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 FBI News Briefing

**TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF**

**DATE: FRIDAY, MAY 7, 2021 6:30 AM EDT**

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## LEADING THE NEWS

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### **FBI San Francisco Pushing Back Against Anti-Asian Hate Crimes.**

The [AP](#) (5/6, Rodriguez) reports the FBI San Francisco office has launched an ad campaign "to encourage the victims of hate crimes to come forward," placing "an ad on a city train that reads 'Speak Up, Be Heard, Report Now. Report Hate Crimes to the FBI.'" The campaign comes "amid a wave of attacks against Asian Americans – many of them elderly – in San Francisco and across the country." The move coincides with a social media campaign. The AP quotes San Francisco SAC Craig Fair saying, "I want to assure the community that the FBI works to protect all victims of crimes, regardless of their country of national origin or immigration status. Acts of hate and racism have no place here and will not be tolerated."

[KTVU-TV](#) San Francisco (5/6, 232K) also covers the "new strategy to combat hate crimes," under which "the FBI will train more special agents to conduct hate crime and civil rights investigations, as well as conduct outreach to community groups, religious organizations, and minority associations to strengthen trust and encourage the public to report hate crimes. To further increase awareness and encourage the reporting of hate crimes, the FBI has launched a public awareness campaign on social media, as well as through advertisements on Muni trains in San Francisco."

[KPIX-TV](#) San Francisco (5/6, 110K) reports the move is meant to "counter a stunning surge in San Francisco Bay Area hate crimes, particularly those targeting the Asian American community. The agency's San Francisco office said the strategy would include directing new resources and personnel toward hate crime investigations, increasing coordination and cooperation with other law enforcement agencies, community outreach, and public awareness."

The [San Mateo \(CA\) Daily Journal](#) (5/6, 43K) also reports.

### **Hostage Standoff At Minnesota Bank Ends.**

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (5/6, 855K) reported employees at a Wells Fargo branch in St. Cloud, Minnesota, were being held hostage by an alleged bank robber Thursday afternoon. According to local police, the FBI is assisting in the response. "Law enforcement officials said that as of late Thursday afternoon, more than 3½ hours after the robbery was reported, that an unspecified number of hostages remain held by a male suspect." In a subsequent article, the [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (5/6, 855K) reports the "hourlong standoff ended late Thursday at a St. Cloud bank after a fifth and final bank employee taken hostage during an early afternoon robbery was freed." Video from the scene shows law enforcement entering after the final hostage leaves and arresting the suspect. "Late Thursday, local law enforcement officers and the FBI said negotiations had continued with a male suspect in the bank robbery, which was reported at 1:45 p.m."

The [St. Cloud \(MN\) Times](#) (5/6, 44K) reports, "After an eight-hour long standoff Thursday, a suspect was led out of a St. Cloud Wells Fargo bank branch in handcuffs around 10:30 p.m."

[USA Today](#) (5/6, Haecherl, Newland, 12.7M) reported earlier that local police were "trying to negotiate" the release of the hostages "with the help of the FBI." [CNN](#) (5/6, Vera, Allen, 89.21M) also reported.

## CAPITOL RIOTS

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### **FBI Continues To Make Arrests In Capitol Siege.**

[NBC News](#) (5/6, 4.91M) reports, "Four months after the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol, FBI agents maintain a steady pace of arresting people accused of taking part," calling the case "one of the largest criminal investigations in American history." Authorities have arrested over 440 suspects, "coming from all but five states. ... The largest number come from Texas, Pennsylvania, and Florida, in that order." Over 60 "face some of the most serious charges, of assaulting officers with the U.S. Capitol Police and Washington's Metropolitan Police departments. Officials said 140 officers were injured during the riot." The FBI is "sort[ing] through hundreds of thousands of public tips."

[Yahoo! News](#) (5/6, Knowles, 10.87M) reports in the months since the insurrection, "the FBI has fanned out across the country, arresting individuals in all but six U.S. states, NBC News reported." The FBI has posted "hundreds of pictures of suspects" on its website "and has asked the public for help leading to the arrests of those who took part in the riot that injured approximately 140 members of both the U.S. Capitol Police and Washington's Metropolitan Police." This article quotes the Bureau saying on its website, "The FBI is seeking the public's assistance in identifying individuals who made unlawful entry into the U.S. Capitol building and committed various other alleged criminal violations, such as destruction of property, assaulting law enforcement personnel, targeting members of the media for assault, and other unlawful conduct, on January 6, 2021, in Washington, D.C."

### **Democrats Seek Additional Funding For Capitol Security.**

[CNN](#) (5/6, Grayer, Herb, 89.21M) reports House Appropriations Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro and congressional leaders "have started negotiating on what a funding supplemental for Capitol security should look like, though they have not yet reached an agreement yet on what should go in the bill – or how to address policy questions like what to do with fencing around the Capitol." They "are preparing to move a \$2 billion supplemental funding bill to address US Capitol security to the floor later this month, despite some outstanding questions – and reservations – among Republicans and even some Senate Democrats about the spending."

[The Hill](#) (5/6, Elis, 5.69M) reports that Democrats "are likely to huddle on the supplemental spending bill Monday before unveiling the legislation and sending it to the House Rules Committee for floor consideration." The measure will "deal with issues relating to the Capitol Police and its preparedness, beefing up the Capitol complex and providing members of Congress additional security."

### **Republicans Criticize Lofgren After Publication Of Social Media Post Compilation.**

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (5/6, Kopan, 2.44M) reports that Republicans "are firing back at Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) over a compilation she created of their social media posts related to the 2020 election and Jan. 6 insurrection, filing a complaint against her that was made public Thursday." Lofgren "defended herself in a reply, saying that it is part of Congress' duty to investigate any officeholder's potential role in an insurrection." The escalation "reveals how high tensions remain between Democrats and Republicans as the GOP continues to spread baseless doubt over President Biden's win over Donald Trump in the November election."

### **Secret Service Director: Agency Needs More Funding To Provide Security For High-Profile Events.**

[CBS News](#) (5/6, Sganga, 5.39M) reports US Secret Service Director James Murray "told lawmakers Thursday that the agency needs more money to fund coverage of high-profile functions that are designated as National Special Security Events (NSSEs) – there were five events that were specially designated and federally coordinated in the past year." Such an event "prompts the federal government – led by the Secret Service in coordination with the FBI and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – to work together to secure large venues that may be targeted by violent actors." CBS notes that the January 6 election result certification at the US Capitol "was not designated an NSSE by the federal government. ... In the agency's first public hearing since the January 6 riot, Murray called the siege of the U.S. Capitol 'abhorrent' and 'an attack on democracy.'"

### **Capitol 'Zip Tie' Suspect Requests Mother's Day Conversation With Co-Defendant Mom.**

The [Tennessean](#) (5/6, 645K) reports, "Eric Munchel, dubbed 'zip tie guy' on social media after he was photographed holding a handful of plastic restraints inside the U.S. Capitol during the failed insurrection on Jan. 6, has asked a federal judge for permission to call to his mother on Mother's Day." Lisa Marie Eisenhart and her son Munchel are barred from speaking because they are both defendants in the case. "Prosecutors allege Munchel and Eisenhart were unhappy with the 2020 Presidential election results, which led them to Washington, D.C. to protest. The two brought tactical gear, and Munchel carried a taser, according to court testimony." According to FBI testimony, the two acted in concert when entering the Capitol.

### **Continuing: New Jersey Man Arrested In Capitol Riot After Mother Tells Friend About Participation.**

The [AP](#) (5/6) reports in continuing coverage that a comment made by the mother of Robert Lee Petrosh of May's Landing, New Jersey, "may have led to his being charged for participating in the Jan. 6 breach of the Capitol. ... According to a criminal complaint filed Wednesday, the FBI received a tip that Petrosh had been in the Capitol building that day. The tipster's grandmother allegedly passed on the information, which had been mentioned to her by Petrosh's mother."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) describes the two women as "close friends," saying the "The grandmother did not keep that news to herself. She told her grandson, who days later, court records show, called the FBI to report Petrosh." The Post says Petrosh was already on the FBI's radar, reporting, "On January 10, an anonymous online tipster said Petrosh 'was on the steps' of the federal building on Jan. 6."

### **FBI: Georgia Man Shared 'Post Victory Picture' After Capitol Riot.**

The [Lexington \(KY\) Herald-Leader](#) (5/6, 205K) reports Glen Mitchell Simon of Gainesville, Georgia, "denied taking part in the U.S. Capitol insurrection on Jan. 6 – but federal authorities say surveillance footage suggests otherwise." According to the FBI, Simon "shared a 'post victory picture' from the steps of the U.S. Capitol after he and throngs of other rioters stormed the building." DOJ documents show "Simon was arrested Wednesday in Gainesville, about 55 miles northeast of Atlanta, and charged with 'knowingly entering or remaining in any restricted building or grounds without lawful authority.'"

### **Pennsylvania Man Charged In Capitol Insurgency After Wife's Facebook Posts.**

The [Harrisburg \(PA\) Patriot-News](#) (5/6, 567K) reports Lynn Feiler Edwards "wrote on Facebook about her husband's role in the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, leading to his facing federal criminal charges. Gary Edwards, 68, of Southampton, Pa., is charged with entering a restricted building without authority, disorderly conduct, disruption of official business, violent entry and disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds, and parading, demonstrating or picketing in a Capitol building." Edwards is currently free on \$100,000 bond. "Although the posts were removed, an informant took screenshots and provided them to the FBI, documents show."

Agents were able to use the information from the posts to match photos of Edwards to videos taken during the Capitol assault.”

## COUNTER-TERRORISM

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### **Florida Man Convicted Of Targeting Pro-Trump Protestors For Violent Attack.**

The [AP](#) (5/6, Farrington) reports Daniel Alan Baker of Tallahassee, Florida, “was convicted Thursday of trying to organize an armed response to supporters of former President Donald Trump for an expected gathering at the state Capitol in January ahead of Joe Biden’s presidential inauguration.” Baker “was convicted of two counts of transmitting a communication in interstate commerce containing a threat to kidnap or injure another person.”

### **Michigan White Supremacist Leader’s Bond Revoked.**

The [Detroit News](#) (5/6, 1.16M) reports Justen Watkins of Bad Axe, Michigan, who is “charged with gang membership for his self-proclaimed leadership role of white supremacist group the Base has had his bond revoked for violations of the bond conditions.” Watkins had been free on “bond conditions that included a prohibition on contact with other members of the Base, Attorney General Dana Nessel’s office said in a statement. But a member of the gang paid Watkins bond in February and the two are accused of committing a crime the next week.”

### **FBI Investigating SSA Bomb Threat In Texas.**

[KRGV-TV](#) Harlingen, TX (5/6) reports the FBI joined local law enforcement agencies in responding to a bomb threat against Social Security Administration offices in Harlingen, Texas. KRGV quotes FBI Spokesperson Michelle Lee as saying “‘No explosive devices were located’ ... ‘Law enforcement has cleared the scene, however, the investigation is ongoing.’” [KGBT-TV](#) Harlingen, TX (5/6) reports “the FBI said they have taken over the investigation of this case.”

## COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

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### **Administration Launches “Government-Wide” Effort To Investigate “Havana Syndrome.”**

[CBS News](#) (5/6, Gazis, 5.39M) reports that more than a dozen CIA officers “serving in multiple overseas locations have returned to the U.S. to seek care this year after reporting symptoms consistent with ‘Havana Syndrome,’ ...according to current and former U.S. officials and people familiar with the matter. The new suspected incidents occurred in the early months of 2021, and at least one happened as recently as March, according to three sources.” A White House spokesperson “said the cause of the incidents is an area of ‘active inquiry,’ and that the National Security Council (NSC) has been coordinating a ‘government-wide effort’ since the start of the administration to determine who is responsible and ensure those affected receive medical evaluations and proper care.”

For the [Washington Examiner](#) (5/6, 888K), Tom Rogan writes that following the DOD’s lead, the CIA, State, and the NSA “are belatedly moving to support employees who believe they have suffered radio frequency/microwave attacks while serving abroad.” The Examiner adds that “the CIA will imminently appoint a new chief medical officer.”

[Healthline](#) (5/6, 3.62M) also runs a piece looking at what is known about the situation.

### **Declassified Report: CIA Analysts Discovered Information Suggesting Russian Bounty Story Was True.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/7, Savage, Schmitt, Schwirtz, 20.6M) reports that in early 2020, “members of a Taliban-linked criminal network in Afghanistan detained in raids told interrogators that they had heard that Russians were offering money to reward killings of

American and coalition troops." The claim "was stunning, particularly because the United States was trying at the same time to negotiate a deal with the Taliban to end the long-running war in Afghanistan. C.I.A. analysts set out to see whether they could corroborate or debunk the detainees' accounts." Ultimately, "newly declassified information shows, those analysts discovered a significant reason to believe the claim was accurate: Other members of the same Taliban-linked network had been working closely with operatives from a notorious unit of the G.R.U.," which is "known for assassination operations."

***Pentagon Begins Removing Contractors From Afghanistan.*** [Reuters](#) (5/6, Ali, Stewart) reports that Defense Secretary Austin "said on Thursday the process of removing all contractors from Afghanistan working with the United States was under way" as part of President Biden's withdrawal of forces. According to Reuters, Austin's remarks "are the clearest indication yet that Biden's April order to withdraw all U.S. forces from Afghanistan by Sept. 11 extended to US-funded contractors."

***Blinken Addresses Taliban Threats In Afghanistan.*** Asked on [MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell Reports](#) (5/6, 958K) about the power of the Taliban in Afghanistan after US troops leave, Secretary of State Blinken said, "We have trained over the years well over 300,000 Afghan security forces. Other countries will remain engaged. Everyone has to make some new calculations. That starts with the Taliban. It has to decide whether it wants to plunge the country back into a civil war or whether it wants some kind of recognition to be an accepted actor in the international community. ... We are also focused on the diplomacy, trying to see if the Taliban will engage with the Afghanistan government to try to come to a political resolution."

***NYTimes Analysis: DOD Struggles To End Afghan Dependency On US Air Support.*** The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Gibbons-Neff, Cooper, Schmitt, 20.6M) reports that, despite the Biden Administration's portrayal of Afghan security forces as "well equipped to handle the war on their own," their country's "dependency on US pilots and warplanes" remains "unquestionable," adding that US forces have launched "a half-dozen airstrikes" in the face of renewed Taliban aggression amid the withdrawal of US troops. The Times says, the Pentagon "is now weighing how it will wean Afghan security forces from their dependency." According to the Times, Austin "suggested that it would be up to Gen. Austin S. Miller, the commander in Afghanistan, to decide when to turn off the spigot."

***US May Train Afghan Forces In Third Countries.*** The [AP](#) (5/6) reports Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Gen. Milley "said the Pentagon is considering options for continued support of Afghan government forces after the troop withdrawal is complete, including possibly training Afghan security forces in another country." That would be in addition to "urging the Congress to authorize continued financial assistance to the Afghan forces, which has been in the range of \$4 billion a year for many years, and possibly providing aircraft maintenance support remotely from another country." [The Hill](#) (5/6, Kheel, 5.69M) reports, "asked at a Pentagon press briefing whether training Afghan forces from a different country is an option, Milley said, "It's possible. There's a lot of different options out there, and we haven't settled on one of them yet."

### **Space Force Aims To Go Fully Digital.**

[Defense News](#) (5/6, Strout, 73K) reports Space Force released a "vision document" Thursday on becoming fully digital. Space Force Chief of Space Operations Gen. Jay Raymond said on a media call, "Space is a big data environment. ... And when you think about our strategic competitors and the threats that we currently face, becoming a digital service is much more than an opportunity – it's a necessity."

[ExecutiveGov](#) (5/6, McCormick) reports the vision document expresses "the service's desire to be the world's first fully digital service." The Space Force Technology and Innovation Office will lead the digital transformation and focus on "engineering, workforce, headquarters and operations."

