the US is succeeding in its vaccination campaign, scientists and medical professionals must pivot toward researching the "long-haul" COVID infection, which "is cropping up as another of the great mysteries" because no one "knows precisely why some people, including those who had only mild cases of covid-19 and were not hospitalized, continue to feel lousy months after infection." The issue continues to grow in importance after a new New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center report "found that cell damage, inflammatory immune response, abnormal blood clotting and other complications can leave long-term symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath, 'brain fog,' fatigue, joint pain and post-traumatic stress disorder."

Biden And Walensky Warn Of Potential COVID Resurgence.

Though President Biden announced on Monday that 90% of US adults will be eligible for COVID vaccination within three weeks, coverage focuses more on his warnings about a possible "fourth wave" of the virus and on CDC Director Walensky's blunt warning of "impending doom" if the nation lets up on protocols too quickly.

Eva Pilgrim reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (3/29, story 3, 3:35, Muir, 6.92M), "With the country averaging more than 60,000 cases of the coronavirus every day, the CDC Director today bluntly warn[ed] of another surge. ... Hospital admissions up more than 10% across 17 states in the last week, and the numbers of death rising too. In Michigan, hospitals seeing a surge of patients in their 30s and 40s." Pilgrim added that Biden said Monday that "some states should pause their reopenings and called on states that have lifted mask mandates to reinstate them." Biden: "We're in the life-and-death race for the virus that is spreading quickly." Pilgrim said Biden also "announc[ed] that the majority of American adults will be eligible for the vaccine ahead of his May 1 deadline."

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (3/29, story 3, 2:45, O'Donnell, 4.18M) reported Biden called on governors "to reimpose those mask mandates," while Walensky issued "an impassioned plea...to not let down our guard." CBS' Mola Lenghi: "As cases continue to rise nationwide, blunt words from the head of the CDC." Walensky: "So much reason for hope, but right now I'm scared. So I'm speaking today not necessarily as your CDC Director, but as a wife, as a mother, as a daughter. To ask you to just please hold on a little while longer." Lenghi: "Cases are up

more than 10%, with hospitalizations on the rise, as life looks more like it did pre-pandemic in much of the country. Forty-three states have allowed most or all businesses to reopen, and 17 don't have mask mandates."

Lester Holt on [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (3/29, story 2, 2:40, 5.9M) called it an "urgent new warning about COVID" from Walensky, "even as 95 million [Americans have] received at least one vaccination dose and President Biden says 90% of adults will be eligible for the vaccine in three weeks." NBC's Miguel Almaguer: "Not since the deadly winter surge have so many states – 31 – recorded a troubling rise in new COVID cases. ... With signs of trouble brewing in the Northeast and Midwest, doctors in parts of Washington State already fear they're entering a fourth surge. But the numbers haven't slowed Americans down. More than one million have flown every day for the last 18 straight days, despite CDC guidance to avoid air travel. As more states reopen, yet another state, Arkansas, announces their mask mandate is coming to an end. The President asking some governors to pause reopenings and reinstate mask policies." Biden: "This is not politics. Reinstate the mandate."

The [AP](#) (3/29, Miller) reports Biden and Walensky "warned Monday that too many Americans are declaring virus victory too quickly, appealing for mask requirements and other restrictions to be maintained or restored to stave off a 'fourth surge' of COVID. The "double dose of warnings came even as Biden laid out hopeful new steps to expand coronavirus vaccinations, with all adults to become eligible over the next 5 weeks. ... But the optimism was tempered by stark warnings about the potential for another wave of cases." The [Houston Chronicle](#) (3/29, 982K) reports Biden said "'reckless behavior' is threatening progress in containing COVID-19 as cases have started to climb, despite a rapidly accelerating vaccination push."

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, LaFraniere, Sullivan, 20.6M) reports Biden, "facing a rise in coronavirus cases around the country, called on Monday for governors and mayors to reinstate mask mandates" as Walensky "warned of 'impending doom' from a potential fourth surge of the pandemic. ... The back-to-back appeals reflected a growing sense of urgency among top White House officials and government scientists that the chance to conquer the pandemic...may slip through its grasp." The [Boston Globe](#) (3/29, 1.04M) reports Biden "said he shares the concerns expressed by Walensky and urged Americans to continue engaging in the public health measures that help reduce the spread of the virus."

[Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Wingrove, 3.57M) reports Biden introduced his "90-90" plan, under which 90% of adults in the US will be eligible for vaccination by April 19, and 90% of the nation will live within five miles of a vaccination site "as his Administration more than doubles the number of participating pharmacies." [Politico](#) (3/29, Oweremohle, 6.73M) reports that under the 90-90 plan, "nearly 40,000 pharmacies across the country will be on board to deliver vaccine doses compared to 17,000 earlier." The vaccination program includes 21 pharmacy chains and the Biden Administration "will also expand its program for mass vaccination sites, adding 12 more to the 21 existing hubs." [Roll Call](#) (3/29, Lesniewski, 130K) reports, "The White House said in a fact sheet that the number of participating retail pharmacies in the Federal Retail Pharmacy program will more than double (to almost 40,000) and a dozen more federally backed mass vaccination sites will be developed."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, A1, Bernstein, Cha, Guarino, Stanley-Becker, 10.52M) says "an emotional [Walensky] went off script at a briefing Monday morning to demonstrate her alarm. Her words brought to mind a prescient warning from another CDC official, Nancy Messonnier, director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, who told Americans more than 13 months ago that their lives would dramatically change as the pandemic exploded" in the US.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/29, Megerian, 3.37M) says Walensky's "voice cracked as she talked about treating dying patients and seeing the extra mobile morgue parked outside the hospital where she had previously worked in Massachusetts." The [New York Post](#) (3/29, Salo, 7.45M) also highlights Walensky's "voice breaking as she warned that the US is facing

'impending doom'" as cases rise again. The [New York Daily News](#) (3/29, Goldiner, 2.51M) says Walensky "issued a dire warning" with "her voice trembling." [Fox News](#) (3/29, Farber, 23.99M) reports on its website that Walensky "added that the 'trajectory of the pandemic in the U.S. looks similar to other European states' such as Germany and France, where she said there is a 'worrying spike in cases.'"

[USA Today](#) (3/29, Morin, 12.7M) reports Walensky "said that daily infections are up 10% from a week ago, and hospitalizations are also on the rise again," and "added that deaths averaged nearly 1,000 per day last week after four consecutive days below 850." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Parti, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports NIAID Director Fauci said Monday, "It will be a race between the vaccine and what's going on with the dynamics of the outbreak. And we can win this by just hanging in there a bit longer."

Surgeon General Murthy said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (3/29, 1M), "Dr. Walensky is an extraordinary physician, and I think she was right on in her comments and the concerns that she raised. She feels what so many of us feel which is a sense of deep concern as we look at the reality of what is happening in our country. There is some good news, no doubt. We have been able to vaccinate millions of people. ... But we have not come down all the way and, in fact, we have settled at a very high level of daily deaths. ... This is deeply concerning because every time we've seen it in the past, it's led to another surge."

Rep. Dan Bishop (R-NC) [tweeted](#), "Media glossary: Catastrophic failure of leadership: Historically unprecedented development and procurement of pandemic-ending vaccines in 9 months. Model leadership: Screaming 'impending dooooooom!!!" Rep. Bill Johnson (R-OH) [tweeted](#), "If there's a sense of 'impending doom' surrounding the rise of COVID cases, why is President Biden still letting untested illegal immigrants into the country?"

