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 FBI News Briefing

TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2021 6:30 AM EDT

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LEADING THE NEWS

Senate Passes Asian American Hate Crimes Bill On 94-1 Vote.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{vi} (4/22, story 6, 0:10, Holt, 4.83M) reported that “by a [vote of 94-1](#), the Senate passed a bill” on Thursday “aimed at protecting Asian-Americans from hate crimes, which have soared during the pandemic.” The [AP](#) (4/22, Jalonick) describes the vote as “a bipartisan denunciation of such violence during the coronavirus pandemic and a modest step toward legislating in a chamber where most of President Joe Biden’s agenda has stalled.” The measure will “expedite the review of hate crimes at the Justice Department and provide support for local law enforcement in response to thousands of reported violent incidents in the past year.”

[Reuters](#) (4/22) reports that the legislation must now pass the House, “where Democrats hold a clear majority.” The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Kane, 10.52M) reports that Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY), the bill’s lead sponsor in the House, said in a statement after the vote that the chamber expects to vote on the legislation next month. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Edmondson, 20.6M) reports that the measure “was the first legislative action either chamber of Congress has taken to bolster law enforcement’s response to rising attacks on people of Asian descent.” Senate Majority Leader Schumer said, “By passing this bill, the Senate makes it very clear that hate and discrimination against any group has no place in America. By passing this bill, we say to the Asian-American community that their government is paying attention to them, has heard their concerns and will respond to protect them.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/22, Haberkorn, 3.37M) reports that Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO), “the only senator to vote against the bill, said it was ‘too broad.’” Hawley is quoted as saying, “As a former prosecutor, my view is it’s dangerous to simply give the federal government open-ended authority to define a whole new class of federal hate crime incidents.” The Times notes that “the bill originally only addressed hate crimes related to the pandemic, a link that Republicans and others viewed as potentially too onerous for law enforcement to make.”

[CNN](#) (4/22, Rogers, 89.21M) reports on its website that “some Republicans were initially skeptical about the legislation,” but Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) “and others teamed up with” Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI) “to strike an agreement broadening its support.” Hirono on Thursday “said...that the bill’s passage ‘sends a clear and unmistakable message of solidarity’ to the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. Collins said it ‘affirms our commitment to stand with’ them against hate crimes.” The [New York Daily News](#) (4/22, Sommerfeldt, 2.51M) reports that Schumer “said the rare bipartisan feat is proof the usually gridlocked chamber can ‘work to solve important issues.’”

[USA Today](#) (4/22, Behrmann, 12.7M) reports that the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act would “designate an official at DOJ to oversee” the review of hate crimes and “task the department with coordinating with local law enforcement groups and community-based organizations to facilitate and raise awareness about hate crime reporting, including establishing an online hate crime reporting system in multiple languages.” The legislation “underwent several bipartisan changes before its final passage,” including the addition of “grants to aid local and state governments to encourage more training on hate crimes for law enforcement, establish hate crime hotlines and allow for a ‘rehabilitation’ effort for perpetrators of hate crimes.”

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (4/22, Wermund, 982K) reports that “before the final vote, Democrats rejected” a handful of amendments by Republicans, including one Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) “offered focused on anti-Asian bias in college admissions, which Republicans have pointed to as they oppose affirmative action policies.” [Roll Call](#) (4/22, Ruger, 130K) reports that an amendment from Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) “would have required the Justice Department to report to Congress about the restrictions on religious exercise imposed by states during the COVID-19 pandemic,” and another from Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) would have required “the reporting only of hate crimes and not hate crime incidents,” among other things.

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (4/22, Mitchell, 1.46M) reports that the vote follows the shootings in Atlanta, Georgia “that killed six women of Asian descent” in March. Sen. Jon Ossoff (D-GA) “noted that the names of those killed in the spa shootings are included in the bill’s language, which he said will help ensure that what happened last month is never forgotten.”

[CNBC](#) (4/22, Pramuk, 7.34M) reports on its website that "Anti-Asian hate crimes jumped by about 150% last year in 16 of the largest U.S. cities, according to a study released last month by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino."

[Politico](#) (4/22, Wu, 6.73M) reports that advocates, including Advancing Justice-AAJC and the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, "hailed the bill's passage," but "also urged solutions to violence outside of law enforcement." [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 8, 0:20, Muir, 6.07M), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Peterson, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), and [The Hill](#) (4/22, Carney, 5.69M) provide additional coverage.

CAPITOL VIOLENCE NEWS

Federal Prosecutors Expect At Least 100 More Arrests In Capitol Siege Probe.

[Reuters](#) (4/22, Wolfe) reports that the Justice Department "expects to charge at least 100 more people for taking part in the deadly attack on the U.S. Capitol, signaling prosecutors are far from finished investigating an attack that a judge on Thursday called an act of terrorism. 'Over 400 individuals have been charged in connection with the Capitol attack,' federal prosecutors said in a court filing on Thursday. 'The investigation continues and the government expects that at least one hundred additional individuals will be charged.'" The Justice Department "made the disclosure in a set of similar court filings asking judges to postpone deadlines in pending prosecutions. 'The investigation and prosecution of the Capitol attack will likely be one of the largest in American history, both in terms of the number of defendants prosecuted and the nature and volume of the evidence,' the court filings stated."

WPost Analysis: Evidence In Trump Supporter's Trial Suggests He Espoused Nazi Ideals.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Jacobs, 10.52M) reports from New York, "An impassioned supporter of former president Donald Trump, on trial for allegedly advocating the 'slaughter' of influential Democrats after the U.S. Capitol riot, also espoused Nazi ideology and suggested to his father that Trump should override the election results and declare the United States a dictatorship as Adolf Hitler did in Germany generations ago, according to evidence presented by federal authorities in a Brooklyn courtroom Thursday." The Post adds that the evidence suggests that Brendan Hunt "was fixated on extremist ideas and conspiracy theories – including that Democrats falsely portrayed covid-19 as a deadly epidemic to gain political advantage over Trump – when on Jan. 8 he posted a video titled 'KILL YOUR SENATORS: Slaughter them all.'" Hunt's trial "is believed to be the first related to the insurrection since the Justice Department opened its sweeping investigation into the attack." [Courthouse News](#) (4/22, Pullano, 21K) also reports.

New York Man Charged In Capitol Siege Probe.

The [Watertown \(NY\) Daily Times](#) (4/22, Muir, 58K) reports that a second Syracuse, New York man "is facing charges for his alleged role in the January assault on the U.S. Capitol, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation." Matthew Greene, 33, "faces more than a half-dozen charges for allegedly intending to stop, delay or hinder Congress' certification of the Electoral College votes, 'by force if necessary,' according to an indictment against him and his co-conspirators. 'His actions were deliberate, dangerous and illegal,' Special Agent Thomas Relford with the FBI in Albany said in a statement. 'Now he must face the consequences.'" Relford "went on to say that the FBI Albany bureau will continue to work with colleagues in Washington, D.C., and partners in the U.S. Attorney's Office to pursue charges against anyone who broke the law on Jan. 6, adding that they remain grateful to the public for their assistance in this investigation."

New Mexico Man Charged In Capitol Siege Probe.

The [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (4/22, Alves, 188K) reports from Santa Fe, "A Santa Fe man was recently arrested and charged for his alleged participation in the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol in Washington." Matthew Martin, 42, "was federally charged with unlawful entry, disorderly conduct impeding the conduct of government business, and parading, demonstrating or picketing in the capitol buildings, according to court documents." Martin "has a security clearance and worked at a defense contracting company in Santa Fe, according to court documents. One of Martin's coworkers told law enforcement that Martin had asked to take Jan. 6 off from work." The Journal adds, "Court documents indicate the FBI got a hold of Martin's cellphone records and found that he used his cell service in and around the U.S. Capitol building the day of the insurrection."

New York Man Arrested After Posting On Dating App Of Storming Capitol During Riot.

[WNBC-TV](#) New York (4/22, 289K) reports, "Another New York man was arrested for his role in the siege at the U.S. Capitol back in January, after law enforcement learned that he talked about storming the Capitol on social media and a dating app, according to prosecutors." Robert Chapman, "from the Putnam County town of Carmel, was arrested Thursday by the FBI in connection with the events of Jan. 6 in Washington, D.C., prosecutors said. He was charged with trespassing and disorderly conduct on restricted government property. The FBI was provided information regarding Chapman's social media posts in the days following Jan. 6 in which he is pictured in Statuary Hall in the Capitol. He also told a woman he had matched with on the dating app Bumble that 'I did storm the capitol' and that he 'made it all the way into Statuary Hall,' court papers allege."

Kentucky Man Charged In Capitol Siege Probe After Undercover Agents Recorded Him At His Job.

[Insider](#) (4/22, Hall, 2.74M) reports, "A man from Kentucky who rioted at the US Capitol on January 6 was arrested a week after undercover FBI agents secretly recorded him, according to a recent Department of Justice filing." Stephen Randolph "was charged with assaulting, resisting, or impeding an officer causing bodily injury, obstruction of law enforcement during civil disorder, and obstruction of justice/Congress. Randolph appeared in several video recordings and photographs from the Capitol riots where prosecutors allege he attacked police officers behind barricades." Investigators "were unable to determine Randolph's identity for three months before the FBI identified him using facial-recognition software to link images from the riots to photographs on his girlfriend's Instagram account. The DOJ said undercover FBI agents followed Randolph to work on March 3 where they captured photos of him wearing the same hat, jacket, and jeans he wore at the Capitol."

Parties Divided Over Scope Of Proposed Capitol Riot Commission.

[CNN](#) (4/22, 89.21M) reports on its website that House Speaker Pelosi "is making concessions in a bid to revive her effort for a 9/11-style commission to investigate the January 6 attack on the Capitol, but the two parties still don't appear to be resuming serious negotiations amid a dispute over the scope of what the commission would investigate." Republicans want the commission to "also investigate violence from far left groups surrounding last year's protests of police brutality, something Democrats say is an effort to distract from the role that former President Donald Trump played in the lead-up to the insurrection."

Greg Sargent writes in the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M) that in an effort to come to an agreement, Pelosi has reportedly "suggested ways Republicans might have more influence on decisions about subpoenas." Sargent says Pelosi has not offered any concessions on "the scope of what's examined," and "Democrats should not concede an inch on this. Because what Republicans are asking for in terms of scope is not only absurd, it's designed to frustrate any real accounting into the insurrection."

Capitol Police Respond To Lofgren Allegation. [Politico](#) (4/22, 6.73M) reports, "The Capitol Police pushed back forcefully" Thursday against a claim by Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) that a "commanding official directed officers on Jan. 6 to pursue only agitators against [Trump] and ignore potential pro-Trump troublemakers." The department said the radio communication cited by Lofgren was "misquoted" and lacked "full and necessary context."

NYTimes Examines GOP's Response To Cheney. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Draper, 20.6M) runs a 6,600-word magazine feature titled "Liz Cheney Vs. MAGA" on how Republicans "turned on" Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY) in the wake of her call for her party "to turn away from Trump after Jan. 6."

PROTESTS

Alternate Juror Says She Would Have Convicted Chauvin.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 4, 1:55, Holt, 4.83M) reported about its interview with Lisa Christensen, who "was one of the alternate jurors who did not get to deliberate over Derek Chauvin's fate." Christensen "listened to the 14 days of testimony and took extensive notes," and she said she would have voted to convict him on the charges. [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (4/22, lead story, 2:30, Muir, 6.07M) reported Christensen said of the trial, "It was overwhelming. And then to see it day after day or, you know, over and over again, it never got any easier."

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 2, 3:00, O'Donnell, 3.71M) reported Christensen discussed her decision-making behind her opinion of Chauvin's guilt. She said, "I just felt like the prosecution made a really good, strong argument. Dr. Tobin was the one that really did it for me. He explained everything, I understood it, down to the moment where he said this is the moment he lost his life. That really got to me. I felt like all the doctors pretty much supported each other."

COUNTER-TERRORISM

New York Subway Pipe Bomber Sentenced To Life In Prison.

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Weiser, 20.6M) reports that Akayed Ullah, "who detonated a pipe bomb in a crowded subway tunnel near Times Square in the name of ISIS in 2017," has been sentenced to life in prison. [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 9, 0:20, Muir, 6.07M) said the bomb "malfunction[ed], leaving him seriously injured."

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Jacobs, 10.52M) reports that Ullah, "a Bangladeshi immigrant who in 2017 set off a bomb in a busy subway artery beneath Manhattan's Port Authority bus terminal was sentenced Thursday to life in prison for the attack, which authorities said was inspired by his devotion to the Islamic State terrorist group." Ullah, 31, "wanted to kill as many Americans as possible, officials said, but would-be victims were spared because his explosive device malfunctioned. One person sustained a shrapnel wound to the leg, and two other victims were left with hearing damage. Ullah also was injured in the incident."

[Reuters](#) (4/22, Stempel) reports, "No one died and four people were injured in the explosion, which led to the temporary closure of the station and the adjacent Port Authority Bus Terminal during the morning rush. Ullah was burned in what prosecutors called a 'lone wolf' attack." US Circuit Judge Richard Sullivan, "who imposed the sentence, told Ullah he had committed a 'truly barbaric and heinous crime' without regard for the humanity of those in his way. 'They were just people on the way to work, or school,' Sullivan said. 'People who maybe had finished the night shift. ... To you, these people were expendable.'"

[Fox News](#) (4/22, Norman, 23.99M) reports that Ullah "apologized before hearing the sentence." Prosecutors "earlier this month had argued that Ullah should spend the rest of his life behind bars for the 'premeditated and vicious' Dec. 11, 2017 terror attack committed on

behalf of the Islamic State terrorist group." Fox News adds, "After growing angry at American foreign policy in the Middle East, Ullah grew consumed by online Islamic State propaganda 'glorifying brutally violent stabbings, shootings, and bombings targeting Americans,' prosecutors had written in papers filed in federal court in Manhattan. 'He ultimately answered ISIS's call for its supporters to carry out 'lone-wolf' terrorist attacks in the United States,' the memo added, according to the Associated Press. 'Ullah's attack was premeditated and vicious.'" Also reporting are [WABC-AM](#) New York (4/22, 18K) and the [Rutherford \(NJ\) Daily Voice](#) (4/22).

