

## **FBI PUBLIC AFFAIRS – DIRECTOR’S AM NEWS BRIEFING**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2019 5:00 AM EDT**

**FBI Dive Team, Evidence Recovery Team Assist In California Dive Boat Investigation.** The [CBS Evening News](#) (9/4, story 6, 2:09, O'Donnell, 3.87M) reported 33 of 34 bodies have now been recovered following the California dive boat disaster off Santa Cruz Island. Many "were burned beyond recognition." CBS News said investigators interviewed the crew on Wednesday "and met with family members of the victims." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/4, story 5, 1:33, Muir, 6.31M) reported, "While families mourn, members of this tight-knit boating community are pleading for the public to wait for all the facts to come out." Investigators "aren't even sure if they can pull that wreckage out of the water."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (9/4, story 4, 1:26, Holt, 5.58M) reported investigators are working "to understand why all the passengers became trapped." The FBI's dive team was at the scene, "hoping to help pinpoint the cause of the fire that killed 34 people." The Conception, "sinking to the sea floor, may soon be brought to shore." After interviewing "the five surviving crew members, the Coast Guard and NTSB boarded The Vision, examining the layout of its sleeping quarters, similar to The Conception. Investigators finding it difficult to escape through the emergency hatch."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/4, 4.64M) reports on Wednesday morning, "about a dozen divers with the FBI gathered at Santa Barbara Harbor to search for the last victim." They will "join divers from other government agencies to comb the area where the Conception sank days earlier, said Santa Barbara County sheriff's Lt. Brian Olmstead." The Times adds that on Tuesday, "roughly a dozen agents with the FBI's Evidence Response Team also boarded the Vision to snap photographs of the vessel's interior, decks, staircases and entryways." They "pinned sheets of paper with block letters beside some parts of the boat – an 'A' next to a life preserver, a 'B' next to the door to the top deck – and took pictures from several angles." Tyler McCurdy, "supervisor of the FBI's Ventura office, said that the FBI's Evidence Response Team will gather evidence on behalf of the NTSB and the sheriff's office. He would not specify the type of evidence they are collecting."

In a slideshow of images highlighting the investigation, the [AP](#) (9/4) says members of the FBI's Evidence Response Team "set up a command post at the Santa Barbara Harbor to begin investigating evidence from the scuba boat Conception on Tuesday, Sept. 3, 2019, in Santa Barbara, Calif."

[KABC-TV](#) Los Angeles (9/4, 316K) reports, "As teams of federal, state and local officials delve into what exactly made a deadly fire break out on a diving boat off the coast of Santa Barbara, officials say determining the cause could take a year or more." The deadly fire, "which is being investigated with help from the FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, is being treated as an accident and there's nothing to suggest anything 'nefarious,' said Santa Barbara County Sheriff Lt. Erik Raney."

[KSBY-TV](#) San Luis Obispo, CA (9/4, 16K) reports that a "large presence from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) is now visible at the Santa Barbara Harbor." The agency's evidence response team and underwater search and evidence recovery team "are assisting the lead agency's handling the deadly Conception boat fire investigation."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/3, 4.64M) and [KEYT-TV](#) Santa Barbara, CA (9/4, Lehr, 3K) also report.

**New York Man, Alleged ISIS Sniper, Indicted For Aiding Terror Group, DOJ Says.** [Fox News](#) (9/4, Sorace, 27.59M) reports a 43-year-old man from Brooklyn, New York, "who allegedly became an ISIS sniper and then a high-ranking emir in the terror organization has been indicted for aiding the group in Syria, Department of Justice officials announced Wednesday." Ruslan Maratovich Asainov, "a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Kazakhstan, was charged with conspiracy to provide and providing material support to ISIS, including weapons training for recruits and advising the militant group, the statement said." Asainov, "also known as 'Suleiman Al-Amriki' and 'Suleiman Al-Kazakhi,' was transferred into FBI custody in July."

[Vice](#) (9/4, 2.11M) reports Asainov "was flown back to the United States by the FBI in July and is currently being held without bail. If convicted, he faces a maximum sentence of life in prison." He is "among many U.S. citizens to join ISIS. More than a dozen Americans of various backgrounds have joined the terrorist group, and some American women have moved to Syria to marry members of ISIS." One woman, "Samantha Elhassani, moved to Syria with her husband and ended up fleeing the group, only to be charged with providing material support to ISIS, aiding and abetting the group, and lying about her involvement to the FBI."

**Mattis Memoir Critical Of Obama White House, Biden On ISIS Strategy.** Becket Adams of the [Washington Examiner](#) (9/4, 448K) writes that ex-Defense Secretary James Mattis' memoir "Call Sign Chaos" offers "an awfully unflattering

glimpse into Obama-era foreign policy and the former president's strategy (or the lack thereof) for defeating" ISIS. Mattis says the Obama White House "roundly ignored his assessment that a sudden withdrawal from Iraq would produce disastrous results." He also writes of then-Vice President Joe Biden, "I found him an admirable and amiable man. But he was past the point where he was willing to entertain a 'good idea.' He didn't want to hear more; he wanted our forces out of Iraq. Whatever path led there fastest, he favored."