Roll Call's Niels Lesniewski [tweeted](#), "The mix of the positive news about vaccines and the 'impending doom' is quite a combination today." Tony Romm of the Washington Post [tweeted](#), "The juxtaposition today – the CDC sounding an urgent note of alarm on rising case numbers vs the objectively wonderful vaccine news – is a lot to process."

[Reuters](#) (3/29), [Axios](#) (3/29, Chen, 1.26M), [The Hill](#) (3/29, Samuels, 5.69M), and the [CNN](#) (3/29, Maxouris, 89.21M), [CNBC](#) (3/29, Higgins-Dunn, 7.34M), and [Voice of America](#) (3/29, 85K) websites are among the other outlets reporting.

CDC: Pfizer And Moderna Vaccines 90% Effective After Two Doses. The [AP](#) (3/29, Stobbe) reports the CDC's "first look at the real-world use of COVID-19 vaccines found their effectiveness was nearly as robust as it was in controlled studies." The CDC said "the two vaccines available since December – Pfizer and Moderna – were highly effective at 90% after two doses. ... [The study](#) (3/29, 1.08M) is the government's first assessment of how the shots have been working beyond the drugmakers' initial experiments." The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (3/29, Olson, 855K) says "clinical trials of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines only looked at prevention of symptomatic infections, so the latest study of their effectiveness in health care and emergency medical workers is a significant advance," according to infectious disease specialist Harmony Tyner.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Kolata, 20.6M) reports, "Consistent with clinical trial data, a two-dose regimen prevented 90 percent of infections by two weeks after the second shot. One dose prevented 80 percent of infections by two weeks after vaccination." The Times adds, "Scientists have debated whether vaccinated people may still get asymptomatic infections and transmit the virus to others." The new study "suggested that since infections were so rare, transmission is likely rare, too." The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Sun, 10.52M) says the CDC "findings are consistent with clinical trial results and studies showing strong effectiveness in Israel and the United Kingdom, and in initial studies of health-care workers at the UT Southwestern Medical Center and in Southern California."

[Reuters](#) (3/29, Banerjee, Chander), [Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Tozzi, 3.57M), and [Axios](#) (3/29, Fernandez, 1.26M) also report, while the [Boston Globe](#) (3/29, 1.04M) says in an editorial that it is crucial that vaccine makers and public officials "adopt a new mantra when it comes to public

communications about vaccine efficacy: No more drama. ... Vaccine makers and US officials need to be as careful and meticulous in their public messaging as they are in ensuring a vaccine's safety."

In related news, [Axios](#) (3/29, Allassan, 1.26M) reports that Moderna announced on Monday that it has "shipped 100 million doses of its COVID-19 vaccine to the U.S. government, meeting its Q1 goal for the first tranche of 300 million shots purchased" by the US.

White House Says Vaccine Passports Should Come From Private Sector.

[Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Rutherford, 3.57M) reports, "White House officials said that the push for vaccine passports should come from the private sector and that the federal government won't take the lead in creating a centralized document proving vaccination." White House COVID adviser Andy Slavitt said at a briefing that "the U.S. government 'is not viewing its role as the place to create a passport, nor a place to hold the data of citizens.'" The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Cunningham, Shammass, Diamond, Guarino, 10.52M) reports that White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki "said federal agencies are working on guidelines around the handling of 'vaccine passports,' or credentials, which would allow people to prove they have been vaccinated against the coronavirus." Psaki said, "We expect, as Andy Slavitt I think alluded to, that a determination or development of a vaccine passport or whatever you want to call it will be driven by the private sector. Ours will more be focused on guidelines that can be used as a basis."

[Fox Business](#) (3/29, Keene, 3.06M) reports on its website, "Multiple Republican lawmakers have come out against the idea of digital 'vaccine passports' that would allow private businesses to require customers provide proof of vaccination." House Minority Whip Scalise said, "Considering that Democrats want to require vaccine IDs for people to conduct their basic daily activities, they now have zero grounds to object to voter ID laws." Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) "slammed the Biden administration for pursuing the idea of vaccine passports when the president 'doesn't seem to care about passports when it comes to illegal migrants crossing the southern border.'"

[The Hill](#) (3/29, Coleman, 5.69M) reports Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) "vowed to take executive action...banning 'vaccine passports' that businesses and local governments could potentially require to show digital or physical proof of vaccination against COVID-19." DeSantis said, "We always said we wanted to provide it for all but mandate it for none. And that was something that, while it was advised to take particularly if you're vulnerable, we were not going to force you to do it."

More States Expanding Vaccine Availability. The [AP](#) (3/29, Smith, Tang) reports, "More than a dozen states will open vaccine eligibility to all adults this week in a major expansion of COVID-19 shots for tens of millions of Americans." These states include Colorado, Connecticut, parts of Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Gold, 20.6M) reports, "New York announced on Monday that it will make all adult residents eligible to receive a coronavirus vaccine by April 6." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, West, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports all New Yorkers age 30 and up can be vaccinated starting Tuesday. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/29, Shalby, 3.37M) reports, "Californians who are at least 50 years old will be able to book appointments starting Thursday, and all residents age 16 and older will be eligible starting April 15."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (3/29, 2.16M) reports Detroit "will open up vaccine eligibility to Detroiters age 16 and older – a week earlier" than rest of Michigan – "as more younger people are contracting the coronavirus and being hospitalized." The [Denver Post](#) (3/29, 660K) reports Colorado will open vaccine eligibility "to the general public sooner than expected, with anyone 16 and older able to be inoculated beginning at the end of this week."

McConnell Says "All Republican Men" Should Get Vaccine. [CNN](#) (3/29, Zaslav, 89.21M) reports on its website that Senate Minority Leader McConnell on Monday "encouraged 'all Republican men' to get the Covid-19 vaccine, as new polls indicate many in the group are skeptical of getting the shot." McConnell said, "I can say as a Republican man, as soon as it was

my turn, I took the vaccine. I would encourage all Republican men to do that." McConnell "added that there is 'no good argument not to get the vaccination. I would encourage all men regardless of party affiliation to get the vaccination.'"

Michael Gerson writes in his [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) column that "the defiance of public health guidance has become a political selling point in the Republican Party."

NYTimes Urges State Lawmakers To Support Raising New York's Felony Theft Threshold.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, 20.6M) editorializes that state lawmakers in New York should support upcoming legislation that would "raise the state's felony theft threshold" from \$200 to \$5,000. The legislation comes after the state has made other criminal justice changes, including one that "reduced the severity of punishments for nonviolent drug crimes." But the Times argues that an increase in the state's felony theft threshold amount is still needed, "because New York continues to use prison as the default punishment for too many crimes."

Biden To Lay Out First Part Of Infrastructure And Jobs Proposal Wednesday.

On its website, [CNN](#) (3/29, Mattingly, 89.21M) reports "senior administration officials" say President Biden "will lay out the first of a sweeping two-pronged infrastructure and jobs proposal Wednesday, with the administration launching its expected months-long effort to pass proposals that will total between \$3 trillion and \$4 trillion." During a visit to Pittsburgh, Biden "will detail the infrastructure and climate piece of the proposal." CNN says he "is set to focus on repairing the physical infrastructure of the country while pushing for significant investments in climate infrastructure and research and development."

[Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Wasson, Sink, 3.57M) says Biden "will unveil the framework for a major infrastructure-and-jobs program on Wednesday in Pittsburgh, and later in the week offer the first glimpse of his 2022 budget. ... The announcements will offer the first concrete details of Biden's plan to overhaul federal spending, in a sales pitch without the immediacy of the pandemic emergency that he had for his first package." Biden, Bloomberg adds, "will have to convince the public and lawmakers on a multitrillion-dollar investment in infrastructure and social safety nets, along with a revamp of the tax code to help address funding needs and widening inequality."

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Stein, 10.52M) says as Biden's team began putting the package together, the National Economic Council "circulated an internal proposal calling for about \$3 trillion in new spending and \$1 trillion in new tax hikes," but some members of the economic team became "concerned that the plan could jeopardize the nation's long-term financial stability." Due in part to those concerns, the package Biden "will begin unveiling this week includes higher amounts of federal spending but also significantly more in new tax revenue – with possibly as much as \$4 trillion in new spending and more than \$3 trillion in tax increases." That "choice to limit the impact" on the federal deficit "sets up the administration for an enormous political challenge in convincing Congress to pass a package of tax increases on wealthy Americans and companies that together would represent the largest tax hike in generations."

The [AP](#) (3/29, Lemire, Mascaro, Boak) says Biden "is aiming for summer passage" of the plan and "the White House hopes to take a more deliberate and collaborative approach with the contentious Congress than it did on the COVID-19 rescue package, officials said Monday." Administration officials "are sending signals that the White House will listen to suggestions and criticism alike from both parties and that significant changes could occur during the legislative process." But, congressional leaders are also "preparing a go-it-alone strategy, much as was done in the virus aid package, in case Congress hits a wall of GOP opposition." [Axios](#) (3/29, Geman, 1.26M) says it is unclear "how much Biden and Democrats will seek to move through budget reconciliation...or whether there's an opening for some bipartisan dealmaking."

In an interview with [CNN's The Lead](#)^{Vi} (3/29, 1.07M), Transportation Secretary Buttigieg expressed optimism that the bill could win bipartisan support. Buttigieg said, "I think that there's a tremendous opportunity now to have bipartisan support for a big bold vision on infrastructure. I see it in the conversations I am having with Republicans and Democrats on the Hill. I definitely see it in the conversations that I'm having with people across the country."

[CNN](#) (3/29, Kelly, 89.21M) reports on its website that Buttigieg "said...that neither a gas tax nor a mileage tax would be part of" the plan to be detailed on Wednesday. Asked about the mileage tax, Buttigieg said, "No, that's not part of the conversation about this infrastructure bill," and he added that a gas tax would not be part of the plan either. [Politico](#) (3/29, Cadelago, Mintz, Snyder, 6.73M) the President and Buttigieg want him to be "one of the package's chief pitchmen." Buttigieg "has held scores of meetings with transportation, business and labor groups on infrastructure, which will take up a major part of the upcoming \$3 trillion 'Build Back Better' plan." Politico adds, "Central to his approach is a Capitol Hill tour that's part listening session, part charm offensive."

However, the task he faces was evident in comments from lawmakers. For example, Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) told [CNBC's Squawk Box](#)^{Vi} (3/29, 154K), "Raising taxes generally is not a real popular issue for the American people. You look back to 2017, we worked hard to reduce taxes. It unleashed the economy. ... Democrats...unleashed big government with this massive spending and now proposed tax hikes."

In a separate story, [Axios](#) (3/29, Goba, Swan, 1.26M) says Biden's "plan to pay for his coming infrastructure package with big tax hikes" is "meeting some resistance from moderate Democrats." Axios says "several" House Democrats are "skeptical about Biden's tax-and-spend plans, and some were willing to say so on the record." Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ) "said he worries about tax increases that could slow economic recovery and drive residents out of his state." He said, "We need to be careful not to do anything that's too big or too much in the middle of a pandemic and an economic crisis." The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Tankersley, Cochrane, 20.6M) reports Rep. Tom Suozzi (D-NY) "warned that he would not support the president's plan unless it eliminated a rule that prevents taxpayers from deducting more than \$10,000 in local and state taxes from their federal income taxes. He is one of a handful of House Democrats who are calling on the president to repeal the provision."

Jennifer Rubin writes in the [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) that as Biden begins to roll out his two-part infrastructure plan, "he should not get hung up on 'bipartisanship' (if that is defined as Republican votes in Congress), nor should he minimize its scope. To the contrary, contrasting Democrats' support for a big, bold, forward-looking plans with Republicans' incessant obstructionism has been shown to be a political winner." Rubin argues, "'Selling' infrastructure is as easy as pointing to the thousands of crumbling bridges, gridlocked highways, dingy subway systems and crowded airports." Arguing against infrastructure projects "because we do not want to raise taxes on the very rich likely will only hurt Republicans."

OMB Expected To Release Biden's Discretionary Funding Request This Week.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Friedman, Plumer, 20.6M) reports that the Office of Management and Budget is "expected this week to release" President Biden's "discretionary funding request for the next fiscal year – detailing spending that is separate from the infrastructure plan." White House officials say the request "will lay out agency-by-agency funding levels and other information to help congressional committees begin to write next year's appropriation's bills, which for the first time in a decade will not be limited by spending caps imposed by Congress."

Boot: No One Seems To Care About Growing Federal Deficit. Max Boot writes in the [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) that "the federal deficit this year is projected to be \$3.4 trillion – even higher than last year's record-breaking \$3.1 trillion – and no one seems to much care." Boot says "we no longer have a political party devoted to fiscal conservatism. Democrats don't even pretend to care, and Republicans pretend to care only when a Democrat is in power."

Schumer Reportedly Believes Reconciliation Can Be Used More Expansively.

[Axios](#) (3/29, Allen, 1.26M) reports that Senate Majority Leader Schumer “believes he has found a route to moving additional bills by simple majority, beyond the one additional use of reconciliation that most on Capitol Hill had thought was his limit.” Schumer’s “top policy aides” recently “argued to the Senate parliamentarian that revising this year’s budget resolution could ‘trigger an additional set of reconciliation instructions,’ which would allow for further 50-50 votes that are decided by Vice President Harris.” It is unclear “how many additional reconciliation opportunities this theory would open up. But the conventional wisdom is that Democrats have just one more shot at reconciliation this year, and this route would give them at least one more.”

Senate Progressives Propose Taxing Capital-Gains At Death With \$1M Per Person Exemption.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Duehren, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports progressive Democrats in the Senate have indicated that their plan to tax unrealized capital gains at death should include a per-person exemption of \$1 million. Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and others released a discussion draft Monday that starts to add details to the idea President Biden endorsed during the campaign.

WPost Analysis: Summers Has Emerged As Loudest Critic Of Biden’s Economic Policy.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Lynch, 10.52M) former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers’ influence can be seen “just about everywhere you look in the Biden White House” except “for the policies.” Summers “has emerged in recent weeks as the loudest critic of President Biden’s approach to reviving the pandemic-era U.S. economy.” Summers “worries that a reopened economy could rev out of control,” but the “architects of Biden’s plan say any inflationary risks pale alongside the damage that could be done to millions of Americans if the administration doesn’t restore a vibrant economy.” Others argue his “inflation concerns conflict with his calls over the past several years for large-scale government spending to ward off ‘secular stagnation,’ or a permanent shortfall of demand.”

