Office of Information Governance and Privacy

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 12th St., SW
Washington, D.C. 20536

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

September 14, 2022

Hart Wood
American Oversight
1030 15th St. NW, B255
Washington, DC 20005
Hart.wood@americanoversight.org

RE: AMERICAN OVERSIGHT v. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY-1:21-cv-01171-TNM
ICE FOIA Case Number 2021-ICLI-00064
Eighth Release

Dear Mr. Hart:

This letter is the eighth interim response to your client's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), dated July 16, 2021. Your FOIA request seeking records related to all final talking points prepared for Secretary Nielsen regarding the MPP and issues related to it, such as plans for lodging asylum seekers in Tijuana, plans for transporting migrants to and from Tijuana, expansion of the protocol to additional ports of entry, etc.

ICE has considered your request under the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

A total of 500 pages of records were reviewed for this interim production. These 500 pages of records were located pursuant to a search of the Director's Office. After review of these documents, ICE has determined that 70 pages were nonresponsive, and 276 pages were duplicative. The responsive 154 pages of records are attached and have been marked 2021-ICLI-00064 1756 to 2021-ICLI-00064 1909.

ICE has applied FOIA Exemptions (b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) and (b)(7)(E) to portions of the pages produced as described below.

FOIA Exemption 5 protects inter-agency or intra-agency deliberative process privilege, attorney work-product privilege, or attorney-client privilege information. Exemption 5 protects the integrity of the decision-making processes within the agency by exempting from mandatory disclosure opinions, conclusions, and recommendations included within inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters. The release of this internal information would discourage the expression of candid opinions and inhibit the free and frank exchange of information among agency personnel.

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FOIA Exemption 6 exempts from disclosure information in personnel or medical files and similar files the release of which would cause a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. This requires a balancing of the public's right to disclosure against the individual's right to privacy. The privacy interests of the individuals in the records you have requested outweigh any minimal public interest in disclosure of the information. Any private interest you may have in that information does not factor into the aforementioned balancing test.

FOIA Exemption 7(C) protects records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes when production of such could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. This exemption takes particular note of the strong interests of individuals, whether they are suspects, witnesses, or investigators, in not being unwarrantably associated with alleged criminal activity. That interest extends to persons who are not only the subjects of the investigation, but those who may have their privacy invaded by having their identities and information about them revealed in connection with an investigation. Based upon the traditional recognition of strong privacy interests in law enforcement records, categorical withholding of information that identifies third parties in law enforcement records is ordinarily appropriate.

ICE has applied FOIA Exemption 7(E) to protect from disclosure internal agency case numbers contained within the document.

FOIA Exemption 7(E) protects records compiled for law enforcement purposes, the release of which would disclose techniques and/or procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law. I have determined that disclosure of certain law enforcement sensitive information contained within the responsive records could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law. Additionally, the techniques and procedures at issue are not well known to the public.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Assistant United States Attorney Sean Michael Tepe at sean.tepe@usdoj.gov.

Sincerely,

MERONICA D STONEY

Digitally signed by MERONICA D STONEY
Date: 2022.09.14 09:41:47 -04'00'

Meronica D. Stoney
Ligation Team Supervisor

Enclosure(s): 154 pages

cc: Sean Michael Tepe
Assistant United States Attorney
sean.tepe@usdoj.gov

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Tue, 3 Mar 2020 22:52:47 +0000
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Cc: #ICE OPA ERO Issue Paper;#ERO CHIEFS OF STAFF
Subject: RE: Follow-up OPA Issue: Venezuelan removal questions

Good Afternoon (b)(6);
Please see below revised statement that is cleared by ERO.

Thank You.
(b)(6);

Statement:

ICE submits travel document requests to the Embassy of Venezuela, as it does other countries, when a travel document is needed to effect the removal of a Venezuelan national from the United State. ICE does not control the manner in which the Government of Venezuela verifies identities, issues travel documents or ultimately accepts their citizens once they arrive in country.

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 2:38 PM
To: #ICE OPA ERO Issue Paper (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: Follow-up OPA Issue: Venezuelan removal questions

Issue: AP reporter claims that I didn't answer his questions. I wanted to run my response by ERO.

From reporter: *Thanks (b)(6); for the reply. This really doesn't answer any of my questions however. The Venezuelan government—the Guaido folks recognized by the U.S.—insist they have not provided any assistance to ICE except in the case of the removal of criminals and in every meeting with U.S. authorities argue for a stay on deporting all detained Venezuelans. Maybe I'm getting confused with the terminology. Would it be possible to speak to someone on background?*

Statement:

ICE requests travel documents from the Embassy of Venezuela, who in turn, issues them to facilitate removal. Please reach out to the Embassy of Venezuela if you have questions regarding relationship with the Venezuelan government and the United States.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
ICE Public Affairs Specialist
Department of Homeland Security
Office: (202) 732-(b)(6);

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Cell: (202) 924-(b)(6);
Email: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) n@ap.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 1:41 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: ICEMedia <(b)(6); @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(6 for the reply. This really doesn't answer any of my questions however. The Venezuelan government—the Guaido folks recognized by the U.S.—insist they have not provided any assistance to ICE except in the case of the removal of criminals and in every meeting with U.S. authorities argue for a stay on deporting all detained Venezuelans. Maybe I'm getting confused with the terminology. Would it be possible to speak to someone on background?

Best,
(b)(6);

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) n@ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 1:33 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Cc: ICEMedia (b)(6); @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(6);

Thank you for your patience. See below for answers to your additional questions.

In regards to removals, Venezuelan nationals are removed via commercial flight. ICE ERO is able to effect these removals by transiting through a third country, similar to when ICE removes to other countries where a direct flight does not exist. In regards to travel documents, ICE requests travel documents from the Embassy of Venezuela, who in turn, issues them to facilitate removal.

Background:

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) works to timely remove illegal aliens from the United States once they are subject to a final order of removal. The removal of aliens subject to final orders of removal is a national security priority for the United States, highlighted by Presidential Executive Order No. 13,768, Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States, issued on January 25, 2017.

Each country has an obligation under international law to accept the return of its nationals who are not eligible to remain in the United States or any other country. The United States itself routinely cooperates with foreign governments in documenting and accepting its citizens when asked. Ongoing U.S. government efforts have ensured that the majority of the world's countries accept the return of their nationals with final orders of removal.

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The U.S. Government requests that foreign governments take appropriate steps to confirm the citizenship of aliens suspected to be their nationals, including by conducting interviews where necessary; the timely issuance of travel documents, where appropriate; and accepting the physical return.

More on documents needed for removals:

A valid passport or travel document is required to remove Venezuelans. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) uses documents issued by either government to facilitate travel and the individual's entry into Venezuela. ICE ERO is able to effect these removals by transiting through a third country, similar to when ICE removes to other countries where a direct flight does not exist.

Kind regards,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
ICE Public Affairs Specialist
Department of Homeland Security
Email: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 2:03 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(6);

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 2:00 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(6);

We have someone looking into this. They have a pretty packed day, but we should have information for you tomorrow.