**Esper Says Taliban Negotiations "Ongoing," But Declines To Offer Specifics.** The [AP](#) (9/4, Burns) reports that Defense Secretary Esper, speaking to reporters ahead of his Thursday meeting with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in Stuttgart, "said...he's not ready to publicly discuss how a U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan would begin under a peace deal with the Taliban." Esper said, "Negotiations in some ways are still ongoing. ... I don't want to say anything that gets in front of that or upsets that process." Esper "declined to talk about specifics, such as the timing of an initial American troop pullout or, more broadly, his level of confidence that the Taliban would live up to their end of any peace agreement." [Reuters](#) (9/4, Ali) says "the distance that must still be covered before peace is achieved was underlined by a Taliban attack on a housing complex used by international organizations in the Afghan capital Kabul late on Monday that killed at least 16 people."

**Fleischer Troubled Comey Shared Information From Trump's Transition Briefing With FBI.** [Fox News](#) (9/4, 27.59M) contributor Ari Fleischer discusses IG Michael Horowitz's report, which says shortly after the presidential election James Comey fed details about then-President-elect Trump from a traditional transition briefing to the bureau's Russia probe team. Ari Fleischer "said he was troubled by the information that Comey shared info from Trump's transition briefing with FBI's Russia team."

**Craig Acquitted Of Lying To Federal Authorities.** A federal jury on Wednesday acquitted former Obama White House counsel Greg Craig of giving federal authorities false information about his work on behalf of the government of Ukraine. [USA Today](#) (9/4, Phillips, 10.31M) reports that the case "was one of a handful of investigations that grew out of special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election." Craig's acquittal came "after more than two weeks of testimony followed by less than five hours of deliberation." While prosecutors said Craig did work for the government of former Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich "and sought to conceal the extent of his dealings with Ukrainians to protect his reputation," defense attorneys "portrayed Craig as a man of integrity, ensnared in a web of dirty tricks spun by individuals who sought to lie on behalf of the Ukrainian government."

[Politico](#) (9/4, Gerstein, 4.29M) reports nine men and three women "took less than five hours to reach a verdict following a three-week trial in federal court in Washington, where witnesses detailed the activities of Craig and others promoting a report he prepared in 2012 on the prosecution of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/4, Tau, Naranjo, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that Craig's acquittal removes a stain on his distinguished career in law and politics, and represents a blow to the Justice Department, which intended to make an example of Craig as it boosted its enforcement of the laws governing work on behalf of foreign governments. [Reuters](#) (9/4, Sullivan) reports Craig said in a statement, "I want to thank the jury for doing justice. I'm very fortunate to have the support of a loving family and many loyal friends who were steadfast during this ordeal."

The [New York Times](#) (9/4, Lafraniere, 18.61M) says the verdict "was a blow to the Justice Department's effort to more aggressively crack down on foreign influence in Washington," and the [Washington Times](#) (9/4, Mordock, 492K) says it was "vindication for the top Washington lawyer who advised presidents Clinton and Obama, building a sterling reputation over 50 years as an attorney." The [AP](#) (9/4) reports the quick verdict "was a setback to the Justice Department's crackdown on lobbyists who do unregistered work for foreign governments and came as prosecutors have been ramping up enforcement of a decades-old law meant to police foreign influence and promote transparency." US officials "hoped a conviction would demonstrate an aggressive approach to lobbyists who fail to register their foreign work or who give false information to the Justice Department to avoid identifying themselves as a foreign agent, as Craig was alleged to have done."

**McCabe To Headline Pennsylvania Democrats' Fundraiser.** The [Inquirer \(PA\)](#) (9/4, Terruso, 347K) reports Andrew McCabe "will headline a fund-raiser for Pennsylvania Democrats this month." His keynote address for the Lancaster County Democrats "is teased on the group's website as 'sure to be one of the most interesting events we've ever had!'" McCabe is slated to appear September 21 at the Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square, "where he will discuss the firing of FBI Director James Comey and its fallout, Russian meddling in the 2016 election, and his 'one-on-one interactions with Donald Trump,' according to the event description."

## **Senate Committee Still Waiting For FBI Responses To Questions On Trump Tower Briefing.**

[Fox News](#) (9/4, Pappas, 27.59M) reports it's been more than a year" since a top Republican senator reconstructing the Russia probe demanded answers from the FBI about a post-election briefing for then-President-elect Trump on the unverified dossier of allegations against him – but the bureau has not yet responded." A congressional source "confirmed to Fox News that more than 15 months later, the FBI has still not responded to a May 21, 2018 letter from Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson, the chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, asking questions about FBI senior executives, their communications and their actions at the January 6, 2017 Trump Tower briefing on the dossier."

## **DOJ Facing Growing Pressure To Release Surveillance Documents.**

[Fox News](#) (9/4, Re, 27.59M) reports the Justice Department is confronting a new "wave of pressure, in court and on Capitol Hill, to release key documents pertaining to the origins of the FBI's Russia meddling probe." With a batch of internal and inspector general reviews already "beginning to shed more light on the bureau's handling of that politically explosive case, the push for documents marks another avenue for those seeking a full accounting of the investigation." Most recently, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham (R-SC) "released a letter to Attorney General Bill Barr seeking the declassification of numerous files related to evidence also sought by former national security adviser Michael Flynn's attorneys." In his letter, Graham "detailed a wide range of documents he'd like to see declassified including FISA warrants obtained concerning anyone associated with the Trump campaign, as well as 'all documents the inspector general identifies as appropriate for declassification as much as possible, without harming national security.'"