[Breaking Defense](#) (5/6, Hitchens) reports the Space and Missile Systems Center is "creating a new virtual testing environment to apply digital engineering techniques to space acquisition" as a first step toward implementing the Vision for a Digital Service. Space Force Chief Technology Innovation Officer Maj. Gen. Kim Crider said, "This is a basically putting in place the infrastructure and integrating the digital engineering tools – the modeling tools and the data – to support the digital engineering process."

## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

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### **Continuing: California Bar Owner Arrested For Selling Counterfeit COVID-19 Vaccination Cards.**

[NBC News](#) (5/6, Madani, 4.91M) reports in continuing coverage that after an undercover investigation by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Todd Anderson, owner of the Old Corner Saloon in Clement, California, "was arrested Wednesday over allegations that he was selling fake Covid-19 vaccination cards at his establishment." Clement faces charges including "identity theft, forging government documents, and falsifying medical records, according to a statement from San Joaquin District Attorney Tori Verber Salazar."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, Thebault, 10.52M) reports that "lately, state authorities allege, patrons have visited" the Old Corner Saloon in California's Central Valley "for a service unmentioned on its social media accounts or in its overwhelmingly positive Google reviews: to buy a fake coronavirus vaccination card." California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control agents "arrested Old Corner's owner on Tuesday, charging 59-year-old Todd Anderson with three felony crimes, including identity theft, forging government documents and carrying an unregistered firearm." Anderson "was also charged with falsifying medical records, a misdemeanor." The case marks "the California agency's first arrest for the sale of fraudulent vaccine cards, said spokesman John Carr."

### **Idaho Police Investigate School Shooting.**

The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 4, 0:15, O'Donnell, 4.04M) reported that Idaho police are investigating a new school shooting incident in Rigby, Idaho, where a student "pulled out a gun and opened fire, injuring two other students and a custodian." [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 4, 0:15, Holt, 5.2M) reported that the authorities "say a teacher disarmed the suspect, a sixth-grade girl, and held her until police arrested her." The injuries "are described as non life-threatening."

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, lead story, 2:55, Muir, 6.52M) reported one student said of the shooting, "We heard one gunshot, and then we heard another. And we heard multiple kids screaming and that – people arguing. And then people ran past our room. And all my friends and I were freaking out, and we were hiding in the corner of our classroom with the lights off and the doors locked."

The [AP](#) (5/6, Boone) reports that police "were called to the school around 9:15 a.m. after students and staffers heard gunfire." Bonneville County sheriff's Sgt. Bryan Lovell "said an investigation was underway and no additional information was immediately available." Idaho Gov. Brad Little (R) said in a statement, "I am praying for the lives and safety of those involved in today's tragic events."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports that the shooter "shot two people in a hallway with a handgun before going outside and shooting another." Jefferson County Sheriff Steve Anderson "did not release a name," and he "said the girl was being held at the sheriff's office."

The [Idaho Statesman](#) (5/6, 299K) reports Jefferson School District Superintendent Chad Martin said to reporters, "Today we had the worst nightmare a school district could encounter. We had a school shooting here at Rigby Middle School." He added, "What we know so far is the shooter has been apprehended. There is no further threat to the students."

[CNN](#) (5/6, Andone, 89.21M) reports on its website that the Jefferson School District announced the closure of all schools on Friday, and counselors "will be available at Rigby High School throughout the day." [BuzzFeed News](#) (5/6, Baer) also reports.

### **Family: Missing San Antonio Girl Found Safe.**

[KENS-TV](#) San Antonio (5/5, 185K) reports the family of a missing San Antonio, Texas, teen says she "was found safe." Earlier, the station reported that the San Antonio Police Department was "searching for a missing 16-year-old girl last seen on the city's northeast side."

### **Georgia Meth Ring Leader Gets 20 Years.**

[Georgia Sun](#) (5/6, Chandler) reports Kelvin D. Carswell, "the leader of Macon's 'Get Dat Money'" meth gang, "was sentenced to serve 20 years in prison as the result of a lengthy investigation into the network's illegal activities throughout Middle Georgia." Court documents show Carswell "was sentenced to serve 240 months in federal prison to be followed by three years of supervised release after he pleaded guilty to one count conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute methamphetamine on December 15, 2020." The FBI received a tip in June indicating that "Carswell was orchestrating the sale of drugs while incarcerated at the Washington State Prison in Sandersville, Georgia. A search of Carswell's prison cell uncovered a quantity of drugs and a cellular phone with multiple SD cards, according to court records."

The [Albany \(GA\) Herald](#) (5/6) also covers this story, quoting acting US Attorney Peter D. Leary saying, "Many lives have been undoubtedly damaged, even destroyed, due to the actions of Kelvin Carswell and the members of the 'Get Dat Money' drug trafficking organization. Carswell brazenly orchestrated a prolific meth trafficking organization from behind prison bars, and he has now received the maximum penalty provided by law. He, along with his co-conspirators, are being held accountable for their destructive choices. The FBI and Bibb County Sheriff's Office did an outstanding job investigating and ultimately shutting down this stream of methamphetamine into Middle Georgia."

### **Colorado Man Charged With Murder Of Missing Wife.**

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports roughly a year after the disappearance of Suzanne Morphew, who failed to return home after a Mother's Day bike ride, her husband, Barry Morphew, has been charged with her murder. "Although police have yet to locate Suzanne's body, Barry, 53, was charged with first-degree murder, tampering with evidence and attempting to influence a public servant." The investigation "involved more than 70 officers from the Chaffee County Sheriff's office, Colorado Bureau of Investigation and the FBI, in addition to dozens of other local law enforcement agencies, according to Chaffee County Sheriff John Spezze."

### **FBI Takes Part In Texas Manhunt Over Domestic Violence Incident.**

[KXII-TV](#) Sherman, TX (5/7) reports tribal and municipal police in Ada, Oklahoma, along with the FBI and other agencies, "spent Thursday afternoon searching for a man they say was armed and dangerous. Neighbors called 911 at the Rolling Hills Apartments Thursday afternoon to report a disturbance involving a man who lives there and a woman."

### **Man Charged In Connection To Stabbing Of Asian Women In San Francisco.**

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 9, 0:15, Muir, 6.52M) reported Patrick Thompson has been "charged with attempted murder and two counts of inflicting injury" after he "allegedly attacked the woman at a bus stop" in San Francisco." Yet, authorities are "still deciding whether to label this a hate crime." The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 6, 1:50, O'Donnell, 4.04M) reported that the rash of recent attacks on Asians on led the Alameda County, California district attorney to create a new special response unit. District Attorney Nancy O'Malley said, "We have 78 victims that we're working with just since we put together the unit since the end of January."

FBI San Francisco Division Special Agent In Charge Craig Fair said of the investigation, "I think in some communities, there is this reflective resistance, and even a distrust of law enforcement, and that is a barrier that we are trying to break down."

[NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 8, 1:35, Holt, 5.2M) reported that the surge in Asian-American hate crimes is reflected in new police data, which "found a 164% increase in reports of anti-Asian hate crimes compared to this time last year." [USA Today](#) (5/6, Yancey-Bragg, 12.7M) reports that Stop AAPI Hate published new data on Asian-American hate crimes, and it said that there have been more than 6,600 incidents. The uptick "was first reported in March 2020 as COVID-19 began spreading across the nation and some politicians, including President Donald Trump, blamed China for the pandemic."

[KNSD-TV](#) San Diego (5/6, 105K) reports Patrick Thompson of San Francisco is facing two counts of attempted murder, assault with a deadly weapon, and elder abuse after allegedly "stabbing two elderly Asian women at a muni bus stop Tuesday. ... But the DA said he isn't filing hate crime charges – for now." Said San Francisco Police Chief Bill Scott, "There is no indication at this point that there was any kind of hate prejudice. We do think at this point it is random but there is more investigation to be done so I don't want to close that door."

### **Group: Asian Americans Report Thousands Of Cases Of Racism, Discrimination.**

[CNN](#) (5/6, Chavez, 89.21M) reports the group Stop AAPI Hate, which tracks "reports of racism and discrimination against Asian Americans says it has received 6,603 firsthand complaints since last year." The organization "began tracking violence and harassment on March 19 last year as more Asian Americans were verbally and physically assaulted while erroneously being blamed for the Covid-19 pandemic. More than a year later, anti-Asian violence continues to increase nationally with horrifying assaults reported in cities like San Francisco and New York City."

[CBS News](#) (5/6, 5.39M) reports the group released data showing that "women reported nearly 65 percent of anti-Asian hate incidents nationally between March 2020 and March 2021. ... Stop AAPI Hate reported a total of 6, 603 hate incidents, a broad term that can include hate crimes such as physical assaults but also incorporates verbal and online harassment, shunning, and civil rights violations."

### **Continuing: Former Maui Police Officer Pleads Guilty To Soliciting Sex In Exchange For Sabotaging Criminal Case.**

The [Honolulu Star-Advertiser](#) (5/6, 409K) reports in continuing coverage that former Maui police officer Brandon Charles Saffeels has pleaded guilty "before a U.S. District judge in a case in which the officer allegedly told a woman he arrested that he would lie for her in court in exchange for a sexual relationship with each other." Saffeels "pleaded guilty to a seven-count indictment alleging that in 2019 he engaged in a bribery scheme wherein he solicited a sexual relationship with the woman, whom he arrested for driving under the influence, by offering to provide false testimony in court to help her beat her case."

### **Oregon Woman Charged With Portland Police Union Arson.**

The [Portland \(OR\) Tribune](#) (5/6, 92K) reports Alma Raven-Guido of Beaverton, Oregon, "is facing a federal arson charge in connection with a Portland police union building fire in April." Raven-Guido "has been charged with one count of arson following a federal grand jury indictment, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. Raven-Guido was arrested by FBI agents on Wednesday, May 5, and was arraigned on Thursday, pleading not guilty, prosecutors said in a statement."

The [Oregonian](#) (5/6, 1.02M) reports Raven-Guido "made her first appearance via video on a one-count indictment charging her with arson in U.S. District Court in Portland Thursday afternoon." The FBI "arrested the teen at her Beaverton home on Wednesday and she spent a night in Portland's downtown jail." While Raven-Guido had previously been arrested on state

charges in the case, "the federal charge is based on an interpretation that unions affect interstate commerce, according to prosecutors." The [AP](#) (5/6) also reports.

### **Judge Issues New "Red Flag" Guidance After Indiana FedEx Shooting.**

The [AP](#) (5/6) reports, "All 'red flag' cases filed by Indianapolis police will now come before a judge after an Indiana prosecutor was criticized for declining to use the law to pursue court hearings that could have prevented a man from accessing the guns used to kill eight people at a FedEx facility last month." The new guidance was issued this week by Judge Amy Jones, who oversees the filings of red flag cases in Marion County. This comes after Marion County Prosecutor Ryan Mears "decided not to bring Brandon Scott Hole before a judge for a red flag hearing, even after his mother called police last year to say her son might try to die from 'suicide by cop.'" A spokesperson for the prosecutor said Thursday that conversations about changes to the filing process began before the shooting. [WTHR-TV](#) Indianapolis (5/6, 346K) and [The Hill](#) (5/6, Choi, 5.69M) also report.

### **In Puerto Rico, Boxer Félix Verdejo Indicted In Lover's Death.**

In The [AP](#) (5/6, Coto) reports that, on Thursday, a federal grand jury in Puerto Rico indicted boxer Félix Verdejo for the killing of his pregnant lover Keishla Rodríguez, "a case potentially eligible for the death penalty." According to the AP, "an FBI complaint...accused Verdejo of punching Rodríguez in the face, injecting her with a syringe filled with an unidentified substance bought at a public housing complex, binding her arms and feet with wire, tying a block to her and then throwing her off a bridge...last Thursday." In a story about the indictment, [NBC News](#) (5/6, 4.91M) notes "the FBI has been leading the investigation with the Puerto Rico Public Safety Department, the Puerto Rico Police Bureau and the Puerto Rico Justice Department."

### **Maine Man Faces Child Porn Charges After Employer Contacts FBI.**

The [Portland \(ME\) Press Herald](#) (5/6, Byrne, 174K) reports that Andrew Hazelton, a former member of a neo-Nazi group called the NSC-131, is facing a federal charges for possessing child pornography after a Portland business owner who feared Hazelton "would commit a workplace shooting" contacted the FBI. According to the Press Herald, "agents with the FBI were granted a search warrant April 28 for Hazelton's cellphone and electronic devices and searched his home the next day, taking Hazelton's phone from him. On the phone, they found a folder labeled "1488" that contained videos of child pornography."

### **City Officials Get Two Years In California Bribery Case.**

Former The [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (5/6, Damein, 220K) reports that, on Wednesday, a federal court sentenced David Romero, a former member of the Calexico City Council, and Bruno Suarez-Soto, a former member of the Calexico Economic Development and Financial Advisory Commission, to two years in prison after both men pleaded guilty to accepting bribes during an FBI sting in 2020. The [Washington Examiner](#) (5/6, Brest, 888K) says Romero and Suarez-Soto had "accepted \$35,000 in cash bribes from an undercover FBI agent in exchange for a promise to issue a permit for a commercial cannabis dispensary." The [Holtville \(CA\) Tribune](#) (5/6, Brown, Morales, 7K) also reports.

### **West Virginia Man Pleads Guilty To Child Sex Trafficking.**

The [Huntington \(WV\) Herald-Dispatch](#) (5/6, Herald-Dispatch, 82K) reports that Dale Randall McCarthy Jr. pleaded guilty to a child sex trafficking charge. According to the Herald-Dispatch, McCarthy agreed to pay "a man he met online...\$100 to have sex with a 14-year-old girl." The Herald-Dispatch says that federal prosecutors "praised the investigative work of the FBI Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force" in the case.

### **MS-13 Member Pleads Guilty To Violent Crimes In Maryland.**

The [Annapolis \(MD\) Capital Gazette](#) (5/6, Hutzell, 85K) reports that, on Wednesday, Moises Alexis Reyes-Canales “pleaded guilty in federal court to conspiracy to participate in a racketeering enterprise as part of MS-13 gang activities, including murder and two attempted murders.” According to the Gazette, “as part of a plea agreement, Reyes-Canales admitted he became an associate gang member in March 2016, participated in the murder of a suspected rival gang member, and tried to kill other people in Annapolis.” The Gazette says federal prosecutors will recommend a 35-year sentence in the case.

#### **FBI Investigating Arizona Shooting Of FBI Task Force Officer.**

The [Arizona Republic](#) (5/6, Onneweer, 1.05M) briefly reports that the FBI is “offering a reward for information leading to arrests” in an April 23rd drive-by shooting that targeted “an FBI Task Force officer” in Phoenix.

#### **FBI’s Role In Missing Buffalo Student Case Noted.**

In a story about a local New York prosecutor’s announcement that Saniyya Dennis, a Buffalo college student who has been missing for a week, died by suicide, [WABC-TV](#) New York (5/6, 351K) briefly notes the FBI’s participation in the case, saying agents interviewed Dennis’ boyfriend and ruled him out as a suspect.

#### **FBI Reward For Truman Artifacts Noted.**

In a story about the theft of “a collection of swords and daggers” from the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, [KSHB-TV](#) Kansas City, MO (5/6, Reid, McCormick, 147K) notes that the FBI is offering a \$10,000 reward “for information leading to the return of” the artifacts.

#### **Attorney Gets More Than 15 Years In Prison For Scheming To Defraud Drug Traffickers.**

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, Bella, 10.52M) reports Texas attorney James Morris Balagia, who was found guilty of scheming “to defraud Colombian cocaine traffickers,” has been sentenced “to more than 15 years in prison.” Balagia “was turned in to the FBI by the very drug traffickers he attempted to defraud.”