(b)(6);

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 11:58 AM

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To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(6). I'll reach out to CBP on that last one.

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 11:33 AM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) as@ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) e@ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(6);

I will look into this for you. For your last question regarding MPP, you will need to reach out to CBP at cbpmediarelations(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

Kind regards,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
ICE Public Affairs

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Date: Monday, Mar 02, 2020, 11:22 AM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) s@ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) e@ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) R@ice.dhs.gov>, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(6); . Can I ask you or (b)(6) some additional questions?

According to the email she sent my AP colleague (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) ICE removed 327 Venezuelans in 2019. In May of 2019, the US barred all air transport to Venezuela. So were those 327 removals all carried out before the air ban? Or were these partly self-removals? Through non-direct flights to a third county? Just want to understand how the Venezuelans are being removed today with the air ban in place.

Also, how has the Guaido government facilitated these removals? Are they verifying passports or identities? Issuing new travel documents or conducting interviews? It's an uncommon situation because although the U.S. recognizes Juan Guaido as Venezuela's president, and has afforded his envoys diplomatic status, they don't control any government institution inside Venezuela.

Finally, can you provide a number of how many Venezuelans are in the "wait in Mexico" program while their asylum cases are being processed?

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Thanks again for your help. I'm happy to get on the phone with an expert if that helps.

(b)(6);

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) s@ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 8:01 AM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) n@ap.org>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) e@ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) R@ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) n@ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

(b)(6);

Our New Orleans office has the same response as Houston.

(b)(6);

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) n@ap.org>
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020 8:16 AM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) e@ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) R@ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) s@ice.dhs.gov>;
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) n@ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: Re: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(). Monday seems impossible but I will consult with the Ambassador's folks about Louisiana and see if they are visiting a detention center where there is a Venezuelan I am in contact with already. His lawyer has signed off in me contacting him. Do you think that would possibly work? I mean me accompanying the Ambassador to a specific facility so he can speak with a specific detainee who has given me permission? If so, I'll proceed as you suggest.

Best,
(b)(6);

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 28, 2020, at 7:36 AM, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov> wrote:

(b)(6);

It's about logistics. The Ambassador/consular officials will speak with individual detainees. ICE has a responsibility to protect the privacy and other rights of detainees and we require detainees to pre-sign a privacy waiver prior to talking with media. For detainees who have attorney's this has to go through them, which is impossible to do when media reps accompany a consular

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official because we don't know the specific detainees who they will meet with. Furthermore, we only have one public affairs officer per area. To attempt to manage this request with only one business-day notice is not reasonable. We require at least 48 hours (business days) to process media requests for tours, which is reasonable to ensure we can properly vet the individual and mitigate any security or privacy concerns.

With all of that said, you can submit a formal request and I will send it to the Field Office Director for review. However, we would need more specifics in your request. (i.e. what facility you are wanting to visit, the time you want to visit, what equipment you request to bring, who would all accompany you, what you are specifically requesting – i.e. tour, interviews w/ detainees, interviews w/ ICE personnel, interviews w/Ambassador etc.) Please send this to me as soon as possible and I will forward it to the Field Office Director.

v/r

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Public Affairs Officer/Spokesman
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Houston, Texas
Desk: (281) 774-(b)(6);
Cell: (346) 262-(b)(6)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) e@ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) n@ap.org>
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020 6:02 AM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) e@ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: Re: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(6);
What is the reason for not combining a consular visit with a media visit if the diplomat allows it? My understanding is you are required to facilitate reasonable requests like this. In ny case, it's a story that directly relates to what Venezuela's embassy is doing to help its nationals, so it's not a peripheral issue. I would certainly respect your rules about bringing only pen and paper if that makes it easier to approve.

Best,
(b)(6);

Sent from my iPhone

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On Feb 28, 2020, at 6:56 AM, (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov> wrote:

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

I can't speak for Louisiana, but in the Houston area of responsibility we do not combine media visits with visits from NGOs or Consular officials. If you would like a separate tour of a Houston detention facility you would need to request that in writing to acting Field Office Director (b)(6) (b)(6); listing the specific facility, the individuals who would attend the tour and the time and date that you would like to tour. Generally, we do not allow recording devices in our facilities for operational security reasons, but that decision would be up to the Field Office Director. Most likely it would be pen and paper only. If you would like to request a media tour please send me your request and I will forward it to the acting FOD for review. Thanks!

v/r

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Public Affairs Officer/Spokesman
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Houston, Texas
Desk: (281) 774-(b)(6);
Cell: (346) 262-(b)(6);
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) e@ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) R@ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2020 5:59 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(6), I'm sorry to let you know I'm out tomorrow, so I'm including the Houston PAO (b)(6); and Miami PAO currently supporting New Orleans (b)(6); (b)(7)(C), who can see if this is possible.

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
813-525-(b)(6);
(b)(6); @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ap.org>
Date: Thursday, Feb 27, 2020, 6:54 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>

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Subject: FW: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(6);
I see (b)(6) is off, so forwarding this request to you. Thanks.

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2020 6:17 PM
To: (b)(6); @ice.dhs.gov
Subject: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(6);

I'm an AP reporter based in Miami but until October was responsible for our coverage of Venezuela. I've learned that Venezuelan Ambassador Carlos Vecchio is visiting with Venezuelan migrant detainees in Houston on Monday and then in the Louisiana area a few days later (week of March 9). Would it be possible to accompany him on any of these visits? We are preparing a story about the Venezuelan detainees and this would be a great opportunity to provide some much-needed color to the numbers that (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) has provided my colleague (b)(6); (b)(7)(C). What do you think? I've got a good relationship with Vecchio's people and know they are interested in drawing attention to what they are doing to assist their nationals. So I have no doubt they would allow me to join them. But obviously it's a US Government facility so I wanted to approach ICE first about getting inside a facility.

Best,
(b)(6);

<image001.jpg>

<image002.jpg>

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Latin America correspondent
Twitter (b)(6) joshgoodman
j (b)(6); @ap.org

9100 NW 36th Street, Suite 111
Miami, FL 33178
T +1-305-594 (b)(6);
C +1-786-643

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Page 1765

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(b)(5) ; (b)(7)(E)

of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act

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Page 1766

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5) ; (b)(7)(E)

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Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5) ; (b)(7)(E)

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Page 1768

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Page 1769

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Page 1770

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of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act

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Page 1786

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5)

of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act

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From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Wed, 11 Mar 2020 19:08:55 +0000
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) #ICE OPA ERO Issue Paper
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) ;#ERO CHIEFS OF STAFF
Subject: RE: OPA ISSUE: Hunger striker transferred from ELP back to NOL

Good Afternoon (b)(6);

The below statement is clear, with edit, by ERO.