## **Former Roger Stone Aide Will Testify At Trial.**

[Politico](#) (9/4, Bertrand, 4.29M) reports Andrew Miller, a longtime aide to Roger Stone, "who spent a year fighting a subpoena from special counsel Robert Mueller, has now been subpoenaed to testify at his former boss' trial." Miller received a subpoena in early August "to appear as a government witness, said Miller's lawyer, Paul Kamenar." Kamenar "said he was 'puzzled' as to why prosecutors wanted Miller as a government witness – he said earlier this year that he did not think Miller would be called – but confirmed that Miller plans to comply." The result is that one of Stone's closest aides "will be testifying about him at his trial in November for lying to Congress about his dealings with WikiLeaks during the 2016 election."

## **Cohen: What We Still Do Not Know About Russiagate.**

In a commentary in the [Nation](#) (9/4, 431K) based on his weekly discussion with the host of the John Batchelor Show, professor Stephen Cohen writes, "Not surprisingly, former special counsel Robert Mueller found no evidence of "collusion" between the Trump campaign and the Kremlin. No credible evidence has been produced that Russia's "interference" affected the result of the 2016 presidential election in any significant way." Cohen asserts, "But the question remains: Why did Western intelligence agencies, prompted, it seems clear, by US ones, seek to undermine Trump's presidential campaign?" Cohen argues, "As I have long suggested, John Brennan and James Clapper, head of the CIA and Office of National Intelligence under Obama respectively, are the more likely culprits. The FBI is no longer the fearsome organization it once was and thus not hard to investigate, as Barr has already shown. The others...are a different matter, and Barr has suggested they are resisting."

## **Nunes Files Racketeering Lawsuit Against Fusion GPS.**

The [Daily Caller](#) (9/4, 716K) reports Rep. Devin Nunes (R-CA) "is suing Fusion GPS, the firm behind the Steele dossier, and a liberal watchdog group." Nunes "accuses Fusion GPS and Campaign for Accountability of working together to derail his investigation into Fusion GPS." Campaign for Accountability "paid Fusion GPS nearly \$140,000 for research last year." The group also filed "three ethics complaints against Nunes, including one that accused him of leaking information about Fusion GPS." Campaign for Accountability official Daniel Stevens "has denied hiring Fusion GPS to investigate Nunes." Nunes filed a federal lawsuit Wednesday "against opposition research firm Fusion GPS and the Campaign for Accountability, accusing the two of smearing him over his investigation into Fusion GPS's and the Steele dossier."

## **Opinion: Overstock CEO's Wild Maria Butina Story Raises Serious Questions.**

In a commentary in [Rolling Stone](#) (9/4, 12.8M), contributing editor Matt Taibbi writes, "Former Overstock.com CEO Patrick Byrne came to me months ago with a wild, difficult tale. I told him any story would have to come with a caveat. 'There's not going to be any way to tell this,' I told him, 'without explaining to readers you're a different sort of dude.' The tale is now out, and Byrne..is taking a beating in the press. It's unfortunate, and the import of his story is going unnoticed because reporters are focusing instead on Byrne's eccentricities." Taibbi contends, "The story seems too outlandish to be real. However, parts can be confirmed." Taibbi concludes,

"Byrne has been right about enough things in the past that he deserves a hearing. The FBI should at least have to explain exactly what was its relationship with Byrne."

**Over 1,000 People Linked To Jeffrey Epstein In Address Book.** The [New York Times](#) (9/4, Harris, 18.61M) reports, "A trove of sealed court records names hundreds of people who are connected to Jeffrey Epstein, and one unnamed man has already asked a judge not to release his name or the names of others accused in the documents of wrongdoing, arguing it could unfairly damage their reputations." Jeffrey S. Pagliuca, an attorney involved in the litigation, "said the people are named in 29 depositions, voluminous investigatory records and an 'address book' that includes over 1,000 names." Judge Loretta A. Preska "said she wanted to release the documents quickly and asked the lawyers to provide briefs in the coming weeks on which documents the public had the strongest right to see."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/4, story 9, 0:27, Muir, 6.31M) reported the judge has "ordered an expedited private review of sealed files from an earlier civil lawsuit that involves Ghislaine Maxwell." ABC added that "the judge said any unnamed people will be notified and will be allowed to object."

**Gun Law Loophole Allowed Texas Mass Shooting Suspect To Purchase AR-type Assault Rifle.**

[ABC News](#) (9/4, Gutman, Hutchinson, 2.97M) reports, "The suspect who allegedly gunned down seven people and injured more than 20 in a Labor Day weekend massacre in western Texas appeared to have exploited a loophole in federal gun regulations to obtain the AR-type assault rifle he used in the rampage, multiple law enforcement sources told ABC News on Tuesday." The suspect was able to obtain "the weapon through a private sale despite being considered a 'prohibited person' barred by law from possessing a firearm because he had been diagnosed by a clinician as mentally ill, federal and local law enforcement sources said." Christopher Combs, special agent in charge of the FBI field office in San Antonio, "described the calls Ator made to law enforcement as the 'rambling and incoherent' gibberish of someone in 'great mental distress.'" The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/4, Frosch, Gurman, Elinson, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports an FBI spokeswoman referred questions to the ATF.