#### **Three Rhode Islanders Plead Guilty To Participating In Drug Distribution Conspiracy.**

The [Woonsocket \(RI\) Patch](#) (5/6, Sandoli, 1.44M) reports the FBI conducted an investigation that will lead to prison time for Rhode Island residents Juan Batista, Natalie Cassidy, and Angel Aviles, who pleaded guilty “to participating in a conspiracy” to distribute crack cocaine and fentanyl.

#### **Suspected Drug Dealer Arrested In Massachusetts.**

In online coverage, [WWLP-TV](#) Springfield, MA (5/6, Asiamah, 453K) reports the DEA and the FBI participated in a Thursday search warrant operation that led to the arrest of a “suspected drug dealer in Springfield.” A similar [Springfield \(MA\) Republican](#) (5/6, DeForge, 592K) article says Springfield resident Mario Monge “was arrested on drug trafficking and firearms charges.” The [WBZ-AM](#) Boston (5/6, 114K) website also covers this story.

## **FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS**

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#### **Pay-For-Play Marijuana Trial Of Former Massachusetts Mayor Continues.**

The [Providence \(RI\) Journal](#) (5/6, 376K) reports jurors in the trial of former Fall River, Massachusetts, Mayor Jasiel Correia II on Wednesday heard how Correia “demanded a bribe – with no middleman involved – accepted the cash and then promptly handed over a coveted non-opposition letter to a hopeful marijuana vendor.” Local business owner Charles Saliby in

2018 “was trying to open a marijuana dispensary and needed a much sought after letter of non-opposition from the mayor. He called city hall and was told the city had already reached its limit for marijuana shops.” The article describes the testimony in detail, narrating the questioning of US District Attorney David Tobin.

### **Kansas City Man Convicted For Role In Cell Phone Burglary Scheme.**

The [Kansas City \(MO\) Star](#) (5/6, 519K) reports court records show Bryan C. Kirkendoll II of Kansas City, Missouri, “has been convicted in federal court of helping to steal more than \$1 million worth of cell phones over several months across multiple states.” A jury found Kirkendoll “guilty of three counts of transporting stolen property across state lines, two counts of witness tampering, and one count each of participating in a conspiracy and transmitting threats in interstate commerce, according to a news release from the United States Attorney’s office for the Western District of Missouri.” US Attorneys say that while Kirkendoll was free on bond, he “intimidated and threatened a victim scheduled to testify as a witness against him in court.”

### **Virginia Man Gets 18 Months For Bribing FBI Official Over Data Center Contract.**

[DatacenterDynamics](#) (5/6) reports Virginia resident Robert Bailey “was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison for paying a bribe to an FBI official after pleading guilty.” Bailey’s bribes helped his business “win a contract to build the FBI’s ‘Grey Wolf’ Pocatello data center. The official, James Heslep, was sentenced to 39 months in April.” The article quotes acting US Attorney Rafael M. Gonzalez Jr. saying, “When private individuals perform contracts for the government, they effectively become public servants who must uphold a public trust. Mr. Bailey breached that trust and now faces the consequences of his actions. The Court’s 18-month sentence sends the appropriate message to Mr. Bailey and other similarly-situated government contractors: take the public trust seriously or wind up behind bars.”

## **CYBER DIVISION**

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### **DHS Secretary Warns Ransomware Attacks Increasing.**

[ABC News](#) (5/6, Barr, 2.44M) reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas “warned that cyberattacks – specifically ransomware attacks – are on the rise and targets range from government agencies to small businesses.” Mayorkas said at the US Chamber of Commerce’s Now & Then Speaker series Wednesday, “The threat is real. The threat is upon us. The risk is to all of us. Inform oneself. Educate oneself and defend oneself.” Mayorkas “said that \$350 million was paid out for ransomware attacks in 2020.” Mayorkas also “stressed Wednesday that ransomware attacks against small businesses have been successful.” The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports in its Cybersecurity 202 column that Mayorkas also announced DHS “would begin its next major 60-day initiative focused on workforce development. DHS plans to hire 200 new cyber employees by July.” That hiring could be a “boon to the agency’s ransomware capabilities.”

[Gov Info Security](#) (5/6) reports Mayorkas “said about 50% to 70% of all ransomware attacks in the US are targeting small and medium-sized businesses, costing the victims an estimated total of \$350 million in the last year,” [ExecutiveGov](#) (5/6) reports Mayorkas “urged small and medium-sized businesses to strengthen defense against cyber attacks as ransomware threats continue to escalate and the ‘backbone’ of US economy serves as the target of cyber actors.”

### **DHS Seeks To Hire 200 Cyber Pros.**

[Federal Computer Week](#) (5/6, 263K) reports DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas “said on Wednesday his agency will begin its 60-day workforce sprint with an aggressive hiring campaign to expand the agency’s cadre of cybersecurity professionals.” During remarks at a US

Chamber of Commerce event, Mayorkas "called the effort 'the most significant hiring initiative that DHS has undertaken in its history.'" He also "said Wednesday was the first day of the department's workforce sprint." The new campaign "aims to hire 200 cyber personnel by July 1." Half of those 'conditional job offers' "will be made by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency while the other half will be made by various DHS component agencies."

### **Proposed Legislation Would Bolster National Guard's Role In Cyber Response.**

[Defense News](#) (5/6, Pomerleau, 73K) reports the National Guard Cybersecurity Support Act, introduced by Rep. Andy Kim (D-NJ) and Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) "would give governors the ability to decide when and how to deploy their state's National Guard to stand off against increasing cyberattacks that could impact various agencies and services, such a water supplies or the electrical grid." The National Guard Cybersecurity Support Act "seeks to codify that National Guard support in cybersecurity missions defending critical infrastructure by modifying Title 32 of the US Code, which governs the National Guard."

### **Cybersecurity Incident Pushes Alaska Court System Offline.**

The [AP](#) (5/6) reports the chief justice of the Alaska Supreme Court on Thursday "said the court system did not receive a ransom demand or any direct message from those involved in a cybersecurity attack last week that resulted in the system disconnecting its online services." Chief Justice Joel Bolger told The Associated Press in an interview, "So we feel fortunate that we caught this attack at an early stage." The court system "said it had disconnected online services to remove malware from its servers and was working with a cybersecurity company to respond to the incident and prevent 'any further system breaches.'" The disruption has "affected the public's ability to email court email addresses, including for filing documents; view cases online; or participate in hearings via videoconference, according to the court system."

### **UK Spies Warn Local Authorities Over "Smart City" Tech Risks.**

[BBC News](#) (5/6, Corera, 876K) reports cities are "increasingly relying on sensors and other network-connected devices which feed data into a central system." The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has "warned smart cities will be a target for hackers, and councils need to be prepared." The NCSC – an arm of GCHQ – has "published guidance for local authorities on how to secure what they call 'connected places.'" They "warn that critical public services will need to be protected from disruption." The NCSC is "warning of possible 'destructive impacts' if systems were switched off which, in some cases, could even 'endanger' residents." Another concern is that the "large volumes of data about people that are collected could erode privacy by allowing citizens to be tracked even more, or could be stolen by criminals or hostile states."

### **Insurer AXA To Stop Reimbursing Ransomware Payments In France.**

The [AP](#) (5/6) reports that, in an apparent industry first, the global insurance company AXA "said Thursday it will stop writing cyber-insurance policies in France that reimburse customers for extortion payments made to ransomware criminals." AXA, among Europe's top five insurers, "said it was suspending the option in response to concerns aired by French justice and cybersecurity officials during a Senate roundtable in Paris last month about the devastating global epidemic of ransomware." Christine Weirsky, a spokeswoman for the US AXA subsidiary, a leading underwriter of cyber-insurance in the US, "said the suspension only applies to France and does not affect existing policies." She "said it also does not affect coverage for responding and recovering from ransomware attacks, in which criminals based in safe havens including Russia break into networks, seed malware and cripple them by scrambling data."

### **Experts Say Zero Trust Should Be Foundation For Security Approaches.**

[MeriTalk](#) (5/6) reports that, "although zero trust has become a bit of a buzzword in the IT world, experts agree that zero trust is 'foundational' to all security approaches and that

foundation needs to continue to grow in tandem with emerging tech." During an event on May 5, US Air Force CDO Eileen Vidrine and Matthew Marsden, vice president at Tanium "discussed how zero trust has shaped their security journeys and why the strategy so important when it comes to security today." When "asked how his work in the IC has shaped his work in zero trust, Marsden called his support for zero trust a 'no brainer.'" Marsden said, "It [zero trust] has been foundational to all of my approaches to security and access management."

### **DOD Announces Expansion Of Vulnerability Disclosure Policy.**

[Government Computer News](#) (5/6) reports the DOD is "expanding its vulnerability disclosure program to cover all of its publicly available systems, including networks, frequency-based communication, industrial control systems and internet-of-things devices." Sparked by the Defense Digital Service's 2016 Hack the Pentagon initiative, the program "was initially restricted to public-facing websites and applications, which limited the number and kinds of vulnerabilities reported." Kristopher Johnson, the director for the Pentagon's Cyber Crime Center, which oversees the program, said, "DOD websites were only the beginning as they account for a fraction of our overall attack surface." The announcement comes "after the center announced a defense industry-focused pilot of its bug bounty program in April."

## **LABORATORY**

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### **DNA, Fingerprint Evidence Lead To Arrest in 1983 Nebraska Cold Case Murder.**

The [Omaha \(NE\) World-Herald](#) (5/6, 509K) reports on the 1983 discovery of the body of University of Nebraska at Omaha student Firozeh Dehghanpour, saying news broke this week that "Nebraska sex offender" Bud Leroy Christensen "had been arrested in her slaying. ... Pottawattamie County law enforcement officials on Thursday provided additional details on the cold case arrest in Dehghanpour's slaying, which was first reported Wednesday by The World-Herald." After a former classmate brought the cold case to the attention of current law enforcement, "Pottawattamie County Sheriff's Sgt. Jim Doty reopened the case in November 2020. ... Doty said he thought that items that had been collected in 1983 as evidence...could now be tested again using advanced technology. Doty sent 11 items to the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation laboratory. According to an affidavit, test results that came back in March revealed that a left-handed glove with apparent bloodstains contained a male DNA profile and Dehghanpour's DNA." The article mentions parenthetically the involvement of the FBI in the original investigation.

## **OTHER FBI NEWS**

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### **Man Shot By FBI At CIA Headquarters ID'ed As Indiana Resident.**

[WISH-TV](#) Indianapolis (5/6, 76K) reports that an "armed suspect who was fatally shot by the FBI on Monday outside CIA headquarters was a man from Dubois County, Indiana." Dubois County Sheriff Tom Kleinhelter "on Thursday confirmed Roy Gordon Cole, of Dubois County, was the suspect shot and killed law enforcement in a standoff just outside CIA headquarters in McLean, Virginia, on Monday."

### **Arizona Gathering Aims To Spotlight Cases Of Missing, Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls.**

The [Arizona Republic](#) (5/6, 1.05M) reports, "Dozens of people gathered in the Navajo Nation capital Wednesday wearing red and holding signs in honor of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls." The gathering was intended to "raise awareness of the issue, with proclamations issued by tribes, Arizona and President Joe Biden." Tribal leaders on Wednesday "were joined by representatives of the Albuquerque FBI Field Office at the Navajo Nation

Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock to sign the proclamation designating May 5 as 'Navajo Nation Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples Awareness Day.' ... Albuquerque FBI Special Agent in Charge Raul Bujanda attended the proclamation and also met with local readers to review the roles of the FBI in working with federal, tribal, and state agencies for responding to reports of missing and murdered Indigenous people."

### **George Conway: Giuliani May "Offer Prosecutors" Trump To "Save Himself."**

George Conway writes in the [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) that if Rudy Giuliani, whose residence was raided by the FBI last week, "has anything to offer prosecutors to save himself, it would have to be [Donald] Trump, the only bigger fish left." Conway says, "Federal prosecutors in Manhattan tried to get permission last fall for a Giuliani raid but were rebuffed by senior officials serving under Trump. And last June, for reasons still opaque, then-Attorney General William P. Barr ousted the U.S. attorney there and tried to handpick a successor. If any of that was intended to protect Giuliani – or Trump himself – it might end up backfiring spectacularly."

### **Former Mob Lawyer Claims Hoffa Buried At Savannah Golf Course.**

The [New York Post](#) (5/6, Lapin, 7.45M) reports that Reginald Haupt, a defense attorney who once represented Chicago mob boss Lou Rosanova, claims his one of his clients helped bury the remains of Jimmy Hoffa at the Savannah Inn and Golf Country Club, "an exclusive resort on Wilmington Island, where members of the Chicago Outfit would vacation." According to the Post, Haupt "said the feds have interviewed him several times about his claim," and "locals also recalled seeing FBI agents on the course examining the location of the suspected" burial site. The Post says the FBI declined to comment for the story.

## **OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS**

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### **Biden Touts Infrastructure Plan In Front Of Aging Bridge In Louisiana.**

The [AP](#) (5/6, Boak) reports, "With a badly aging bridge as his backdrop," President Biden "stood in reliably Republican Louisiana on Thursday to pressure GOP lawmakers to support his \$2.3 trillion infrastructure plan – and yet express a willingness to compromise on the corporate tax hikes he's recommending to pay the cost." The President said, "I'm willing to hear ideas from both sides. I'm ready to compromise. What I'm not ready to do is, I'm not ready to do nothing."

[NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 9, 1:10, Holt, 5.2M), the only broadcast network to make note of the trip, said the President "traveled to a Republican stronghold...to sell his massive infrastructure plan." NBC's Kristen Welker: "With Republicans opposing his \$2.3 trillion plan to overhaul the nation's infrastructure," Biden went "to bright red Lake Charles, Louisiana, to make his case, joined by the Republican mayor." Biden: "Across the country, we have failed. We have failed to properly invest in infrastructure for half a century." Welker: "But Republicans in Congress [are] blasting it as a massive tax-and-spending spree they say focuses too little on traditional infrastructure like roads and bridges."

[KPLC-TV](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Lake Charles, LA (5/6, 24K) reported Biden talked about "his proposed \$2 trillion American Jobs Plan which focuses on infrastructure." The plan focuses on "fixing highways and updating airports and ports, but it also mentions things like eliminating use of lead pipes to carry drinking water and providing broadband Internet throughout the country." Biden "did say the state is working to rebuild the I-10 bridge," and "he said Americans can be put to work all across the country fixing highways and roads." [KTBS-TV](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Shreveport, LA (5/6, 32K) reported Biden "spoke in front of the Calcasieu River Bridge. His focus was on infrastructure. The significance of this bridge is that it's 70 years old, which is 20 years past its designated lifespan."

[KLFY-TV](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Lafayette, LA (5/6, 2.22M) reported Biden "came here to talk about repairing and replacing America's crumbling infrastructure and also creating jobs. He called it the blue-

collar blueprint to get America back on track." Biden's "more than \$2 trillion plan is focused on infrastructure," but "it also includes billions of dollars for other things like caregiving, technology, and workforce development."

[Reuters](#) (5/6) reports that Biden "said a corporate tax rate between 25% and 28% could help pay for badly needed infrastructure, suggesting he could accept a lower rate than what he has proposed in his search for Republican support for the funding." The [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (5/6, 691K) reports the President told "a small crowd in Lake Charles that he wanted to replace the aging Interstate 10 bridge that served as a visual backdrop there and touring an antiquated water plant in New Orleans where vital machinery frequently breaks down." [WBRZ-TV](#) Baton Rouge, LA (5/6, 20K) said "about \$100 billion in the plan would go to fixing water systems like that one."