US Postal Service Reportedly Tracking Americans' Social Media Posts.

The [New York Post](#) (4/22, O'Neill, 7.45M) reports, "The US Postal Service is running a shadowy surveillance program that tracks Americans' social media posts – including ones about planned right-wing protests, a report revealed Thursday." The Post adds, "The so-called Internet Covert Operations Program enlists the law enforcement arm of the USPS to hunt down 'inflammatory' posts – made by groups ranging from the Proud Boys to demonstrators protesting coronavirus lockdowns, according to documents obtained by Yahoo News. Posts deemed threatening are then sent to federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to be monitored, the outlet reported. 'Locations and times have been identified for these protests, which are being distributed online across multiple social media platforms, to include right-wing leaning Parler and Telegram accounts,' says a government bulletin, marked as law enforcement-sensitive on March 16. 'No intelligence is available to suggest the legitimacy of these threats.'"

AFRICOM Chief: Somalia Withdrawal Made Counterterrorism Missions Riskier.

[The Hill](#) (4/22, Kheel, 5.69M) reports the top US general for the region "said Thursday the withdrawal of most US troops from Somalia has hindered intelligence gathering, making continued US counterterrorism operations more difficult." US Africa Command chief Gen. Stephen Townsend told the Senate Armed Services Committee, "There's no denying that the repositioning of forces out of Somalia has introduced new layers of complexity and risk. Our understanding of what's happening in Somalia is less now than it was when we were there on the ground physically located with our partners." In the final months of his tenure, former President Trump "ordered almost all of the 700 US troops that were in Somalia to withdraw. "The troops were in Somalia "to help local security forces fight al Qaeda affiliate al-Shabaab and the local ISIS affiliate."

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

Michigan Woman Convicted In Tennessee Of Stealing Trade Secrets For China.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (4/22, Dunleavy, 888K) reports, "A Chinese-born, naturalized U.S. citizen was convicted Thursday of stealing trade secrets worth up to \$120 million from companies that developed a safer coating for the inside of beverage cans and trying to sell the technology to the Chinese Communist Party." Xiaorong You, "who began working in the United States nearly 30 years ago, was employed by Coca-Cola and Eastman Chemical Company when she stole trade secrets related to formulations for bisphenol-A-free coatings. She was found guilty following an April jury trial of conspiracy to steal trade secrets, economic espionage, and wire fraud."

The [Kingsport \(TN\) Times-News](#) (4/22, Lane, 103K) reports from Greenville, Tennessee that Dr. You, "also known as Shannon You, 59, of Lansing, Michigan, was convicted of conspiracy to commit economic espionage, conspiracy to steal trade secrets, possession of stolen trade secrets, economic espionage and wire fraud. You is scheduled for sentencing Nov 1." According to the Times-News, "The trade secrets stolen belonged to multiple owners and cost an estimated \$119,600,000 to develop, according to a press release from the U.S."

Attorney's Office. According to court records, the stolen information was related to formulations for bisphenol-A-free, or BPA-free, coatings."

[WATE-TV](#) Knoxville, TN (4/22, Holder, 157K) reports, "The stolen trade secrets belonged to major chemical and coating companies including Akzo-Nobel, BASF, Dow Chemical, PPG, Toyochem, Sherwin Williams, and Eastman Chemical company, and cost nearly \$120,000,000 to develop." WATE-TV adds, "You stole the trade secrets for the purpose of establishing the manufacturer in China with a Chinese chemical company called the Weihai Jinhong Group."

[WBIR-TV](#) Knoxville, TN (4/22, Salvemini, 269K) reports, "Officials said that because of education and experience with BPA-free technologies, she was one of a limited number of Coca-Cola employees with access to the trade secrets around the technologies." WBIR-TV adds, "Witnesses at a 12-day trial in Greeneville said that developing the alternatives was an expensive process. Officials said that Dr. You also had access to the trade secrets from September 2017 through June 2018 as a packaging application development manager for Eastman Chemical Company in Kingsport." Also reporting are [Law360](#) (4/22, Subscription Publication, 9K) and [WJHL-TV](#) Johnson City, TN (4/22, Teague, 158K).

NIH: Hundreds Of US Scientists Feared Compromised By China.

The [Washington Times](#) (4/22, Lovelace, 626K) reports, "More than 500 federally funded scientists are under investigation for being compromised by China and other foreign powers, the National Institutes of Health revealed Thursday." The Times adds, "The federal health officials told a Senate committee that they are fighting to keep up with large-scale Chinese efforts to corrupt American researchers and steal intellectual property that scientists hope will lead to biomedical advances." The NIH "has contacted more than 90 institutions about more than 200 scientists they're concerned about, said Dr. Michael S. Lauer, NIH deputy director for extramural research," but "the investigations' workload is weighing down the nation's top medical research agency, and new cases are turning up constantly across the government," the Times reports.

Alabama A&M Closing Confucius Institute.

[Alabama Live](#) (4/22, 497K) reports Alabama A&M University's executive committee has "voted to close the Confucius Institute at the university after notification from the federal government that it could lose eligibility for some federal funds." Congressman Mo Brooks of Huntsville "applauded the decision and urged Troy University, which also has a Confucius Institute, to do the same." Troy University "said no decision has been made." An April 6 letter from the Under Secretary of Defense to Alabama A&M President Andrew Hugine Jr., "said the Defense Department would not provide grants, contracts, or other funds to universities hosting Confucius Institutes, which are based in China."

MTA Pulls Security Cameras From Subway Due To Links To Chinese Facial Recognition Company.

The [New York Daily News](#) (4/22, Guse, 2.51M) reports the MTA on Thursday "abruptly halted a program to test new security cameras on subway cars – a day after the Daily News raised questions about the ties the company providing the technology has to a Chinese firm that specializes in facial recognition technology." Transit managers last week "sent a memo to subway crews alerting them of new video cameras installed on a four-car G line train." But the vendor contracted "to provide the system's technology – Suzhou Huaqi Intelligent Technology – raised major security flags that prompted officials to suddenly pull the camera-filled train from service on Thursday."

Haines: Climate Must Be At "Center" Of Security Policy.

In remarks delivered at the first day of the White House virtual climate summit, [The Hill](#) (4/22, Schnell, 5.69M) reports DNI Haines "said that climate change must be 'at the center' of

countries' national security and foreign policy to address the issue properly." Haines said, "To address climate change properly, it must be at the center of a country's national security and foreign policy, and as such it needs to be fully integrated with every aspect of our analysis in order to allow us not only to monitor the threat but also critically think to ensure that policymakers understand the implication of climate change on seemingly unrelated policies, and then identifying opportunities to mitigate the challenge that we face."

[CBS News](#) (4/22, Gazis, 5.39M) reports that Haines "noted the U.S. intelligence community's initial focus on climate change dated back several decades, when the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) first offered scientists access to classified information and asked them to review satellite images of environmental changes on the continents." She added, "Ever since, our services have been raising increasing alarms about the impact that climate change has, across every aspect of our work, as geophysical features of the earth are being reshaped — whether through the changing boundary lines of the tropics or the shrinking sea ice, centrally in the Arctic."

[Huffington Post](#) (4/22, Visser) reports that Haines "added that as director of national intelligence, she intended to make climate action 'a whole of government effort, working not just to protect national security for America but to protect human security around the world.'"

Republicans Offer COVID-19 Origin Act Amid Concerns About Possible Link Between Pandemic, Wuhan Lab.

The [Washington Times](#) (4/22, Blake, 626K) reports, "Republican senators introduced legislation Thursday requiring the US government to declassify any information about potential links between the coronavirus pandemic and a Chinese laboratory." These senators "proposed the COVID-19 Origin Act of 2021 amid lingering questions involving the provenance of the pandemic more than a year since it started." The piece adds, "If successful, their bill would compel the DNI, currently Avril Haines, to declassify 'any and all information' involving potential links between the lab and virus."

[Fox News](#) (4/22, Conklin, 23.99M) reports Sens. Josh Hawley (R-MO) and Mike Braun (R-IN) "introduced the bill to declassify intelligence related to COVID-19 origins." Hawley said in a Thursday statement, "For over a year, anyone asking questions about the Wuhan Institute of Virology has been branded as a conspiracy theorist. The world needs to know if this pandemic was the product of negligence at the Wuhan lab but the CCP has done everything it can to block a credible investigation." He added that the "Biden Administration must declassify what it knows about the Wuhan lab and Beijing's attempts to cover up the origin of the pandemic."

Jordan Releases 16 Allegedly Involved In Sedition Plot.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/22, 3.37M) reports more than a dozen alleged plotters "were freed over their involvement in a royal feud between King Abdullah II and his half-brother and onetime crown prince, Prince Hamzah." The 16 detainees, "many of them members of Prince Hamzah's staff or his circle of friends from Jordan's powerful tribes, had been captured in a blitz operation involving multiple strike teams dispatched across the kingdom." The release had come "after families of the accused petitioned the palace for forgiveness."

UK's MI5 Joins Instagram.

[Forbes](#) (4/22, Hart, 10.33M) reports Britain's secretive domestic intelligence service, known as MI5, "joined Instagram Thursday in a bid to boost transparency, bust myths and appeal to a more diverse range of recruits, something the agency's director said will need to be balanced against the need to operate in the shadows." Ken McCallum, the agency's head, "said 'being more open' is critical to MI5's approach to the 2020s but that does not mean the organization will 'become an open book.'" MI5 intends to use the account to "debunk popular myths about the agency, promote career opportunities, highlight historical exhibits from its museum and

host Q&As with its officers." The agency's first post, "an image of its London headquarters, said the secret to successful spying is to 'consider all angles. It'll give you a better view.'"

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Wright Laid To Rest.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 3, 1:40, Holt, 4.83M) reported that the family of Daunte Wright laid him to rest on Thursday. He was "remembered as a former high school star athlete who always made people laugh and as the doting father of toddler Daunte Jr." His mother Katie Wright said, "He was loved by so many. He's going to be so missed."

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports Al Sharpton spoke at the funeral, and his eulogy "included a stinging rebuke of the possibility that Wright was pulled over for having air fresheners dangling from his mirror." Katie Wright "said her son called her after he was stopped and told her that was the reason," but the police challenge the claim. The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (4/22, 855K) reports Sharpton said in his remarks, "We came to bury the prince of Brooklyn Center. We came from all over the country because you hurt one of our princes. You thought he was just some kid with an air freshener. He was a prince. All of Minneapolis has stopped today to honor the prince of Brooklyn Center."

[USA Today](#) (4/22, Miller, Yancey-Bragg, Ortiz, 12.7M) reports that hundreds of mourners "were inside Shiloh International Ministries for the service, 11 days after Wright's death in nearby Brooklyn Center and two days after the police officer who killed George Floyd last May was convicted of murder in a Minneapolis courtroom." [Reuters](#) (4/22) reports Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz (D), Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) attended the funeral.

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 3, 2:05, O'Donnell, 3.71M) reported Wright "was stopped for an expired tag and found to have an outstanding misdemeanor warrant, when former officer Kim Potter jumped in to assist the arrest, she grabbed her gun instead of a taser, firing the fatal shot." [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 2, 1:15, Muir, 6.07M) reported Potter "was charged with second degree manslaughter and is scheduled to appear in court again next month."

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Bogel-Burroughs, 20.6M) and the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Bellware, 10.52M) provide additional coverage of the funeral.

Columbus Police Face Growing Criticism Over Bryant Shooting.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 5, 2:10, Holt, 4.83M) reported that the Columbus, Ohio, Police Department is facing growing furor over the fatal shooting of 16-year-old Ma'Khia Bryant, who was shot and killed this week. Police Officer Nicolas Reardon "was placed on administrative leave pending this investigation," but the latest incident is fueling a groundswell of anger "felt by communities across the nation who are calling for police reform."

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Ludlow, Firozi, Fahrenthold, Hawkins, 10.52M) reports Bryant "was fatally shot by a Columbus police officer responding to a call for help at her foster home in the city's southeast." The city has released the body camera footage, which "shows Bryant swinging what appears to be a knife at two people during an altercation outside the property before an officer arrives and fires four shots at her torso."

Christy E. Lopez writes in the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M) that to end the "cycle of traumatic police violence, we have to recognize that we have turned policing into an impossible endeavor – one that underprotects communities even as it needlessly provokes conflict. It is not realistic, and perhaps not even reasonable, to expect that police will ever be able to carry out the multiple, often conflicting tasks we've given them in a manner that is consistently lawful, ethical and effective."

WSJournal: Administration Heeds Politics Over Facts Regarding Recent Police Shootings. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) criticizes

President Biden and his staff, such as White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, who have repeatedly taken to commenting on recent police shootings before authorities had the opportunity to confirm what has happened. The Journal refers to Psaki's decision to label the shooting of Bryant as a racist incident as well as Biden's decision to generalize the issue of systemic racism as an issue within every police department in the US.

Authorities Believe Remains Found Are Those Of Missing Pennsylvania Amish Teen.

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, "Authorities strongly believe that remains found a day earlier in a grave along railroad tracks in southern Pennsylvania are those of a young Amish woman who disappeared last summer, a county prosecutor said Thursday." Lancaster County District Attorney Heather Adams "told a news conference that a coroner has not made a positive forensic identification," but, "Adams said, the remains appear to be those of a female of the same age as 18-year-old Linda Stoltzfoos, and were buried with a dress, bonnet and shoes like those Stoltzfoos wore the day she disappeared. She was last seen walking home from church in the Bird-in-Hand area on June 21, 2020." Justo Smoker, 35, of Paradise, "was charged with homicide in December and a county judge ruled in March that there was enough evidence for a homicide trial. Smoker was initially arrested in August, and also faces charges of kidnapping and false imprisonment."