**Online Forums Catalyzing Mass Shootings.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/4, Wells, Lovett, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that online platforms, where anonymous users spout extremist ideologies and hate speech, are inciting violence and spurring mass shootings. Mass shooters are celebrated on forums like 8chan, and lawmakers are law-enforcement officials are trying to figure out how to counter the calls to violence posted online.

**Emails In College Admissions Scandal Show School Used "VIP" Labels.** [NBC Nightly News](#)

(9/4, story 8, 1:40, Holt, 5.58M) reported that in "a new twist in the college admissions scandal," emails are said "to show the big role donations from parents played in admissions for the school at the center of the uproar." NBC's Joe Fryer added that "a court filing reveals emails between" officials at the University of Southern California show "how they tracked applicants and spreadsheets sent by an athletics department official." Some applicants were "labeled VIP, with comments like donor, potential donor, one mill pledge, given two million already, \$15 mil, and dad well-known ortho surgeon."

[Newsweek](#) (9/4, 1.53M) reports "Operation Varsity Blues," also "dubbed the college admission scandal, was an FBI operation that resulted in the arrest of dozens of individuals." Among the parents "accused of engaging in fraudulent measures to aid their children's admission to college were actress Lori Loughlin and businessman Robert Zangrillo."

**Colorado Man Accused Of Making Threats To Kidnap, Murder Women.** [KKCO-TV](#) Grand

Junction, CO (9/4, Corey) reports Daniel Alfred Gallegos, 33, of Mesa County, "is scheduled for court Thursday at 4 p.m. for a detention hearing at the Federal Courthouse in Grand Junction after being accused of making threats to kidnap and murder women." Gallegos is "accused of violating Title 18, U.S.C., Section 875(c), which pertains to Interstate Communications containing threats to kidnap or injure." An FBI agent "obtained a sickening letter on August 23, 2019," which stated, "Every time I see young, beautiful females, ages 15-30, I so badly wish to lure them to my van, take them to a remote location, and pleasure them." The letter "goes on, indicating what he would do to the girls. The letters contain such vulgarity and sickening language that we chose not to include them in this document."

**Schools Contact FBI After Website Run By White Nationalist Uses Jewish Students Pics.** The [Daily](#)

[Beast](#) (9/4, 1.39M) reports the FBI has been contacted "by officials at two universities after photos of hundreds of Jewish students and staff appeared on a website run by a white nationalist who openly advocates for 'exterminating Jews and those who serve them.'" Journalists from student newspapers "at Brandeis University near Boston and Yeshiva University in New York City sounded the alarm in recent days after discovering the cache of photos on the anti-Semitic and racist message board VNN

Forum." The forum "and its namesake Vanguard News Network are run by Alex Linder, a longtime presence in the white nationalist movement who routinely endorses the killing of Jewish people." A person "familiar with the matter told The Daily Beast the FBI field office in New York received a complaint from Yeshiva University and passed on the information to its counterparts in St. Louis, which would have jurisdiction over any criminal investigation involving Linder, a Missouri resident." A spokeswoman "with the FBI in St. Louis declined to comment, adding the bureau would not confirm or deny if it is investigating Linder or VNN."

**Alleged Slate Belt Bomb Owner Faces New Charges.** The [Lehigh Valley \(PA\) Express Times](#) (9/4, 257K) reports a 44-year-old Slate Belt man "faces more federal charges as an investigation into several explosions earlier this year continues, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania." Jason Muzzicato, of Washington Township, "was taken into federal custody by the FBI as a June 7 search" of his home and business "turned up 10 guns – including more than one AR-15 rifle and semi-automatic pistols – and seven improvised explosive devices, authorities have said." A new indictment "charges Muzzicato with possession of firearms by an unlawful user of a controlled substance. Muzzicato tested positive for methamphetamine and reportedly told authorities he was a regular user for three years, the U.S. attorney's office said in a news release."

**New Jersey Man Accused Of Possessing Destructive Device Faces New Charges.** [Tap Into New Jersey](#) (9/3) reports Middlesex County Acting Prosecutor Christopher L.C. Kuberiet and South Plainfield Police Chief James Parker "announced today that additional charges have been brought forth against 55-year-old borough resident Thomas G. Kaiser." On September 2, Kaiser "was arrested and charged with possession of a destructive device for an unlawful purpose." The new charges against Kaiser "include third-degree possession of prohibited devices and fourth-degree tampering with evidence." The FBI is assisting in the investigation.

**Heroin, Fentanyl Dealers Used Jail Guard's Home To Stash Drugs, Authorities Say.** The [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) (9/4, Patrick, 685K) reports two heroin and fentanyl dealers "used a jail guard's home to stash their drugs and guns, federal investigators said Wednesday." Teneisha D. Moore, 26, "a correctional officer at the St. Louis Medium Security Institution, was arrested Wednesday and charged with one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance and one count of aiding and abetting the possession of firearms in furtherance of that drug trafficking crime." Police and FBI agents "found a semi-automatic pistol and a rifle with a high-capacity, drum-style magazine in Moore's home...in St. Louis, prosecutors said."