The [Baton Rouge Advocate](#) (5/6, 255K) reports Biden, "dressed in a navy blue suit with aviator sunglasses, spoke along the Lake Charles waterfront adjacent to its downtown, the hulking I-10 bridge over the Calcasieu River and its arched truss in the distance behind him. ... Signs around his podium included a picture of the bridge with the slogan: 'Getting America Back on Track.' A smattering of local officials" and Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) "were in attendance, as was a group of workers in hard hats whom Biden spoke with after finishing his speech, exchanging fist bumps with a few."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) says Biden "sought to define the debate on his \$2 trillion infrastructure plan as a question of priorities: overdue investments that would benefit a wide swath of Americans versus tax cuts that would help a wealthy few." The President said, "In my view, it's an easy choice, between giving tax breaks to corporations and the super wealthy and investing in working families." Biden said the 2017 tax cuts "passed by Republicans 'created a \$2 trillion dollar deficit with the vast majority of that going to the top one tenth of one percent of the wage earners. I don't want to punish anybody. ... Just pay your fair share,' he said." On its website, [CNN](#) (5/6, 89.21M) says Biden "noted the corporate rate, which is currently 21%, had been as high as 35% before former President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans cut taxes in 2017."

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Flavelle, 20.6M) reports that when Biden arrived in Lake Charles, "plywood still covered windows broken from back-to-back hurricanes that devastated the city last summer. 'I promise you, we're going to build back better,' Mr. Biden said, talking about the need to act as climate change continues. 'Better able to withstand storms that are becoming more severe and more frequent than ever.'"

The [New York Daily News](#) (5/6, Goldiner, 2.51M) reports Lake Charles Mayor Nic Hunter (R) "said in his own remarks that his city has a 'dire need' for 'an infrastructure plan that can build us a new bridge.' Biden used Hunter's support as a cudgel for a thinly veiled jab at GOP lawmakers in Congress." The President said, "I find more support from Republican governors and mayors and Democratic governors and mayors around the country because they've got to answer the question: Is life better in this town, this city, this state than it was before I got elected?"

[WMC-TV](#) Memphis, TN (5/6, 31K) reports on its website that "even as he engages with Republicans in Washington, Biden is trying to sell their voters on the idea that higher corporate taxes can provide \$115 billion for roads and bridges" and other upgrades. [KATC-TV](#) Lafayette, LA (5/6, 54K) reports on its website, "In Louisiana, 1,634 of the state's 12,853 bridges are classified as structurally deficient. Repairs have been identified on 3,251 bridges at an estimated cost of \$6.9 billion."

On its website, [NBC News](#) (5/6, 4.91M) quotes Biden as saying, "I've never seen a Republican or a Democrat road: I just see roads. ... Infrastructure has historically been a bipartisan undertaking and there's no reason it shouldn't be that way again, as the mayor is evidence of." [CBS News](#) (5/6, 5.39M) reports on its website that Biden also spoke with Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and John Kennedy (R-LA) during his trip.

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports, "Dueling proposals to fund the nation's ailing infrastructure network follow decades of timidity in Washington – a period that has seen roads crumble and a warming climate threaten investments of the past. A line of presidents couldn't make transformational investments in infrastructure, despite big promises and yawning national needs." The question today "is whether the nation still can make good on its aspirations – from upkeep of its physical foundations to meeting the challenges experts say will intensify with a changing planet."

[Politico](#) (5/6, 6.73M), [The Hill](#) (5/6, Samuels, 5.69M), and the [CNBC](#) (5/6, Wilkie, 7.34M), [WDSU-TV](#) New Orleans (5/6, 101K), and [WGNO-TV](#) New Orleans (5/6) websites, also report.

### **Document Details Lander's Meetings With Epstein.**

[Politico](#) (5/6, Lima, 6.73M) reports that Office of Science and Technology Policy Director-designate Eric Lander's "past meetings with the late convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein spanned approximately 90 minutes over two events in the spring of 2012, according to a document obtained by Politico." While Lander "has faced scrutiny from Democratic and Republican lawmakers alike over" the meetings, "the document reveals details that largely align with Lander and the White House's descriptions of the meetings as brief interactions, including during his recent nomination hearing."

### **Fox News Report: Klain And Others In Administration Tied To "Dark Money" Groups.**

[Fox News](#) (5/6, Cawthorne, Schoffstall, 23.99M) reports on its website that President Biden "has padded his administration with a number of individuals with strong ties to progressive dark money groups," including Chief of Staff Klain, "which could provide a pipeline for the groups to push their agendas to the White House." According to Fox, Klain "has ties to the Center for American Progress (CAP) Action Fund," but CAP's "reach within the administration extends far beyond him," with "nearly 60 people with ties to the group...tapped for key posts."

### **Cases, Hospitalizations, Deaths Continue To Fall Across US.**

[NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, lead story, 2:45, Holt, 5.2M) reported, "As America eases open the doors of familiar life this week, the number of people...lost in this country to COVID has quietly ticked above 580,000," with over 600 deaths on Thursday. However, "a dramatically slowing rate of deaths and COVID infections tells us the vaccinations are working." NBC's Miguel Almaguer added, "Across the country, more than 40% of all adults are fully vaccinated. A new study finds when half the US is inoculated, the nation could prevent 6.8 million COVID cases and billions in medical costs."

The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, lead story, 3:25, O'Donnell, 4.04M) reported that "the US has reached a seven month low in new infections of the virus. Hospitalizations and deaths are also down significantly, and in some areas that were once overwhelmed by COVID, including parts of California, vaccinations are so far up and cases so far down some communities may reach herd immunity." However, "while infections are dropping so are the number of people getting vaccinated, in just one week the rate of Americans getting their first shot has dropped by nearly 25%." CBS' Carter Evans added that "45% of eligible Americans have received at least one dose of the vaccine." [ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 2, 3:30, Muir, 6.52M) reported that "147 million people have received at least one dose, that's 57% of adults now. Across the country, volunteers are reaching out to those who are still unvaccinated."

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, A1, Bosman, Mervosh, 20.6M) reports, "Across the country, the outlook for the pandemic has indeed improved, putting the United States in its best position against the virus yet." According to the Times, "The nation is recording about 49,000 new cases a day, the lowest number since early October, and hospitalizations have plateaued at around 40,000, a similar level as the early fall. Nationwide, deaths are hovering around 700 a day, down from a peak of more than 3,000 in January."

However, [Politico](#) (5/6, Goldberg, Ollstein, 6.73M) reports that “health officials are worried that pockets of the country slow to get vaccinated against Covid-19 could turn into breeding grounds for more dangerous virus variants, mimicking the experience in South Africa and Brazil. Vaccination rates have been falling for weeks in parts of the South and mountain West, prompting the White House to rethink its vaccination strategy to reach those reluctant or unwilling to get the shots.”

**More Than 70% Of Elderly Americans Are Fully Vaccinated.** [CNBC](#) (5/6, Rattner, 7.34M) reports on its website that, according to the CDC, “more than 70% of Americans aged 65 and older are fully vaccinated. ... About 45% of Americans have received at least one vaccine dose, and nearly one-third are fully vaccinated.” However, CNBC adds that the CDC data also “shows an average of 2.1 million reported vaccinations per day over the past week, down from a peak of 3.4 million in mid-April.”

### **Politico Report: White House Slowly Returning To Pre-Pandemic Normal.**

According to [Politico](#) (5/6, Korecki, Kumar, 6.73M), “White House and administrative staff are beginning to trickle into the West Wing in greater numbers. And additional journalists are working at the White House.” Politico adds, “1600 Pennsylvania Avenue is starting to open up. How much, however, remains unclear, in part because White House officials are reluctant to say.” Politico says “those officials insist they are moving cautiously and still working to balance medical guidance in the workplace and the realities of employees returning to work within cramped quarters.”

### **Cardona: Schools Should Be Fully Reopened By September.**

In an appearance on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (5/6, 1.01M), Education Secretary Cardona said that when the next school year starts, “I expect all schools to be open full-time in person for all students. We really need to make sure students have an opportunity to learn in the classroom. And quite frankly, I would rather have it this spring. Students don't learn as well remotely. There is no substitute for in-person learning.”

[Axios](#) (5/6, Allassan, 1.26M) reports that a survey released Thursday by the Education Department suggests President Biden “has met his goal of having ‘most’ elementary and middle open for full-time in-person learning by the end of his first 100 days in office. 54% of schools up to the high school level are offering full-time classroom instruction, up from 46% in January. Nearly 40% are still holding all classes remotely, while 2 in 10 are using a hybrid model.”

[Reuters](#) (5/6) reports, “While 58% of white students were enrolled in full-time, in-person learning in March, only 36% of Black students, 35% of Hispanics and 18% of Asians were enrolled, National Assessment of Educational Progress data shows.” The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) says, “The disparities reflect both what is offered to students and whether their parents choose to send them back.”

### **Jennifer Garner To Feature In Administration's Mother's Day Vaccine Campaign.**

[Axios](#) (5/6, Mucha, 1.26M) reports that actor Jennifer Garner “will team up with the Biden administration in a coordinated campaign to encourage vaccinations around Mother's Day, Axios has learned.” An HHS official said, “We hope this will help create a foundation of vaccine confidence for mothers who may have otherwise been hesitant to get vaccinated or get their children vaccinated once available.” CDC Director Walensky is expected to “talk to Garner about vaccines for a live Instagram event,” and officials including Walensky, White House Health Equity Task Force Director Marcella Nunez-Smith, and HHS Secretary Becerra will make appearances on *The View*, *PopSugar Family*, and *Al Punto* as part of the push.

**Sesame Street Launches Public Service Campaign Promoting Vaccines.** The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Tumin, 20.6M) reports that “in a new public service campaign, cast members of ‘Sesame Street’ explain why adults are getting vaccinated with a simple idea: Getting vaccinated means sunnier days are ahead.” The ad campaign is “part of a promotional effort to

combat Covid-19 vaccine skepticism that launched in February, backed by the Ad Council, a nonprofit advertising group, and a coalition of experts known as the Covid Collaborative.”

### **Local Health Officials Offer Incentives To Tackle Vaccine Hesitancy.**

The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 7, 1:45, O'Donnell, 4.04M) reported that public health officials are going to “extraordinary lengths...just to entice COVID vaccine holdouts to get their shots. They’re offering everything from beer to concert tickets.” CBS’ Adriana Diaz said that beer with a shot in New Jersey is “one of many incentives nationwide,” including a \$100 savings bond in West Virginia, \$50 for convincing someone to receive a dose in Detroit, Michigan, “and free salon and barbershop services coming soon in Chicago,” Illinois. Diaz added that “mass vaccination sites nationwide are starting to wind down” as the focus shifts “to people who aren’t going out of their way to get vaccinated” and instead “vaccinating people where they are in their communities.”

**Survey: Few Unvaccinated Americans Intend To Get Shots.** The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Levin, 20.6M) reports that a survey that was published by the Kaiser Family Foundation’s Vaccine Monitor “suggests” that “the American public’s willingness to get a Covid vaccine is reaching a saturation point among adults, and many parents do not plan to vaccinate their children. ... Only 9 percent of respondents said that they had not yet gotten a shot but intended to do so,” and just “three in 10 parents said they planned to vaccinate their children as soon as they could.” In addition, “The survey found that public confidence in the Johnson & Johnson vaccine has plummeted since health authorities suspended using it for 10 days to examine possible links to a rare, dangerous blood clotting problem.”

In a separate piece, the [New York Times](#) (5/6, Hoffman, 20.6M) reports that the survey “also found significant progress in persuading Republicans, who have been among the most hesitant, to be vaccinated. The findings highlight the challenges ahead for the Biden administration’s efforts to persuade hesitant people to take the vaccine, even as a growing number of scientists and public health experts have concluded that it is unlikely that the country will reach herd immunity.”

**Poll: 24% Of Georgians Will Not Be Vaccinated.** The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (5/6, Bluestein, 1.46M) reports on a new poll that “highlights the sharp challenges confronting public health officials battling apathy and all-out resistance as they scramble to inoculate as many Georgians as possible with lifesaving coronavirus vaccines.” While “about 51% of the registered voters who responded to the poll said they have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine,” one-third of those have yet to be vaccinated “are in a wait-and-see mode and...half don’t intend to get vaccinated. Roughly two-thirds of Republicans who aren’t vaccinated don’t plan to get a shot.” In all, “about 24% of the poll’s respondents say they don’t intend to get vaccinated. That’s down from the 34% who said in January that they would not be willing to take the vaccine.”

**Experts Say Vaccines’ Efficacy For Teens Could Boost Inoculations.** [USA Today](#) (5/6, Bacon, 12.7M) reports that “encouraging data” recently released by Moderna and Pfizer “on the effectiveness and safety of COVID-19 vaccines for kids” may “ignite much-needed momentum in the lagging national vaccination effort, experts say.” Moderna on Thursday reported “that its vaccine is showing a 96% effectiveness rate in Phase 2/3 testing of adolescents ages 12 to 17,” while Pfizer has said its vaccine is 100% effective for those aged 12 to 15. Butler University public health specialist Ogbonnaya Omenka “said the latest data could help curb broader vaccine hesitancy, which has been partly to blame for a slowdown in daily shots.”

### **Judge’s Action On Barr Memo Spotlights Secretive DOJ Office.**

[The Hill](#) (5/6, Neidig, Beitsch, 5.69M) reports a “small but powerful section of the Department of Justice (DOJ) is under renewed scrutiny after a federal judge tore into former Attorney General William Barr and ordered the DOJ to release a memo that let former President Trump

claim he was exonerated by the Mueller probe." Critics of the Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) have long "argued it acts as a rubber stamp for the president and essentially drafts laws behind closed doors." The judge's "accusation this week that the OLC was tasked with clearing Trump's name is only likely to increase calls for reform and greater transparency." Ethics and transparency advocates have been "calling for the office to be reformed for years, and some are hoping that the latest revelation about how it operated during the Trump Administration will provide some momentum."

### **Studies Suggest Pfizer And Moderna Vaccines Protect Against Variants.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Anthes, Otterman, Mandavilli, Waller, 20.6M) reports that "several new studies released on Wednesday offered encouraging news about the ability of widely used vaccines to protect against severe Covid-19 cases, including illness caused by some dangerous variants. Two published studies found that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was extraordinarily effective against severe disease caused by two variants, including the dominant one in the United States. And the results of an early-stage trial of the Moderna vaccine – though not published or vetted by scientists – suggested that a single dose given as a booster was effective against variants first identified in South Africa and Brazil, the company said."

### **Pfizer Can Manufacture Up To 3B Vaccine Doses This Year.**

[Bloomberg](#) (5/6, Kresge, 3.57M) reports that Pfizer and BioNTech "have the capacity to make as many as 3 billion doses of their Covid-19 vaccine this year, lifting their production target even as pressure mounts to waive their patents to boost global supply." According to Bloomberg, "Though the production goals aren't the same as firm orders, the increases more than double what the partners had said they'd be able to make less than six months ago."

### **Foreign Health Officials Pause Distribution Of J&J Vaccines Made By Emergent.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, A1, Hamby, LaFraniere, Stolberg, 20.6M) reports that "quality-control problems" at Emergent BioSolutions' manufacturing plant in Baltimore, Maryland have led health officials in Canada, the European Union, and South Africa "to pause the distribution of millions of Johnson & Johnson doses, as the troubles of a politically connected U.S. contractor ripple across the world." Officials from all three governments "said there was no evidence that any of the doses they had received were tainted. But the problems identified in Baltimore have slowed their vaccination efforts while they perform additional quality assessments as a precaution." An FDA spokesperson said the agency is "in close communication with our foreign regulatory counterparts" on the matter.

### **Pritzker Targets June 11 To Fully Reopen Illinois.**

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (5/6, Petrella, Yin, Whidden, 2.03M) reports that Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker (D) on Thursday said that the state's COVID restrictions will be loosened on May 14, with a goal of fully reopening on June 11. While mask requirements would stay in place until the CDC recommends otherwise, Pritzker said, "The light that we can see at the end of the tunnel is getting brighter and brighter." He also "announced the state is now making [vaccine] doses available to individual doctor's office, the next step in the distribution effort." The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (5/6, Armentrout, 970K) reports that the announcements come as cases in the state "have fallen to their lowest levels in about six weeks." However, Pritzker cautioned, "We have to make sure that we don't see another surge in the virus. And the best way to do that is for everyone to get vaccinated." Over a third of the state's population is now fully vaccinated.