[WGAL-TV](#) Lancaster, PA (4/22, 177K) reports, "The remains were recovered Wednesday in Gap behind the previous place of employment of" Smoker, and "an autopsy is scheduled for Friday to help confirm the identity and determine the cause and manner of death, but a preliminary review indicates the remains are those of a female of a relevant age. Investigators also found a dress, bonnet and shoes consistent with the clothing worn by Stoltzfoos on the day she disappeared." Police "believe Smoker killed Stoltzfoos within hours of allegedly kidnapping her on June 21 and buried her behind a business on Harvest Drive in Ronks, where investigators found her stockings and bra. It's believed that Smoker then moved the body several days later."

The [LNP Media \(PA\)](#) (4/22, Nephin, 77K) reports, "The Stoltzfoos family has not spoken publicly throughout the case and remained silent on Wednesday and Thursday as the news of the teen's recovery spread." LNP Media adds, "Stoltzfoos' body will likely be released to the family Friday, after an autopsy to determine cause and manner of death is completed, Dr. Stephen Diamantoni, the Lancaster County Coroner, said Thursday."

Virginia Man Pleads Guilty In Cross Burning That Targeted Black Teen.

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports from Abingdon, Virginia, "A southwest Virginia man pleaded guilty Thursday to a federal offense in connection with the burning of a cross last summer on the front lawn of a Black teenager who had recently organized a civil rights protest." James Brown, 41, of Marion, Virginia "will remain free on bond until his sentencing in August on one count of criminal interference with federally protected housing rights based upon the victim's race, according to court records. Federal prosecutors said Brown admitted to burning the cross to two witnesses and also was known to use racial epithets when referring to the African-American family, who court documents describe as his neighbors."

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Duggan, 10.52M) reports, "The incident occurred June 14 in Marion, Va., near the Tennessee border. Authorities said James Brown, now 41, covered a wooden cross in cloth, doused it with a flame accelerant, placed it in a barrel and set it on fire. 'There is absolutely no room for racial intimidation or injustice occurring in our communities,' Stanley M. Meador, special agent in charge of the FBI's Richmond Division, said in a statement Thursday after Brown appeared in U.S. District Court in Abingdon."

The [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (4/22, Sorrell) reports, "Brown admitted to burning the cross to two witnesses and also was known to use racial epithets when referring to the African-American family, prosecutors said."

Colorado Grocery Store Gunman Charged With Another 43 Counts.

[Fox News](#) (4/22, Conklin, 23.99M) reports, "Colorado prosecutors have charged the man who fatally shot 10 people at a Boulder grocery store on March 22 with an additional 44 counts of attempted murder, weapons and assault charges." Ahmad Al Aliwi Alissa, 21, "was initially facing 10 counts of first-degree murder and one count of attempted first-degree murder when he was apprehended on March 23; he now faces 54 total charges. The additional charges include 32 additional counts of attempted first-degree murder, 10 counts of unlawful use of a high-capacity magazine and one count of first-degree assault, according to a motion filed Wednesday in Boulder County District Court." Alissa "had bought a Ruger AR-556 pistol, which resembles an AR-15 rifle, six days before killing the 10 victims, including Boulder Police Officer Eric Talley. He passed a background check conducted by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation."

Kristin Smart's Parents Sue Father Who Is Accused Of Hiding Her Body.

The [AP](#) (4/22, Melley) reports from Los Angeles, "The parents of missing California college student Kristin Smart on Thursday sued the father of the man charged with killing their daughter nearly 25 years ago." The AP adds, "The lawsuit filed in San Luis Obispo County Superior Court said Smart's body was buried in Ruben Flores's backyard and he moved the body "under cover of darkness" to another location a few days after investigators searched his property in February 2020." Ruben Flores, 80, "pleaded not guilty to accessory after murder on Monday and his son, Paul Flores, 44, pleaded not guilty to murder. The father and son were arrested last week after investigators said they found 'biological evidence' indicating Smart had been buried under Ruben Flores' deck behind his home in nearby Arroyo Grande and was recently moved, according to a court document."

Suspect In Smart Killing Was Previously Suspected In 2007 Rape Allegation.

[NBC News](#) (4/22, Blankstein, 4.91M) reports, "A man charged with murder in the death of Kristin Smart, a California college student who vanished walking home from a party in 1996, was investigated in the alleged rape of a woman in Southern California a decade after Smart's disappearance." Paul R. Flores, "now 44, became the subject of the investigation in 2012 when his DNA profile matched a profile collected from the woman, who was given a forensic examination at a hospital the morning after the alleged January 2007 assault, according to a report from the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office. But the alleged incident was never prosecuted. The woman said she blacked out at a bar in Redondo Beach and later woke up naked and disoriented in a stranger's bed."

Reuters Source: Gaetz's Complaints About Iran Hostage Scheme Will Not Distract FBI Probe.

[Reuters](#) (4/22, Hosenball) reports, "A federal investigation into whether U.S. Representative Matt Gaetz trafficked a minor for sex will not be derailed by his assertion that a veteran asked his father for money to pay for the release of an American held by Iran, a law enforcement source familiar with the investigation said." Reuters adds, "Investigators believe the purported scheme to free Robert Levinson, a former FBI agent who disappeared in Iran in 2007, lacked credibility, the source said. Another U.S. official familiar with the case noted that Levinson's family in March 2020 publicly accepted U.S. government assessments that he died in Iranian custody." Federal investigators "are examining the purported attempt while separately also looking into whether Gaetz, a Florida Republican, may have violated sex trafficking laws by paying travel expenses for a 17-year-old female, the law enforcement source said. 'One has nothing to do with the other,' the source said."

FBI Probe Nets Two Arrests For Identity Theft Trafficking In Tennessee.

[WVLT-TV](#) Knoxville, TN (4/22) reports from Knoxville, Tennessee, "Two people were arrested in Knoxville and accused of identity theft after officers discovered numerous fraudulent debit, credit and gift cards." WVLT-TV adds, "Officers conducted a search warrant at the home of 36-

year-old Jessica Sanchez who had been arrested on Tuesday for driving a vehicle that was reported stolen out of California." Police said Sanchez "was in possession of numerous debit, credit and gift cards. Five of the prepaid debit cards were verified fraudulent. Police said they swiped the cards through a card reader which showed the information from the magnetic strip was different than the information printed on the card. A Detective with the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Identity Theft Task Force and the FBI White Collar Crime Task Force verified the five individuals whose names were printed on the cards were victims of identity theft."

Reputed Mexican Drug Cartel Leader Sentenced In Washington On Drug, Money Laundering Charges.

[KAPP-TV](#) Yakima, WA (4/22, Slyke) reports that a Pasco, Washington man "described by prosecutors as a 'leader/organizer of a cell with the Sinaloa Cartel' was sentenced this week to 26 years in prison for drug crimes and money laundering, the Department of Justice announced Wednesday." Federal prosecutors said Reynaldo Perez Munoz, 41, was sentenced after pleading guilty on August 28, 2020 to several charges, including conspiracy to distribute 50+ grams methamphetamine, five or more kilograms of cocaine and at least one kilogram of heroin, two counts of money laundering, and possession with intent to distribute 400 grams or more of fentanyl. Senior US District Judge Edward Shea "sentenced Munoz to 26 years of federal prison time + a seven-year term of court supervision after release. Federal authorities call him a transnational drug trafficker, and he was living right here in the Tri-Cities."

Washington Man Sentenced For Drug Trafficking.

The [Columbia Basin \(WA\) Herald](#) (4/22, Schweizer, 26K) reports from Spokane, Washington, "A Quincy man was sentenced Thursday to more than 11 years in federal prison after pleading guilty to conspiracy to possess and distribute methamphetamine." Eusebio Olvera Ruiz, 27, "was sentenced to 140 months in federal prison and five years of court supervision following that, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Washington. Ruiz pleaded guilty Jan. 14 to conspiracy to possess with Intent to distribute and distribution of 50 grams or more of actual (pure) methamphetamine." Ruiz "was in a 'drug-trafficking organization' in Quincy and Moses Lake, according to information in court proceedings. Ruiz participated in a drive-by shooting in Moses Lake at the direction of leaders of his organization, the press release said. He also was booked in the Grant County Jail Jan. 28, 2020, on drug charges, according to Herald archives."

Father, Daughter Plead Guilty In Shoplifting Scheme.

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (4/22, Abusaid, 1.46M) reports father and daughter duo Robert and Noni Whitley of Atlanta, GA pleaded guilty Thursday to an "elaborate multi-million dollar" shoplifting scheme. The Whitleys "reportedly operated out of a southwest Atlanta warehouse, paying shoplifters cash for trash bags filled with over-the-counter prescription drugs, shaving razors and beauty products" from 2011 to 2019. FBI Atlanta Special Agent Chris Hacker said, "For more than eight years, the Whitleys profited off the backs of legitimate retailers by encouraging theft of their products for resale online."

Tennessee Man Arrested For Sexual Exploitation.

The [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (4/22) reports Dalton Slemph of Bluff City, TN was arrested April 20 after being indicted on a charge of aggravated sexual exploitation of a minor for uploading and sharing child pornography. The sheriff's office acted on a tip received from the FBI.

Federal Charges Dropped Against Suspected Kidnapper.

The [Miami Herald](#) (4/22, Teproff, Neal, 647K) reports self-proclaimed witch Shannon Ryan of Muscle Shoals, AL "was charged Thursday by Miramar police with child neglect" in Florida.

Kidnapping charges against him in connection with the disappearance of Leila Cavett have been dropped. The FBI "confirmed that investigators were searching Monarch Hill Landfill...in connection with [Cavett's] disappearance" in October, but found nothing.

[WTVJ-TV](#) Miami (4/22, Hamacher, Shepard, 123K) reports on its website that Ryan "was arrested this past August following an FBI investigation into [Cavett's] disappearance." The FBI said "video evidence didn't support Ryan's claims that he saw Cavett and her son get into another person's vehicle at a RaceTrac gas station in Hollywood, [FL]" July 25.

[WTVT-TV](#) Tampa, FL (4/22, 476K) reports the FBI "released new security video showing the last known images of missing mom Leila Cavett." Her 2-year-old son "was found wandering the streets of South Florida alone in July."

[WPLG-TV](#) Miami (4/22, Batchelor, Forney, 271K) reports "surveillance video showed Ryan's car directly in front of an apartment complex shortly before the woman's 2-year-old son, Kamdyn, was found there." Ryan "told the FBI he was...examining a nail in his tire."

Louisiana Suspected Serial Killer's DNA Found On Shell Casings.

The [Baton Rouge \(LA\) Advocate](#) (4/22, Gyan, 255K) reports an expert testifying at the trial of suspected serial killer Kenneth Gleason on Thursday said Gleason's "DNA was found on shell casings recovered from the scene of a Black homeless man's slaying at a Baton Rouge bus stop in September 2017." Gleason is accused of several racially-based killings and shootings. An FBI agent "testified Wednesday that Gleason searched the internet between Sept. 1, 2017, and Sept. 16, 2017, for topics such as White nationalism, genocide, Nazi propaganda and gun silencers."

Texas Kidnapper May Face Federal Charges.

The [Huntsville \(AL\) Times](#) (4/22, Thornton, 623K) reports Florence, AL police "say they are working closely with the FBI to pursue federal charges" against Daniel Skipworth of Tyler, TX. Skipworth is accused of "third degree kidnapping, aggravated sexual assault and trafficking of persons" in Texas in connection with the kidnapping of Abbygail Moody from Alabama.

Surveillance Photo of Illinois Bank Robber Released.

The [Northbrook \(IL\) Patch](#) (4/22, DeGrechie, 1.44M) reports FBI Public Affairs Officer for the Chicago Division Special Agent Siobhan Johnson said a photo was released of the man who robbed a TCF Bank in Arlington Heights, IL on April 7. The surveillance photo was taken from behind.

Three New Yorkers Arrested For International Bank Robberies.

[CNN](#) (4/22, Williams, 89.21M) reports on its website that three men from Brooklyn, NY were arrested Tuesday "on money laundering conspiracy charges in connection with an elaborate, international bank robbery operation that netted more than \$30 million over several years." FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Sweeney said in the statement, "The crimes we allege in this indictment read like something straight out of Hollywood fiction. ... The thieves used sophisticated tools to thwart security systems at foreign banks and tried to cover their tracks by laundering money through US banks."

Case Of Former North Carolina Sheriff Accused Of Corruption Goes To Jury.

[Raleigh \(NC\) News & Observer](#) (4/22, Monk, Dys, 396K) reports arguments in the trial of former Chester County, NC Sheriff Alex "Big A" Underwood and Chief Deputy Robert Sprouse and Lt. Johnny Neal concluded Thursday. They are "charged with being part of a multi-pronged conspiracy involving a variety of different alleged illegal acts." Defense lawyer Stanley Myers said FBI lead case agent Rodney Naramore "'doesn't even have the guts' to get on the witness stand and tell the jury what he knows" about the undisclosed facts of the case.

New Mexico Corrections Officer Said To Have Illicit Relationship With Gang Member.

In an opinion piece, the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (4/22, 188K) points out the “troubling” personal relationship between Sindicato de Nuevo Mexico prison gang member Jody Rufino Martinez and corrections officer Santana Bustamante. Jail employees “told the FBI that Bustamante entered Martinez’s cell alone on numerous occasions, provided him with outside food, and they spent time alone outside the view of surveillance cameras.” In addition, the FBI “says Bustamante waited in a truck outside the victim’s home while Martinez went inside and shot” an informer after Martinez was released from prison. Bustamante has not been fired from her prison job.

Indiana Man Sentenced For Sexual Exploitation.