NYTimes Report: Biden Intent On Spending Far More On Climate Initiatives Than Obama Did In 2009.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Davenport, 20.6M) reports that President Biden is “preparing the details of a new, vastly larger, economic stimulus plan that...would use government spending to unite the goals of fighting climate change and restoring the economy. While clean energy spending was just a fraction of” former president Barack Obama’s 2009 “stimulus, Mr. Biden wants to make it the centerpiece of his proposal for trillions of dollars, not billions, on government grants, loans, and tax incentives to spark renewable power, energy efficiency and electric car production.” Energy Secretary Granholm “said her team was studying the lessons of 2009.” Granholm said, “When you invest in innovation sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn’t. But you learn from the losses more often than you do from the wins, just like any human, right?”

Legislation Would Create A “Chief Manufacturing Officer” In White House.

The [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) (3/29, 1.22M) reports “a bipartisan group of lawmakers in both Houses of Congress” have introduced legislation that would create a new White House position called “Chief Manufacturing Officer,” as well as “a new Office of Manufacturing and Industrial Innovation Policy (OMII) to help strengthen America’s manufacturing industry and workforce, improve global competitiveness following the coronavirus pandemic, and enhance research and development. Initial operations would be funded with \$20 million.” The measure has the support of “an assortment of unions and manufacturing groups,” and a spokesperson for one of the sponsors, Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), “said the legislation’s sponsors are optimistic it will pass because of its bipartisan backing in Congress and its support from President Joe Biden.”

IRS Delays Deadlines For IRA, HSA Contributions Until May.

[Politico](#) (3/29, Faler, 6.73M) reports the IRS announced Monday it is moving "several more tax deadlines into next month." The agency is "delaying until May 17, from April 15, the deadlines for making 2020 contributions to individual retirement accounts, health savings accounts and Coverdell education savings accounts." However, it "emphasized that it is not delaying the deadline for making estimated tax payments, on income that isn't subject to withholding, as some have demanded."

Suez Canal Traffic Resumes After Cargo Ship Is Freed.

The [AP](#) (3/29, DeBre, Magdy) reports salvage teams on Monday freed the Ever Given, "the colossal container ship stuck for nearly a week in the Suez Canal, ending a crisis that had clogged one of the world's most vital waterways and halted billions of dollars a day in maritime commerce." [Reuters](#) (3/29, Mohamed, Awadalla, Lewis) says with the ship dislodged, "113 ships were expected to transit the canal in both directions by early Tuesday morning, Suez Canal Authority (SCA) chairman Osama Rabie told reporters. He said a backlog of 422 ships could be cleared in 3 -1/2 days."

[Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Koh, Wardany, Magdy, 3.57M) reports, "Authorities expected operations to return to normal within days." [Axios](#) (3/29, Knutson, 1.26M) reports that "the Suez blockage was estimated to cost \$400 million per hour in delays to goods shipments."

In a separate story, [Reuters](#) (3/29) reports that on Monday, Russia's energy ministry made the case that the Suez blockage "highlighted the safety and sustainability of its Northern Sea Route (NSR) and Russian energy pipelines." According to Reuters, Russia "expects cargoes to increase through the Northern Sea Route, an Arctic Ocean route to Asia which trims 4,000 nautical miles off the southern alternative via the Suez Canal."

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Yee, 20.6M) says this was "one of the most consequential shipping accidents in history," and "the global supply chain industry will have a cascade of costly delays to contend with and much to assess: the size of container ships, the width of the Suez Canal, the wisdom of relying on just-in-time manufacturing to satisfy consumer demand around the world, and the role, if any, of human error." Similarly, the [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Raghavan, Taylor, Mellen, 10.52M) says "the spotlight is now likely to turn to the investigation of how the vessel got wedged into the Suez Canal, leading to billions of dollars in losses globally." [USA Today](#) (3/29, Bacon, 12.7M), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Jones, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), and the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/29, 3.37M) provide similar coverage, as did the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (3/29, story 6, 1:20, O'Donnell, 4.55M), [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (3/29, story 6, 1:10, Muir, 7.27M) and [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (3/29, story 9, 1:25, Holt, 5.9M) Monday evening.

CDC Extends National Eviction Moratorium Through June.

[Axios](#) (3/29, Saric, 1.26M) reports that in a statement on Monday, the CDC "extended its nationwide ban on evictions through the end of June." The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Thrush, 20.6M) says the CDC's extension was "widely expected," and the Department of Housing and Urban Development "earlier this year extended its own moratorium on federally financed housing to June 30."

According to [Politico](#) (3/29, O'Donnell, 6.73M), "Monday's extension makes no substantive changes to the policy, despite housing advocates pushing the administration to boost enforcement measures to prevent landlords from going around the moratorium." The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Swenson, 10.52M) says the extension comes "as the policy faces a growing number of challenges from landlords. Tenant advocates also question the policy's effectiveness, particularly in states like Virginia, where evictions continue due to loopholes and misinformation."

The [AP](#) (3/29, Khalil, Casey) reports to be eligible for the protection, “renters must earn \$198,000 annually or less for couples filing jointly, or \$99,000 for single filers; demonstrate that they’ve sought government help to pay the rent; declare that they can’t pay because of COVID-19 hardships; and affirm they are likely to become homeless if evicted.” The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (3/29, story 9, 0:15, O'Donnell, 4.18M) provided similar coverage in a brief report Monday evening.

Stocks Finish Mostly Lower, But Dow Posts A Record.

The [AP](#) (3/29, Choe, Troise, Veiga) reports stocks finished “mostly lower Monday, pulling the S&P 500 slightly below the all-time high it set last week, while nudging the Dow Jones Industrial Average to another record high.” According to [Reuters](#) (3/29, Valetkevitch), “optimism over the economy limited the day’s declines.” The Dow climbed 98.49 points to 33,171.37, the S&P 500 fell 3.45 points to 3,971.09 and the Nasdaq closed 79.08 points lower at 13,059.65. [Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Papuc, 3.57M) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Otani, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provide similar coverage.

Ballot-Counting In Amazon Union Election To Begin Tuesday.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Greene, 10.52M) reports although voting “in the high-stakes, high-profile union election at an Amazon warehouse in Alabama ends Monday,” the “final tally may days, or even weeks or months, to determine.” The vote, which the Post says is “one of the most important labor battles in recent history,” will not “be decided quickly.” The votes must be counted and “there are several opportunities in that process for both Amazon and the union to contest results.” The losing side “could challenge the results through the National Labor Relations Board or in court, which could delay the outcome for weeks if not longer.” The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Weise, Corkery, 20.6M) says counting will begin on Tuesday. The Times adds, “If the union prevails, workers fear that the company may shut down the warehouse.”

WSJournal: Vermont Wants To Use Federal Aid For Pension Funds.

A [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) editorial says Vermont’s budget has a surplus because the state received \$1.3 billion from the Cares Act and is getting another \$1.3 billion from the American Rescue Plan. The Journal says Democrats in the legislature want to put \$150 million of the surplus into state pension funds though the federal law prohibits it and implement reforms. Meanwhile, state unions want to raise taxes to fund the pension rather than support the reforms. It is, the Journal says, an example of progressive government in action.

China Warns Apparel Makers Not To Promote Xinjiang Forced-Labor Claims.

[Reuters](#) (3/29, Cadell) reports that on Monday, Chinese officials “said Sweden’s H&M and other foreign brands should not make rash moves or step into politics after the companies raised concerns about forced labour in Xinjiang, sparking a furious online backlash and boycotts.” According to Reuters, “H&M, Burberry, Nike, Adidas and other Western brands have been hit by consumer boycotts in China since last week over comments about their sourcing of cotton in Xinjiang.” On Monday, Xinjiang government spokesman Xu Guixiang said, “I don’t think a company should politicize its economic behaviour. ... Can H&M continue to make money in the Chinese market? Not anymore.”