### **Walz To Lift Minnesota COVID Restrictions On May 28.**

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (5/6, Olson, 855K) reports that Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz (D) unveiled a plan on Thursday that will see COVID restrictions on businesses and social gatherings end on May 28 and an indoor mask-wearing mandate following to end on July 1. The

rollback will begin on "Friday with an elimination of capacity caps for outdoor entertainment venues...an expansion of caps for indoor venues, and an end to early bar and restaurant closings." The mask mandate "could be lifted before July 1 if the state can increase the rate of Minnesotans who have received COVID-19 vaccine from 59% to 70%." Walz is quoted as saying, "Let's just go get it done and end this thing."

In an editorial, the [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (5/6, 855K) praises Walz's plan as "a sensible one after a year of mostly grim state updates," with "three safe and remarkably effective vaccines" available, an abundant supply of doses, and residents signing up for vaccinations at a high rate.

### **Florida Theme Parks Loosen COVID Protocols.**

[USA Today](#) (5/6, Deerwester, 12.7M) reports, "Walt Disney World Resort and Universal Orlando are relaxing some of their COVID-19 protocols, which have been in place since the Florida theme parks reopened last summer." Universal Orlando announced that visitors will no longer undergo temperature checks and that social distancing protocol has been reduced to three feet, though masks will still be required across the resort. Disney World similarly "said it would begin phasing out temperature checks...starting May 16," while its mask mandate will remain in place.

### **Families Start To Rethink Role Of Nursing Homes Following Pandemic.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Abelson, 20.6M) says, "The pandemic's toll on nursing homes drove occupancy down significantly – not just from the 132,000 deaths but also because of a decline in admissions." The roughly "14,000 skilled nursing facilities in the United States now have on average a vacancy rate of slightly more than 25 percent, according to figures from the National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care." The pandemic and "deaths of so many elderly residents, captive in those homes, has deepened levels of anxiety and guilt among many families planning the next phase of care for an aging relative." With this in mind, "experts say rethinking the purpose of nursing homes is long overdue."

### **Initial Jobless Claims Fell Last Week To Lowest Point Since Pandemic Began.**

The [AP](#) (5/6, Rugaber) reports the Labor Department announced Thursday that "the number of Americans seeking unemployment aid fell last week to 498,000, the lowest point since the viral pandemic struck 14 months ago and a sign of the job market's growing strength as businesses reopen and consumers step up spending." [Bloomberg](#) (5/6, Lubbers, Rockeman, 3.57M) says that "the median estimate in a Bloomberg survey of economists called for 538,000 claims."

But, the [New York Times](#) (5/6, Casselman, 20.6M) says applications "remain high by historical standards," and [Reuters](#) (5/6, Mutikani) that "the labor market is not out of the woods yet, with about 16.2 million people still collecting unemployment checks."

[CNBC](#) (5/6, Cox, 7.34M) reports on its website that on Friday, the Labor Department will "release...its nonfarm payroll count for April." According to CNBC, "Economists expect that the economy added another 1 million jobs during the month, with hiring likely to be the quickest in the hospitality sector, which sustained the worst of the pandemic-related damage. However, continuing claims actually ticked higher last week, rising 37,000 to just below 3.7 million." The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, Telford, 10.52M) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Guilford, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provide similar coverage.

### **McConnell: Biden Stimulus Has Created Labor Shortage.**

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports that on Thursday, Senate Minority Leader McConnell "alleged that the Biden administration's stimulus law, which included \$1,400 checks and new unemployment assistance for millions of Americans, had created a massive labor shortage that threatens to hold back the country's economic recovery." McConnell said. "Regretfully, it's actually more lucrative for many Kentuckians and Americans to not work than work. So we

have a workforce shortage, and we have raising inflation, both directly related to this recent bill that just passed." According to the Post, "Employers across a range of industries have complained that it is difficult to find workers, even though millions of Americans remain unemployed."

[Bloomberg](#) (5/6, Lubbers, Rockeman, Pickert, 3.57M) says there is "a growing debate about whether there are enough workers to power faster economic growth" as companies "from fast food chains like Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc. to chicken producer Pilgrim's Pride Corp. and MGM Resorts International say they can't find – or entice – enough workers." Bloomberg says that "executives often blame stimulus checks and generous unemployment benefits for hampering hiring efforts. But economists and policy makers are unclear about what's really causing this gap and how long it will last."

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, McCabe, 20.6M) reports employers "have said in recent weeks that they would like to hire even faster but have struggled to find enough workers," and "some have blamed enhanced unemployment benefits for discouraging people from returning to work." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Morath, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage.

### **House Republicans Tout Rescue Plan Spending In Their Districts.**

[Axios](#) (5/6, Allassan, 1.26M) reports that "a number of Republican lawmakers are celebrating and promoting provisions of President Biden's American Rescue Plan in their home constituencies, despite unanimously voting against the sweeping COVID rescue bill." With polls indicating the plan "is widely popular among the American public," Rep. Madison Cawthorn (R-NC) "said he was 'proud' to see taxpayer money return to his district, referencing the millions in health care grants the relief bill sent to local communities," and Rep. Alex Mooney (R-WV) "promoted the more than \$41 million going to 12 health care centers in his district, without mentioning the plan."

The [AP](#) (5/6, Peoples) says Democrats "are promising to make the pandemic relief vote – and the Republican resistance to it – a central element in their political strategy moving into next year's midterm elections. ... And there are early signs that Republicans may struggle to defend their opposition to the popular legislative package, which was designed to protect the nation's fragile economic recovery following the worst public health threat in a century."

### **Kamin Says Biden Tax Increases Will Lead Wealthy To Give More To Charity.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Tankersley, 20.6M) reports in a private conference call last week, NEC Deputy Director David Kamin told nonprofit leaders that President Biden's plan to increase taxes on high earners and the wealthy would lead more rich Americans to donate property or other assets to charity before they die in order to avoid large tax bills. Asked how the President's tax plans "would affect charitable giving," Kamin said the plan "actually increases the incentive to give to charity. ... And it basically says if you want to not pay tax on the gain, the way you need to do that is to give the property to charity." The Times calls the comments "an acknowledgment that Mr. Biden's proposals would encourage the wealthy to find new workarounds to reduce the amount of tax they or their heirs pay...even as the president seeks to level the tax playing field between typical workers and the very rich."

### **Rural Democrats Express Concern About Administration's Capital-Gains Tax Plan.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports 13 rural Democrats have expressed concern to House leaders about the possible impact of the Biden Administration's plan to tax unrealized capital gains at death could have on family farms. In a letter to House leaders, the lawmakers said they would appreciate the Administration's proposal to let family-owned farms and businesses defer the taxes if they remain under family control but would push to make sure the protections are included as the plan moves forward.

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says there is mounting evidence that the capital-gains tax increase will reduce federal revenue. Citing the rural Democrats' call for an exemption for family farms, the Journal says exceptions are granted, the impact on revenue will get worse.

### **Biden Seeks To Close Tax Loophole For Farmers.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Parker, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that while President Biden has sought to reassure Americans that his tax plan would only impact Americans earning more than \$400,000, his package would undermine farmers by tightening a tax loophole allowing landowners to defer capital-gains tax payments.

### **Bloomberg Analysis: IRS Funding Increase Unlikely To Quickly Boost Tax Receipts.**

[Bloomberg](#) (5/6, Versprille, 3.57M) reports that President Biden's "plan to raise \$700 billion over a decade from increased tax audits of the wealthy and corporations – a major funding source for his economic-investment proposals – will probably take years to bear fruit and faces skepticism that the figure is realistic." The Biden Administration "has proposed a more than 10% funding increase for the Internal Revenue Service for the next fiscal year and an overall investment of \$80 billion over the next 10 years to beef up the agency's depleted auditing staff and outdated technology. ... But some former IRS officials said it will take several years to produce significant results, especially after accounting for the time it takes to hire and train new employees and to complete audits of highly complex returns."

### **Federal Judge Stays Ruling Overturning CDC Eviction Moratorium.**

The [AP](#) (5/6) reports that "a federal judge has temporarily stayed an order that found the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention exceeded its authority when it imposed a federal eviction moratorium to help stop the spread of the coronavirus." The stay, which was issued Wednesday by a federal judge in Washington, "came after the Justice Department filed an emergency appeal in the case." It "means there will be no immediate impact on the ban, which was extended in March to go through the end of June."

A [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) editorial says district courts have said the CDC is not empowered to impose the ban but expresses concern that if the CDC order expires on June 30, the cases will be rendered pointless. However, the [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) editorializes, "The practical effect of a federal judge's opinion tossing out the pandemic-era nationwide freeze on evictions may be limited," since "some states and localities have their own moratoria," and other courts have made different decisions. But "make no mistake: Most tenants who try to fight landlords in eviction court face next-to-impossible odds, and countless Americans are at risk of losing their homes as a result."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, A1, 10.52M) has a 2,600-word front-page feature on a family facing eviction.

### **One In Eight Americans Facing Food Insecurity.**

[NBC Nightly News](#) (5/6, story 10, 2:10, Holt, 5.2M) reported that "one in eight people are reportedly having food insecurity." NBC's Cynthia McFadden added, "In Iowa, one in seven children struggle with hunger. In Nebraska, it's one in six." NBC reported on "a food bank that stretches over 93 counties in those states. ... While there have been plenty of hard times over the years, nothing has been as rough as this. The month before the pandemic struck, they were spending \$80,000 a month on food." Now they spend about \$1.5 million per month. NBC added that "food banks can't do it alone." Brian Barks, who runs Food Bank for the Heartland, "says the federal government's decision to extend the 15% increase in food stamp benefits known as SNAP through the summer will help." Barks: "For every meal that a food bank distributes, SNAP can do nine. When you do the math, it just makes sense."

### **DeLauro Says House Will Move Appropriations Bills In June, July.**

[The Hill](#) (5/6, Elis, 5.69M) reports House Appropriations Chair Rosa DeLauro told a Brookings event Thursday that her panel and its subcommittee will mark up the 12 government funding bills for fiscal 2022 in June with passage by the full House expected in July. DeLauro said, "The subcommittee and full committee markups will be in June, and we will be on the floor in July." The Hill says the House version of the measures "will include a reintroduced version of earmarks." DeLauro said, "I know what scrutiny there will be in regards to these projects. They are being carefully vetted."

### **Fed Warns Rising Asset Prices Could Harm Investors.**

The [AP](#) (5/6, Crutsinger) reports a Federal Reserve report released Thursday "warn[ed] that prices of stocks and other financial assets are rising to levels that could set investors up for big losses from sudden declines." The report "noted that stocks and other risky assets have risen in value since last November, in some cases to record highs, as the outlook for the post-pandemic U.S. economy has improved with increases in vaccinations and business re-openings." The report warned, "Asset prices may be vulnerable to significant declines should risk appetite fall." The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, Siegel, 10.52M) describes Fed "fears that a significant drop-off in asset prices could ripple through the broader financial system."

The warning, came in the Fed's "latest report on financial stability," [Reuters](#) (5/6, Schneider, Schroeder, Saphir) reports. Fed Governor Lael Brainard said in a statement released with the report, "With investors ebullient on expectations for a strong rebound, it is important to closely monitor risks to the system and ensure the financial system is resilient." [Bloomberg](#) (5/6, Torres, 3.57M) and the [New York Times](#) (5/6, Smialek, 20.6M) provide similar coverage.

### **Gensler: Rules Needed For Brokerage Apps That Turn Stock Trades Into A Game.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Goldstein, 20.6M) reports SEC Chair Gensler "is putting transparency in the markets and the need to understand the impact of new technology at the top of his priority list." Gensler "appeared by video before the House Committee on Financial Services to discuss the S.E.C.'s response to the tumultuous trading in shares of GameStop in January." He "said the S.E.C.'s staff has been working on a report addressing the issues raised by the episode that will be released this summer. He also said new rules may be needed for brokerage apps that turn stock trading into a game or contest, a method called gamification." Gensler "said the S.E.C. will need to 'lean in' to make sure traders, companies and others are not using social media to manipulate the markets." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Osipovich, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage.

### **Amid Skyrocketing Steel Prices, Bank Of America Analyst Warns Of A Bubble.**

[CNN](#) (5/6, 89.21M) reports on its website that "the reopening of the economy is driving a steel boom so strong that some are convinced it will end in tears." Prices for US benchmark hot-rolled coil steel, which "bottom[ed] out around \$460 last year," are now "sitting at around \$1,500 a ton, a record high that is nearly triple the 20-year average." In addition, "steel stocks are on fire. US Steel (X), which crashed to a record low last March amid bankruptcy fears, has skyrocketed 200% in just 12 months." But Bank of America analyst Timna Tanners warned, "This is going to be short-lived. It's very appropriate to call this a bubble." Tanners "predicted a painful reversal as supply catches up with what she described as unimpressive demand." Tanners said, "We expect this will correct - and often when it corrects, it over-corrects."

### **National Chicken Council Downplays Talk Of Shortage.**

[USA Today](#) (5/6, Tyko, 12.7M) reports on a shortage that is making poultry "so scarce and expensive that some restaurants are limiting or running out of chicken sandwiches, wings and tenders. Others are considering changes to menus and promotions." It is "unclear if and how the low supplies will affect consumers in the grocery store." Meanwhile, the poultry industry "is

tamping down growing alarm over a chicken shortage with National Chicken Council spokesman Tom Super saying there was “a very tight supply but short of a shortage.” Super said, “Yes, supply is somewhat tight, but the sky certainly isn’t falling. ... Chicken producers are doing everything they can to overcome the devastating impact of Mother Nature when she inflicted the once-in-a-lifetime winter storm on Texas and nearby states – major chicken producing regions.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Haddon, Bunge, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage.

### **Stocks Finish “Broadly Higher” As Dow Posts Another Record.**

The [AP](#) (5/6, Kageyama) reports stocks ended Thursday “broadly higher,” with the Dow reaching “another all-time high.” [Reuters](#) (5/6, Sanyal, Hu) says stocks were “bolstered by an upbeat weekly jobless claims report.” According to the [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Wursthorn, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), the Dow climbed 318.19 points to 34,548.53, the S&P 500 added 34.03 points to close at 4,201.62 and the Nasdaq ended the day 50.42 points higher at 13,632.84. [Bloomberg](#) (5/6, Papuc, Barrett, 3.57M) provides similar coverage.

### **Krugman Faults Media Reaction To Yellen’s Comment On Interest Rates.**

Paul Krugman writes in the [New York Times](#) (5/6, 20.6M) that Treasury Secretary Yellen’s comment Tuesday that interest rates may “have to rise somewhat to make sure that our economy doesn’t overheat,” was neither “a forecast” nor “an attempt to influence the Federal Reserve.” It was “simple good sense. Still, she shouldn’t have said it. Convention says that the nation’s top economic official must avoid uttering even the most obvious economic truths, even if she happens to be a world-class economist, lest they be read as signals of...something.” Krugman argues that “the hair-trigger media response” to Yellen’s comment “was part of a broader phenomenon: Many commentators just don’t seem able to keep any perspective about the bumps and blips of a booming economy.”

### **China Suspends Economic Dialogue With Australia.**

[Reuters](#) (5/6) reports that China on Thursday “indefinitely’ suspended...all activity under a China-Australia Strategic Economic Dialogue.” China’s National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said in a statement, “Recently, some Australian Commonwealth Government officials launched a series of measures to disrupt the normal exchanges and cooperation between China and Australia out of Cold War mindset and ideological discrimination.” Australian Trade Minister Dan Tehan “said the commission’s decision was disappointing because the economic dialogue” was “an important forum for Australia and China to work through issues relevant to our economic partnership.”