The [Kokomo \(IN\) Tribune](#) (4/22, Juranovich, 58K) reports Bradley M. Cox of Kokomo, IN “was sentenced to 35 years in prison Wednesday” after being convicted in December of “sexual exploitation of children, extortion and production and attempted production of child pornography and receipt of child pornography.” FBI Indianapolis Special Agent in Charge Paul Keenan said in a statement, “Mr. Cox thought he could hide behind the anonymity of the internet to terrorize his young victims, causing them untold mental anguish, but this sentence is a clear message that those who engage in sextortion will be held accountable for their heinous actions. ... The FBI and our partners are dedicated to rooting out these perpetrators and ensuring they can never impose such terror on their victims and their families ever again.”

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

US Charges Three In Scheme To Get \$14M In COVID-Relief Loans.

[The Hill](#) (4/22, Oshin, 5.69M) reports, “Three men from Texas and Oregon were charged in an apparent scheme to get \$14 million from COVID-relief loans.” The Hill adds, “According to a Thursday press release sent out by the United States Attorney’s Office of the Southern District of New York, the three men – Apocalypse Bella, Mackenzy Toussaint, and Amos Mundendi – were charged for trying to obtain government guaranteed loans designed to provide relief to small businesses during the pandemic. ‘As alleged in the indictment, the defendants in this case are charged with fraudulently securing loans intended to help honest small businesses and their employees deal with the pandemic’s economic effects,’ FBI Assistant Director William F. Sweeney Jr. said in the statement.”

[Law360](#) (4/22, Subscription Publication, 9K) reports, “In a case pending before U.S. District Judge Paul A. Engelmayer,” the defendants “are charged with four counts each of conspiracy and fraud for allegedly receiving millions and engaging in ‘large transfers of funds’ abroad last year.” The men “and others targeted the Small Business Administration’s coronavirus pandemic programs – the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan – using two unnamed straw companies to make their applications, according to the indictment. Bella transferred more than \$729,000 into an account he controlled, while Toussaint moved \$138,000 into one of his accounts, the indictment says. Other money was transferred aboard and into an investment account, the indictment says.”

North Carolina Man Charged With Fraudulently Obtaining \$1.5M In PPP Loans.

[The Hill](#) (4/22, Oshin, 5.69M) reports, “A federal grand jury indicted a North Carolina man Thursday accused of fraudulently obtaining \$1.5 million in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans.” The Hill adds, “In a Department of Justice press release William T. Stetzer, acting U.S. attorney for the Western District of North Carolina, stated that Maurice Kamgaing had allegedly collected the sum in COVID-19 relief funds by submitting fraudulent PPP loan applications on behalf of two businesses.” In April 2020, Kamgaing “allegedly filed a fraudulent loan application for Apiagne Inc., for \$856,463 and another for AKC Solutions for \$650,000. He allegedly used

the amount disbursed for improper purposes and personal expenses, according to the statement." Kamgaing, 41, "is charged with wire fraud in relation to a disaster benefit, two counts of making false statements to a bank and two counts of engaging in monetary transactions in criminally derived property."

Head Of Shuttered Texas Company Says He Turned Himself In.

[Reuters](#) (4/22, Khan) reports Christopher Bentley was the founder of Bellatorum Resources, which bought mineral rights in Texas shale fields before Bentley shut it down on April 9 and "acknowledged in a Reuters interview that he had squandered investors' cash." Bentley sent an email to investors saying he was turning himself in to authorities. The FBI "said it does not confirm or deny the existence of any investigations."

CYBER DIVISION

GCHQ Chief Says West Faces Near-Term Challenges With Cybersecurity.

[The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (4/23, 5.53M) reports that, according to the head of the spy agency GCHQ, Britain and its allies "face a 'moment of reckoning' in which secure encryption and other future technologies may no longer be 'shaped and controlled by the west.'" In a speech on Friday, Jeremy Fleming "will say the UK has to 'develop sovereign technologies' and work with allies to 'build better cyberdefenses' to prosper in the future." Although the spy chief "does not mention China by name, his remarks are largely aimed at Beijing's growing strength in high technology, revealed recently by the row over the deployment of Huawei kit in Britain's 5G mobile phone networks." There are also "growing concerns about Russian state-sponsored hacking." This is showing "signs of increasing sophistication, as demonstrated by the recent exploitation of a vulnerability in SolarWinds software used in several US government departments."

[Reuters](#) (4/22) reports Britain's spies "believe that China could within decades dominate all of the key emerging technologies of this century, particularly artificial intelligence, synthetic biology and genetics." In an unusually blunt speech, Fleming "said that the UK's cyber power could not be taken for granted and that the rules were changing in ways that states did not always control." Fleming said in a lecture at London's Imperial College, according a text of his speech released ahead of delivery, "Without action it is increasingly clear that the key technologies on which we will rely for our future prosperity and security won't be shaped and controlled by the West."

CISO Chris DeRusha Discusses Zero Trust.

[NextGov](#) (4/22) reports that, "amid a swarm of industry offerings that employ the cybersecurity buzzword, Federal Chief Information Security Officer Chris DeRusha described the essential components of what he considers zero trust." He said, "I really believe it's rooted in three core principles: verifying every user, validating every device, and then within that, limiting access intelligently. This is obviously a shift away from the prior trust model that assumed if a user is behind a firewall, then you know they can be trusted. Obviously, this isn't bearing out anymore." DeRusha headlined the Billington Cybersecurity Defense Summit Thursday "where current and former federal officials stressed that the term 'zero trust' refers to a plan of action or policy, not something any one product can claim they provide and advocated smart budgeting."

Taiwan Authorities Investigating Apple Supplier Hack.

[BBC News](#) (4/22, 876K) reports authorities in Taiwan "say they are looking into a ransomware cyber-attack on a major technology firm there." Quanta Computer is a "manufacturer of many flagship Apple products, including its MacBook line." The hackers, known as Revil, "have published stolen blueprints for unreleased products, and are threatening to release more."

Taiwanese officials "said they are 'taking an initial step to look into and understand' the incident." On their darknet website, the anonymous hackers "are attempting to extort a ransom from Apple directly, writing, 'We recommended that Apple buy back available data by 1 May.'" It is understood they are "asking for tens of millions of pounds."

Officials Welcome CISA's New Authorities To Hunt Cyber Threats.

[NextGov](#) (4/22) reports new authorities "allowing the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to look for threats across federal agencies' networks will boost work some departments have already been doing to spot and remove threats outside their perimeter," according to a leading chief information security officer. Department of Education CISO Steve Hernandez said, "We're very excited about [CISA's] threat hunting authorities, simply because it gives us more folks out in the wilderness looking for those bad actors. We see this as an absolute win, it's only going to supplement and help reinforce the work we're already doing." Hernandez, who co-chairs the Federal Chief Information Security Officers Council, "detailed the agencies' threat-hunting activities, which grew in response to fraudsters trying to take advantage of the pandemic."

Cyber Experts Warn Canada's Aging Critical Infrastructure Strategy A Growing Concern.

The [National Post \(CAN\)](#) (4/22, 75K) reports the 2019 budget "said monies would go to protect Canada's critical cyber systems including in the finance, telecommunications, energy and transport sectors." The \$144.9 million earmarked in the 2019 budget for cybersecurity of Canada's critical infrastructure "still hasn't been put to use after two years, despite warnings that systems such as energy grids and telecom networks could be targeted by hostile actors." The funding was "dependent on new legislation to 'introduce a new critical cyber systems framework,' which still hasn't materialized." Benjamin Fung, Canada research chair in data mining for cybersecurity at McGill University "said that critical infrastructure has become more vulnerable to attacks in the past 10 or 15 years because it is now connected to the internet to allow it to be operated remotely, which 'opens up another dimension of cyber threats.'"

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

FBI Warns New Englanders Of Fake Government Agent Scams.

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports from Boston, "The FBI's Boston office is warning New Englanders about scammers claiming to be a government official and using intimidation or threats to get money from victims. It says the scammers typically claim to be calling from a government agency. They threaten to confiscate property, freeze bank accounts, or have people arrested unless payment is made through a wire transfer or prepaid or gift cards." The FBI "stressed that federal agencies do not call or e-mail people threatening arrest or demanding money. The agency said residents should hang up and report the call, even if it appears to be coming from an agency's legitimate phone number."

The [Portland \(ME\) Press Herald](#) (4/22, 174K) reports, "The FBI's Boston Division said it is seeing an increase in reports about scammers targeting residents of Maine and other New England states through unsolicited, often spoofed, telephone calls, according to a news release issued by spokeswoman Kristen M. Setera. A scammer claims to be representative of a government agency, including the FBI, while trying to intimidate the victim into making immediate payment to avoid arrests. 'Nobody wants to be the subject of a law enforcement investigation, and scammers are using that to their advantage to try and intimidate people into just handing over their hard-earned money. We're asking you not to fall for it,' said Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Boston Division."

Supreme Court Expands Life Sentencing Guidelines For Minors.

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports that the Supreme Court “made it easier Thursday to sentence minors convicted of murder to life in prison without the possibility of parole, a ruling that reflects a change in course driven by a more conservative group of justices.” The case, which “involved a Mississippi inmate and a crime committed when he was 15,” had “asked the justices whether a minor has to be found to be ‘permanently incorrigible,’ incapable of being rehabilitated, before being sentenced to life without parole.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/22, 3.37M) reports that the 6-3 ruling “retreats somewhat from a pair of earlier rulings, which said that such life sentences for minors convicted of murder should be extremely rare and limited to cases in which there was no reason to hope the young person could be rehabilitated.” Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh “said judges are required to weigh the defendant’s age as a mitigating factor before imposing a punishment for a homicide.” [CNN](#) (4/22, 89.21M) reports on its website that Kavanaugh wrote, “In a case involving an individual who was under 18 when he or she committed a homicide, a State’s discretionary sentencing system is both constitutionally necessary and constitutionally sufficient.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Bravin, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports Justice Sonia Sotomayor published a dissent, and she condemned the majority for its decision, which she said violated the juvenile inmates’ protection from cruel and unusual punishment. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Barnes, 10.52M) reports Kavanaugh “downplayed Sotomayor’s fiery dissent as reflecting ‘simply...a good-faith disagreement’ over ‘how to interpret relevant precedents.’”

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Liptak, 20.6M) reports that the late Justice Anthony Kennedy had “methodically limited the availability of the harshest penalties for crimes committed by juveniles, first by striking down the juvenile death penalty and then by restricting sentences of life without the possibility of parole” in rulings over the past 16 years.

[NPR](#) (4/22, Totenberg, 3.69M) reports on its website that Mississippi “is among a handful of states that allow a life without parole sentence for juvenile crimes without requiring a finding of ‘permanent incorrigibility.’”

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

US Told Colombia That Florida Woman Held In Venezuela Coup Plot Had Links To Arms Ring.

The [Miami Herald](#) (4/22, Hall, Delgado, 647K) reports, “The U.S. Department of Homeland Security warned Colombian law enforcement several times that a Florida resident tangled up in last year’s slapdash failed coup in Venezuela may be part of an international arms smuggling ring.” The Herald adds that in a letter in June, “the Homeland Security Investigations division of DHS warned Colombia’s customs police agency that it had been tracking calls to a cellular phone from the 305 area code that was registered to Yacsy Álvarez Mirabal,” the “Venezuelan national who owns a home in Tampa, frequents Miami and was arrested last September in connection to a weapons seizure linked to what became a botched Venezuelan coup launched from Colombia.” The letter “from Julio Magallan, the adjunct attache for Homeland Security Investigations at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota, alerted about a weapons ring under investigation for allegedly trafficking arms from the United States and Europe to Colombia.”

OTHER FBI NEWS

Sen. Paul Criticizes FBI’s “Suicide By Cop” Classification Of Baseball Park Shooting.

[Fox News](#) (4/22, Blitzer, 23.99M) reports, “Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., pushed back against the notion that the 2017 shooting at a congressional baseball practice was merely a case of ‘suicide by cop,’ after Rep. Brad Wenstrup, R-Ohio, revealed at a hearing this was exactly how the FBI characterized it at the time.” Paul “was there at the time of the incident, during which Rep.

Steve Scalise, R-La., suffered a gunshot wound that resulted in serious injury and was nearly fatal. In a statement to Fox News, Paul rejected the idea that the attack was not politically motivated. 'I was present at the baseball practice where a Bernie Sanders supporter nearly killed Rep. Steve Scalise,' Paul said. 'It would seem that his goal was to kill individual members of Congress since he had a list of targets in his pocket.' Paul added, "To argue that this assassination attempt was suicide by cop is unsupported by the facts."

Suspect In Governor-Related Massachusetts Case Wants Monitoring Bracelet Off.

The [Salem \(MA\) News](#) (4/22, Manganis, 60K) reports Haverhill District Court Judge Cesar Archilla has "agreed to listen to a recording of" an October hearing that involved Massachusetts resident Lane Forman, who is "charged with misdemeanor breaking and entering after" he allegedly walked into Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker's home. This action is being taken because Forman claims he was never ordered by Archilla to wear a GPS monitoring bracelet while out on bail. Forman, who wants the bracelet removed, made many comments during a virtual hearing that preceded Archilla's audio recording decision. Among other things, Forman said, "The FBI and the DEA needed me at Middleton Jail to take down a couple of major drug dealers."

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Walensky And Murthy Discuss Approach To Vaccine Hesitancy.

In an appearance on [NBC's Today](#)^{Vi} (4/22, 2.78M), CDC Director Walensky was asked how the government intends to encourage the half of Americans who have not been vaccinated for COVID to do so. Walensky said, "We've been planning for this. ... And I would consider it good news that we have enough vaccine out there and it is accessible enough. We have vaccine now within five miles of 90% of Americans. And we knew we were going to hit this point...and here we are. And now comes the hard work...trying to understand why people might be hesitant." Walensky added, "This value of herd immunity is very much dependent on how transmissible the virus is. And with these variants, that may in fact be a moving target."