Thank You
(b)(6);

(b)(5); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

(b)(5); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:06 PM
To: #ICE OPA ERO Issue Paper (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: OPA ISSUE: Hunger striker transferred from ELP back to NOL

All:

Please review and advise. - Thanks! (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(5); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

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(b)(5); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

INTERNAL INFORMATION
-213 Narrative
Narrative 1 : Created Date: 02/01/2019 08:49 AMOTM ER with Credible Fear- No Prosecution
IMMIGRATION HISTORY: No prior immigration history.
CRIMINAL HISTORY: No prior criminal history.
ENCOUNTER:
A Border Patrol Agent encountered subject in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas Border Patrol Sector. A Border Patrol Agent determined this subject had unlawfully entered the United States from Mexico, at a time and place other than as designated by the Secretary

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of the Department of Homeland Security of the United States. After determining that this subject was an alien whom illegally entered the United States, the subject was arrested and transported to the Rio Grande Valley/Centralized Processing Center, McAllen, Texas for further processing.

IMMIGRATION/CRIMINAL VIOLATION:
At the Rio Grande Valley/Centralized Processing Center, McAllen, Texas, the subject was asked to make a Sworn Statement as part of the Expedited Removal Proceedings. Service Form I-867 A/B was read and explained to the subject. The subject understood and was willing to answer questions and give a statement. The subject again admitted to being a citizen and national of Bangladesh without the necessary legal documents to enter, pass through, or remain in the United States. The subject also admitted to illegally crossing the international boundary without being inspected by an Immigration Officer at a designated Port of Entry.

CONSULAR NOTIFICATION:
The subject was notified of the right to communicate with a consular officer from Bangladesh as per Article 36(a)(b) of the Vienna Convention of Consular Relations. The subject acknowledged understanding the right but declined to speak with anyone at this time. Furthermore, the subject does claim to fear persecution or torture if returned to the subject's country of citizenship.

DISPOSITION:
The subject is being processed for Expedited Removal with Credible fear. The subject was apprehended within fourteen days of the subject's last entry into the United States and within 100 air miles from the United States/Mexico international boundary.

ROOM and BOARD in ELP:
(b)(6); case belonged to the NOL AOR. (b)(6); was in El Paso only as a room and board because it was anticipated that an involuntary hydration/nutrition court order could be needed. (b)(6); continued to drink several Boost nutritional shakes daily, refusing solid meals, which prevented need for court order. ELP is prepping for MPP intake; therefore, NOL was contacted regarding (b)(6); room and board. Medical staff cleared him to travel and he was returned to the NOL AOR to continue his case.

Latest Comments in EARM:
03/10/2020 11:47 AM (b)(6); EARM contacted attorney offices to advise his client was transferred to Winn Correctional Center in LA, no answer, left message. DO/RF
03/08/2020 04:00 PM (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) EADM in from ASF
03/08/2020 06:35 AM EADM SUBJECT TRANSFERRED TO JENA VIA ICE AIR.
03/06/2020 11:51 AM (b)(6); EARM Subject will be incoming from the ELP office, subject has an appeal pending with the BIA ensure I-830 is filed with the BIA upon arrival.
03/06/2020 11:31 AM (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) EARM On March 6, 2020, at 0915 hours, (b)(6); (b)(6); and (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) contacted Lionbridge and spoke with translator (b)(6); for the Bangladesh language for (b)(6); regarding hunger strike. (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) stated that he did

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

not want to eat. Food was offered to (b)(6); but he declined. (b)(6); stated that he will remain on hunger strike until he is released from ICE custody. CMU attempted to convince subject eat food for the safety of his well-being.
03/06/2020 10:54 AM (b)(6); EARM Subject pending transfer to another AOR due to MPP injunction and lack of bed space at EPC. File forwarded to CMU SDDO for transfer coordination. Attorney notified regarding transfer. A-file Railed to CMU. DO/RF
03/06/2020 10:40 AM (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) EARM BIA decision still pending. DO/RF
03/03/2020 04:21 PM EARM Attorney was contacted; wasn't available, left message with receptionist Jordan to advise attorney to get a hold of sponsors and let them know DPO has been trying to contact them to confirmed address and request additional information. DO/RF - View Revision History
03/03/2020 04:20 PM (b)(6); EARM made an attempt to contact sponsor (aunt) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) in New Jersey, did not answer, left message. DO/RF
03/03/2020 02:42 PM (b)(6); EARM On March 3, 2020, at 1010 hours, DO (b)(6); and DO (b)(6); a contacted Lionbridge and spoke with translator (b)(6); for the Bangladesh language for (b)(6); regarding hunger strike. (b)(6); stated that he did not want to eat. Food was offered to (b)(6); but he declined. (b)(6); stated that he drank 2 boost nutritional drinks and bottle and a half of water. (b)(6); stated that he will remain on hunger strike until he is released from ICE custody. (b)(6); stated that he is aware of the results of his case, requested DO (b)(6); communicate with his attorney, DO (b)(6); was informed by the CMU officers that (b)(6); attorney requested to communicate with him and his client . An attempted to convince (b)(6); to eat food for the safety of his well-being but (b)(6); declined. (b)(6); stated that he drank 2 boost nutritional drinks.
03/02/2020 03:43 PM (b)(6); EARM Received additional packet from attorney requesting parole, packet contains same information subject submitted, placed in A-file pending review. DO/RF
03/02/2020 01:43 PM (b)(6); EARM request for parole received via USPS mail, tracking # (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) packet forwarded to officer for review. gb
03/02/2020 12:59 PM (b)(6); EARM On March 02, 2020, at 1015 hours, DO (b)(6); and DO (b)(6); called Lionbridge and spoke with translator (b)(6); for the Nepali language for KC regarding hunger strike. KC stated that he has not eaten any food and will not eat any food until he is released from custody. Food was offered but KC declined. Boost was offered but KC declined. KC stated he was drinking water. KC was informed on the status of his immigration case. An attempted to convince KC to eat food for the safety of his well-being but KC declined. Comments above have been logged in EARM.
02/27/2020 08:22 PM (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) EARM On February 27, 2020, at 1800 hours, (A) SDDO (b)(6); contacted Lionbridge and spoke with translator (b)(6); for the Bangladesh language for (b)(6); regarding hunger strike. (b)(6); stated that he did not want to eat. Food was offered to (b)(6); but he declined. (b)(6); stated that he drank 6 boost nutritional drinks. (b)(6); stated that he will remain on hunger strike until he is released from ICE custody. (b)(6); stated that he is aware of the results of his case. An attempted to convince (b)(6); to eat food for the safety of his well-being but (b)(6); declined. (b)(6); stated that he drank 6 boost nutritional drinks.

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

(b)(6); stated that his attorney is requesting to speak to his case Officer, Deportation Officer (b)(6); Comments above have been logged in EARM.
02/27/2020 05:24 PM (b)(6); EARM Reviewing Parole packet submitted, trying to contact sponsor (Aunt) (b)(6); (Uncle) (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) d at (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); 6 to confirm address and request additional information, phone message not receiving calls at this time, follow up. DO/RF - View Revision History

Thank you for your consideration,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Public Affairs Officer/Spokeswoman
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) office
fax
mobile
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) a@ice.dhs.gov

Follow ICE

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) .org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 10:01 AM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: Hunger striker

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The attorneys for the Nepalese hunger striker said he resumed eating on Monday, after being told by ICE that he would be freed if he ate for two days and then underwent two subsequent days of health monitoring. Can you confirm this and offer any comment you deem appropriate? (b)(5)

Also, the attorneys have been told that another detainee, a Bangladeshi man who had been on a lengthy hunger strike, was transferred to another facility over the weekend. Can you address that?