**Cincinnati Man Sentence To 54 Months In Prison For Federal Hate Crimes.** [WLWT-TV](#) Cincinnati (9/4, Staff, 319K) reports a Cincinnati man "was sentenced in federal court Wednesday on hate crime charges in connection to a Price Hill home vandalism case, according to the U.S. Department of Justice." Samuel Whitt, 43, "was sentenced in U.S. District Court to 54 months in prison for criminal interference with the right to fair housing, according to the U.S. Department of Justice." US Attorney Benjamin Glassman "commended the cooperative investigation by the FBI and Cincinnati police, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorneys Megan Gaffney and Kyle Healey, who are representing the U.S. in this case."

**Federal Prosecutor Says "Block Boyz" Leader, Members Sentenced To Prison Time.** The [Ouachita \(LA\) Citizen](#) (9/4) reports, "The 'Block Boyz' gang leader and final two defendants have been sentenced to federal prison after court proceedings in Shreveport last week, announced U.S. Attorney David Joseph's office." DeMarcus D. Morris, 30, Jimmie R. Durden Jr., 30, and Gary J. McCain, 24, all of Shreveport, "were sentenced last week in federal court for being part of a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) conspiracy, and for drug trafficking and firearms offenses." FBI Acting Special Agent in Charge Anthony Riedlinger is quoted saying, "Along with our partners, the FBI has dedicated significant time, manpower, and resources toward investigating the 'Block Boyz' gang."

**FBI Asks Public For Help In Finding Man In 2018 Missouri Credit Union Robbery.** The [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) (9/4, reports, 685K) reports the FBI "is asking for the public's help in finding a man wanted in a Jennings robbery." Police "said Shayne McKee, 37, of north St. Louis County, is a fugitive wanted for the May 5, 2018, robbery." Rebecca Wu, a spokeswoman for the FBI office in St. Louis, "said McKee has been charged in federal court with the robbery."

**FBI Says Man Robs Third Bank In One Month.** The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (9/4, Struett, 875K) reports a man "implied he had a weapon Wednesday when he robbed a bank in Ashburn on the South Side." It "was the suspect's third heist in a month, according to the FBI. About 11 a.m., the suspect entered a Chase Bank bank branch at 8340 S. Kedzie Ave., implied he had a weapon and left with an undisclosed amount of cash, an FBI spokesperson said."

## **Another Of Atlanta's Senior City Officials Pleads Guilty To Charges Related To Federal Corruption Investigation.**

[WSB-TV](#) Atlanta (9/4, Diamant, 105K) reports another senior city official "pleaded guilty Wednesday afternoon to charges related to the federal corruption investigation into Atlanta City Hall." Larry Scott "pleaded guilty to wire fraud and filing false tax returns." Scott, "who ran a critical part of the city's procurement operation, resigned suddenly last week after a visit from the FBI."

## **Former UAW Official Pleads Guilty To Fraud, Money Laundering.**

[Reuters](#) (9/4, Lienert) reports former United Auto Workers official Michael Grimes "pleaded guilty Wednesday to wire fraud and money laundering as part of an ongoing FBI corruption probe that could hamper upcoming contract talks with the Detroit-based automakers." Grimes was charged "with soliciting hundreds of thousands of dollars in kickbacks from vendors supplying watches and jackets to union members, including a General Motors-funded non-profit training center jointly run with the UAW."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (9/4, 1.52M) reports a week "after FBI and Internal Revenue Service agents raided the homes of the current and former UAW presidents, an ex-union official appeared Wednesday in federal court to admit his role in the ongoing training center scandal." Grimes "pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and money laundering before U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman in Ann Arbor."

**Lab-Testing Startup Files For Bankruptcy.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/4, Biswas, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports uBiome Inc., a lab-testing startup, has filed for bankruptcy. The company said it has suspended testing and has secured an \$8 million loan to keep its business while it searches for a buyer.

## **Gut Health Start-up UBiome Files For Bankruptcy Five Months After FBI Raid.**

[CNBC](#) (9/4, Farr, 3.62M) reports health-tech startup uBiome on Wednesday filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy five months after it was raided by the FBI. UBiome was "raided in May by the FBI as part of an ongoing probe into its billing practices. Sources told CNBC around that time that the company was billing consumers multiple times without their consent, and insurance plans were beginning to reject the claims."

**Huawei Says US Using "Unscrupulous Means" To Disrupt Its Business.** The [AP](#) (9/4, McDonald) reports that Huawei on Wednesday accused the US of "attempting to break into its information systems and of trying to coerce its employees to gather information on the company." The Chinese telecom equipment maker "said in a statement that Washington has used 'unscrupulous means' in recent months to disrupt its business." The company "gave no evidence to support its accusations."

**Trump Says He Does Not Want To Tie Huawei Issues To Trade Talks.** [Reuters](#) (9/4) reports that also earlier Wednesday, the President said his Administration "does not want to discuss the U.S. blacklisting of Huawei Technologies with China as the two biggest world economies try to end escalating trade tensions." Trump is quoted as saying, "It's a national security concern. Huawei is a big concern of our military, of our intelligence agencies, and we are not doing business with Huawei. And we'll see what happens with respect to China, but Huawei has been not a player that we want to discuss, (that) we want to talk about right now." However, according to Reuters, Trump previously "said he would be open to including Huawei in talks to reach a trade deal with Beijing."

The [AP](#) (9/4) reports a company statement "said FBI agents had pressured Huawei employees to collect information on the company. It said American authorities launched cyberattacks on Huawei but gave no indication whether they succeeded."