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Dou, 10.52M) says the CCP has been “seeking to control the domestic narrative over Xinjiang, flooding social media platforms for days with official media posts defending the work conditions there” and “calls to boycott Western fashion brands.” According to the Post, China Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying “has posted primarily about Xinjiang in recent days, with a dozen tweets defending its cotton industry and criticizing U.S. policies on Muslims since Sunday.”

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Zhong, Mozur, 20.6M) reports that in September, when H&M "said...that it was ending its relationship with a Chinese supplier accused of using forced labor, a few Chinese social media accounts dedicated to the textile industry took note. But by and large, the moment passed without fanfare." However, the Times adds that "half a year later, Beijing's online outrage machine sprang into action," and "its wrath was unsparing." According to the Times, "The Communist Party's youth wing denounced H&M on social media and posted an archival photo of slaves on an American cotton plantation," and "within hours, a tsunami of nationalist fury was crashing down upon H&M, Nike, Uniqlo and other international clothing brands, becoming the latest eruption over China's policies in...Xinjiang, a major cotton producer."

Olsen Welcomes Biden's Delay In Lifting Trump's China Tariffs.

Henry Olsen writes in the [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) that after President Biden's criticism of former President Donald Trump's tariffs on goods from China during the campaign, it is "both surprising and welcome...that so far they are staying put." Olden says Biden's "change of heart is welcome because of the increasingly obvious threat Communist China poses to the United States and world. China's government uses the wealth it receives from foreign trade to build its military and finance its global influence," and "trade with the United States is a significant source of the wealth China is using to bolster its influence abroad." Biden, Olsen argues, "should keep the pressure on China, and that means keeping the tariffs."

Supreme Court Reinstates Death Sentence For Tennessee Inmate.

[The Hill](#) (3/29, Kruzal, 5.69M) reports the Supreme Court in an eight-to-one decision on Monday reinstated the death sentence of Anthony Hines, "a Tennessee inmate convicted of the 1985 murder of a hotel maid, reversing a lower court finding that the defendant had received unacceptably poor defense counsel." The Hill says the Supreme Court "ruled that any shortcomings in Hines's defense had failed to clear the high legal hurdle needed to set aside his conviction" and concluded that the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals "had failed to adequately take into account all of the facts supporting Hines's guilty conviction." Justice Sonia Sotomayor "dissented without comment."

Romney Says He Will Not Vote For New Federal Gun Laws.

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (3/29, Rodgers, 284K) reports Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT) on Monday "indicated he will not support attempts to tighten federal gun laws in the wake of recent back-to-back mass shootings, although he's open to working with his colleagues on improving background check technology." Romney told the Tribune's editorial board that he would "honor [his] commitment" not to vote for new federal gun legislation, which he "argued [is] more appropriate...at a state level."

Graham Says He Owns AR-15 To Defend Home Against "Gangs." [USA Today](#) (3/29, Mendoza, 12.7M) reports Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) "said on 'Fox News Sunday' he would use his AR-15 to defend his home if needed, a comment that drew the ire of some gun control advocates." He stated, "If there is a natural disaster in South Carolina where the cops can't protect my neighborhood, my house will be the last one that the gang will come to because I can defend myself." According to USA Today, "Gun control advocates were outraged by Graham's comments, including Golden State Warriors head coach Steve Kerr, whose father died from gun violence."

A [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Bump, 10.52M) analysis says that Graham laid out "a very specific scenario, evoking a Rambo-esque Graham standing on his front porch spraying bullets at encroaching marauders – gang members, to use Graham's specific evocation," but "despite the specificity, it's a familiar framing for such debates: I need to be able to protect myself in a what-if scenario." However, the Post adds this scenario "is not the reality of South Carolina gun violence," and asserts "it is safe to say, based on the numbers above and on past research, that

it is more likely that a firearm in someone's home will be used for a suicide than for self-defense in a police-free dystopia."

Education Department Cancels Student Debt For Some Students With Disabilities.

The [AP](#) (3/29, Binkley) reports the Education Department on Monday announced that it "is canceling student debt for more than 40,000 Americans who were previously granted loan forgiveness because of disabilities but later had their debt reinstated after they failed to submit certain paperwork." This loan forgiveness program "was created to help people who are 'totally and permanently disabled' and unable to generate significant income." The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Douglas-Gabriel, 10.52M) reports the Social Security Administration and Department of Education found about 400,000 individuals eligible for the loan forgiveness "and encouraged those borrowers to apply, but few did." Thus, "nearly 70 percent of those eligible borrowers, who hold an estimated \$14 billion in student debt, have not received relief, according to data the department provided Congress."

WSJournal Celebrates That States Are Seeing Progress With School Choice.

A [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) editorial hails how the pandemic has pushed states to advance school choice reforms.

Supreme Court To Hear Kentucky Abortion Case.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Barnes, 10.52M) reports the Supreme Court on Monday announced it "will decide whether Kentucky's Republican attorney general can defend the state's restrictive abortion law against the wishes of its Democratic governor." The Post says that while the law "would effectively ban after 15 weeks a common procedure used to terminate a pregnancy in the second trimester," the Supreme Court case "does not ask the court to reconsider its abortion jurisprudence." The Post adds the Supreme Court will instead rule on "whether the appeals court was right to bar Attorney General Daniel Cameron from taking over the case to further challenge the ruling."

[CNN](#) (3/29, Vogue, Kelly, 89.21M) reports on its website that Cameron "sought to defend the law after the state's Democratic administration declined to continue doing so." [Politico](#) (3/29, Ollstein, 6.73M) reports the abortion case is the Supreme Court's first "with a newly fortified 6-3 conservative majority."

WPost Criticizes Republican Officials For Blocking Americans From Access To Medicaid Expansion.

A [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) editorial says the past year "has been a landmark year for the Affordable Care Act. For the first time, due to the covid-19 epidemic, the safety net that Congress created 11 years ago has had to catch large numbers of Americans as they lose their jobs and their health-care insurance. Thankfully, President Biden wants the law to succeed, unlike his predecessor." The Post calls out Republican officials in several states who continue to "block access for 2 million Americans." The Post concedes that although "some holdout states appear to be reconsidering" their opposition to Medicaid expansion, Florida and Texas are not, which means "more than 1 million low-income Americans will lack coverage that the federal government wants to provide them."

Administration "Still Struggling With A Surge Of Migrant Children."

On [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (3/29, story 7, 1:40, Holt, 5.9M), Antonia Hylton reported that "despite opening more housing facilities, the Biden Administration is still struggling with a surge of migrant children at the border." Hylton added, "According to new data obtained by NBC News, a record 5,400 unaccompanied children are now being held in border patrol's jail-like facilities. Nearly 4,000 children are being detained longer than the 72 hours allowed by law. Here in Rio Grande Valley Border Patrol facilities are at 800% capacity."

On the [CBS Evening News](#) (3/29, story 5, 2:15, O'Donnell, 4.18M), Lilia Luiano reported the San Diego convention center “now housing 500 migrant girls between the ages of 13 and 17 who crossed the border alone. Another 250 are expected to arrive later tonight where they will stay until they can be reunited with family, a sponsor, or head to a long-term shelter.” According to Luiano, “It is part of the race to find space for the more than 18,000 unaccompanied migrant children now in US custody. The Department of Health and Human Services will open nine emergency facilities with more than 16,000 beds and is considering opening more sites for children.” Meanwhile, the [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/29, Carcamo, 3.37M) profiles a five-year-old Honduran boy who has been separated from his family for a month since crossing the US border.