Surgeon General Murthy said on [ABC's GMA Day](#)^{Vi} (4/22, 1.36M), "We've got more work to do if we want to vaccinate the entire country, and what we know is that there is a small portion of the population that's got questions about the vaccine, and some people also who are wondering" if it is important to get vaccinated. Murthy continued, "And the answer is absolutely yes. ... We are recommending that people look strongly at the vaccines, get vaccinated, help your family members get vaccinated as well. That is ultimately how we're going to turn this pandemic around."

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 3, 3:30, Muir, 6.07M) reported that "the daily average number of shots has now fallen below 3 million a day. That's the first time in weeks. And authorities say that reflects in part some of the hesitancy in folks who have yet to get the shot." [CNBC](#) (4/22, Rattner, 7.34M) says on its website that the US is "reporting nearly 63,000 daily new Covid infections, based on a seven-day average of data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. That figure is above the nation's most recent low point of 53,600 per day in late March, but has been trending downward over the past few days."

In the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M), Jennifer Rubin cites "a new survey conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute in concert with Interfaith Youth Core," which found that "among those who attend religious services at least a few times per year, 44% of those who are hesitant and 14% of those who are resistant say faith-based approaches would make them more likely to get vaccinated." Rubin writes, "While the more secularized mainstream media is understandably focused on what politicians say and do, they overlook where real progress in breaking down vaccine aversion can be made. It's time to take vaccines to church."

CDC Has Reportedly Reassigned Vaccine Task Force Head. [Politico](#) (4/22, Owermhle, Banco, Cancryn, 6.73M) reports, "CDC respiratory disease chief Nancy Messonnier has been reassigned from her position heading the agency's Covid-19 vaccine task force, according to three people familiar with the move," who said she "is being absorbed into an incident management response team headed by" Walensky. Her duties "will be reassigned to Henry Walke, the director of the agency's Division of Preparedness and Emerging Infections."

CDC Panel Expected To Recommend Resumption Of J&J Vaccine Use.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, A1, McGinley, Sun, 10.52M) reports, "Federal health authorities are leaning toward recommending that use of the Johnson & Johnson coronavirus vaccine resume, possibly as soon as this weekend – a move that would include a new warning about a rare complication involving blood clots but probably not call for age restrictions." According to the Post, "The position would be similar to one taken by Europe's drug regulator, the European Medicines Agency, which said this week the Johnson & Johnson vaccine should carry a warning but placed no restrictions on its use." The Post says, "The fate of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is scheduled to be discussed publicly in a pivotal meeting Friday of an influential advisory group to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, lead story, 4:30, O'Donnell, 3.71M) reported that use of the vaccine could resume "as early as" Friday, adding it "has learned the decision will come after scientists advising the government meet in emergency session." However, "the decision may be too late to change the public opinion, as more and more appointments for shots go unfilled. ... In the last week alone, the number of Americans getting vaccinated every day has dropped by more than 10% nationwide." CBS' Janet Shamlian added that "another case of blood clotting related to the Johnson & Johnson vaccine" was reported in Texas.

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, A1, Weiland, LaFraniere, 20.6M) quotes FDA Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research Director Peter Marks as saying, "We know that it's not a good thing to leave the pause going for any longer than it absolutely has to go for. ... Once, essentially, the adequate discussion has occurred, we're prepared to move as quickly as we possibly can." Marks and Acting FDA Commissioner Woodcock "said the clotting disorder appeared to be nearly as rare as they had hoped it would be when they recommended the pause." However, according to the Times, even if the pause is lifted, "the company will still face manufacturing hurdles at a Baltimore plant that regulators have refused so far to certify."

[Politico](#) (4/22, Banco, Cancryn, Owermhle, 6.73M) reports that "the Biden administration has stood by Johnson & Johnson as the vaccine maker struggled to deliver promised doses of its Covid-19 vaccine – but privately, frustrated senior health officials have largely written off the shot, according to seven people with knowledge of the matter." However, "officials are hopeful that J&J can iron out its problems and still be of use for booster shots down the line, and for immunization in other countries as the U.S. ramps up its vaccine diplomacy."

The [AP](#) (4/22, Choi) reports that suspending "distribution of the shots without setting off alarm about their safety" was "just the latest challenge in crisis messaging for" health officials during the pandemic, with the nature of the virus, public health measures, and local restrictions "marked by public confusion, changing guidance and squabbling." According to the AP, "by promptly notifying the public that they were investigating clots, officials were following a fundamental rule in the crisis playbook: transparency, even when the answers aren't yet clear." Surgeon General Murthy is quoted as saying, "We want people to know what we know."

Asked on [ABC's GMA Day](#)^{Vi} (4/22, 1.36M) about confidence in the Johnson & Johnson vaccine after the pause, Murthy said, "What we...know is that the safety system stopped immediately, picked up that signal and went to investigate. That's actually evidence of what you want in a safety system, which is responsiveness, and we'll see where the investigation from the CDC and FDA leads. I anticipate we'll have data...and a decision within just a few days."

In his [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M) column, Fareed Zakaria argues the pause, and Europe's temporary suspension of the AstraZeneca vaccine, "are fueling many people's fears

about vaccine safety, perpetuating conspiracy theories and wasting precious time at a moment when the crucial imperative is to get people vaccinated." Zakaria writes, "We need to think more closely, carefully and rationally about risk and remember to balance it with that other half of the equation: reward."

CDC Faces Pressure Over Outdoor Mask Guidance.

On [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, lead story, 2:55, Holt, 4.83M), Miguel Almaguer reported that "the CDC faces growing pressure and questions over its long-standing guidance on face masks outdoors," as 24 states have repealed "that very mandate" and "even scientists agree the risk of transmission is much lower outside," depending on crowd size and vaccination status. CDC Director Walensky "says the agency is looking into the matter, but notes COVID cases are on the rise again." Almaguer added, "Because most Americans are not fully vaccinated, easing the restriction that saves lives won't happen overnight."

Study Suggests COVID Reinfections Are Very Rare.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Johnson, 10.52M) says, "In the early days of the pandemic, one of the frightening mysteries stemmed from anecdotes about people previously stricken with the disease, getting sick again a few months later. ... But an analysis of 63 million medical records by data scientists show that while reinfection is possible, it is rare. Out of about 400,000 people with positive tests for the coronavirus," only 0.4% tested positive twice more than 90 days apart.

Study Finds COVID Infection Can Increase Pregnancy Complications.

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports that "a multi-country study suggests pregnant women who get COVID-19 have higher risks for death, intensive-care stays, preterm birth and other complications. ... Pregnant women can gain some protection by getting vaccinated; recent evidence suggests the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are safe to use in pregnancy." The AP says "the results were published on Thursday in the Journal of the American Medical Association Pediatrics, which echo smaller studies."

Fort Meade Says 800 Moderna Doses Were Improperly Stored.

The [Baltimore Sun](#) (4/22, Mongilio, 629K) reports that Fort Meade's Kimbrough Ambulatory Center said in a statement that 80 vials, or approximately 800 doses, of Moderna vaccine administered on April 7 and April 12 were stored outside of the recommended temperature range. The facility said the Department of Defense employees and other military community members who received the doses will be provided with the opportunity to receive a third shot.

Studies Find Vaccines Effective Against New York Variant.

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Mandavilli, 20.6M) reports that two independent studies suggested that both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are effective in preventing serious illness and death from the COVID variant first identified in New York. While "the results are based on laboratory experiments with blood samples from small numbers of vaccinated people and have not yet been peer-reviewed," both "are consistent with what is known about similar variants, several experts said, and they add to a growing body of research that suggests that the two main vaccines in the United States are protective against all of the variants identified so far."

NBC Looks At Ongoing Child Vaccine Trials.

On [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 10, 1:55, 4.83M), Tom Costello profiled two nine-year-old twins who "were the first [children] in the country to receive the Pfizer vaccine" as "part of a nationwide trial testing vaccine safety and efficacy on children between six months and 12 years." Costello added, "While severe COVID-related illness and death are low in children, kids

still account for 13.6% of all cases, 3.6 million so far, 88,000 cases last week alone." According to experts, "vaccinating kids...is critical to building herd immunity" and "the ultimate goal [is] to vaccinate every elementary school child by this time next year."

Hospitalizations Drop 80% Among Senior Citizens.

The [AP](#) (4/22, Perrone, Johnson) reports, "COVID-19 hospitalizations among older Americans have plunged 80% since the start of the year, dramatic proof the vaccination campaign is working." According to the AP, "the drop-off in severe cases among people 65 and older is so dramatic that the hospitalization rate...is now down to around the level of the next-youngest category, Americans 50 to 64." The numbers are "especially encouraging because senior citizens have accounted for about 8 out of 10 deaths from COVID-19 since the virus hit the United States." Overall fatalities in the US have since "plummeted to about 700 per day on average, compared with a peak of over 3,400 in mid-January."

Los Angeles County Infection Rates Now Among Lowest In US.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Ansari, Lovett, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that Los Angeles County, which once reported three times more COVID cases per day than any other in the US, now has one of the lowest per capita infection rates of the nation's ten most populous. Researchers theorize that the turnaround, which has occurred despite lower vaccination rates, comes as a result of high immunity.

Women Vaccinated At Higher Rates Than Men.

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Steinhauer, 20.6M) reports, "As the Biden administration seeks to get 80 percent of adult Americans immunized by summer, the continuing reluctance of men to get a shot could impede that goal." Women have been vaccinated "at a far higher rate – about 10 percentage points – than men," a "worrisome" trend, "as vaccination rates have dipped a bit recently." The Times goes on to report that the reasons behind the gap reflect "the role of women in specific occupations that received early vaccine priority, political and cultural differences and long standing patterns of women embracing preventive care more often generally than men," even though COVID deaths worldwide are "about 2.4 times higher for men."

Biden Opens Climate Summit With Pledge To Halve US Carbon Emissions By 2030.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 4, 2:20, Muir, 6.07M) reported, "On this Earth Day, President Biden is making news" with "his summit with world leaders and the President pledging to cut carbon emissions here in the US by 50% in less than a decade, by 2030, and to reach zero net emissions by 2050." That pledge came "at the start of his two-day climate summit with 40 world leaders, including China and Russia." ABC's Mary Bruce: "In a sharp departure from the previous Administration," Biden sent "a clear message to the world on climate change, saying America is back." Biden: "The cost of inaction keeps mounting. The United States isn't waiting. We are resolving to take action." Bruce: "Calling it a moral imperative, Biden announcing a new lofty goal to cut carbon emissions from record-high 2005 levels in half by the end of the decade. The target: to reach net zero emissions by 2050."

Norah O'Donnell said on the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 5, 2:15, 3.71M), "In what may have been the most powerful Zoom call ever, President Biden marked Earth Day today by hosting a virtual conference on the world's climate, and making a bold vow to cut carbon emissions." CBS' Nancy Cordes: "Biden came armed with an ambitious pledge to cut US greenhouse emissions in half by the end of this decade. ... To reach that goal, the US would need to cut fossil fuel use in every sector of the economy. How can you realistically make this pledge to the rest of the world when there's no guarantee that Republicans will get on board with your plan once you release it?" White House National Climate Adviser Gina McCarthy: "You know, wind and solar had the biggest year they've ever had last year, and what we saw last

year was continuation of tax credits that passed through a Republican-controlled Congress. So we all know where this is heading."

Peter Alexander said on [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 7, 1:30, Holt, 4.83M) that Biden's goal is "nearly double the target set by former President Obama, including a new pledge to make the US power grid 100% carbon pollution-free by 2035." Biden is "looking to reestablish American leadership on the issue after former President Trump withdrew the US from the Paris Climate Accord and mocked climate science. ... But critics argue the President's commitments will make America less competitive globally, noting China, the world's largest polluter, says for now, its emissions will keep going up." Senate Minority Leader McConnell: "The DNA of the far-left Green New Deal is all over President Biden's spending bills."

McCarthy said on [MSNBC](#)^{Vi} (4/22, 2.43M), "If you look at already available climate solutions, if you look at the ways that we can move our country forward and reduce our emissions, we still will be able to get at 50% reduction by 2030 because clean energy is winning everywhere." McCarthy continued, "There's lots of opportunity, but investing in innovation is going to be important. So the American Jobs Plan is a great strategy to actually move forward to grab that clean energy future."

Asked on [BBC News' World News America](#)^{Vi} (4/22, 286K) how the US intends to meet the new target, White House Deputy National Climate Adviser Ali Zaidi said, "The way we meet it is by bringing everybody along. For the last several years, we've seen a growing chorus of folks calling out for bold climate action. We've seen states and cities lead, we've seen businesses and workers seize the economic opportunity that tackling the climate crisis represents. So that's how we do it."

Transportation Secretary Buttigieg said on [Bloomberg TV](#)^{Vi} (4/22, 3.57M), "This is going to take an extraordinary, unprecedented national effort, but it's also something we can't afford not to do. ... We know what we have to do, and we know that that's going to require concrete specific steps in every part of the economy." Buttigieg said on [MSNBC](#)^{Vi} (4/22, 1.49M), "The President is challenging all of us to make sure that we meet these goals and as he so often says, this is also the moment when we can put away the old false framework of climate versus jobs and demonstrate, especially in sectors like transportation where I work, that job creation through climate action is the way forward."

The [AP](#) (4/22, Knickmeyer, Madhani) reports Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin "put aside their raw-worded disputes" with Biden on Thursday "long enough to pledge international cooperation on cutting climate-wrecking coal and petroleum emissions." However, neither leader "immediately followed the United States and some of its developed allies in making specific new pledges to reduce damaging fossil fuel pollution." The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Friedman, Sengupta, Davenport, 20.6M) reports, "In rapid succession, Japan, Canada, Britain and the European Union committed to steeper cuts. But China, India and Russia made no new emissions promises." The [New York Post](#) (4/22, Moore, 7.45M) reports Xi, "who didn't announce he would participate in the summit until Wednesday, claimed his country – one of the world's top polluters – will cut down on the use of coal and other fossil fuels and will work with the US."