**Opinion: US Is Unprepared For Space Cyberwarfare.** In an op-ed in the [Military Times](#) (9/4, 772K), retired Army Reserve Col. Lawrence Sellin writes, "Virtually every aspect of American national security, including the detection of threats, the use of weapons, the deployment of forces and their resupply, is now dependent on the integrity of critical space-based capabilities." Sellin contends, "Both our major adversaries, China and Russia, have placed a high priority on developing superiority within the electromagnetic battlespace with already demonstrable capabilities in electronic and cyberwarfare." According to a recently-released Royal Institute of International Affairs report, "the extent of the present gap between US space cybersecurity and the existing threat is such that our satellite network should be considered already compromised and efforts should focus on resilience measures and a sense of urgency regarding the development of advanced techniques to identify and respond to the ever-increasing number of cyber attacks." Sellin concludes, "It will be the responsibility of Congress to bridge the technological investment gap, while the United States Cyber Command, US Space Command and an engaged commercial sector must integrate space-cyber defense activities to meet the challenges posed by America's 21st century technological adversaries."

**Federal Judge Rules Terror Watchlist Violates Constitutional Rights.** The [AP](#) (9/4) reports the government's watchlist of more than 1 million people "identified as 'known or suspected terrorists' violates the constitutional rights of those placed on it, a federal judge ruled Wednesday." The ruling "from U.S. District Judge Anthony Trenga grants summary judgment to nearly two dozen Muslim U.S. citizens who had challenged the watchlist with the help of a Muslim civil-rights group, the Council on American-Islamic Relations." The FBI "declined comment on the ruling Wednesday. In court, the FBI's lawyers argued that the difficulties suffered by the plaintiffs pale in comparison to the government's interests in combatting terrorism."

**New Federal "Strike Force" To Target Baltimore Drug Gangs.** The [Washington Post](#) (9/4, Sun, 14.2M) reports a new federal "Strike Force" composed of "detectives, prosecutors and federal agents from across the region will soon begin work on a long-planned effort to target Baltimore drug gangs and their Mexican and Dominican suppliers, who have been flooding the city with heroin, fentanyl and other illicit drugs for years." Don Hibbert, assistant special agent in charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's Baltimore field office, is quoted saying, "We're teaming up to go after the bad actors in this city who are threatening to destabilize it." Hibbert "said the Baltimore Strike Force features seven individual groups, one each led by the Baltimore police, Maryland State Police, DEA, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the FBI, Homeland Security Investigations and the U.S. Marshals Service."

The [AP](#) (9/4, Cano, Press) reports US Attorney in Maryland Robert Hur "announced the strike force, which will focus on gun- and drug-related crime. Members will work from a shared location in the city, allowing law enforcement to work more efficiently." Meanwhile, Baltimore Police Commissioner Michael Harrison "said the group will 'enhance our ability to rid Baltimore of its most violent offenders.'"

**Ammon Bundy Says FBI Has Reversed Its Decision To Deny AR-15 Purchase.** The [Idaho Statesman](#) (9/4, 200K) reports, "On Aug. 31, 2019, Ammon Bundy failed a federally required background check to purchase a firearm at an Emmett, Idaho, sporting goods store." Three days later, Bundy "says the FBI changed its mind and OK'd his background check."

**McCabe To Be Keynote Speaker At Pennsylvania Democrats' Fundraiser.** The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (9/4, Scher, 78K) reports that former FBI Director Andrew McCabe, who was fired from the FBI after the Justice Department IG found he had lied to investigators about contacts with the media, will be "the keynote speaker at a fundraising banquet for the Lancaster County [Pennsylvania] Democratic Committee." McCabe plans to discuss his "one-on-one interactions with Donald Trump," as well as the "fallout and aftermath" of former FBI Director James Comey's firing, "Russian meddling in the 2016 election," and special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation. The [Daily Caller](#) (9/4, Kerr, 716K) says word of McCabe's planned appearance at the fundraiser "comes as the Justice Department considers whether to indict the 21-year FBI veteran."

**Citing Mental Health, Trump Says He Looks Forward To Quick Action On Mass Shootings.** [Politico](#) (9/4, Oprysko, 4.29M) reports the President "maintained Wednesday that he hopes to quickly see legislative action to address a spate of mass shootings, but he remained coy about what exactly he would support." Trump "said that any gun reform proposal would need to be bipartisan," and "expressed hope that Congress' imminent return following a month-long recess would bring an agreement 'soon.'" The President "explained that he is reviewing 'many different concepts and many different things' in response to recent shootings, 'including mental health which is, to me, a very important element of it.'" Added Trump, "I heard 29 different proposals, so there's no lack of proposals, so we'll have to see what happens." [CQ Roll Call](#) (9/4, Bennett, 154K) says that "in recent weeks, Trump – echoed by Republican members – has described the mass shootings epidemic as a mental health problem." However, "his staff and GOP members have yet to roll out a plan aimed at addressing what they call a major problem – other than the president's endorsement of building new 'institutions' for people with mental issues."