### **China Avoiding Trade Restraints By Purchasing Overseas Manufacturers.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Dalton, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that for the past decade, China has given subsidies to state-owned companies to buy manufacturing competitors in the West and build factories outside the country. While the US and Europe have relied on the WTO to penalize China for subsidizing exports, WTO rules are not designed to restrict a country’s subsidies to its overseas manufacturers.

### **WSJournal: Europe Should Join US, Other Nations To Present Unified Trade Front To China.**

A [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) editorial says that instead of trying to ratify an agreement with Beijing that would give Europe and China greater access to each other’s markets, the EU should present a unified trade front to China alongside the US and other nations.

### **Ernst And Gillibrand Say Military Sexual Assault Bill Has Enough Votes To Pass.**

[NPR](#) (5/6, Grisales, 3.69M) reports on its website that Sens. Joni Ernst (R-IA) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), who are cosponsoring a bill to “revamp the way the military handles sexual assault cases and other serious crimes,” said on Wednesday that the bill has enough support to leave the Senate. Gillibrand said, “We have enormous momentum. I think we are well over 60 votes at this point.” Ernst added, “We’ve basically met that threshold and I am just so excited that hopefully we will [be] making changes that make a significant difference in our military men’s and women’s lives.” The Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act seeks to overhaul the military’s handling of sexual assault cases as well as implementing new systems to combat it.

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports that Pentagon leaders “signaled an openness Thursday to altering military rules that govern the prosecution of sexual assaults, as support builds behind congressional initiatives that would take those decisions out of the chain of command.” Joint Chiefs of Staff Chair Gen. Mark A. Milley “said his decision to drop his opposition to changing the military’s system for prosecuting such crimes was based in part on data suggesting that 20,000 service members were sexually assaulted last year.” He said, “We can’t tolerate that level of divisiveness in our force. These are blue-on-blue assaults.” He added, “It cannot stand. It has to be resolved. So, yes, my mind is very open.”

### **Man Charged In Connection To Stabbing Of Asian Women In San Francisco.**

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 9, 0:15, Muir, 6.52M) reported that Patrick Thompson has been “charged with attempted murder and two counts of inflicting injury” after he “allegedly attacked the woman at a bus stop” in San Francisco.” Yet, authorities are “still deciding whether to label this a hate crime.” The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 6, 1:50, O’Donnell, 4.04M) reported that the rash of recent attacks on Asians led the Alameda County, California, District Attorney to create a new special response unit. District Attorney Nancy O’Malley said, “We have 78 victims that we’re working with just since we put together the unit since the end of January. FBI San Francisco Division Special Agent In Charge Craig Fair said of the investigation, “I think in some communities, there is this reflective resistance, and even a distrust of law enforcement, and that is a barrier that we are trying to break down.”

[NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 8, 1:35, Holt, 5.2M) reported that the surge in anti-Asian American hate crimes is reflected in new police data, which “found a 164% increase in reports of anti-Asian hate crimes compared to this time last year.” [USA Today](#) (5/6, Yancey-Bragg, 12.7M) reports that Stop AAPI Hate published new data on hate crimes targeting Asian Americans, and it said that there have been more than 6,600 incidents. The uptick “was first reported in March 2020 as COVID-19 began spreading across the nation and some politicians, including President Donald Trump, blamed China for the pandemic.”

### **Idaho Police Investigate School Shooting.**

The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 4, 0:15, O’Donnell, 4.04M) reported that Idaho police are investigating a new school shooting incident in Rigby, Idaho, where a student “pulled out a gun and opened fire, injuring two other students and a custodian.” [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 4, 0:15, Holt, 5.2M) reported that the authorities “say a teacher disarmed the suspect, a sixth-grade girl, and held her until police arrested her.” The injuries “are described as non life-threatening.”

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, lead story, 2:55, Muir, 6.52M) reported one student said of the shooting, “We heard one gunshot, and then we heard another. And we heard multiple kids screaming and that – people arguing. And then people ran past our room. And all my friends and I were freaking out, and we were hiding in the corner of our classroom with the lights off and the doors locked.”

The [AP](#) (5/6, Boone) reports that police “were called to the school around 9:15 a.m. after students and staffers heard gunfire.” Bonneville County sheriff’s Sgt. Bryan Lovell “said an

investigation was underway and no additional information was immediately available." Idaho Gov. Brad Little (R) said in a statement, "I am praying for the lives and safety of those involved in today's tragic events."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports that the shooter "shot two people in a hallway with a handgun before going outside and shooting another." Jefferson County Sheriff Steve Anderson "did not release a name," and he "said the girl was being held at the sheriff's office."

The [Idaho Statesman](#) (5/6, 299K) reports Jefferson School District Superintendent Chad Martin said to reporters, "Today we had the worst nightmare a school district could encounter. We had a school shooting here at Rigby Middle School." He added, "What we know so far is the shooter has been apprehended. There is no further threat to the students."

[CNN](#) (5/6, Andone, 89.21M) reports on its website that the Jefferson School District announced the closure of all schools on Friday, and counselors "will be available at Rigby High School throughout the day."

### **ACA Special Enrollment Sees Nearly 1M Sign Up Through April.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Sanger-Katz, Kliff, 20.6M) reports, "Nearly one million Americans have signed up for Affordable Care Act coverage during the first 10 weeks of a special open enrollment period the Biden administration began in February." According to data from the Department of Health and Human Services, 940,000 enrolled between February 15 and April 30, and "of those new enrollees, nearly half bought coverage last month, after Congress added billions in subsidies included in the most recent stimulus package." The Times goes on to report that the surge "reflects a growing demand for health insurance," and "most likely reflects increased publicity about the opportunity, the availability of more financial help with premiums, and health fears related to the pandemic."

[CNN](#) (5/6, Luhby, 89.21M) reports on its website that the figure is "well over double the number who turned to the exchange in the same period over the past two years, when enrollment was limited to those losing job-based policies and experiencing other major life events, such as divorce." Additionally, "about 1.9 million Obamacare enrollees returned to the federal exchange last month to take advantage of the heftier premium subsidies," which "has reduced monthly premiums by more than 40% – from \$100 to \$57, on average."

### **Gillibrand Promotes "Deeply Bipartisan" Package Aimed At Lowering Drug Prices.**

[The Hill](#) (5/6, Oshin, 5.69M) reports that Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) "this week touted legislation aimed at lowering the cost of prescription drugs for Americans, calling it a 'deeply bipartisan' issue." However, Gillibrand said that, failing Republican support, Democratic lawmakers could pass the three bill package if reforms to the filibuster are made. Democrats on Capitol Hill "have pushed to add drug pricing measures and an expansion of Medicare eligibility to President Biden's \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan."

### **House Lawmakers Seek To Address Maternal Death Rate.**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (5/6, Wire, 3.37M) reports that House Oversight and Reform Committee members "heard testimony Thursday on what Congress can do to address" the rising rate of pregnancy-related deaths across the country, particularly among Black women. Democratic lawmakers "are hoping to include a package of bills focused on maternal health in President Biden's massive infrastructure and tax bill," including legislation focused on "providing more funding for racial bias and healthcare disparity training." Advocates testifying "also urged Congress to make permanent a provision passed in the most recent economic aid package that temporarily allows and encourages states to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage for a year rather than the current 60-day limit."

### **Harris And López Obrador To Discuss Immigration On Friday.**

[Reuters](#) (5/6, Graham) reports Vice President Harris and Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador will speak virtually on Friday in an effort to “explore joint approaches to containing a sharp increase in migrant arrivals at the U.S. southern border.” López Obrador said to reporters, “The issue tomorrow will be migration, basically.” [Axios](#) (5/6, E. Franco, 1.26M) provides additional coverage.

***Administration Officials Discuss Migrant Reunification Efforts.*** [NBC Nightly News Vi](#) (5/6, story 7, 1:20, Holt, 5.2M) reported that Biden Administration officials discussed the ongoing efforts to reunite families on Thursday. Family Reunification Task Force Executive Director Michelle Brané said, “We still have to go and match up data and look at what led to those separations.” Brané also said on [MSNBCVi](#) (5/6, 790K) that her task force has done “an initial pass” of departmental files and is “finding evidence” of additional family separations.

Asked on [MSNBCVi](#) (5/6, 816K) about whether reunited migrant families would be able to remain in the United States permanently, DHS Secretary Mayorkas said, “We are very much focused on providing stability to the reunited families. ... It’s not something we can guarantee at this point in time, but we are dedicated to achieving more than what we have delivered thus far.”

***CBP Distributes New Video Of Immigrant Facility In Texas.*** [NBC Nightly NewsVi](#) (5/6, story 6, 2:00, Holt, 5.2M) reported that Customs and Border Patrol published a new video on Thursday, showing the current status of the immigrant processing facility in Donna, Texas. The location is “much less crowded than it was months ago, and now officials say children are being kept here for an average of 24 hours, much less than before.” The release comes as officials “say 160,000 unaccompanied children are expected to cross the border this year, shattering the previous record.”

[CNN](#) (5/6, Sands, 89.21M) reports on its website that an unidentified Administration official “said it is a sign that the Biden Administration’s efforts have led to a ‘dramatic turnaround’ for the situation of unaccompanied children at the border.” US law “permits children to remain in these jail-like border facilities for only 72 hours before being transferred to the custody” of HHS.

### **Democrats Seek Additional Funding For Capitol Security.**

[CNN](#) (5/6, Grayer, Herb, 89.21M) reports on its website that House Appropriations Chair Rosa DeLauro and congressional leaders “have started negotiating on what a funding supplemental for Capitol security should look like, though they have not yet reached an agreement yet on what should go in the bill – or how to address policy questions like what to do with fencing around the Capitol.” They “are preparing to move a \$2 billion supplemental funding bill to address US Capitol security to the floor later this month, despite some outstanding questions – and reservations – among Republicans and even some Senate Democrats about the spending.”

[The Hill](#) (5/6, Elis, 5.69M) reports that Democrats “are likely to huddle on the supplemental spending bill Monday before unveiling the legislation and sending it to the House Rules Committee for floor consideration.” The measure will “deal with issues relating to the Capitol Police and its preparedness, beefing up the Capitol complex and providing members of Congress additional security.”

***Republicans Criticize Lofgren After Publication Of Social Media Post Compilation.*** The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (5/6, Kopan, 2.44M) reports that Republicans are “firing back” at Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) over a “compilation she created of their social media posts related to the 2020 election and Jan. 6 insurrection, filing a complaint against her that was made public Thursday.” Lofgren “defended herself in a reply, saying that it is part of Congress’ duty to investigate any officeholder’s potential role in an insurrection.”

### **Administration Releases Report On Conserving Land, Combatting Climate Change.**

The [AP](#) (5/6, Daly) reports that on Thursday, the Biden Administration “detailed steps to achieve an ambitious goal to conserve nearly one-third of America’s lands and waters by 2030,

relying on voluntary efforts to preserve public, private and tribal areas while also helping tackle climate change and create jobs. [A report](#), with the lofty title 'America the Beautiful,' calls for a decade-long commitment on projects nationwide to make the conservation and restoration of lands and waters an urgent priority." According to the AP, "The plan would purify drinking water, increase green space, improve access to outdoor recreation, restore healthy fisheries, reduce the risk of wildfires and recognize the 'oversized contributions' of farmers, ranchers, forest owners, fishers, hunters, rural communities and tribal nations."

[Reuters](#) (5/6) says the report was issued by Interior Secretary Haaland, Commerce Secretary Raimondo, Agriculture Secretary Vilsack, and White House Council on Environmental Quality Chair Brenda Mallory. According to Reuters, the report "does not offer specifics about which areas could be set aside for conservation or whether they would be protected from productive use or resource extraction." Reuters says Republicans on the House Natural Resources Committee "said they were concerned that the government could designate strict protections on some land that remained 'productive.'"

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) quotes White House climate adviser Gina McCarthy as saying, "This is the very first national conservation goal we have ever set as a country. It really reflects the urgency with which we have to respond to a global extinction crisis, the climate crisis and the deep racial and economic disparities that too often dictate who has access to nature." However, according to the Post, "the new report doesn't identify specific places for enhanced protection, define what level of conservation would be required for an area to count toward the administration's 30 percent goal or indicate how much federal funding would be needed to make Biden's vision a reality."

[CNN](#) (5/6, Stark, 89.21M) reports on its website that Mallory "provided a glimpse of how the Administration will be determining what success looks like for this initiative." She said, "We will be measuring progress based on real outcomes and benefits of conservation and restoration efforts in the lives of people and in the health of ecosystems, rather than solely by scale."

[Axios](#) (5/6, Geman, 1.26M) reports that the publication "lays out two ways the Administration hopes to track and document progress toward the goal with 'comprehensive and inclusive' accounting." One proposal "is through creation of an 'American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas'", which "collects 'baseline information on the amount and types of lands and waters that are being managed for conservation and restoration purposes.'"

***Interior Department Moves To Reinstate Protections For Migratory Birds.*** The [AP](#) (5/6) reports that "longstanding protections for wild birds would be restored under a proposal unveiled Thursday to bring back prosecutions of avian deaths by industry that were ended under former President Donald Trump." According to the AP, the Interior Department announcement "came as President Joe Biden has sought to dismantle a Trump policy that ended criminal enforcement against companies over bird deaths that could have been prevented. ... The Biden administration in March issued a legal opinion citing court rulings that said the 102-year-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act was 'unambiguous' that killing protected birds was unlawful 'at any time or in any manner.'"

### **Media Analyses: Stefanik Echoes Trump's "False Narrative" About 2020 Election.**

Coverage of the debate inside the House Republican caucus on whether to oust Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY) from the leadership focuses mainly on her likely replacement, Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY). On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (5/6, story 5, 1:50, 6.52M), the only broadcast network to cover the story Thursday, Jonathan Karl said Stefanik "has promoted lies about the election. ... [On Thursday], she appeared on a podcast hosted by Steve Bannon, the Trump loyalist who was pardoned by Trump after being indicted for allegedly defrauding Trump supporters." Stefanik: "My vision is to run with support from [Trump] and his coalition of voters, which was the highest number of votes ever won by a Republican nominee in 2020." ABC's David Muir: "What's so interesting about all of this: Liz Cheney voted for the Trump agenda 93% of the time, far more than" Stefanik.

The [AP](#) (5/6, Fram) reports Stefanik “stated her case Thursday for replacing [Cheney], implicitly lambasting Cheney’s battles with former President Donald Trump by saying, ‘We are one team and that means working with the president.’” The remarks by the “one-time moderate who’s evolved into an ardent Trump champion came as Cheney seems likely to be tossed from her leadership post next week.”

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Edmondson, Broadwater, 20.6M) says Stefanik “loudly resurrected” Trump’s “false narrative” about the 2020 election in her interview with Bannon, “citing ‘unprecedented, unconstitutional overreach’ by election officials in 2020 and endorsing an audit in Arizona that has become the latest avenue for conservatives to try to cast doubt on the results. ... Far from staying quiet about the false election claims on Thursday, Ms. Stefanik effectively campaigned on them.” The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) similarly says Stefanik “sought to cement her place in leadership by giving credence to unfounded theories about election fraud, including in Arizona.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Hughes, Wise, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports under the headline “Elise Stefanik Embraces GOP’s Pro-Trump Wing In Leadership Campaign” that the former Trump critic and moderate became one of his most vocal defenders during his first impeachment, and later joined Trump’s allies in questioning the results of last year’s election. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (5/6, 3.37M) says Stefanik and Cheney “personify the choice now facing the Republican Party at a crossroads: Should it remain defined by Trump – embracing his provocative style and false claims about massive fraud in the 2020 election – or renounce him and re-center conservative orthodoxy that was eclipsed during his presidency?”