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: (b)(5)
Sent: Thu, 12 Mar 2020 19:20:07 +0000
To: #ICE OPA ERO Issue Paper
Subject: FW: Brazilian press - inquiry

Good afternoon,

Issue: Reporter from Brazil interested in number of Brazilian nationals detained with Final Order of Removal.

Statement: As of Feb. 15, there were 320 Brazilian nationals in ICE custody with a Final Order of Removal.

Background:

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is charged with enforcing federal immigration laws enacted by Congress. Officers with ICE's Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) are sworn law enforcement officers who carry out the arrest, detention, and removal of illegal aliens found to be in the United States unlawfully. ICE allocates the agency's finite immigration enforcement resources by prioritizing public and national security threats, immigration fugitives and illegal reentrants. However, all of those in violation of immigration laws may be subject to immigration arrest, detention and, if found removable by final order, removal from the United States.

Aliens processed for removal may receive their legal due process from federal immigration judges in the immigration courts, which are administered by the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). EOIR is an agency within the U.S. Department of Justice, and is separate from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and ICE. Immigration judges in these courts make decisions based on the merits of each individual case. ICE officers carry out the removal decisions made by the federal immigration judges. For more information on EOIR, visit: https://www.justice.gov/eoir/ [justice.gov].

The immigration laws of the United States allow an alien to pursue relief from removal; however, once they have exhausted all due process and appeals, they remain subject to a final order of removal from an immigration judge and that order must be carried out.

Kind regards,

(b)(5)
ICE Public Affairs Specialist
Department of Homeland Security
Office: (b)(5)
Cell (b)(5)
Email: (b)(5) ice.dhs.gov

-

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: (b)(5) @cbp.dhs.gov>
Date: Thursday, Mar 12, 2020, 12:17 PM
To: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Brazilian press - inquiry

Thank you. Does ICE ever give out number of detainees by nationality waiting in detention with final orders of removal? Like Brazilians?

From: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 12:09 PM
To: (b)(5) cbp.dhs.gov>; ICEMedia (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Brazilian press - inquiry

Hi (b)(5)

This is what I have (recent but not super recent):

In fiscal year 2020, as of Feb. 15th, there has been 947 Brazilian nationals removed from the United States.

(b)(5)
ICE Public Affairs Specialist
Department of Homeland Security
Office: (b)(5)
Cell: (b)(5)
Email: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(5) @cbp.dhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:56 AM
To: ICEMedia (b)(5) ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Brazilian press - inquiry

Greetings ICE friends. Haven't you already answered this question highlighted below?

From: (b)(5) @grupofolha.com.br>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 11:16 AM
To: (b)(5) @cbp.dhs.gov>
Subject: Brazilian press - inquiry

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of DHS. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact the CBP Security Operations Center with questions or concerns.

Hi (b)(5)
I'm looking to know how many Brazilians are there waiting in the US to be deported back to Brazil. Do you have this information?

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Also, how many Brazilian nationals are enrolled in the MPP program?

Best regards,

(b)(5)

(b)(5)
Mundo | International desk
Folha de S.Paulo
(b)(5)

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From: (b)(5)
Sent: Wed, 11 Mar 2020 18:05:38 +0000
To: #ICE OPA ERO Issue Paper
Cc: (b)(5)
(b)(5)
Subject: OPA ISSUE: Hunger striker transferred from ELP back to NOL

All:

Please review and advise. - Thanks! (b)(5)

(b)(5); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

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(b)(5); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

(b)(5); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

(b)(5); (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

Thank you for your consideration,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Public Affairs Officer/Spokeswoman
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) office
fax
mobile
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov

Follow ICE

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From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) elpasomatters.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 10:01 AM
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: Hunger striker

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

The attorneys for the Nepalese hunger striker said he resumed eating on Monday, after being told by ICE that he would be freed if he ate for two days and then underwent two subsequent days of health monitoring. Can you confirm this and offer any comment you deem appropriate? (b)(5)

Also, the attorneys have been told that another detainee, a Bangladeshi man who had been on a lengthy hunger strike, was transferred to another facility over the weekend. Can you address that?

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: JIOC-ICE
Sent: Wed, 11 Mar 2020 21:24:05 +0000
To: #ICE-Watch_SLN_NOCnote
Cc: JIOC-ICE
Subject: (U//FOUO) OPS-NOC Note (Initial): U.S. Supreme Court Ruling to Continue Migrant Protection Protocol (NOC 0602-18-070)

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This information is being provided for senior DHS and Component leaders. It is meant to increase senior leader situational awareness and is not for public release.

Overview: Media reports the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it would allow the White House to continue to enforce the "Remain in Mexico" policy, formally known as the Migrant Protection Protocol (MPP), that keeps asylum-seekers in Mexico while awaiting the outcome of their immigration proceedings.

Report: Today's Supreme Court ruling overturns a lower court ruling by the 9th Circuit Court on 4 Mar that ruled MPP as unlawful for persons arriving at border crossings in AZ and CA. Today's ruling comes the day before the lower court ruling was to have taken effect. The "Remain in Mexico" policy will remain in force while a lawsuit challenging the policy is reviewed by the courts. In a brief, unsigned order, the Supreme Court ruled that enforcement of the policy can continue while the justices decide whether to hear an appeal of the lower court ruling that declared the program illegal.

Source: Media

Distribution: DHS HQ Leadership and Senior Staff, DHS Component Leadership, DHS Component Operations Centers, White House Situation Room.

V/r,

(b)(5)
Section Chief / Supervisory Criminal Analyst
Watch Operations
Joint Intelligence Operations Center (JIOC)
ICE | Homeland Security Investigations
Desk Line: (b)(5)
Government (b)(5)
JIOC Ring All: (b)(5)
UNCLASS (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov

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AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: (b)(5)
Sent: Wed, 4 Mar 2020 20:01:35 +0000
To: #ICE OPA ERO Issue Paper
Subject: OPA Issue: Venezuelan removal follow-up

Good afternoon,

Issue: AP Reporter interested in breakdown of removals by criminal convictions.

A contact at the Venezuelan Embassy is telling the reporter that "they do not remove anyone to Venezuela unless they are a criminal." Because reporter is continuing to ask about relationship with Venezuelan government and U.S., and details of the removal process, I believe we should defer to the U.S. State Department. Thoughts?

Statement

Please see below in regards to removals of Venezuelan nationals. _

- In fiscal year 2018, ICE completed 336 removals of Venezuelan nationals. Of those, 104 had criminal convictions, 39 had pending criminal convictions, and 193 had other immigration related violations.
- In fiscal year 2019, ICE completed 327 removals of Venezuelan nationals. Of those, 86 had criminal convictions, 34 had pending criminal convictions, and 207 had other immigration related violations.

Please reach out to the State Department regarding official communication between the United States and the government of Venezuela. They can be reached at (b)(5)@state.gov.