**Crenshaw, Ocasio Cortez Clash On Twitter Over Guns.** The [Daily Caller](#) (9/4, Kruta, 716K) reports Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), "while trying to make a point about gun laws, appeared to accuse" Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-TX) "of loaning guns to criminals." Crenshaw "had [shared](#) the story of a young woman who used a handgun to defend herself when five men reportedly attempted to rob her, adding, 'Situations like this story are why we protect the 2nd Amendment.'" He also "noted that universal background checks could stand in the way of law-abiding citizens who just wanted to defend themselves," writing, "Side note: With universal background checks, I wouldn't be able to let my friends borrow my handgun when they travel alone like this. We would make felons out of people just for defending themselves."

In response, [Townhall](#) (9/4, Pavlich, 177K) reports, "Ocasio-Cortez just accused ...Crenshaw of having violent friends," a charge that, says the [Washington Post](#) (9/4, Wagner, 14.2M), "didn't sit well with the former Navy SEAL." Ocasio-Cortez [tweeted](#), "You are a member of Congress. Why are you 'lending' guns to people unsupervised who can't pass a basic background check?"

The people you're giving a gun to have likely abused their spouse or have a violent criminal record, & you may not know it. Why on earth would you do that?" Crenshaw [responded](#), "Just so I'm clear: you think my friends are domestic abusers/criminals? Seriously that's your argument? That they can't pass a background check? Wrong. People lend guns to friends, esp if they don't own a gun, for self-defense and hunting purposes. This is America outside NYC."

**San Francisco's Board Of Supervisors Votes To Declare NRA A Terrorist Group.** The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (9/4, Grieve, 2.67M) reports "San Francisco's Board of Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously passed a [resolution](#) to declare the National Rifle Association a domestic terrorist organization, while also urging other cities, states and the federal government to ascribe the same label to the gun lobbyist group." District 2 Supervisor Catherine Stefani, who "introduced the resolution after the Gilroy Garlic Festival shooting," said yesterday, "The NRA exists to spread disinformation and knowingly puts weapons in the hands of those who would harm and terrorize us." The [San Francisco Examiner](#) (9/4, Sabatini, 438K) points out the resolution passed "unanimously," and quotes Stefani as further stating, "This country is terrorized by gun violence, and we need to call the NRA what it is: a domestic terrorist organization." The [Daily Caller](#) (9/4, Krayden, 716K) indicates that "the board also aims to prohibit people and organizations who do business with the city of San Francisco from maintaining any form of financial links with the NRA."

[Fox News](#) (9/4, Shaw, 27.59M) reports on its website that "the measure comes as Democrats across the country are ramping up calls to crack down on gun ownership, in response to deadly mass shootings in Dayton, Ohio, and western Texas." However, Republicans "have noted that gun violence is still rampant in major cities like Chicago that have strict gun laws in place."

Sebastian Gorka reacted to the story with disbelief, asking on [Twitter](#), "The @NRA and 5 million Americans are terrorists now?!" The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/4, Diaz, 4.64M) reports that "the NRA said in a [tweet](#) that the decision is a reckless assault on 'a law-abiding organization, its members, and the freedoms they all stand for.'" [Newsweek](#) (9/4, Cole, 1.53M) indicated that in a statement, the NRA also referred to "a 'ludicrous stunt' which was undertaken to 'distract from the real problems facing San Francisco, such as rampant homelessness, drug abuse and skyrocketing petty crime.'" [USA Today](#) (9/4, Shannon, 10.31M) notes the NRA also said, "This is a reckless assault on a law-abiding organization, its members, and the freedoms they all stand for."

**Donohue, Boulouta: Assault Weapon Ban Was Effective In Preventing Mass Shootings.** In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (9/4, Donohue, Boulouta, 18.61M), John Donohue, a law professor at Stanford, and Theodora Boulouta, a senior at Stanford, write that their research shows a federal ban on assault weapons from 1994 to 2004 "worked." They "found that public mass shootings – which we defined as incidents in which a gunman killed at least six people in public – dropped during the decade of the federal ban." However, "in the 15 years since the ban ended, the trajectory of gun massacres has been sharply upward, largely tracking the growth in ownership of military-style weapons and high-capacity magazines."

**Trump Administration Awards \$1.8B To Combat Opioid Crisis.** Yesterday's announcement of grants to fight the opioid epidemic was not mentioned by the major network newscasts, but was widely covered by national and local media outlets. [USA Today](#) (9/4, Subramanian, 10.31M) reports that the Administration announced "it will award \$1.8 billion in grant funding to state and local governments to bolster treatment and prevention efforts in the battle against the opioid epidemic." President Trump made the announcement about "the funding, which was secured through Congress last year." He is quoted as saying, "These funds will be delivered to the communities where their help is most needed." USA Today says the money will "be distributed through a pair of grant programs." Meanwhile, HHS Secretary Azar stated that some of the funding will be used for "everything from expanding the use of medication-assisted treatment in criminal justice settings, or in rural areas, via telemedicine, to youth-focused, community-based prevention efforts." The [AP](#) (9/4) reports "Azar says the grants come from money that President Donald Trump secured from Congress last year." For his part, the President "says 'nothing is more important than defeating the opioid and addiction crisis.'"