The [New York Daily News](#) (5/6, Goldiner, 2.51M) reports, “The rising GOP star, who represents a swath of upstate spanning from Albany to the Canadian border, made it clear Thursday that she would rule differently than Cheney.” But [CNN](#) (5/6, Nobles, Gangel, Orr, 89.21M) says on its website that even as Stefanik “has consolidated her position” as Cheney’s “likely replacement...her voting record has raised concerns from some conservatives in the House and around Washington.” [The Hill](#) (5/6, Lillis, 5.69M) says “some conservative groups are arguing that [Stefanik] is too liberal on policy” to replace Cheney.

[Politico](#) (5/6, Lima, 6.73M) reports Stefanik “blasted Twitter on Thursday after the platform briefly suspended the account of one of her aides, a move a company spokesperson later said was an error the site has since reversed.” Politico says Stefanik “used her campaign Twitter account to rail against the suspension of Karoline Leavitt, her communications director in the House, [calling it](#) an ‘unconstitutional overreach SILENCING our voices and freedom of speech.’”

Henry Olsen writes in the [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) that Stefanik may be “just the type of new leader the GOP needs.” Olsen argues that Trump’s “public endorsement of her to replace Cheney will merely confirm to some observers that Stefanik is merely another loud Trump acolyte,” but “nothing could be further from the truth. Stefanik is an unusually canny and precocious politician.”

***Wyoming Republicans Eye Primary Challenges To Cheney.*** [Politico](#) (5/6, Mutnick, 6.73M) says Wyoming Republicans are now “plotting how to remove [Cheney] from Congress entirely.” According to Politico, “There is no shortage of Republicans eager to take on Cheney in a 2022 primary.” Four Republicans “have filed to run against Cheney. But more contenders are waiting on the sidelines, and Trump’s political team, according to two people familiar with the efforts, has shown early interest in recruiting a pair of Republicans who aren’t already in the race: attorney Darin Smith, who ran for the seat in 2016, and Wyoming Secretary of State Ed Buchanan.”

***Sen. Sanders: GOP Has Become “An Anti-Democratic Cult.”*** [The Hill](#) (5/6, Oshin, 5.69M) reports Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) “called the GOP an ‘anti-democratic cult’ in a Thursday tweet commenting on [Cheney’s] almost certain ouster.” Sanders [tweeted](#), “[Cheney] will likely be voted off the House Republican Leadership. Her crime: acknowledging the reality

that Trump lost the election. The Republican Party is no longer a 'conservative' party. It is an anti-democratic cult pushing the Big Lie and conspiracy theories."

**WPost Analysis: Cheney Issue Challenges Biden's Optimism About Post-Trump GOP.** The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) writes that though President Biden once suggested that if Trump lost his reelection bid, the GOP "would no longer be beholden to one man" and its leaders "would not be intimidated by the former president's blowback," on Wednesday, Biden "offered a more flummoxed, less confident assessment: 'I don't understand the Republicans.'" Biden "now faces a basic question: What if he was wrong about the Republican Party? What if it has, in fact, changed in more fundamental ways than he contemplated? And if it has, what does that mean for his presidency?"

### **Klobuchar Not Giving Up On Senate Passing Voting Rights Legislation.**

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (5/6, 855K) reports that the effort by Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) to push the For The People Act through the Senate "has all the makings of a moonshot: hard to achieve and fraught with complications." The measure "affects everything from voter registration to absentee ballots to campaign finance to ethics laws. Republicans charge that it's an unconstitutional attempt by the federal government to wrest control of elections from states." Ahead of a May 11 markup, Klobuchar, who chairs the Rules Committee, "is talking to colleagues and proposing changes to the bill. ... She has invested a big piece of her political reputation in the legislation because she believes it is the most important voting rights law in half a century."

### **DeSantis Signs Florida Voting Law On Fox News.**

[NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 2, 1:40, Holt, 5.2M) reported Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) "signed a controversial new voting law" on Thursday. NBC's Sam Brock added DeSantis, who says the law "will make elections more secure," made it "official on Fox News. ... With no other media outlets allowed in." [Axios](#) (5/6, Knutson, 1.26M) reports DeSantis "told Fox & Friends in an 'exclusive' broadcast that he believes the law includes the 'strongest election integrity measures in the country.'" According to Axios, the measure "increases restrictions on drop boxes, requires voters to sign up for mail-in ballots every year and limits who can drop off ballots at drop boxes."

On its website, [CNN](#) (5/6, Mena, Kelly, Schouten, 89.21M) reports that by signing the "controversial" measure, DeSantis joined "a host of other GOP-led states pushing new limits in connection with former President Donald Trump's baseless claims of fraud in the 2020 election." The [AP](#) (5/6, Calvin) reports DeSantis "said the new law puts Florida ahead of the curve in preventing any potential fraud." DeSantis said, "Right now I have what we think is the strongest election integrity measures in the country. We're also banning ballot harvesting. We're not going to let political operatives go and get satchels of votes and dump them in some drop box."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) says that for DeSantis, "it made perfect sense to restrict his bill-signing to just the media outlet that had indirectly championed it." DeSantis, "whose presidential aspirations are as subtle as a Miami Beach nightclub," was able "to speak directly to the heavily Republican viewers of the most-watched network for Republicans to sign into law a bill that the network and other Republicans had told those Republicans was necessary. None of it was interrupted by such unpleasantries as questions from outside reporters."

[Reuters](#) (5/6) says "minutes after DeSantis signed the law, the League of Women Voters of Florida and two other civil rights groups sued Florida's 67 counties to try to block the new restrictions. They are represented by Marc Elias, a Democratic lawyer who also sued Georgia over voting limits the state passed in March." The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 5, 2:05, O'Donnell, 4.04M) reported that "the NAACP says it is suing the state of Florida" over the law. [ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 4, 1:10, Muir, 6.52M) provided similar coverage Thursday evening.

**Texas Lawmakers Consider Voting Bill.** The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Corasaniti, Epstein, 20.6M) reports hours after DeSantis signed the law, "the Republican-led Legislature in Texas pressed ahead on Thursday with its own far-reaching bill that would make it one of the most difficult states in the nation in which to cast a ballot." The Texas measure would, "among other restrictions, greatly empower partisan poll watchers, prohibit election officials from mailing out absentee ballot applications and impose strict punishments for those who provide assistance outside the lines of what is permissible." The Texas State House "was scheduled to debate the measure late into the evening with the possibility that it would pass it and send it to the Senate." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Findell, Kamp, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage.

### **FEC Recommends Congress Ban Prechecked Boxes For Recurring Campaign Donations.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Goldmacher, 20.6M) reports the FEC "voted unanimously on Thursday to recommend that Congress ban political campaigns from guiding donors by default into recurring contributions through prechecked boxes." The vote came "a month after a New York Times investigation showed that former President Donald J. Trump's political operation had steered huge numbers of unwitting supporters into repeated donations through that tactic." While the commission "is divided evenly between three Democratic-aligned commissioners and three Republicans," the group "came together on Thursday to ask Congress to strengthen campaign finance law to protect online donors."

### **Leaders Of GOP-Led Arizona Ballot Recount Discount DOJ Concerns.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Wines, 20.6M) reports Arizona Secretary of State Katie Hobbs (D), in "a scathing six-page letter" this week, blasted a Republican-led private recount of 2020 ballots in Maricopa County, where, among other things, "untrained citizens are trying to find traces of bamboo on last year's ballots, seemingly trying to prove a conspiracy theory that the election was tainted by fake votes from Asia," and "people with open partisan bias, including a man who was photographed on the Capitol steps during the Jan. 6 riot, are doing the recounting." The [Arizona Republic](#) (5/6, Fifield, 1.05M) reports the federal Justice Department has asked state Senate President Karen Fann (R) "to respond to concerns the department has about the security of ballots and potential voter intimidation" as the audit proceeds.

However, the [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports officials involved with the recount of the "brushed off concerns raised by the Justice Department" on Thursday. Former Arizona Secretary of State Ken Bennett (R), "the audit's spokesman, said in an interview Thursday that [Fann] plans to tell the Justice Department in her own letter that there is no need for federal involvement." Fann "plans to argue that the ballots at the Arizona Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Phoenix are being guarded 24 hours a day and are not in any danger, he said."

### **Twitter Removes Account That Was Sharing Trump's Blog Posts.**

The [New York Post](#) (5/6, Jacobs, 7.45M) reports, "An account pulled from Twitter for appearing to belong to former President Donald Trump's newly launched communications platform was not created" by Trump's staff. The account, @DJTDesk, "emerged on the social media site shortly after" Trump launched a blog on his website this week. [Politico](#) (5/6, Lima, 6.73M) reports the account "was taken down after tweeting posts identical to his messages on the blog. ... The account featured branding identical to Trump's website, including the same profile picture and banner."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) calls it "the latest skirmish in an all-out war between social media giants and Trump, who was banned from Twitter, Facebook and YouTube following comments they said could incite violence in early January as rioters attacked the Capitol." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (5/6, Mickle, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says that with Trump permanently barred from Twitter and still suspended from Facebook, YouTube is his best

opportunity to return to social media in the near term. But YouTube has not said if or when Trump will be allowed back.

***FEC Has Dropped Daniels Payment Case.*** The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Goldmacher, 20.6M) reports the Federal Election Commission said Thursday that it had “formally dropped a case looking into whether [Trump] violated election law with a payment of \$130,000 shortly before the 2016 election” to adult film performer Stormy Daniels by Trump’s then-personal lawyer Michael Cohen. [CNN](#) (5/6, Schouten, Kelly, 89.21M) reports on its website that two Democrats on the FEC criticized GOP members “after the commission deadlocked and did not take action.”

***George Conway: Giuliani May “Offer Prosecutors” Trump To “Save Himself.”*** George Conway writes in the [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) that if Rudy Giuliani “has anything to offer prosecutors to save himself, it would have to be [Trump], the only bigger fish left.” Conway says, “Federal prosecutors in Manhattan tried to get permission last fall for a Giuliani raid but were rebuffed by senior officials serving under Trump. And last June, for reasons still opaque, then-Attorney General William P. Barr ousted the U.S. attorney there and tried to handpick a successor. If any of that was intended to protect Giuliani – or Trump himself – it might end up backfiring spectacularly.”

### **Tumulty Says Democrats Are Concerned About House Moderates Retiring.**

Karen Tumulty writes in the [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) that there is “growing alarm” among Democrats “over how many House moderates in competitive districts either have headed for the exits or are giving serious consideration to doing so.” Off-year elections “tend to be hard on a first-term president’s party,” and “GOP legislatures across the country are redrawing the lines in ways that will turn what are now swing districts into redder ones.” Democrats’ “governing performance in the months to come will also matter.”

### **WPost Slams DeSantis For “Cynical Calculation” In Delaying FL20 Special Election.**

In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M), noting that other House special elections this year took place within a few months of the vacancies, criticizes Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) for setting the primary to fill the vacant FL20 seat for November and the general election for January. The Post says DeSantis is making a “cynical calculation” to keep a seat that is almost certain to be won by a Democrat empty for much longer than is necessary.

### **Candidate With Bear, 2003 Also-Rans, Among California Gubernatorial Recall Hopes.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Hubler, 20.6M) looks at the expected California gubernatorial recall race, writing that in addition to GOP contenders like ex-San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, Caitlyn Jenner, and ex-Rep. Doug Ose (R-CA), former adult film performer Mary Carey and “former Los Angeles billboard model” Angelyne – who both ran in the 2003 recall race – are in the field. The article focuses primarily on GOP candidate John Cox’s renting of a bear that he has taken on the campaign trail.

### **Jones Poll Shows Him Close To Kemp In Georgia GOP Gubernatorial Race.**

[The Hill](#) (5/6, 5.69M) reports that a Remington Research Group poll of 1,040 likely 2022 Georgia Republican gubernatorial primary voters, conducted on behalf of candidate Vernon Jones, shows Gov. Brian Kemp (R) at 39% and Jones at 35%, with 26% undecided.

### **Atlanta Mayor Will Not Seek Second Term.**

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (5/6, Capelouto, 1.46M) reports, “In a stunning announcement Thursday night,” Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms (D) said she will not seek reelection this year. Bottoms “announced she will not seek a second term during a private call with friends, staffers and allies, according to two people who were on the call and several others who were

told about it. She released a [statement and video](#) around 10:30 p.m. elaborating on her decision and her record as Atlanta's 60th mayor."

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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### **Brazilian Police Raid Leaves 25 Dead.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Milhorce, Londoño, 20.6M) reports that "a police operation targeting drug dealers in Rio de Janeiro on Thursday morning left at least 25 people dead, including a police officer, in an operation that officials and human rights activists called the deadliest in the city's history." The [AP](#) (5/6) reports that Jacarezinho, the "favela" where the raid took place is home to about 40,000 residents and "is dominated by the Comando Vermelho, one of Brazil's leading criminal organizations." According to the AP, police "consider Jacarezinho to be one of the group's headquarters."

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, McCoy, 10.52M) adds, "even in a city long accustomed to extraordinary police violence, where authorities frequently wage warlike operations inside neighborhoods under the control of criminal organizations, the death toll was shocking, showing the enduring grip of violence on Latin America's largest country."

[Reuters](#) (5/6) reports that Amnesty International Brazil called the operation "reprehensible" and Human Rights Watch called for an investigation into the incident.

### **Pentagon Begins Removing Contractors From Afghanistan.**

[Reuters](#) (5/6, Ali, Stewart) reports that Defense Secretary Austin "said on Thursday the process of removing all contractors from Afghanistan working with the United States was under way" as part of President Biden's withdrawal of forces. According to Reuters, Austin's remarks "are the clearest indication yet that Biden's April order to withdraw all U.S. forces from Afghanistan by Sept. 11 extended to US-funded contractors."

***Blinken Addresses Taliban Threats In Afghanistan.*** Asked on [MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell Reports](#) (5/6, 958K) about the power of the Taliban in Afghanistan after US troops leave, Secretary of State Blinken said, "We have trained over the years well over 300,000 Afghan security forces. Other countries will remain engaged. Everyone has to make some new calculations. That starts with the Taliban. It has to decide whether it wants to plunge the country back into a civil war or whether it wants some kind of recognition to be an accepted actor in the international community. ... We are also focused on the diplomacy, trying to see if the Taliban will engage with the Afghanistan government to try to come to a political resolution."

***NYTimes Analysis: DOD Struggles To End Afghan Dependency On US Air Support.*** The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Gibbons-Neff, Cooper, Schmitt, 20.6M) reports that, despite the Biden Administration's portrayal of Afghan security forces as "well equipped to handle the war on their own," their country's "dependency on US pilots and warplanes" remains "unquestionable," adding that US forces have launched "a half-dozen airstrikes" in the face of renewed Taliban aggression amid the withdrawal of US troops. The Times says, the Pentagon "is now weighing how it will wean Afghan security forces from their dependency." According to the Times, Austin "suggested that it would be up to Gen. Austin S. Miller, the commander in Afghanistan, to decide when to turn off the spigot."

### **Social Media Post By US Embassy In Beijing Creates Controversy.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Ives, 20.6M) reports that a social media post related to the State Department's resumption of student visa applications for Chinese nationals after a yearlong hiatus "set off criticism – and accusations of racism – that were amplified by the ruling Communist Party's formidable propaganda machine." According to the Times, the post, which appeared on Weibo, "a Twitter-like platform in China," included a video of "a dog trying to jump

over a fence” and asked, “Are you like this doggy who can’t wait to go out and play?” The Times says that after some Weibo users claimed the post insulted Chinese students by comparing them to dogs, the embassy “removed the post and apologized.”

***Blinken Addresses Chinese Aggression.*** Asked on [MSNBC’s Andrea Mitchell Reports Vi](#) (5/6, 958K) about Chinese aggression, Secretary of State Blinken said, “When it comes to China, we have been clear we are not trying to contain China or hold it back, but we are determined to uphold the so-called rules based international order that we have invested so much in over so many decades. ... When anyone takes actions, when they don’t play by the rules, renege on commitments, whether in the commercial area or human rights...we are going to stand up and defend it.”