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Dennis, Eilperin, Mufson, 10.52M) reports that the event, "one of the most surreal summit meetings ever," was aimed in large part "at shining a spotlight on Biden's renewed push at home to transform the U.S. economy, moving it away from fossil fuels and setting in motion far-reaching changes that would affect everything from how Americans power their homes to what cars they drive." The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Plumer, 20.6M) says that under Biden's vision, by 2030, "more than half of the new cars and S.U.V.s sold at dealerships would need to be powered by electricity, not gasoline. Nearly all coal-fired power plants would need to be shut down" and "the number of wind turbines and solar panels dotting the nation's landscape could quadruple."

[NPR](#) (4/22, Detrow, 3.69M) reports on its website, "As he's repeatedly done, Biden framed the proposed dramatic shift not as a collective sacrifice, but rather, a chance to grow industrial

jobs across the country.” Biden said, “I see auto workers building the next generation of electric vehicles. I see the engineers and the construction workers building new carbon capture and green hydrogen plants.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/22, 3.37M) reports, “Even as the virtual summit hosted by President Biden accomplished his goal of restoring the United States to a position of global leadership on the issue, it also revealed the limits of his ability to build support for the more aggressive action that experts say is needed.” [Bloomberg](#) (4/22, 3.57M) reports Biden’s “vow to spend \$5.7 billion annually helping developing nations deal with climate change and propel clean energy has disappointed environmental activists who say it falls far short of what the U.S. should be spending. ... Financial aid to vulnerable countries has underpinned the Paris climate agreement,” but the US “in particular is woefully behind on meeting former President Barack Obama’s pledge of \$3 billion for the United Nations Green Climate Fund.”

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Plumer, Popovich, 20.6M) says in another analysis that Biden’s goal is “one of the more aggressive near-term targets among wealthy industrialized nations, although the cuts are arguably not quite as large as what the European Union and Britain have already promised.” Still, the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Gearan, 10.52M) says, “the overriding sentiment from the global leaders was one of relief and receptivity to having the United States back in the fold after four years. ... Biden collected plaudits for recommitting the United States to focus on the crisis of a warming planet and reversing the policies of his predecessor.” [Politico](#) (4/22, Colman, Wolff, 6.73M) reports, “Leaders of several nations welcomed the U.S. back into the global climate diplomacy realm in their remarks.”

[CNBC](#) (4/22, Macias, 7.34M) reports on its website that Defense Secretary Austin “described the climate crisis as one of the nation’s existential threats with the potential to profoundly destabilize global security.” Austin said at the summit, “From coast to coast and across the world, the climate crisis has caused substantial damage and put people in danger, making it more difficult for us to carry out our mission of defending the United States and our allies.”

[The Week](#) (4/22, 2.17M) reports Director of National Intelligence Haines said at the summit that “on order to tackle climate change, it has to be ‘at the center of a country’s national security and foreign policy.’” Haines said the US “is taking this approach moving forward, adding that climate change ‘needs to be fully integrated with every aspect of our analysis in order to allow us not only to monitor the threat but also, critically, to ensure that policymakers understand the importance of climate change on seemingly unrelated policies.’”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Restuccia, Puko, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that in 2019, the most recent year for which complete data is available, US emissions were down about 13% from 2005 levels. Emissions in 2020 were projected to be down 21% from 2005, but that progress was due in large part to the pandemic-related economic and industrial slowdown. The [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (4/22, Kummer) says global energy demand “is expected to increase by 4.6% in 2021, offsetting the 4% decrease in 2020 because of the pandemic, according to the International Energy Agency.”

[Fox News](#) (4/22, Blitzer, 23.99M) reports on its website that climate activists with Extinction Rebellion, who say Biden’s plan is insufficient, dumped “cow manure in front of the White House” on Thursday morning. Demonstrators “could be heard chanting...‘no more climate crisis’ while marching down the street with wheelbarrows full of dung. They eventually unloaded their cargo in front of the White House.”

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) says Biden’s 10-year climate proposal is reminiscent of the five-year plans of China’s centralized planned economy, arguing that Biden and Democrats in Congress will push through massive spending intended to reorient the economy that will have little effect on global temperature increases. Henry Olsen writes in the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M) that the climate summit “will predictably attract fawning headlines as world leaders trip over themselves to promise

massive reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Less covered will be how extraordinarily difficult it will be to keep those promises.”

[Reuters](#) (4/22), [Axios](#) (4/22, Knutson, 1.26M), [Vox](#) (4/22, 1.88M), [The Hill](#) (4/22, 5.69M), [Roll Call](#) (4/22, 130K), and the [CNN](#) (4/22, 89.21M) and [Voice of America](#) (4/22, 85K) websites also report, while [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 5, 3:05, Muir, 6.07M) aired a feature on how climate change is impacting migration patterns and exacerbating the situation at the US-Mexico border.

DOT Ends Trump-Era Effort To Block Stricter State Emissions Standards. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Eilperin, 10.52M) reports the Transportation Department said Thursday that it will no longer attempt to block California and other states from setting stricter emissions standards. The Biden Administration “will give the liberal state more leverage in discussions between the auto industry and federal and state officials over national mileage and greenhouse gas emission standards for cars and SUVs.” The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (4/22, Alexander, 2.44M) says the “feud over vehicle emissions between California and the federal government that started during the Trump administration appears to be coming to an end” with the announcement.

Thunberg Testifies Before House Panel. [USA Today](#) (4/22, Santucci, 12.7M) reports, “Teen climate activist Greta Thunberg called tax breaks for the fossil fuel industry a ‘disgrace’ in testimony to Congress at an Earth Day hearing on subsidies.” The [New York Daily News](#) (4/22, McAuliff, 2.51M) reports Thunberg said “none of Washington’s current efforts are enough to meet the Paris Climate Agreement’s goal[s].” Thunberg said, “Either you do this, or you’re going to have to start explaining to your children and the most affected people why you are surrendering on the 1.5 degree target, giving up without even trying. To be honest, I don’t believe for a second that you will actually do this.”

The [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) (4/22, 1.22M) reports “self-described ‘fracking refugee’” Jill Antares Hunkler also testified before the House Oversight and Reform Committee environment subcommittee, urging Congress “to abandon subsidies to the fossil fuel industry when Congress passes its next infrastructure bill.” [Fox News](#) (4/22, 23.99M) reports on its website that Rep. Ralph Norman (R-SC) “accused Democrats, who brought in Thunberg for testimony, of playing up ‘doomsday scenarios’ on climate change.”

Harris Hosts Meeting Of Foundation Heads To Discuss Causes Of Migration.

[The Hill](#) (4/22, Samuels, 5.69M) reports Vice President Harris met Thursday “with leaders of philanthropic groups focused on aiding the Northern Triangle.” The event was “the latest roundtable she has held in her role leading efforts to stem the flow of migrants from Central America.” Harris said, “I’ve asked the leaders of major philanthropic organizations – not only nationally but globally – I’ve asked you to come together so I can learn from you, so I can hear from you. ... Many of you have been investing for years, like I said, in the region. I want to hear from you to know what works, what has worked, what has not worked. So that will help inform our strategy going forward.”

The [New York Daily News](#) (4/22, 2.51M) reports Harris “told foundation leaders that she hopes to correct the conditions that drive people out of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, instead of just increasing security at the U.S. border with Mexico.” In its coverage of Thursday’s meeting, the [New York Post](#) (4/22, Nelson, 7.45M) says Harris “has not paid a visit to the border” since President Biden named her as leader of the Administration’s “response to a historic surge of migrants” crossing the border. [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 6, 0:35, Muir, 6.07M) reported Harris “is set to meet virtually with Guatemala’s president next week, and she plans to travel to the region as well in the coming weeks.”

Cornyn And Sinema Introduce Border Legislation. The [Dallas Morning News](#) (4/22, 772K) reports Sens. John Cornyn (R-TX) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) have joined together in “a bipartisan push for a bill addressing the migration surge at the border.” The legislation “would establish four new regional processing centers in high-traffic areas in order to reduce wait times

and eliminate backlogs in facilities, to help asylum-seekers get rulings more quickly and efficiently." A House version will be introduced by Reps. Henry Cuellar (D-TX) and Tony Gonzales (D-TX). [Axios](#) (4/22, 1.26M) also reports.

WPost Slams Administration's "Disingenuous Explanations" On Refugee Admissions.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M) editorializes under the headline "The White House Is Creating A Smokescreen For Why It Hasn't Raised Refugee Admissions" that "the claim at the heart of the administration's rationale, that refugees are being admitted at a trickle because the government's resources are overstretched, is false." The Post says the "disingenuous explanations mask what looks like political faintheartedness – a fear that Republicans will use immigration generally as a cudgel against the president."

Biden Will Lay Out Childcare And Education Plan In Address To Congress.

[The Hill](#) (4/22, Chalfant, 5.69M) reports the White House said Thursday that President Biden "will use his address to a joint session of Congress next week to lay out his next legislative proposal focusing on child care and education," as well as "to call for police reform and expanding access to health care." White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki "noted that the speech is still being finalized and will not touch on all of his policy priorities."

Tim Scott To Deliver Republican Response. The [AP](#) (4/22) reports Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC), "considered a potential 2024 presidential candidate," will deliver the Republican response. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, 20.6M) says Senate Minority Leader McConnell and House Minority Leader McCarthy selected Scott "at a time when Republicans are seeking to expand their appeal to nonwhite groups that have traditionally voted Democratic." [USA Today](#) (4/22, Bailey, 12.7M) says "the only African American Republican in the Senate" is "seen by many as a rising star in Washington." The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Sotomayor, 10.52M) and [Axios](#) (4/22, Treene, 1.26M) also report.

Harris Breaking Senate Ties At Faster Pace Than Any Other Vice President.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M) reports Vice President Harris on Wednesday "cast her fourth tiebreaking vote" in the Senate, which "a faster pace than any prior vice president." The Post says if Harris "maintains this rate, which she almost certainly won't," she "will have broken 32 ties by the end of the 117th Congress. That would be the most such vice-presidential tiebreaking votes in U.S. history, passing John C. Calhoun's 31."

HUD Withdraws Trump-Era Rule Restricting Transgender People's Access To Homeless Shelters.

The [AP](#) (4/22, Khalil) reports HUD "is withdrawing a Trump-era policy that would have allowed taxpayer-funded homeless shelters to deny access to transgender people." HUD Secretary Fudge said, "Access to safe, stable housing – and shelter – is a basic necessity. ... Unfortunately, transgender and gender-nonconforming people report more instances of housing instability and homelessness than cisgender people. Today, we are taking a critical step in affirming HUD's commitment that no person be denied access to housing or other critical services because of their gender identity." The AP says the action is "partially symbolic; the proposed policy never truly took hold on the ground and was still being hotly debated last fall when former President Trump lost his bid for reelection."

Nonetheless, the [New York Times](#) (4/22, 20.6M) calls it "a stark change in policy at the housing department, which said under the Trump administration last year that the rule would allow shelters to base admissions on 'biological sex,' adding that the rule change would accommodate the 'religious beliefs of shelter providers.'" [The Hill](#) (4/22, 5.69M) reports a HUD statement "blasted the Trump administration's rule." The statement said the rule would have allowed for "HUD- sanctioned, federally funded discrimination against transgender people, who

face disproportionately high rates of homelessness and extreme risk in unsheltered homelessness.”

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Jan, 10.52M) says this is “the latest reversal by the Biden administration of yet another Trump attempt to roll back civil rights protections.” It comes “more than two months after HUD expanded fair housing protections for LGBTQ people by committing to investigate complaints of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.” [Politico](#) (4/22, 6.73M) provides similar coverage.

House Passes DC Statehood Measure On Party-Line Vote.

The [AP](#) (4/22, Khalil) reports, “A decades-long movement to reshape the American political map took a further step Thursday” as the House [voted 216-208](#) “along strict party lines” to make the District of Columbia a state. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Cochrane, 20.6M) reports Democrats “moved to use their congressional majority to accomplish a long-held goal that has become a central plank in the party’s push to expand voting rights and address racial inequity.” The legislation “would establish a 51st state called Washington, Douglass Commonwealth – in honor of Frederick Douglass, the Black emancipation and civil rights leader – while leaving the National Mall, Capitol Hill, the White House and some other federal property under congressional control.”

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Flynn, 10.52M) reports that the bill, “symbolically titled H.R. 51, now heads to the Senate, where proponents hope to break new ground – including a first-ever hearing in that chamber.” However, the Post says “the political odds remain formidable, with the Senate filibuster requiring the support of 60 senators to advance legislation. Republicans, who hold 50 seats, have branded the bill as a Democratic power grab because it would create two Senate seats for the deep-blue city.”

[Roll Call](#) (4/22, 130K) reports, “While the Senate bill already has 44 co-sponsors, it would require bipartisan support to overcome the 60-vote threshold. And even some Senate Democrats have yet to say whether they would support it.” The [New York Daily News](#) (4/22, Sommerfeldt, 2.51M) reports Senate Minority Leader McConnell “has made clear he will direct his caucus to strongly oppose any D.C. statehood effort.”

[USA Today](#) (4/22, Behrmann, 12.7M) reports the bill, introduced by Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), “passed the House in the last Congress, though it was not given a vote in the then-Republican-majority Senate.” The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (4/22, 1.46M) reports, “Contending that Congress lacks the authority to change D.C.’s status is a frequent point of attack against the proposal – even though every state other than the original 13 was admitted to the union via congressional vote. Statehood opponents say D.C. is a special case that requires special steps.”

[The Hill](#) (4/22, 5.69M) reports Sen. Roger Marshall (R-KS) introduced a bill Thursday “to make Washington, D.C., part of the state of Maryland” rather than its own state. The Hill says Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT) and “many [other] Republicans...have suggested that D.C. should become a part of Maryland.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Collins, Subscription Publication, 8.41M), [Axios](#) (4/22, 1.26M), and the [CNN](#) (4/22, Foran, 89.21M) and [Fox News](#) (4/22, 23.99M) websites also report.