Kind regards,

(b)(5)
ICE Public Affairs Specialist
Department of Homeland Security
Office: (b)(5)
Cell: (b)(5)
Email: (b)(5)@ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(5)@ap.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 6:53 PM
To: (b)(5)@ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: ICEMedia (b)(5)@ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: Re: Venezuelan detainee visit

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Ok. But we are still dancing around the issue on how these removals are carried out. Were the removals last year all Venezuelans who had committed a crime in the US? That's what the Embassy contends. Or were there indeed detainees removed who had been denied asylum or were found in civil violation of the US migration laws?

I appreciate your back and forth on this (b)(5) But perhaps getting on the phone and discussing on background or off record would be easier.

Best,
(b)(5)

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 3, 2020, at 6:49 PM, (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov> wrote:

Good evening (b)(5)

Please see below.

Statement attributable to an ICE Spokesperson:

ICE submits travel document requests to the Embassy of Venezuela, as it does other countries, when a travel document is needed to effect the removal of a Venezuelan national from the United States. ICE does not control the manner in which the Government of Venezuela verifies identities, issues travel documents or ultimately accepts their citizens once they arrive in country.

Kind regards,

(b)(5)
ICE Public Affairs Specialist
Department of Homeland Security
Email: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 1:41 PM
To: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: ICEMedia (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(5) for the reply. This really doesn't answer any of my questions however. The Venezuelan government—the Guaido folks recognized by the U.S.—insist they have not provided any assistance to ICE except in the case of the removal of criminals and in every meeting with U.S. authorities argue for a stay on deporting all detained Venezuelans. Maybe I'm getting confused with the terminology. Would it be possible to speak to someone on background?

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Best,
(b)(5)

From (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 1:33 PM
To: (b)(5) n@ap.org>
Cc: ICEMedia (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(5)

Thank you for your patience. See below for answers to your additional questions.

In regards to removals, Venezuelan nationals are removed via commercial flight. ICE ERO is able to effect these removals by transiting through a third country, similar to when ICE removes to other countries where a direct flight does not exist. In regards to travel documents, ICE requests travel documents from the Embassy of Venezuela, who in turn, issues them to facilitate removal.

Background:

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) works to timely remove illegal aliens from the United States once they are subject to a final order of removal. The removal of aliens subject to final orders of removal is a national security priority for the United States, highlighted by Presidential Executive Order No. 13,768, Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States, issued on January 25, 2017.

Each country has an obligation under international law to accept the return of its nationals who are not eligible to remain in the United States or any other country. The United States itself routinely cooperates with foreign governments in documenting and accepting its citizens when asked. Ongoing U.S. government efforts have ensured that the majority of the world's countries accept the return of their nationals with final orders of removal.

The U.S. Government requests that foreign governments take appropriate steps to confirm the citizenship of aliens suspected to be their nationals, including by conducting interviews where necessary; the timely issuance of travel documents, where appropriate; and accepting the physical return.

More on documents needed for removals:

A valid passport or travel document is required to remove Venezuelans. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) uses documents issued by either government to facilitate travel and the individual's entry into Venezuela. ICE ERO is able to effect these removals by transiting through a third country, similar to when ICE removes to other countries where a direct flight does not exist.

Kind regards,

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

(b)(5)
ICE Public Affairs Specialist
Department of Homeland Security
Email (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 2:03 PM
To: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(5)

From: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 2:00 PM
To: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(5)

We have someone looking into this. They have a pretty packed day, but we should have information for you tomorrow.

(b)(5)

From: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 11:58 AM
To: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(5) I'll reach out to CBP on that last one.

From: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 11:33 AM
To: (b)(5) @ap.org>; (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5) (b)(5) e@ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5) @ap.org>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(5)

I will look into this for you. For your last question regarding MPP, you will need to reach out to CBP at (b)(5) @cbp.dhs.gov.

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Kind regards,

(b)(5)
ICE Public Affairs

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Date: Monday, Mar 02, 2020, 11:22 AM
To: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>, (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>, (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>, (b)(5) @ap.org>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(5) or. Can I ask you or (b)(5) some additional questions?

According to the email she sent my AP colleague (b)(5), ICE removed 327 Venezuelans in 2019. In May of 2019, the US barred all air transport to Venezuela. So were those 327 removals all carried out before the air ban? Or were these partly self-removals? Through non-direct flights to a third county? Just want to understand how the Venezuelans are being removed today with the air ban in place.

Also, how has the Guaido government facilitated these removals? Are they verifying passports or identities? Issuing new travel documents or conducting interviews? It's an uncommon situation because although the U.S. recognizes Juan Guaido as Venezuela's president, and has afforded his envoys diplomatic status, they don't control any government institution inside Venezuela.

Finally, can you provide a number of how many Venezuelans are in the "wait in Mexico" program while their asylum cases are being processed?

Thanks again for your help. I'm happy to get on the phone with an expert if that helps.

(b)(5)

From: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 2, 2020 8:01 AM
To: (b)(5) @ap.org>; (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5)
(b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

(b)(5)

Our New Orleans office has the same response as Houston.

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

(b)(5)

From: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020 8:16 AM
To: (b)(5) e@ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(5) R@ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5) s@ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: Re: Venezuelan detainee visit

Thanks (b)(5) Monday seems impossible but I will consult with the Ambassador's folks about Louisiana and see if they are visiting a detention center where there is a Venezuelan I am in contact with already. His lawyer has signed off in me contacting him. Do you think that would possibly work? I mean me accompanying the Ambassador to a specific facility so he can speak with a specific detainee who has given me permission? If so, I'll proceed as you suggest.

Best,
(b)(5)

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 28, 2020, at 7:36 AM, (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov> wrote:

(b)(5)

It's about logistics. The Ambassador/consular officials will speak with individual detainees. ICE has a responsibility to protect the privacy and other rights of detainees and we require detainees to pre-sign a privacy waiver prior to talking with media. For detainees who have attorney's this has to go through them, which is impossible to do when media reps accompany a consular official because we don't know the specific detainees who they will meet with. Furthermore, we only have one public affairs officer per area. To attempt to manage this request with only one business-day notice is not reasonable. We require at least 48 hours (business days) to process media requests for tours, which is reasonable to ensure we can properly vet the individual and mitigate any security or privacy concerns.

With all of that said, you can submit a formal request and I will send it to the Field Office Director for review. However, we would need more specifics in your request. (i.e. what facility you are wanting to visit, the time you want to visit, what equipment you request to bring, who would all accompany you, what you are specifically requesting – i.e. tour, interviews w/ detainees, interviews w/ ICE personnel, interviews w/Ambassador etc.) Please send this to me as soon as possible and I will forward it to the Field Office Director.

v/r

(b)(5)

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Public Affairs Officer/Spokesman
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Houston, Texas
Desk: (b)(5)
Cell: (b)(5)
(b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020 6:02 AM
To: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Cc: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: Re: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(5)
What is the reason for not combining a consular visit with a media visit if the diplomat allows it? My understanding is you are required to facilitate reasonable requests like this. In ny case, it's a story that directly relates to what Venezuela's embassy is doing to help its nationals, so it's not a peripheral issue. I would certainly respect your rules about bringing only pen and paper if that makes it easier to approve.