Guatemala Announces New Border Restrictions. The [AP](#) (3/29) reports that Guatemalan President Alejandro Giammattei on Monday “decreed a ‘state of prevention’” on his country’s border with Honduras, “amid reports that a new migrant caravan may be forming in Honduras.” The AP adds Giammattei’s decree “would restrict open-air gatherings and demonstrations without permits, and will be in effect for two weeks in the five Guatemalan provinces along the border with Honduras.”

New York Post Criticizes Administration’s Immigration Policies. A [New York Post](#) (3/29, 7.45M) editorial says that while President Biden last week tasked Vice President Harris “with leading the White House response to the near-record surge of migrants crossing the southern border,” her schedule “doesn’t have a single immigration-related meeting.” The Post concludes, “Biden & Co.’s only real priority is to do absolutely nothing to secure the border. After that, they’ve got nothing but confusion – including over who’s in charge of the crisis . . . if anyone is.”

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

WHO-China Report On Pandemic’s Origin Rules Out Lab Leak Hypothesis.

The [AP](#) (3/29, Moritsugu, Keaten) reports that “a joint World Health Organization-China study on the origins of COVID-19 says that transmission of the virus from bats to humans through another animal is the most likely scenario and that a lab leak is ‘extremely unlikely.’” According to the AP, “The findings offer little new insight into how the virus first emerged and leave many questions unanswered.” The AP notes that the researchers “proposed further research in every area except the lab leak hypothesis.”

[Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Krasny, Czuczka, 3.57M) says that on Sunday, “Top Biden administration officials...expressed concern about the way” the “pivotal” report was “crafted, including the possibility that the Chinese government had a hand in writing it.” Bloomberg reports that the Biden Administration “has maintained pressure on China and the WHO for weeks over what it has portrayed as a flawed investigation.”

According to the [New York Times](#) (3/29, Hernández, 20.6M), “Critics have assailed the inquiry by the W.H.O. team as insufficient, saying the global health agency has been too deferential to Beijing.” The Times says Chinese scientists, “many of whom are affiliated with the government, helped oversee the inquiry, and the report was repeatedly delayed amid delicate negotiations with Chinese officials.” The Times also notes that “for months, China sought to delay the visit of the investigators in an apparent attempt to avoid scrutiny of its early mistakes in handling the pandemic.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Hinshaw, Page, McKay, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) covers the WHO-China teams findings in an article titled “WHO Report Into Covid-19 Origins Leaves Key Questions Unanswered.”

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Rauhala, 10.52M) reports that on Monday, WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus “said ‘all hypotheses are open’ and warrant future study.” According to the Post, “Given China’s coverup of the outbreak in Wuhan, the WHO’s early praise for the country’s response, and the fact that it took a full year to get independent

foreign experts on the ground, the critical but challenging search for clues faced skepticism from the start." The Post adds, "Questions about Chinese interference will be hard to shake" considering that "much of the data was collected by Chinese scientists ahead of the visit and then analyzed by the joint team."

[Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Gale, Adghirni, Gretler, 3.57M) says the report's "findings mirror what researchers said last month, at the end of their mission to Wuhan. ... A spillover from bats via another animal is the most likely scenario in the report, followed by direct spillover. Introduction through frozen food was deemed possible, and a laboratory accident considered extremely unlikely." Bloomberg adds, "The research center...wasn't storing or testing coronaviruses or bat viruses ahead of the outbreak, the report said. The authors also said that the three laboratories working in Wuhan on coronaviruses and vaccines had high biosafety levels and there was no evidence of Covid spreading among workers there." [CNBC](#) (3/29, 7.34M) reports on its website that "the closest relative of the virus that causes Covid-19 has been found in bats, which are known to carry coronaviruses. However, the report says that 'the evolutionary distance between these bat viruses and SARS-CoV-2 is estimated to be several decades, suggesting a missing link.'"

However, Keir Simmons reported on [NBC Nightly NewsVi](#) (3/29, story 3, 1:55, Holt, 5.46M) that critics "say the WHO team only made brief visits to the Wuhan Institute of Virology and never received all of the information they requested from Chinese officials." [Politico](#) (3/29, Owerhohle, 6.73M) points out that last week, former CDC Director Robert Redfield "said he still thinks the virus escaped a Wuhan lab." On [ABC World News TonightVi](#) (3/29, story 4, 0:25, 6.92M), David Muir said that "China's delay in allowing outside experts in has cast a shadow over the investigation."

WHO, Leaders Of 23 Countries Endorse Pandemic Treaty For Future Health Emergencies.

[Reuters](#) (3/29, Strupczewski) reports the World Health Organization and the leaders of 23 countries on Tuesday "backed an idea to create an international treaty that would help the world deal with future health emergencies like the coronavirus pandemic now ravaging the globe." The concept "of such a treaty, which would ensure universal and equitable access to vaccines, medicines and diagnostics for pandemics, was floated by the chairman of European Union leaders Charles Michel at a G20 summit last November."

Canadian Health Officials To Stop Using AstraZeneca's Vaccine For People Under 55.

[Reuters](#) (3/29, Ljunggren, Martell) reports Canadian health officials "said on Monday they would stop offering AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine to people under age 55 and require a new analysis of the shot's benefits and risks based on age and gender." Reuters says the suspension "affects both versions of the vaccine approved in Canada: One granted to AstraZeneca Canada, and a second for the Serum Institute of India (SII) – which is manufacturing its own version of the vaccine under license – and its Canadian partner Verity Pharmaceuticals."

Meanwhile, the [AP](#) (3/29, Gillies) reports Canada "received its first shipment of AstraZeneca this month – 500,000 doses from India," and [Axios](#) (3/29, Perano, 1.26M) reports the US had been "set to send Canada 1.5 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccines this week." In addition, [Bloomberg](#) (3/29, Bolongaro, Bochove, Argitis, 3.57M) says the suspension "comes as new virus cases are on the rise: Canada reported an average of 4,352 new cases a day over the seven days ended March 28, up 23% from the previous week."

Cuba Has Developed Five Vaccine Candidates, Two In Late-Stage Trials.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Faiola, Herrero, 10.52M) reports Cuba is "on the cusp of a singular breakthrough: Becoming the world's smallest country to develop not just one, but multiple coronavirus vaccines." The Post says "five vaccine candidates are in development, two in late-stage trials with the goal of a broader rollout by May." According to the Post, "Should they prove

successful, the vaccines would be an against-the-odds feat of medical prowess – as well as a public relations coup – for an isolated country of 11 million that was added back to the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism in the final days of the Trump administration.”

UK Begins Easing Lockdown.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Landler, Castle, 20.6M) reports that even as Germany and France are “ordering people back into their homes,” the British government “moved on Monday to relax its strict national lockdown, allowing people to gather outdoors in groups of up to six people.” According to the Times, “The latest cautious steps, announced by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, widened the gulf between how Britain and much of Europe have handled the latest phase of the pandemic. From the rate of vaccinations to new cases of the virus and hospital admissions, the two seem to be moving in opposite directions.”

López Obrador Announces Autopsy Result For Murdered Prisoner.

The [AP](#) (3/29, Verza, Aleman) reports Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador “said Monday that an autopsy of a Salvadoran woman who died in police custody confirmed that police broke her neck.” The examination “found ‘a fracture of part of the upper spinal column produced by the rupture of the first and second vertebra which caused the loss of the victim.’”