Barrett Asked To Recuse In Case Involving Nonprofit Linked To Group That Pushed Her Confirmation.

[NPR](#) (4/22, Totenberg, 3.69M) reports on its website that Democrats on the House and Senate Judiciary committees are asking Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett “to recuse herself from participating in a case involving a conservative nonprofit with ties to a group that gave at least \$1 million to fund a ‘national campaign’ to win Senate confirmation of her Supreme Court nomination.” During her confirmation hearing, Barrett “refused to answer questions about whether she would recuse in the case.” In a letter to Barrett, the Democrats cite “both statutory

provisions of federal law governing judicial ethics and constitutional law that the lawmakers contend require Barrett either to recuse herself or explain why she is not doing so.”

IG Report: Trump Administration Obstructed Investigation Into Delays Of Hurricane Aid For Puerto Rico.

Citing a report from the HUD Inspector General, the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Jan, Rein, 10.52M) reports that the Trump Administration “put up bureaucratic obstacles that stalled approximately \$20 billion in hurricane relief for Puerto Rico and then obstructed an investigation into the holdup.” Congress requested an investigation into the delays but, according to the report, former HUD Secretary Ben Carson and another former HUD official “declined to be interviewed by investigators.” In addition, “several former senior administration officials in the Office of Management and Budget refused to provide requested information about decision-making related to the Puerto Rico relief funds.”

SCOTUS Cuts FTC’s Ability To Seek Monetary Awards For Consumers.

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports the Supreme Court on Thursday “cut back the Federal Trade Commission’s authority to recover ill-gotten gains, overturning a nearly \$1.3 billion award against a professional race car driver who was convicted of cheating consumers through his payday loan businesses.” The unanimous ruling removes what the FTC has called “one of its most important and effective enforcement tools.” In a ruling [Bloomberg](#) (4/22, Stohr, McLaughlin, 3.57M) calls “a triumph for business trade groups,” the justices “said the FTC can’t seek consumer redress when it invokes a provision that lets the agency go straight to federal court to try to stop an alleged fraud.” The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Barnes, Lerman, 10.52M) reports Justice Stephen Breyer “wrote for a united court that federal law did not authorize the aggressive practices the commission had employed on consumers’ behalf for the past decade or so.”

[Politico](#) (4/22, 6.73M) reports Acting FTC Chair Slaughter “slammed the ruling, saying it deprived the FTC of its strongest tool to help consumers.” Slaughter said, “The Supreme Court ruled in favor of scam artists and dishonest corporations, leaving average Americans to pay for illegal behavior. ... We urge Congress to act swiftly to restore and strengthen the powers of the agency so we can make wronged consumers whole.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Kendall, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides similar coverage.

Biden To Nominate Spinrad To Head NOAA.

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Flavelle, 20.6M) and the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Samenow, Eilperin, 10.52M) report that President Biden will nominate Oregon State University professor of oceanography Rick Spinrad to head the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The Times says then-President Donald Trump “publicly sparred with the agency’s scientists and was unable to get any of his nominees to lead it confirmed by the Senate. NOAA has been without a Senate-confirmed leader for the longest period since it was created in 1970.”

Ties To Epstein Slow Science Office Nominee’s Confirmation Path.

[Politico](#) (4/22, Thompson, Meyer, LeVine, 6.73M) reports that President Biden’s nomination of Eric Lander to be director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, now a Cabinet-level post, has been delayed in part because of Senate Commerce Chair Maria Cantwell’s “concerns about meetings Lander and his colleagues had with Jeffrey Epstein, the late financier who was charged with sex trafficking in 2019 before his apparent suicide.” Lander met with Epstein in 2012, “four years after Epstein pleaded guilty to solicitation of prostitution involving an underage girl.”

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India Posts Highest Daily New Case Total.

[Reuters](#) (4/22, Miglani, Arora, Pal, Ravikumar) reports that on Thursday, India "recorded the world's highest daily tally of 314,835 COVID-19 infections...as a second wave of the pandemic raised new fears about the ability of crumbling health services to cope." According to Reuters, "Health officials across northern and western India, including the capital, New Delhi, said they were in crisis, with most hospitals full and running out of oxygen. Some doctors advised patients to stay at home, while a crematorium in the eastern city of Muzaffarpur said it was being overwhelmed with bodies, and grieving families had to wait their turn. A crematorium east of Delhi built funeral pyres in its parking lot."

According to the [New York Times](#) (4/22, Bengali, 20.6M), "On Thursday, the Indian government recorded 2,104 deaths, and an average of more than 1,600 people have died of the virus every day for the past week. That is less than the tolls at the worst points of the pandemic in the United States or Brazil, but it is a steep increase from just two months ago, when fewer than 100 people in India were dying daily." [NBC Nightly News](#)^{vi} (4/22, story 2, 0:15, Holt, 4.83M) reported that only 9% of India's population "has received a vaccine dose" thus far.

The [AP](#) (4/22, Sharma) reports that the new record raises "India's total past 15.9 million cases since the pandemic began," while India's Health Ministry said the country's overall death toll has risen to 184,657. Indian Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said that oxygen "demand and supply is being monitored round the clock" and "said in a tweet that...the government has increased the quota of oxygen for the seven worst-hit states." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, A1, Li, Agarwal, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that an Indian Health Ministry official said oxygen demand has reached 60% of the country's total daily production and is predicted to continue increasing.

[Bloomberg](#) (4/22, Trivedi, Sen, 3.57M) reports that the influx "at crematoriums and burial grounds across India are sparking concerns that the death toll from a ferocious new Covid-19 wave may be much higher than official records." Bloomberg goes on to report that "deaths in India have always been counted poorly," but "news reports from across India suggest that a combination of poor testing and a health system that is inundated by the crush of those sickened by the virus has meant that counting Covid deaths accurately remains a struggle even a year into the health crisis."

EU Reportedly Set To Sue AstraZeneca Over Vaccine Shortfall.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Johnson, 10.52M) reports that the European Union is "set to take legal action against Anglo-Swedish drugmaker AstraZeneca for failing to supply the vast majority of vaccine doses it was contracted to deliver." The Post says it was reported on Wednesday "that the matter was raised at a meeting of ambassadors, during which the majority said they would support taking legal action against AstraZeneca," and that the European Commission "was drawing up plans to sue the company."

South Africa To Resume Use Of J&J Vaccines.

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Goldbaum, 20.6M) reports that South African officials said the country plans to resume use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine next week, "offering some relief to the country that has suffered a series of blows to its vaccination efforts in recent months." The country last week "suspending an early-access" program after the US temporarily paused use of the vaccine. South Africa gives "the second green light this week for Johnson & Johnson" after the European Union on Tuesday "also recommended resuming the rollout."

Russian Vaccine Developer Signs Deals To Produce 40M Vaccine Doses Annually In Egypt.

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports that "developers of the Russian COVID-19 vaccine say they signed a deal with a leading Egyptian pharmaceutical company to manufacture more than 40 million doses

annually in Cairo." According to the AP, the Russian Direct Investment Fund, "along with Egypt's Minapharm and its Berlin-based subsidiary, issued a joint press release saying the technology transfer will begin immediately. It expects the roll out of the Sputnik V vaccine in the third quarter of 2021."

US Sanctions Exacerbate Pandemic In Iran.

The [AP](#) (4/22, Karimi, Batrawy) reports that "as Iran faces what looks like its worst wave of the coronavirus pandemic yet, Tehran commuters still pour into its subway system and buses each working day, even as images of the gasping ill are repeatedly shown on state television every night." The AP adds that in Iran, "which faces crushing U.S. sanctions, many struggle to earn enough to feed their families. Economic pressure, coupled with the growing uncertainty over when vaccines will be widely available in the Islamic Republic, have many simply giving up on social distancing, considering it an unaffordable luxury," which "has public health officials worried the worst of the pandemic still may be yet to come."

German Officials Set To Impose Nationwide Lockdowns.

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Schuetze, Bengali, Stevis-Gridneff, 20.6M) reports that on Thursday, German state lawmakers "approved a new version of a law...boosting the federal government's power to enforce uniform coronavirus lockdown rules." The Times says "new restrictions are expected in most districts soon after the president signs the bill into law, which could be as early as Thursday afternoon." According to the Times, "The law, which Chancellor Angela Merkel's cabinet passed last week, is a response to a disjointed virus response by state governments, which previously had the ultimate say in carrying out restrictions."

WHO Director General Urges Wealthy Countries To Share Doses.

In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (4/22, 20.6M), WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus writes that "of the more than 890 million vaccine doses that have been administered globally, more than 81 percent have been given in high- and upper-middle-income countries. Low-income countries have received just 0.3 percent." Tedros says Covax "was designed to share the huge inherent risks of vaccine development, and to offer a mechanism for pooled procurement and equitable rollout." Tedros calls on "the countries and companies that control the global supply to share financially, to share their doses with Covax immediately and to share their know-how to urgently and massively scale up the production and equitable distribution of vaccines."

Rogin: China Leveraging Vaccines For Influence In Latin America.

Josh Rogin writes in the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Rogin, 10.52M) that China is "using vaccine supplies to pressure governments across the Western Hemisphere," and the Biden Administration "ignores China's pernicious vaccine diplomacy in our neighborhood at the peril of the safety and security of the entire region." At the beginning of the pandemic, China "dangled medical equipment over the heads of governments in exchange for concessions or as punishment for transgressions." Now, "Beijing is using vaccines as leverage around the world – but especially in Latin America."

NYTimes Analysis: Taliban Poised To Regain Control Of Afghanistan As US Exits.

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Zucchini, 20.6M) says President Biden has "conceded that after nearly 20 years of war, America's longest on foreign soil, it was clear that the U.S. military could not transform Afghanistan into a modern, stable democracy." The Times adds, "Because of their strong battlefield position and the imminent U.S. troop withdrawal, the Taliban have maintained the upper hand in talks with the Afghan government." According to the Times, a "classified intelligence assessment presented to the Biden administration this spring said Afghanistan could fall largely under Taliban control within two to three years after the departure

of international forces. ... 'The Taliban is confident it can achieve military victory,' the threat assessment concluded."

McKenzie Warns Afghan Military Will Collapse Without US Help. The [AP](#) (4/22) reports CENTCOM Commander Gen. Frank McKenzie told the House Armed Services Committee on Thursday that the Afghan military "'will certainly collapse' without some continued American support once all U.S. troops are withdrawn." He also "said that as the U.S. pulls out all forces, 'my concern is the Afghans' ability to hold ground' and whether they will be able to continue to maintain and fly their aircraft without U.S. aid and financial support."

US Increasingly Concerned About Taiwan's Security.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Gale, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) reports that growing Chinese military activity off the border of Taiwan is leading the US to grow concerned about Taiwan's ability to deter a potential Chinese invasion. While China has not given any indication of a planned assault, the latest takeover of Hong Kong shows that China is interested in unifying its independent provinces. Yet, it remains unclear if the US would go to war with China in the event of an attack.

Hong Kong Court Convicts Journalist Who Probed Police Misconduct. The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Yu, Mahtani, 10.52M) reports, "An award-winning Hong Kong journalist was found guilty of a crime Thursday for using a public database to expose police failings, the first time a member of the news media has faced prosecution in the Chinese territory for an act of reporting." The Post says "the verdict against 37-year-old Choy Yuk-ling...highlights the deterioration of media freedoms in Hong Kong, supposedly protected under the law, as China remodels the city after imposing a draconian national security law."

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Ramzy, May, 20.6M) says, "As Beijing moves to stamp out dissent in the city, the news media is under direct assault," and "traditional pressure tactics, such as advertising boycotts, have been eclipsed by the sort of bare-knuckles campaign that could leave prominent journalists silenced and their outlets transformed or closed."

Bunch: Hollywood Should Turn Focus On Chinese Abuse Of Uyghurs. Sonny Bunch writes in the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M) that winners at this weekend's Oscars ceremony "should take up an issue that would alienate neither the left nor the right, and speak truth to their industry's own failings: the striking abuse of the minority Uyghur population by the Chinese government." Bunch argues, "What China is doing to its Uyghur population is a story that needs to be told. And telling stories is what Hollywood does best - when they're not too scared to spin a tale."

WPost Says US Must Cripple Burma's Economy To Save Its People.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M) argues that the US must quickly move to save the Burmese people, who "have been making painful sacrifices to support what's called the Civil Disobedience Movement," by sanctioning the country's natural resources. The Post criticizes the world for its limited response as well, and it focuses on Chevron and Total, which "have resisted pressure, including from more than 400 Myanmar civil society organizations, to cease authorizing payments to" Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise.

Ignatius: US Recognition Of Armenian Genocide Will Force A "Reckoning."

David Ignatius writes in the [Washington Post](#) (4/22, 10.52M), "Armenians around the world surely will rejoice" in President Biden's expected announcement this weekend formally recognizing the Armenian genocide of 1915. But Ignatius adds, "I hope they will also think...about how to build bridges now to help Turkey escape from the horrors of its history." Justice, Ignatius writes, "is often denied and suppressed." But, "there must be an eventual reckoning with the past...and then, hopefully, we move into the future, sharing the blessing of truth and justice with others."

Russian Patrol Planes Spotted Harassing Fishermen Near Alaska.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (4/22, story 9, 2:20, Holt, 4.83M) reported that US fishing boats were "harassed repeatedly by a low-flying Russian military aircraft" near the Bering Sea. Other fishing boats have "reported Russian naval ships, even a missile launch like this one, on exercises in the high north, well within US fishing territory off the Alaskan coast." While the Coast Guard "is always at the ready to rescue in the harshest conditions," its sailors are too far from remote fishing villages to respond to any Russian aggression in a rapid manner.

Russian Troops To Pull Back From Ukrainian Border Region.