Best,
(b)(5)

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 28, 2020, at 6:56 AM, (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov> wrote:

(b)(5)

I can't speak for Louisiana, but in the Houston area of responsibility we do not combine media visits with visits from NGOs or Consular officials. If you would like a separate tour of a Houston detention facility you would need to request that in writing to acting Field Office Director Paul McBride listing the specific facility, the individuals who would attend the tour and the time and date that you would like to tour. Generally, we do not allow recording devices in our facilities for operational security reasons, but that decision would be up to the Field Office Director. Most likely it would be pen and paper only. If you would like to request a media tour please send me your request and I will forward it to the acting FOD for review. Thanks!

v/r

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

(b)(5)
Public Affairs Officer/Spokesman
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Houston, Texas
Desk: (b)(5)
Cell: (b)(5)
(b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(5) R@ice.dhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2020 5:59 PM
To: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Cc: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5)
(b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>; (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Venezuelan detainee visit

Hi (b)(5), I'm sorry to let you know I'm out tomorrow, so I'm including the Houston PAO (b)(5) and Miami PAO currently supporting New Orleans Nestor Yglesias, who can see if this is possible.

(b)(5)
(b)(5)
(b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov

From: (b)(5) @ap.org>
Date: Thursday, Feb 27, 2020, 6:54 PM
To: (b)(5) R@ice.dhs.gov>
Subject: FW: Venezuelan detainee visit

H (b)(5)
I see (b)(5) is off, so forwarding this request to you. Thanks.

(b)(5)

From: (b)(5)
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2020 6:17 PM
To: (b)(5) @ice.dhs.gov
Subject: Venezuelan detainee visit

H (b)(5)

I'm an AP reporter based in Miami but until October was responsible for our coverage of Venezuela. I've learned that Venezuelan Ambassador Carlos Vecchio is visiting with Venezuelan migrant detainees in Houston on Monday and then in the Louisiana area a few days later (week of March 9). Would it be

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possible to accompany him on any of these visits? We are preparing a story about the Venezuelan detainees and this would be a great opportunity to provide some much-needed color to the numbers that Mary Houtmann has provided my colleague (b)(5) n. What do you think? I've got a good relationship with Vecchio's people and know they are interested in drawing attention to what they are doing to assist their nationals. So I have no doubt they would allow me to join them. But obviously it's a US Government facility so I wanted to approach ICE first about getting inside a facility.

Best,
(b)(5)

<image001.jpg>

<image002.jpg>

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Sent: Mon, 9 Mar 2020 09:54:41 +0000
Subject: DHS Morning Briefing (3-9-20)

1 DHS MORNING BRIEFING Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) U.S. Department of Homeland Security By TechMIS www.TechMIS.com Mobile User Copy TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff DATE: Monday, March 9, 2020 6:00 AM ET Top News Trump Administration to Gather DNA Data on Detained Migrants (Bloomberg) ..... 6 DOJ to take DNA samples from immigrants illegally entering U.S. (Breitbart) ..... 7 Trump Administration Poised To Start Collecting DNA From Immigration Detainees (NPR) ..... 7 Justice Dept sets in motion mass DNA collection from detained immigrants; effort has drawn fierce resistance (USA Today) ..... 9 New Rule Allows Trump Administration To Collect DNA From Migrants (Daily Caller)..... 10 DOJ approves plan to collect DNA from arrested illegal immigrants (Washington Times) ..... 11 Trump administration finalizes plan to collect DNA from illegal immigrants in federal custody (Washington Examiner) ..... 12 Supreme Court asked to block order threatening Trump's return-to-Mexico asylum policy (Politico) ..... 13 Trump asks Supreme Court to let officials enforce 'remain in Mexico' policy (The Hill) ..... 14 Trump administration asks Supreme Court to let it enforce 'Remain in Mexico' asylum policy (CNN) ..... 15 DOJ asks Supreme Court to preserve 'Remain in Mexico' border policy (Washington Times) ..... 16 Justice Department Warns of Border Rush as It Asks Supreme Court to Protect Asylum Policy (Free Beacon) 16 House Democrats to investigate Trump deals with Central America (Washington Times) ..... 18 17 attorneys general ask administration to delay public charge rule during coronavirus outbreak (CNN) ..... 18 Trump signs $8.3B bill to fund COVID19 fight, will visit CDC (Breitbart) ..... 19 President Donald Trump Signs $8.3 Billion Funding Bill To Fight Coronavirus Into Law (Daily Caller) ..... 20 2 Trump signs $8.3 billion bill to fight coronavirus (Washington Times) ..... 21 Where That $8.3 Billion In U.S. Coronavirus Funding Will And Won't Go (NPR) ..... 22 Trump Visits CDC After Coronavirus Fears Throw Schedule Into Chaos (Aspen Public Radio) ..... 24 Chaos at hospitals due to shortage of coronavirus tests (Los Angeles Times) ..... 26 Coronavirus deaths near 3,300 as U.S. scrambles to test thousands (CBS News) ..... 28 First Responders Are 'Trying To Stay Ahead' Of Coronavirus (NPR) ..... 29 Trump wants cruise ship passengers to stay at sea, but leaves decision up to Pence (FOX News) ..... 31 Cruise lines planning 'significant' anticoronavirus measures (Politico) ..... 33 White House considers tax relief for airlines, travel firms amid coronavirus (Reuters) ..... 35 How Congress is prepping in case of a coronavirus outbreak on Capitol Hill (CNN) ..... 36 2 members of Congress in isolation after potential exposure to coronavirus (San Francisco Chronicle) ..... 38 Trump picks Mark Meadows to be new White House chief of staff (Washington Post) ..... 39 North Carolina's Mark Meadows will leave Congress early for White House post (USA Today) ..... 42 [NY] Exclusive: NY Gov. Cuomo speaks out after declaring state of emergency over coronavirus (FOX News) ..... 43 [PA] Pennsylvania governor confirms first two cases of coronavirus (The Hill) ..... 46 [DC] Officials confirm first coronavirus case in nation's capital (AP) ..... 47 [DC] Former acting Homeland Security inspector general indicted in data theft of 250,000 workers (Washington Post) ..... 49 [DC] Former senior US Homeland Security official indicted for theft (Breitbart) ..... 50 [DC] Ex-inspector general at U.S. Department of Homeland Security indicted for stealing government property (Reuters) ..... 50 [DC] Former Homeland Security watchdog charged with defrauding the government (Washington Times) ..... 51 [VA] US Marine contracts coronavirus in Virginia, the first case in the state (The Hill) ..... 52 [GA] Cruise Ship Carrying 3,500 Passengers Headed to Georgia Military Base for Coronavirus Testing, Quarantine (Breitbart) ..... 52 [FL] Pence says US tracking another cruise ship over coronavirus concerns (CNN) ..... 53 [FL] Cruise docks at Florida post after virus test of 2 staff (AP) ..... 54 [WA] Coronavirus Motel Ignites Clash at Epicenter of Seattle Outbreak (Bloomberg) ..... 55 [WA] First U.S. College to Close Classrooms as Virus Spreads. More Could Follow. (New York Times) ..... 57 [WA] As coronavirus quietly spread, a nondescript nursing home became the deadliest hot spot in the U.S. (Washington Post) ..... 60 [WA] This nursing home is at the center of Washington's coronavirus. Here's what one first responder saw there (CNN) ..... 61 3 [CA] Coronavirus: 21 People On Grand Princess Cruise Ship Test Positive (NPR) ..... 63 [CA] Nearly Half of 46 California Cruise Ship Passengers Tested Have Coronavirus, as U.S. Cases Top 400 (US News & World Report)