The [Washington Times](#) (9/4, Howell, 492K) reports that "Trump said the twin pots of money are 'very exciting' and will make an immediate impact." He is quoted as saying, "They'll be used to increase access to medication and medication-assisted treatment and mental health resources, which are critical for ending homelessness and getting people the help they deserve."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/4, Armour, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) quotes Azar as saying, "We know we have more work to do. ... More Americans still need treatment." The article adds that the funding will further the Administration's initiative to reduce opioid addiction and overdose deaths. [US News & World Report](#) (9/4, Newman, 2.4M) says Azar also stated, "We are truly headed in the right direction for the first time since this crisis arose. From 2017 to 2018, we saw a five percent decrease in provisional drug overdose death counts – the first decline in two decades. ... We are beginning to win the battle against the opioid overdose crisis. ... Our country is seeing the first drop in overdose deaths in more than two decades, more Americans are getting treatment for addiction, and lives are being saved. At the same time, we are still far from declaring victory."

[Reuters](#) (9/4, Mishra) reports that the CDC "will spend \$900 million over three years – about \$301 million in the first year – to help states and territories track overdose data as closely as possible, the HHS said in a statement." In addition, HHS' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration will award "about \$932 million to support prevention, treatment and recovery services."

The [Harrisburg \(PA\) Patriot-News](#) (9/4, Wenner, 427K) reports that Pennsylvania will receive "about \$70 million to continue fighting the opioid addiction crisis, federal officials announced Wednesday." The state "will get \$56 million toward treatment and prevention efforts." Pennsylvania will also receive "\$8.5 million toward real-time tracking of overdoses, based on the idea fresh data is needed to understand the crisis and focus the response." The [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) (9/4, Eaton, 895K) reports that HHS announced "Ohio will get \$55.8 million in grants to fight the drug epidemic – part of \$1.8 billion that the Centers for Disease Control and the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration awarded across the nation."

The [Chattanooga \(TN\) Times Free Press](#) (9/4, Collins, 171K) reports that HHS is awarding \$46.7 million to help Tennessee fight the opioid crisis.

The [Springfield \(MA\) Republican](#) (9/4, Flynn, 395K) reports that the CDC "has awarded the Massachusetts Department of Public Health more than \$7.1 million in funding to track opioid overdose data in as 'closely to real time as possible.'" The article says Maine "also received a second round of State Opioid Response grant funding totaling more than \$35 million from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration." CDC Director Robert R. Redfield is quoted as saying, "Strengthening our nation's public health infrastructure is essential to capturing the predictive data needed to prevent drug overdose deaths and their devastating effects on families."

[WIFR-TV](#) Rockford, IL (9/4, 40K) reports on its website that HHS awarded Illinois "nearly \$38 million to combat the state's opioid epidemic." Commenting on the grant, Senate Minority Whip Durbin said, "We are facing one of the worst drug epidemics in our history. ... This critical federal investment will help those on the front lines battling opioid addiction and overdose in Illinois' communities."

On its website, [WCHS-TV](#) Charleston, WV (9/4, Morris, 69K) reports that HHS "has awarded more than \$35.3 million to West Virginia to combat the opioid epidemic."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (9/4, Kovanis, 1.52M) reports that Michigan will "receive \$35 million in federal funding to combat the state's opioid epidemic, according to grants announced Wednesday."

The [Louisville \(KY\) Courier-Journal](#) (9/4, Sonka, 368K) reports, "Kentucky will receive a \$31.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to combat the state's opioid epidemic, part of a federal program created in 2016 to address the nationwide crisis."

[Seacoast Online \(NH\)](#) (9/4, Barndollar, 32K) reports, "New Hampshire will get a more than \$26 million slice of \$1.8 billion announced Wednesday by the Trump administration to combat the nation's ongoing opioid scourge."

On its website, [WLOX-TV](#) Biloxi, MS (9/4, 24K) reports that Mississippi will receive "more than \$19 million over the next three years to combat the ever-growing opioid crisis in America." The funds from HHS "will help expand access to treatment and support near real-time data on the drug overdose crisis."

[WMTV-TV](#) Madison, WI (9/4, 56K) reports on its website that HHS "announced Wisconsin will be receiving \$17,174,635 to combat the opioid crisis by expanding access to treatment and support near real-time data on the drug overdose crisis."

The [Providence \(RI\) Business News](#) (9/4, 14K) reports, "Rhode Island will receive \$17.1 million in federal funds to combat the opioid crisis, the US Department of Health and Human Services announced Wednesday."

[KTAR-FM](#) Glendale, AZ (9/4, 125K) reports on its website that HHS announced "Arizona has been awarded \$17 million in federal funding to use in the ongoing fight against the opioid crisis."

The [Rutland \(VT\) Herald](#) (9/4, 36K) reports, "Sen. Patrick Leahy's office has announced that the Vermont Department of Health will receive \$4 million in grant money to combat opioid abuse." The funding, from HHS' SAMHSA, totals \$4,020,896. Vermont also received a \$9.5-million grant from the CDC to fight the opioid epidemic.

[WMTW-TV](#) Portland, ME (9/4, 105K) reports on its website that on Wednesday, the White House announced "Maine will receive \$9 million to help combat the opioid crisis in the state. The money is part of nearly \$2 billion in grants to states and local governments to help fight the epidemic."

On its website, [KFYR-TV](#) Bismarck, ND (9/4, Live, 75K) reports that "North Dakota will receive a \$4,020,043 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to fight the opioid crisis."

[KHGI-TV](#) Lincoln, NE (9/4, 36K) reports on its website that "Nebraska is getting a boost to get ahead of the opioid addiction crisis across the nation, with \$4 million to track, prevent and respond to the ongoing struggle." The funding comes from HHS.

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