[Reuters](#) (3/29) reports López Obrador “said 36-year-old Victoria Salazar Arriaza had been subject to ‘brutal treatment and murdered’ after her detention on Saturday by four police officers in the tourist resort of Tulum on the Caribbean coast.” He vowed justice for Arriaza, saying, “It’s a situation that fills us with sadness, pain and shame.”

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Lopez, 20.6M) reports Arriaza “died on Saturday after being detained by the police in Tulum, a resort town on the Yucatán Peninsula.” Social media videos “show an officer kneeling on the woman’s back as she cried out.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (3/29, 3.37M) reports that the attorney general of Quintana Roo announced the arrests of the four officers on Monday. The officers “were charged with feminicide, a special category of homicide linked to misogyny or sexism.” and conviction “could bring prison terms of between 20 and 50 years.” The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Hassan, Sheridan, 10.52M) also reports.

Thailand Begins Sending Ethnic Karen Back To Burma.

The [AP](#) (3/29) reports that on Monday, “Thai soldiers began sending back some of the thousands of people who have fled a series of airstrikes by the military” in Burma. The AP says, “The weekend strikes, which sent ethnic Karen people seeking safety in Thailand, represented another escalation in the violent crackdown by Myanmar’s junta on protests of its Feb. 1 takeover.” According to the AP, “The violence by the Myanmar military – both on the border and in cities around the country – raised the question of whether the international community would respond more forcefully than it has thus far to a coup that ousted the government led by Aung San Suu Kyi and reversed years of progress toward democracy.”

[Bloomberg](#) (3/29, 3.57M) reports that the Karen National Union, “which controls an area in the southeast along the Thai border, confirmed Monday that about 10,000 residents fled to a safe zone last weekend.” Bloomberg reports that the airstrikes “came out in retaliation for an attack by ethnic Karen rebels on a base of the national army...in which 10 soldiers were killed and another eight were arrested.” Bloomberg adds, “The attacks came on the same day at least 114 people were killed in clashes with the military and police...sparking condemnation from governments around the world.” According to Bloomberg, “With the death toll now standing at nearly 500 over the past two months, the prospect of a wider fight with potentially dozens of armed militias risks even more bloodshed.”

[Reuters](#) (3/29) reports, “Despite the violence, crowds turned out in towns across the country, according to media and social media posts. One of the main groups behind the protests, the General Strike Committee of Nationalities, called in an open letter on Facebook for

ethnic minority forces to help those standing up to the 'unfair oppression' of the military. 'It is necessary for the ethnic armed organisations to collectively protect the people,' the group said."

According to the [Washington Post](#) (3/29, Mahtani, 10.52M), the Burmese military's "targeting of children, civilians and peaceful protesters, human rights experts say, constitute acts of terrorism, designed to subjugate a population that has risen up against the army's seizure of power." The Post adds, "After an especially bloody weekend, protesters and human rights groups are calling for stronger action from the international community, and warn that children are at particular risk."

[Reuters](#) (3/29) reports that on Monday, the Kremlin "said...that it was deeply concerned by the rising number of civilian deaths in Myanmar despite a high profile visit by Russia's deputy defence minister to the southeast Asian nation to deepen military ties." According to Reuters, "The visit, by Alexander Fomin, the deputy defence minister, drew strong criticism from rights activists who accused Moscow of legitimising Myanmar's military junta." Reuters says junta leader Min Aung Hlaing "said Russia was a 'true friend' and welcomed the presence of Russian forces at the annual Army Day parade on Saturday, the bloodiest day so far."

WPost Says US Must Expand Pressure Campaign On Burma. The [Washington Post](#) (3/29, 10.52M) argues that the latest massacres mirror the 1988 and 2007 crackdowns, but it warns that continued repression could result in a "Syrian-style civil war" as opposed to a return to peace. It calls on the international community to unite in protest against Burma's military leadership in an effort to curtail the violence, and adds that the US should lead by widening the sanctions regime to include exports as well as foreign companies supporting the military.

WSJournal: US Must Stand In Solidarity With Burmese Protestors. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) lauds US statements in support of Burmese protestors, but it warns that the escalating crisis risks the region as a whole. It adds that while additional sanctions may not convince the Burmese junta to end its violent repressive measure, the US must continue to act in concert with its allies to end the violence.

US Considering New Sanctions On North Korea.

The [AP](#) (3/29) reports UN Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield said the Biden Administration is "looking at 'additional actions' that the United Nations might take to respond to North Korea's recent missile tests." Thomas-Greenfield "wasn't specific about what those actions might entail, but noted that the UN Security Council had met last week and renewed the mandate of experts who monitor sanctions against the North."

NYTimes Analysis: China Working To Build New World Order Not Beholden To US.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Myers, 20.6M) says, "Only days after a rancorous encounter with American officials in Alaska, China's foreign minister joined his Russian counterpart last week to denounce Western meddling and sanctions. He then headed to the Middle East to visit traditional American allies, including Saudi Arabia and Turkey, as well as Iran, where he signed a sweeping investment agreement on Saturday." At the same time, President Xi Jinping "reached out to Colombia one day and pledged support for North Korea on another." According to the Times, "Although officials denied the timing was intentional, the message clearly was. China hopes to position itself as the main challenger to an international order, led by the United States, that is generally guided by principles of democracy, respect for human rights and adherence to rule of law."

Australian PM Announces Cabinet Reshuffle Following Assault, Harassment Scandals.

The [New York Times](#) (3/29, Cave, 20.6M) reports Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced a cabinet reshuffling on Monday, "demoting two ministers tied to separate scandals, but keeping them in senior positions." Defense Minister Linda Reynolds will "become the minister for government services," while Attorney General Christian Porter will "give up that role while continuing to serve in the cabinet as the minister for science, industry and technology."

Politico Report: Biden Will Present Iran With Interim Nuclear Deal As Soon As This Week.

According to [Politico](#) (3/29, Toosi, 6.73M), "If President Joe Biden is serious about rejoining the Iran nuclear deal, then the next few weeks could prove make-or-break," and Biden Administration officials, "mindful of the increasingly unfavorable calendar, plan to put forth a new proposal to jump-start the talks as soon as this week." Politico says Biden's "proposal asks Iran to halt some of its nuclear activities, such as work on advanced centrifuges and the enrichment of uranium to 20 percent purity, in exchange for some relief from U.S. economic sanctions." Politico adds that both US and Iranian officials are "aware that if no breakthrough takes place over the next few weeks, little is likely to happen until September at the earliest, and that's if the deal can be saved at all."

WSJournal: New China-Iran Economic Deal Shows Limits Of Biden's Election.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (3/29, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) argues that the latest 25-year economic partnership signed between China and Iran shows that the election of Biden did not solve the world's problems as well as the limits of US foreign policy thinking in both parties. The Journal warns that the growth of the Chinese-Iranian alliance will only threaten US interests as it continues to expand in the coming years.

Hagel Dismisses May 1 Afghanistan Deadline As Unrealistic.

[The Hill](#) (3/29, Mitchell, 5.69M) reports former Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel on Monday dismissed May 1 deadline set by then-President Donald Trump to remove all US troops from Afghanistan as unrealistic. He told The Hill, "I think it's time that we will have to leave and I think we will leave, but it has to be done responsibly." Hagel also "called the Trump-era agreement 'very irresponsible,'" but he "said the United States still must move to untangle itself from military commitments in the country."

Millions Of Syrians Face Starvation Amid Aid Shortfall.