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under asylum deal with US (The Hill) ..... 79 [Guatemala] Guatemala Seeks to Limit Migrants Returned Under U.S. Asylum Agreement (Reuters) ..... 80 Immigration and Customs Enforcement [NY] Bill De Blasio's NYC: Illegal Alien Accused of Child Rape Freed into U.S. (Breitbart) ..... 81 [TN] The US is deporting a Tennessee man who was an armed guard at a Nazi concentration camp (CNN) ..... 82 [AL] Illegal Alien Accused of Physically Abusing, Raping His Step-Children (Breitbart) ..... 83 [ID] Illegal Alien, 31, Charged with Raping 14-Year-Old Girl in Idaho (Breitbart) ..... 83 [CA] ICE agent charged with sexually abusing foster child (Los Angeles Times) ..... 84 [CA] San Francisco Ignored ICE And Released An Illegal Alien Who Had Been Arrested Seven Times (Daily Caller) ..... 84 [CA] ICE defies sanctuary law to arrest illegal immigrant at San Francisco courthouse (Washington Times) ..... 86 [CA] City officials allege ICE defied 'sanctuary' law with San Francisco courthouse arrest (Washington Examiner) ..... 87 Citizenship and Immigration Services Donald Trump Rejects Lindsey Graham's Push for DACA Amnesty (Breitbart) ..... 88 Chilean Nationals on Tourist Visas Burglarize Homes of Wealthy in New York, California (Breitbart) ..... 90 [IL] With No Braille Option, a Blind Man Failed His Citizenship Exam (New York Times) ..... 90 Customs and Border Protection Military to Be Sent to Border Before Supreme Court's 'Remain in Mexico' Ruling (New York Times) ..... 93 Pentagon sends more troops to the border ahead of SCOTUS decision (Politico) ..... 94 4 Pentagon Sends Troops to California Border amid Fears of Border Rush (Breitbart) ..... 94 Trump administration dispatching "crisis response force" to southern border (CBS News) ..... 96 Trump administration to send approximately 160 troops to southern border as it awaits asylum policy ruling (CNN) ..... 97 Trump to deploy 160 active duty troops to border in response to court rulings, coronavirus (USA Today) ..... 98 Trump Administration Deploying 'Crisis Response Force' At Southern Border In Wake Of Court Decision (Daily Caller) ..... 100 With 'Remain in Mexico' in limbo, Trump administration sends troops to San Diego border (San Diego Union Tribune) ..... 101 More Migrants Deported than Apprehended at Border over Last 5 Months, Say Feds (Breitbart) ..... 103 200 Pounds of Meth, Fentanyl, Cocaine, Heroin Seized at Interior Immigration Checkpoints (Breitbart) 103 [TX] More Kids Are Making The Dangerous Trip Across Texas-Mexico Border (NPR) ..... 104 [AZ] Arizona DPS Do 24-Hour Patrols Again in Some Border Areas (AP) ... 104 Federal Emergency Management Agency Trump's visits to natural disaster sites as president (FOX News) ..... 106 [TN] Tennessee tornadoes' death toll was tied to a lack of warning, awareness and readiness (Washington Post) ..... 107 [TN] Trump promises to 'take care' of Tennessee tornado victims (Breitbart) ..... 112 [TN] We Love Them': Trump Tours And Consoles Tornado-Ravaged Tennessee (NPR) ..... 113 [TN] 'We're going to be with them all the way': Trump tours Tennessee after deadly tornadoes (USA Today) ..... 114 [TN] Trump visits tornado-ravaged town in Tennessee, promises help (Washington Times) ..... 115 [TN] Black neighborhoods of North Nashville suffer heavy blow from tornadoes (San Francisco Chronicle) ..... 116 [MN] High water closes highway in southern Minnesota (Minnesota Public Radio) ..... 117 [OK] At least 30 wildfires have burned more than 30,000 acres in Oklahoma (CNN) ..... 117 [CA] Large earthquake strikes off coast of Northern California (AP) ..... 118 Secret Service Secret Service says no 2020 Democrats 'have requested protection' (Washington Examiner) ..... 118 [MA] Chicopee Police need help identifying counterfeit bills suspect (WWLP) ..... 119 [MA] Nearly 5,700 stolen credit and debit card numbers discovered in card skimming investigation after devices found on gas pumps in Massachusetts (MassLive) ..... 119 [MD] CPAC attendee tests positive for coronavirus (Politico) ..... 121 [SC] Two Men Arrested on Child Pornography Charges (South Carolina Attorney General) ..... 122 [FL] Cloned credit card numbers, hidden gas tanks, and fuel theft (FOX 13 News) ..... 123 [FL] Trio tries duping