[Reuters](#) (4/22) reports that the Russian military "ordered its top army command to begin returning troops to their permanent bases inside the country from Friday, saying it had successfully completed a 'snap inspection' of forces in its south and west, near the border with Ukraine." According to Reuters, "The announcement prompted the rouble to rise sharply, following weeks of tensions with the West over a major Russian military buildup near Ukraine." Reuters adds, "It was unclear if the rebasing order covered all of the forces involved in that buildup. The EU's top diplomat said on Monday that Russia has massed some 100,000 troops near the border."

The [AP](#) (4/22, Isachenkov) reports that Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu "ordered troops back to their permanent bases following massive drills...but said that they should leave their weapons behind in western Russia for another exercise later this year." Nevertheless, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky "welcomed the Russian pullback." According to the AP, "After watching the drills...Shoigu declared the maneuvers in Crimea and wide swathes of western Russia over and ordered the military to pull the troops that took part in them back to their permanent bases. 'I consider the goals of the snap check of readiness fulfilled,' Shoigu said." [Reuters](#) (4/22) quotes Zelensky as saying, "The reduction of troops on our border proportionally reduces tension. Ukraine is always vigilant, yet welcomes any steps to decrease the military presence & deescalate the situation in Donbass."

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Kramer, 20.6M) reports that the pullback order came a day after President Vladimir Putin, in his annual state of the nation address, "warned against crossing a Russian 'red line' with additional pressure on Moscow." According to the Times, "That mobilization had increasingly worried the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, European capitals and Washington, and was seen as an early foreign policy challenge for the Biden administration."

[Axios](#) (4/22, Basu, Lawler, 1.26M) reports that "as recently as early Thursday, Russia conducted military drills in Crimea that involved more than 60 ships, over 10,000 troops, around 200 aircraft and about 1,200 military vehicles, AP reports, citing the Russian defense ministry." According to Axios, "The immediate threat of a Russian invasion may be subsiding, but tens of thousands of troops remain within striking distance of Ukraine and there is no end in sight to the long-simmering conflict in the eastern Donbass region." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/22, Simmons, Kantchev, Subscription Publication, 8.41M) provides additional coverage.

Navalny's Own Doctors Urge Him To End Hunger Strike.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Khurshudyan, 10.52M) reports that "doctors for jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny appealed Thursday for him to end his more than three-week hunger strike after prison authorities allowed civilian physicians to examine him. In a letter from five physicians affiliated with Navalny, published by Russia's independent Mediazona news outlet, they said Navalny was examined at a civilian hospital Tuesday." According to the Post, Navalny "started his hunger strike three weeks ago as a demand to see independent specialists of his choosing at his expense."

Navalny Lauds Supporters For Giving Him "Pride And Hope." The [AP](#) (4/22, Litvinova) reports Navalny "said in an emotional message from behind bars Thursday that he felt 'pride and hope' after learning from his lawyer about the mass protests demanding his

freedom that swept Russia the previous night." He said in his message, "Here it is – the salvation of Russia. You. Those who came out. Those who didn't come out but supported it. Those who didn't support it publicly, but sympathized."

US Ambassador Leaves Russia.

[Reuters](#) (4/22) reports that on Thursday, the government of Russia said it hoped US Ambassador John Sullivan "would use his time usefully in Washington during consultations with members of Joe Biden's administration amid a diplomatic row with Moscow." Reuters says that on Tuesday, Sullivan "said...he would travel to the United States this week for consultations, days after the Kremlin suggested that Washington recall him amid a diplomatic crisis between the two countries. Sullivan left Russia on Thursday, TASS news agency reported, citing a source."

Czech Republic Expels Russian Diplomats Over Alleged Russian Role In 2014 Explosion. The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Goeij, Higgins, 20.6M) reports that the Czech Republic, which is "furious over what it said were Moscow's fingerprints on a military-style sabotage attack on a Czech weapons warehouse in 2014," has "ordered the expulsion of as many as 60 Russian diplomats." The decision "escalated not only a diplomatic crisis between Prague and Moscow but a wider showdown between Russia and NATO, of which the Czech Republic is a member."

Israeli Officials Will Reportedly Lobby Administration Against JCPOA Reactivation.

[Axios](#) (4/22, 1.26M) reports that an incoming Israeli delegation are expected to "stress their objection to a U.S. return to the 2015 nuclear deal and to refuse to discuss its contents." The delegation will "include national security adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat, Israel Defense Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Aviv Kochavi, military intelligence chief Tamir Hayman and Mossad director Yossi Cohen."

Iran Reduces Number Of Active Centrifuges. [Reuters](#) (4/22) reports that a new IAEA report says Iran "has reduced the number of centrifuges enriching uranium to up to 60% purity at an above-ground plant at Natanz to one cluster from two." The announcement "complicated the current indirect talks with the United States on rescuing its nuclear deal with major powers."

Israel Attacks Syrian Military Sites After Missile Fell Near Nuclear Facility.

The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Hendrix, Fahim, 10.52M) reports that a "missile launched from Syria flew into southern Israel early Thursday, triggering air raid sirens near a nuclear facility, according to the Israeli military, raising fears of an escalation in ongoing tensions among Israel, Syria and Iran." According to the Post, "The attack triggered Israel's air defense system, and explosions from the exchange were reportedly felt by several Israeli communities near" the Shimon Peres Negev Nuclear Research Center, which is "widely believed to be the seat of Israel's unacknowledged nuclear weapons program."

Israeli Police Clash With Palestinians, Far-Right Israelis Outside Jerusalem.

The [AP](#) (4/22) reports that Israeli police "clashed with Palestinians outside Jerusalem's Old City on Thursday and manned barricades to prevent hundreds of Jewish extremists from marching to the area." Police "have clashed with Palestinians on a nightly basis since the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan last week," and the far-right Lahava group "led a march of hundreds of protesters chanting 'Arabs get out!' toward Damascus Gate" after a video "circulated on TikTok showing Palestinians slapping religious Jews at random."

Jordan Releases 16 Involved In Palace Controversy Involving King's Brother.

[Reuters](#) (4/22) reports that on Thursday, the government of Jordan "released...16 people linked to a rift in the royal family that rattled the country, but a member of the royal family and a

former adviser to the king remained in detention." According to Reuters, "Security sources said those released were mostly personal aides to former heir Prince Hamza, King Abdullah's half-brother, who had said in an April video he was banned from leaving his home and accused the country's rulers of corruption. ... With mediation by the royal family, Hamza had pledged allegiance to the king, days after the military ordered him to stop actions that it said undermined Jordan's security."

The [New York Times](#) (4/22, Sweis, Kingsley, 20.6M) reports former head of the Royal Jordanian court Bassem Awadallah and minor royal family member Sharif Hassan bin Zeid "remained in custody on Thursday night because of the severity of the charges against them." The [Washington Post](#) (4/22, Hendrix, 10.52M) reports that Jordanian authorities "said the releases stemmed from Abdullah's desire to show leniency during the Muslim holiday of Ramadan, 'the month of mercy and forgiveness.'"

Children Of Exiled Former Top Intelligence Official Remain Jailed In Saudi Arabia.

[Reuters](#) (4/22) reports that "the family of a former top Saudi intelligence official who is living in exile and locked in an international feud with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman say they have become pawns in the kingdom's efforts to bring the spy chief home." Reuters says a Saudi court "jailed two of Saad al-Jabri's adult children late last year for money laundering and conspiracy to escape the kingdom unlawfully, charges they deny." According to Reuters, Jabri was "a long-time aide to another royal, Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, whom MbS ousted as heir to the throne in a 2017 palace coup."

UNSC Issues Statement Over Ethiopia's Tigray Region.

[Reuters](#) (4/22) reports that the UN Security Council "expressed concern on Thursday about the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia's Tigray region, particularly abuse of women and girls, a week after the U.N. aid chief said sexual violence was being used as a weapon of war." It "was the first public statement by the 15-member council, which has been briefed five times privately on the conflict, since fighting between Ethiopia's federal government troops and Tigray's former ruling party began in November."

New Ruling Council Promises Democratic Elections In Chad.

[Reuters](#) (4/22) reports that foreign leaders "arrived in Chad on Thursday for the funeral of slain president Idriss Deby as France backed the new military leaders in the face of rebel threats to resume an offensive on the capital N'Djamena." New leader Mahamat Idriss Déby "has said the army will hold democratic elections in 18 months, but opposition leaders have condemned his takeover as a coup d'état and an army general said many officers were opposed to the transition plan."

THE BIG PICTURE

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

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[Supreme Court Cuts Federal Trade Commission Powers To Recover Ill-Gotten Gains](#)

[India Hits Global Record For Daily New Covid-19 Cases](#)

[Robinhood, Three Friends And The Fortune That Got Away](#)

[Soccer's Super League Made Plans For The Next 23 Years. It Failed In 48 Hours.](#)

[Company Talent Contests Are Back – With Trapeze Stunts And Gingerbread Skyscrapers](#)

New York Times:

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[Biden To Seek Tax On Richest To Aid Families](#)
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[Biden Faces Police Reform Challenge In Wake Of Chauvin Verdict](#)
[Wirecard Employees Removed Millions In Cash Using Shopping Bags](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Chauvin Alternate Juror; Wright Funeral; COVID Update; Biden-Climate Summit; Border Crisis-Climate Influence; Harris-Guatemala; Indonesia-Missing Submarine; Senate-Hate Crimes Bill; NYC-Subway Bomber; Weather Report; Mars Helicopter; The Secrets of the Whales.

CBS: COVID Update; Chauvin Alternate Juror; Wright Funeral; Boulder Shooter; Biden-Climate Summit; DC's Rising Rivers; Mars Helicopter; Sleep Study; Daughter Helps Dad Recover From COVID.

NBC: COVID Update; COVID-India; Wright Funeral; Chauvin Alternate Juror; Bryant Shooting; Senate-Hate Crimes Bill; Biden-Climate Summit; Climate Change-US Migration; Alaska-Russian Military; COVID-Child Vaccines; Paralyzed Doctor Connects With Patients.

Network TV At A Glance:

COVID Update – 10 minutes, 55 seconds
Chauvin Alternate Juror – 7 minutes, 25 seconds
Biden-Climate Summit – 6 minutes, 5 seconds
Wright Funeral – 5 minutes, 0 seconds

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

- President Biden — Delivers remarks and participates in the virtual Leaders Summit on Climate Session 5: The Economic Opportunities of Climate Action; participates in a virtual U.S. Department of Defense Senior Leaders Conference.
- Vice President Harris — Travels to Plymouth and Concord, NH; holds a listening session on the American Jobs Plan's investments in broadband at New Hampshire Electric Cooperative; tour of IBEW Local 490; delivers remarks on the American Jobs Plan's investments in workforce development and infrastructure.

US Senate:

- No schedule released.

US House:

- No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives

Cabinet Officers:

- Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff and Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland hold National Park Service event (virtual) – Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff and Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland will hold a virtual event to announce 16 new listings on the National Park Service’s National Underground Railroad Network (UGRR) to Freedom Program; *9:30 AM*
- Cabinet members and other administration officials participate in CNN town hall on ‘The Climate Crisis’ – ‘CNN Town Hall: The Climate Crisis’, with U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, White House National Climate Advisor Gina McCarthy, Environment Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan, and Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm answering video-submitted questions about Biden administration climate policy * Airs on CNN, CNN en Espanol, and CNN International, livestreamed on CNNgo, CNN.com, and CNN’s apps, and simulcast on SiriusXM; *10:00 AM*
- Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki and Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland; *11:30 AM*
- Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona participates in Cabinet Affairs Meeting; *1:00 PM*
- HUD Secretary Fudge discusses funding allocations related to homelessness assistance in the American Rescue Plan (virtual) – Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Marcia Fudge, Democratic Rep. Maxine Waters, Colorado Governor Jared Polis, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan, and San Francisco Mayor London Breed discuss funding allocations related to homelessness assistance in the American Rescue Plan, via press call; *2:00 PM*
- White House Council on Native American Affairs meeting (virtual) – First White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNAA) meeting of the Biden administration, convened by Council Chair Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and Domestic Policy Council Chair Susan Rice and held virtually
- President Biden hosts Leaders’ Climate Summit, day two (virtual) – Leaders’ Climate Summit continues, hosted virtually by President Joe Biden on Earth Day, to ‘underscore the urgency – and the economic benefits – of stronger climate action. 40 world leaders have been invited to participate in the summit, with President Biden encouraging them to use the event as an opportunity to outline how their countries will contribute to stronger climate ambition. Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, and U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Amb. John Kerry also participate.
- Secretary of State Blinken participates in C5+1 Ministerial – Secretary of State Anthony Blinken participates in C5+1 virtual Ministerial with the foreign ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, from the State Department
Location: State Department, Washington, DC

Visitors:

- No visitors scheduled.

General Events:

- Wilson Center discussion on climate change and the Arctic (virtual) – ‘Climate Change and The Arctic: Profound Disruption, Uncertain Impact’ Wilson Center webinar, with Canadian Member of Parliament James Peterson, former Michigan Governor James Blanchard, Government of Canada Department of National Defence Director General of Continental Defence Jonathon Quinn, Danish Embassy in the U.S. Defense Attache to the U.S. and Canada Rear Adm. Martin La Cour-Andersen, Saskatchewan First Nations Economic Development Network Board Member Heather Pirot, and Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services Assistant to the Public Health Director Kitty Gordon; *8:30 AM*
- Press Briefing by White House COVID-19 Response Team and public health officials; *11:00 AM*

- DoJ National Crime Victims' Rights Week awards ceremony (virtual) – Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime annual National Crime Victims' Service Awards Ceremony, honoring individuals and organizations for their 'outstanding service on behalf of crime victims', held during National Crime Victims' Rights Week; *3:00 PM*
- Jill Biden concludes two-day Navajo Nation visit – First Lady Jill Biden concludes two-day visit to the Navajo Nation in Window Rock, AZ, with agenda today including attending a listening session with students from across Navajo Nation, then visiting a vaccination site
Location: Window Rock, AZ

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