The [AP](#) (3/29, El Deeb) says that "despite the worsening humanitarian situation across war-ravaged Syria, it's been getting tougher every year to raise money from global donors," and "the aid community is bracing for significant shortfalls ahead of a donor conference that starts Monday in Brussels...co-hosted by the United Nations and the European Union." According to the AP, "Nine out of 10 people live below the poverty line and in northwest Syria, close to three-quarters of the 4.3 million residents are food insecure."

UN Report Concludes Houthis Responsible For December Attack On Aden Airport.

[Reuters](#) (3/29, Landay, Ghantous, Mourad) reports that UN sources say that a forthcoming analysis "found Yemen's Houthis were responsible for a Dec. 30 attack on Aden airport that killed at least 22 people as members of the country's internationally recognized government arrived." The investigators "presented their report to the U.N. committee that oversees Yemen-related sanctions during closed consultations on Friday, but Russia blocked its wider release."

Report: Mozambique ISIS Militants Behead Residents Of Palma.

The [AP](#) (3/29, Meldrum) reports that the Islamic State claimed responsibility for a new attack on the city of Palma, which "left beheaded bodies strewn in the streets." The group said that the ISIS Central Africa Province led the operation.

THE BIG PICTURE

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Goldman, Morgan Stanley Limit Losses With Fast Sale Of Archegos Assets](#)
[Ship Stuck In The Suez Canal Is Freed](#)
[Coronavirus Was Supposed To Drive Bankruptcies Higher. The Opposite Happened.](#)
[NCAA Faces Showdown Over Player Compensation – And Future Of College Sports](#)
[You're Going Back To The Office. What Happens To Your Nap Habit?](#)

New York Times:

['Believe Your Eyes,' Prosecutor Tells Jury On First Day Of Derek Chauvin Trial](#)
[Biden Pushes Mask Mandate As CDC Director Warns Of 'Impending Doom'](#)
[Virus Origins Remain Unclear In WHO-China Inquiry](#)
[Why Transgender Girls Are Suddenly The GOP's Culture-War Focus](#)
[Biden Administration Announces A Major Offshore Wind Plan](#)
[Biden's Lesson From Past Green Stimulus Failures: Go Even Bigger](#)

Washington Post:

[Biden Team Shifts Its Tax Strategy On Next Big Bill](#)
[Emotional First Day In Chauvin Trial](#)
[Signs Of A Virus Surge Multiply](#)
[Pro-Trump Groups Jockey For Donors](#)
['I'm Never Going To See My Son Again'](#)

Financial Times:

[Credit Suisse And Nomura Warn Of Losses After Archegos-Linked Sell-Off](#)
[Suez Canal Ship Finally Free In Boost For Global Trade](#)
[What Is At Stake As Mozambique Conflict Flares?](#)
[Cameron Faces Probe Into Links With Greensill At Heart Of Government](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Chauvin Trial; Chauvin Trial Analysis; COVID Update; CDC-Wuhan Report; Cuomo-Accusations; Suez Canal; Ghislaine Maxwell; Iowa State Crew Club-Boat Capsized; Reuniting With Pets.

CBS: Chauvin Trial; Chauvin Trial Analysis; COVID Update; Tennessee-Floods; Border Crisis; Suez Canal; Cuomo-Accusations; Alaska-Helicopter Crash; Eviction Ban; Biden-Vietnam Memorial.

NBC: Chauvin Trial; COVID Update; CDC-Wuhan Report; Cuomo-Accusations; Ghislaine Maxwell; Tennessee-Floods; Border Crisis; Georgia-Election Laws; Suez Canal; COVID-Vacation Rentals; North Carolina-High School Football.

Network TV At A Glance:

Chauvin Trial – 15 minutes, 55 seconds
COVID Update – 9 minutes, 0 seconds
Suez Canal – 3 minutes, 55 seconds
Cuomo-Accusations – 3 minutes, 25 seconds

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

- President Biden — Signs the PPP Extension Act of 2021 into law; the Vice President and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration also attend.

- Vice President Harris — Joins the President when he signs the PPP Extension Act of 2021 into law.

US Senate:

- Senate on recess from 26 Mar – 12 Apr

US House:

- House of Representatives on recess from 26 Mar – 12 Apr

Cabinet Officers:

- Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS small group foreign ministers meeting, co-hosted by Secretary of State Blinken (virtual) – Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS Small Group Foreign Ministers virtual meeting, co-hosted by Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Sophie Wilmes, with agenda including ways to sustain pressure on the Islamic State group remnants in Iraq and Syria and to counter the group's networks elsewhere, including in Africa

Visitors:

- No visitors scheduled.

General Events:

- Fed vice chairman speaks on Peterson Institute event (virtual) – Peterson Institute for International Economics virtual event with Federal Reserve Vice Chair Randal Quarles, discussing his work as chair of the Financial Stability Board (FSB); 9:00 AM
- Heritage Foundation discussion on Russian interference in U.S.-Czech missile defense cooperation (virtual) – 'Confronting Russian Interference in U.S.-Czech Missile Defense Cooperation' Heritage Foundation virtual event, to discuss how Russia advanced its goals in the Czech Republic, and how the U.S. and NATO can work together prevent this from happening again. Speakers include National Institute for Public Policy Research Scholar Michaela Dodge, Czech Republic Ministry of Defense Security Expert Otakar Foltyn, and European Values Center for Security Policy Executive Director Jakub Janda; 10:00 AM
- U.S. Supreme Court hearing – U.S. Supreme Court hearing: 'TransUnion v. Ramirez' (Whether either Article III or Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23 permits a damages class action when the vast majority of the class suffered no actual injury, let alone an injury anything like what the class representative suffered?); 10:00 AM
- Czech Embassy of the U.S. launches SPORTSDIP sports series (virtual) – Czech Embassy of the U.S. launches SPORTSDIP sports series with a virtual discussion on 'Sport as a Tool for Public Diplomacy'. Speakers include Czech Olympic Committee Vice President Roman Kumpost, State Department's Sports Diplomacy Unit Program Officer Ryan Murphy, and Czech olympian Danka Bartekova; 10:00 AM
- Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff visits a COVID-19 vaccination site in Silver Spring, Maryland with U.S. Representative Jamie Raskin (D-MD); 10:00 AM
- Washington Post Live discussion on 'Reimagining a Just Society' – 'Opportunity in Crisis: Reimagining a Just Society' Washington Post Live virtual discussion, with former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julian Castro, Democratic Rep. Marilyn Strickland, and Ford Foundation President Darren Walker; 10:00 AM
- Army chief of staff discusses role in the Indo-Pacific (virtual) – 'The Army in the Indo-Pacific' Center for Strategic and International Studies online discussion, with Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville and Army Pacific Commanding General gen. Paul LaCamera; 11:00 AM
- Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki; 12:30 PM
- Dem Rep. Suzan DelBene discusses her Information Transparency and Personal Data Control Act (virtual) – NDN webinar with Democratic Rep. Suzan DelBene, who discusses her

Information Transparency and Personal Data Control Act, legislation which would 'create a national data privacy standard to protect our most personal information'; *1:00 PM*

- [EPA White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council virtual meeting](#); *2:00 PM*
- [CSIS discussion on Chinese security threats \(virtual\)](#) – 'Securing America's Networks Against Chinese Security Threats' Center for Strategic and International Studies online discussion, with Federal Communications Commissioner Brendan Carr discussing the steps the agency should take to secure our 5G networks and address the use of Uyghur forced labor in the telecom supply chain. Other speakers include U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Commissioner Nury Turkel and Heritage Foundation Senior Research Fellow Dean Cheng; *2:30 PM*

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