David Ignatius writes in the [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M), “China’s accelerating nuclear program vexes American analysts. During the Cold War, the United States and Russia developed a language for thinking about nuclear weapons and deterrence. ... China lacks such a vocabulary for thinking about the unthinkable. ... Even as the Biden administration thinks about building a new generation of doomsday weapons, it needs to sit down and begin a conversation with China about strategic forces that’s becoming more urgent every day.”

***Pentagon Monitoring Chinese Rocket Expected To Reenter Atmosphere This Weekend.*** The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) reports that the US Space Command is “tracking a large Chinese rocket booster that is tumbling uncontrollably through space and expected to come crashing down to Earth sometime this weekend.” According to the Post, “It’s not clear where the 22-metric-ton rocket stage would land or what, if anything, the Pentagon would do if it were to come down over a populated area.” The Post adds, “While the booster would be among the 10 largest objects ever to reenter earth’s atmosphere on an uncontrolled trajectory, the risk for those on the ground is very low – astronomically low, scientists say.”

***China Emitting More Greenhouse Gases Than Entire OECD Combined.*** [Axios](#) (5/6, Geman, 1.26M) reports, “The distribution of global greenhouse gas emissions has reached an inflection point: China’s emissions exceeded developed nations combined in 2019, a new Rhodium Group analysis concludes.” Axios says Rhodium “compared China’s emissions to nations in the multilateral Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development as of 2019 and all 27 EU members.” According to Axios, “The analysis also showed that on a per-capita basis, China’s 2019 emissions were close to the OECD average. The firm expects that the final 2020 data will show China’s per-capita emissions exceeded the OECD average.”

[Bloomberg](#) (5/6, 3.57M) reports that China’s “emissions of six heat-trapping gases, including carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, rose to 14.09 billion tons of CO2 equivalent in 2019, edging out the total of [OECD] members by about 30 million tons, according to the New York-based climate research group.” Bloomberg says China “accounted for 27% of global emissions. The U.S., the second biggest emitter, contributed 11% while India for the first time surpassed the European Union with about 6.6% of the global total.”

The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, Mufson, Dennis, 10.52M) says, “With the impacts from climate change intensifying and pressure growing for countries to do more to hit the targets of the Paris climate accord, the developed world has sought to make China, India and other developing nations a central part of the global push to restrict emissions for the sake of the planet.” The Post notes that “during a climate summit President Biden organized last month featuring dozens of world leaders, Chinese President Xi Jinping said his nation would limit its coal-based emissions so that they peak ahead of the 2030 target it had set earlier,” and “also reiterated a pledge that China would have net-zero emissions by 2060.”

### **Speaker Of Maldivian Parliament Injured In Blast.**

The [AP](#) (5/6, Sharuhaan) reports that the Speaker of Maldives’ Parliament, Mohamed Nasheed, “was injured in a blast Thursday near his home.” Police are still investigating the incident. According to the AP, Nasheed has been “an outspoken critic of religious extremism in this

predominantly Sunni Muslim nation, where preaching and practicing other faiths are banned by law.”

### **NYTimes Analysis: Burma Has Revived Censorship And Oppressive Policing.**

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Beech, 20.6M) reports that three months after Burma’s “experiment in democracy was strangled” by a military coup, the “new junta is consolidating its grip by resorting...to a reign of terror” that includes Internet censorship and widespread arrests, abductions, and assaults by the military. However, the Times adds that “the groundswell of opposition to the coup, which has sustained protests in hundreds of cities and towns, was surely not in the military’s game plan, making its crackdown all the riskier.”

### **Blinken Affirms Support For Ukraine While Calling For Kyiv To Address Graft.**

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 7, 0:20, Muir, 6.52M) reported Secretary of State Blinken has traveled to Ukraine “in a strong show of support amid that country’s continuing tensions with Russia.” According to ABC, Blinken told President Volodymyr Zelensky that “the US is committed to Ukraine’s sovereignty and independence” while Zelensky made “a case for US military aid and for membership in NATO.” Asked on [MSNBC’s Andrea Mitchell Reports](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, 958K) whether the US would commit to defending the Ukraine against a Russian invasion, Blinken said, “We are making clear our commitment to helping Ukraine defend itself with security assistance, with advice. Other allies and partners are doing the same and also making clear that, as happened after 2014, the international community is resolutely against any Russian aggression, reckless actions in Ukraine.” [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, story 3, 2:05, Holt, 5.2M) also broadcast the interview.

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Crowley, 20.6M) reports Blinken “told Ukraine’s president on Thursday that the United States strongly backed his country’s sovereignty against Russia’s military aggression but also warned that the embattled country was under threat from ‘internal forces,’ including powerful oligarchs who thrive on corruption.” The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) quotes Blinken as saying, “‘Ukraine faces twin challenges’ ... ‘aggression from outside coming from Russia, and in effect, aggression from within coming from corruption, oligarchs and others who are putting their interests ahead of those of the Ukrainian people.’” The [CNN](#) (5/6, Hansler, 89.21M) website adds that the Secretary of State said he and Zelensky “discussed in some detail the support that we’re providing, we’ll continue to provide to Ukraine to continue to strengthen its security, its defenses.”

The [AP](#) (5/6, Karmanau) reports that, “by visiting so early in his tenure, before any trip to Russia, Blinken signaled that Ukraine is a high priority for President Joe Biden’s foreign policy.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (5/6, Cloud, 3.37M) reports that “Blinken made a point of noting that his trip to Kyiv was one of only a small handful of in-person meetings he has had with foreign leaders, choosing Ukraine and Zelensky before Russia.”

**White House Strikes Words Supporting Ukrainian NATO Membership.** The [New York Post](#) (5/6, 7.45M) reports that in “a rare foreign policy pivot” on Thursday, the White House removed language from a transcript in which White House Deputy Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre expressed support for Ukraine’s accession to NATO while speaking with a journalist. According to the Post, the White House made the change because Jean-Pierre’s statement did “not reflect official policy.”

**WPost: Putin Borrows Repressive Tactics From China.** The [Washington Post](#) (5/6, 10.52M) editorializes that Russian President Vladimir Putin’s crackdown on opposition leaders and publications as well as the recent arrest of a prominent human rights lawyer emulate tactics from China and Cuba. The Post continues that Putin “has dramatically escalated his pressure on civil society in recent months. ... It’s a campaign that should not continue without consequences from Western governments.”

### **Blinken Says “Jury Is Out” On Whether Iran Talks Will Be Successful.**

Asked on [MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell Reports](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (5/6, 958K) about the likelihood talks with Iran will succeed, Secretary of State Blinken said, "What we don't know is whether Iran is actually prepared to make the decisions necessary to return to full compliance with the nuclear agreement. They, unfortunately, have continued to take steps that are restarting dangerous parts of their program that the nuclear agreement stopped. The jury is out whether they are prepared to do what is necessary. Regardless of that, we are resolutely focused on Americans who are being arbitrarily detained in Iran or anywhere else."

The [New York Times](#) (5/6, Jakes, Fassihi, 20.6M) reports that "the United States and Iran could each come back into compliance with a 2015 nuclear deal within weeks, a senior State Department official said on Thursday, on the eve of what could be a final round of negotiations before an agreement is brokered." The [AP](#) (5/6) says the official "told reporters Thursday that the US has laid out the concessions it's prepared to make in order to rejoin the landmark 2015 nuclear deal that former President Donald Trump withdrew from in 2018. The official said success or failure now depends on Iran making the political decision to accept those concessions and to return to compliance with the accord." [Axios](#) (5/6, Ravid, Lawler, 1.26M) adds "there are still big gaps between the U.S. and Iranian positions on what a mutual return to the 2015 nuclear deal looks like, a senior State Department official told reporters on Thursday ahead of the next round of talks in Vienna."

The [CNN](#) (5/6, Bertrand, 89.21M) website reports that as the negotiations continue, the Administration is also "weighing unfreezing \$1 billion in Iranian funds that the country could use for humanitarian relief." According to CNN, "one line of thought is that" the move may "serve as a useful goodwill gesture to Tehran...as the talks in Vienna enter their second month with no concrete signs yet of a breakthrough."

## THE BIG PICTURE

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### Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Millions Are Unemployed. Why Can't Companies Find Workers?](#)  
[Covid-19 Retreats In The West, But The Pandemic Fight Is Far From Over](#)  
[Dogecoin's 12,000% Rally Spurs Hunt For Next Crypto Winner](#)  
[Chinese Manufacturers Sidestep Trade Barriers By Buying Factories Overseas](#)  
[One Group's Post-Pandemic Travel Plan: Get As Far Away As Possible](#)

#### **New York Times:**

[Health Advocate or Big Brother? Companies Weigh Requiring Vaccines.](#)  
[The Lithium Gold Rush: Inside the Race to Power Electric Vehicles](#)  
[Baltimore Vaccine Plant's Troubles Ripple Across 3 Continents](#)  
[Three Months After Coup, Myanmar Returns to the 'Bad Old Days'](#)  
[Arizona Review Of 2020 Vote Is Riddled With Flaws, Says Secretary Of State](#)  
[The Wealthy Lobbyist Behind Andrew Yang's Campaign For Mayor](#)

#### **Washington Post:**

[A Texas Town Grapples With Risks Of Border Life](#)  
[EU Vaccinations Racing Along After A Slow Start](#)  
[With Fanfare, Fla. Governor Signs Voting Law](#)  
[Is It Infrastructure's Moment?](#)  
[Third Landlord, Same Ticking Clock](#)

#### **Financial Times:**

[Merkel Rejects US Move To Waive Patents On Vaccines](#)  
[Iglesias Exits Political Stage As Spanish Left Licks Its Wounds](#)  
[Rio Tinto Suffers Huge Revolt Over Pay](#)

**Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:**

**ABC:** Idaho-School Shooting; COVID Update; South Carolina-Hijacked School Bus; Florida Election Law; GOP-Cheney; Colorado-Missing Mother; Blinken-Ukraine; Minnesota-Hostage Situation; Attacks On Asian Americans; China-Rocket; National Nurses Day.

**CBS:** COVID Update; COVID-India; South Carolina-Hijacked School Bus; Idaho-School Shooting; Florida Election Law; Attacks On Asian Americans; Vaccine Hesitancy; Female Marines; China-Rocket; High School Senior Accepted To 29 Colleges; Couple Met In Lebanon Refugee Camp.

**NBC:** COVID Update; Florida Election Law; Blinken-Ukraine; Idaho-School Shooting; South Carolina-Hijacked School Bus; Border Crisis; Reuniting Migrant Families; Attacks On Asian Americans; Biden-Infrastructure; Hunger Crisis; Summer Travel; National Nurses Day.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

COVID Update – 9 minutes, 40 seconds

Florida Election Law – 4 minutes, 55 seconds

South Carolina-Hijacked School Bus – 3 minutes, 50 seconds

Attacks On Asian Americans – 3 minutes, 40 seconds

Idaho-School Shooting – 3 minutes, 25 seconds

## WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

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### Today's Events In Washington.

**White House:**

- President Biden — Delivers remarks on the April jobs report; has lunch with the Vice President; and the Vice President receive the Weekly Economic Briefing from Treasury Secretary Yellen; meets with his Jobs Cabinet; the Vice President also attends.
- Vice President Harris — Meets with Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador for a virtual meeting, also featuring Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations Marcelo Ebrard Casaubon and Secretary of Economy Tatiana Clouthier Carrillo; joins the President for lunch; joins the President to receive the Weekly Economic Briefing from Treasury Secretary Yellen; joins the President to meet with his Jobs Cabinet.

**US Senate:**

- Senate on recess from 30 Apr – 10 May

**US House:**

- House of Representatives meets in pro forma session  
Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 10:30 AM
- House Financial Services task force hearing on AI, racism, housing, and financial services (virtual) – Task Force on Artificial Intelligence virtual hearing on 'Equitable Algorithms: How Human-Centered AI Can Address Systemic Racism and Racial Justice in Housing and Financial Services', held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from Relman Colfax partner Stephen Hayes; FinRegLab CEO Melissa Koide; National Fair Housing Alliance President and CEO Lisa Rice; FairPlay AI founder Kareem Saleh; and Upstart founder and CEO Dave Girouard; 12:00 PM  
Location: Virtual Event; 12:00 PM
- House Appropriations subcommittee hearing on U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force budget – Defense Subcommittee hearing on 'Fiscal Year 2022 United States Air Force and Space

Force Budget', with testimony from U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Brown; U.S. Space Force Chief of Operations Gen. John Raymond; and Acting Secretary of the Air Force John Roth; 12:00 PM

- House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis briefing on the threat of rapid sea-level rise – House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis virtual briefing on 'The Threat of Rapid Sea-Level Rise and the Financial Risks to Coastal Communities', featuring University of Massachusetts Amherst School of Earth & Sustainability Co-Director Dr Robert DeConto, and Milliman Principal and Consulting Actuary Nancy Watkins

*Location: Virtual Event; 12:30 PM*

#### **Cabinet Officers:**

- Treasury Secretary Yellen joins White House press briefing to mark release of Monthly Employment Report – White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki and Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen hold press briefing, to mark today's release of the Monthly Employment Report

*Location: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC*

#### **Visitors:**

- No visitors scheduled.

#### **General Events:**

- Monthly Employment Report – The Employment Situation: Unemployment Rate, Average Workweek, Average Hourly Earnings, Manufacturing Payrolls, Nonfarm payrolls; 8:30 AM
- EU-U.S. Future Forum concludes (virtual) – EU-U.S. Future Forum concludes, hosted virtually by the Atlantic Council in partnership with the Delegation of the European Union to the United States, to develop a new transatlantic agenda and momentum for EU-U.S. cooperation. Final day speakers include European Parliament Members Chrisoula Zacharopoulou, Reinhard Butikofer, David McAllister, and Natalie Loiseau, Morning Consult President Kyle Dropp, European Commission Vice President for Promoting our European Way of Life Margaritis Scinas, European Commission Vice President for Democracy and Demography Dubravka Suica, European Union Military Committee Chairman Gen. Claudio Graziano, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Oliver Varhelyi, and former EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini

*Location: Virtual Event; 8:30 AM*

- CSIS conversation with Dem Rep. Lauren Underwood (virtual) – Center for Strategic and International Studies Strengthening America's Health Security program hosts virtual conversation with Democratic Rep. Lauren Underwood on the American Rescue Plan, lessons learned from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, public health disparities, and the role of Congress in directing U.S. engagement on global health security

*Location: Virtual Event; 10:00 AM*

- Press Briefing by White House COVID-19 Response Team and public health officials; 10:30 AM
- Heritage Foundation event on defense supply chains with GOP Rep. Mike Gallagher (virtual) – 'Protecting Vital Defense Supply Chains: Perspectives from Congress and Industry' Heritage Foundation virtual event, with Republican Rep. Mike Gallagher, Milwaukee Valve Company President and CEO Rick Giannini, and Center for National Defense Research Associate Maiya Clark

*Location: Virtual Event; 12:00 PM*

- Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki and Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen; 12:30 PM

- Foreign Service Day observed by the State Department – Foreign Service Day – State Department's annual homecoming event for State Department retirees and Foreign Service retirees of other U.S. foreign affairs agencies, with day also commemorating members of the Foreign Service who lost their lives serving the U.S. overseas

- National Labor Relations Board hearing to consider objections to Amazon warehouse union election result – National Labor Relations Board hearing to consider objections filed by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union to last month’s union election at Amazon’s warehouse in Bessemer, AL \* Workers at the warehouse voted against forming a union, but the RWDSU subsequently filed objections to the conduct of Amazon during the election, saying that the company interfered with the right of the workers to vote in a ‘free and fair’ election

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