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Jacksonville stores with funny money (News4 JAX) ..... 124 5 [IL] Fake money passed in Milan (QuadCities) ..... 125 [MN] Girl shot in Oak Lawn Township after juveniles buy marijuana with counterfeit bills (KSTP) ..... 125 [IA] Counterfeiting suspect captured by multiple law enforcement agencies (Estherville Daily News) ..... 126 [TX] Police Searching For Persons Of Interest In Hurst ATM Skimmer Thefts (CBS Dallas Fort Worth) ..... 127 [TX] Houston Man Sentenced in Beaumont Gas Pump Skimming Scheme (Gilmer Mirror) ..... 127 [OK] Credit card skimmers found at Ninnekah truck stop, police say (KFOR) ..... 128 [WY] Casper Pd Warns Of Coronavirus Scams (Oil City News) ..... 128 [AZ] Counterfeit currency discovered in Safford (Eastern Arizona Courier) ... 129 [CA] Calaveras County man facing multiple drug possession, firearm charges (Recordnet) ..... 130 [CA] San Bruno police arrest three on attempted fraud, explosives charges (The Mercury News) ..... 131 Coast Guard [CA] Coast Guard Delivers Coronavirus Test Kits to Cruise Ship Off California (Bloomberg) ..... 131 CISA/Cybersecurity [KY] Kentucky university system network reboots after cyberattack (San Francisco Chronicle) ..... 131 Terrorism Investigations U.S. Creates New Envoy Position to Counter Rising Terrorism in Sahel (New York Times) ..... 132 DOJ IG: FBI Missed Opportunities to Avert Terror Attacks Under ObamaComey (Breitbart) ..... 133 One more black eye for the FBI: Agents missed chances to stop U.S. terrorists (Washington Times) ..... 135 National Security News [Cuba] Judge Orders Medical Panel to Evaluate Tortured Guantánamo Prisoner (New York Times) ..... 137 [Italy] Coronavirus: Italy Orders Massive Shutdown; Cruise Ship Gets OK To Dock In California (NPR) ..... 139 [Egypt] On Nile Cruiser, 12 Crew Test Positive for Virus, and Egypt Fears Broader Outbreak (New York Times) ..... 141 [Egypt] Egypt Says Cruise Ship Quarantined Over New Virus Cluster (Bloomberg) ..... 143 [Turkey] Erdogan Risks Sanctions With April Date for Activating Russian S-400s (Bloomberg) ..... 145 [Afghanistan] Chaotic week after USTaliban deal leaves Afghans' fate unclear (Breitbart) ..... 146 [Russia] Russia Closes Border With Iran as Coronavirus Spread Worsens (US News & World Report) ..... 148 [China] China: Wuhan Could See No More Fresh Coronavirus Infections by End of March (Breitbart) ..... 149 [China] Shanghai tightens airport checks as imported virus infections in China jump (Reuters) ..... 149 [China] Trump Administration Blocks Chinese Acquisition of Hotel Software Company (New York Times) ..... 151 [China] Trump orders Chinese company to divest ownership of U.S. firm, citing national security concerns (Washington Post) ..... 152 [China] Trump Blocks Chinese Deal for U.S. Hotel Software Firm StayNTouch Over Security (Bloomberg) ..... 153 6 [China] CIA funnels cash to private company aimed at defeating Huawei (Washington Times) ..... 154 [China] 'Global espionage operation': US wages all-out campaign to convince UK to reject Huawei (Washington Examiner) ..... 156 [China] Grindr sold by Chinese owner after national security concerns (Los Angeles Times) ..... 158 [China] Grindr's China Owner Sells Gay App for $600 Million (Bloomberg) .... 159 [China] Mark Esper presses Chinese general on 'unsafe' use of laser against U.S. warplane (Washington Times) . 159 [North Korea] N. Korea fires weapons after threatening 'momentous' action (Los Angeles Times) ..... 161 [North Korea] North Korea fires three projectiles in into sea, South Korea says (Reuters) ..... 163 [South Korea] South Korea's coronavirus cases climb above 7,000, most cases traced to church (Reuters) ..... 164 Presidential Tweets Editorial Note: The DHS Daily Briefing is a collection of news articles related to Department's mission. The inclusion of particular stories is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse the political viewpoints or affiliations included in news coverage. Top News Trump Administration to Gather DNA Data on Detained Migrants (Bloomberg) Bloomberg [3/6/2020 10:33 AM, Chris Strohm, 6400K] The Trump administration has moved a step closer to requiring the collection of DNA samples from many of the undocumented immigrants held in U.S. detention facilities, a dramatic expansion of enforcement powers that civil rights groups say could be abused. Under a new rule announced Friday, the Department of Homeland Security can collect DNA samples from non-U.S. citizens who are being detained for criminal offenses in federal facilities. The samples would be put into a massive database operated by the FBI that federal, state and local authorities use to identify and locate violent criminals who are in the country illegally. "The failure to collect DNA has allowed subjects accused of violent crimes, including homicide and sexual assault, to avoid detection even when they have been detained multiple times," according to a Justice Department statement. But civil liberties groups have said that forced DNA collection could affect hundreds of thousands of people, including refugees, asylum seekers and children who are in administrative detention but haven't committed any crimes. "Collecting the genetic blueprints of people in immigration detention doesn't make us safer," Naureen Shah, a senior advocacy and policy counsel with the American Civil Liberties Union, said in a statement on Friday. "It makes it easier for the government to attack immigrant communities, and brings us one step closer to the government knocking on all of 7 our doors demanding our DNA under the same flawed justification that we may one day commit a crime." The rule will be published officially on March 9. The Homeland Security

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Department has been operating a test program since January in anticipation of the rule. A 2005 federal law required agencies to collect DNA samples from undocumented persons being detained in the U.S., but exemptions issued by Homeland Security have prevented the collection of certain categories of data. The new rule eliminates exemptions, giving the attorney general the authority to direct the collection. DOJ to take DNA samples from immigrants illegally entering U.S. (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 3:57 PM, UPI, 1973K] DNA samples will soon be taken from migrants crossing the U.S. border and stored in a federal criminal database, the Justice Department ruled Friday. The move, a significant expansion of immigration law, is likely to be challenged in court. The ruling authorizes the Department of Homeland Security to collect DNA samples from immigrants who illegally enter the country and are in federal custody. The collection is authorized by the DNA Fingerprint Act, a law passed in 2005. It requires a DNA sample, typically done with a simple swabbing of the mouth, from anyone arrested, facing charges or convicted, as well as from any non-U.S. citizen detained under federal authority. Although 15 years old, the law has been only sporadically enforced. DHS, during the Obama administration, said it lacked appropriate manpower and sought an exemption from the law. In October, the Trump administration disclosed plans to enforce it, adding the technology and process is now easier and less expensive. The results will be sent to the FBI's Combined DNA Index System, known as CODIS, which the FBI defines as "the generic term used to describe the FBI's program of support for criminal justice DNA databases." It is similar to the FBI's fingerprint database, which is used to identify suspects through fingerprints found at crime scenes. Pilot programs for DNA collection began in January in Detroit and at the Eagle Pass entry port in Texas. Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., Rep. Veronica Escobar, D-Mich., and Rep. Joaquin Castro, DTexas, are critical of the DNA collection process, saying it "reinforces the xenophobic myth that undocumented immigrants are more likely to commit crimes." Trump Administration Poised To Start Collecting DNA From Immigration Detainees (NPR) NPR [3/6/2020 5:25 PM, Merrit Kennedy, 4112K] Starting in April, immigration authorities will start taking cheek swabs to collect DNA from hundreds of thousands of immigration detainees in federal custody each year. The Trump Administration says the policy change will help law enforcement apprehend criminal suspects. The data collected will be transferred to an FBI database, so that in the future, law enforcement officials could check if these samples matched any DNA recovered 8 from a crime scene. Immigrant rights advocates describe it as dehumanizing and a serious breach of privacy against vulnerable populations. "It's about miscasting these individuals, many of whom are seeking asylum in this country ... as people who pose a threat that somehow would justify holding onto the most intimate information about them indefinitely," Naureen Shah, senior advocacy and policy counsel with the American Civil Liberties Union, tells NPR. She notes the ACLU also opposes DNA collection from people arrested or investigated for crimes, due to concerns about the risk of misidentification. The Justice Department said Friday that it is formally amending regulations and pushing forward with the DNA collection plan, which was first floated in October. The final rule is scheduled to publish on Monday. The Department of Justice said the final rule is simply implementing a 2005 law called the DNA Fingerprint Act, which gave authorities broad authority to collect DNA samples from people in federal custody. "Today's rule assists federal agencies in implementing longstanding aspects of our immigration laws as passed by bipartisan majorities of Congress," Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey A. Rosen said in a statement. "Its implementation will help to enforce federal law with the use of science." Until now, however, the law allowed the Secretary of Homeland Security to waive the collection of DNA samples from some migrants "because of operational exigencies or resource limitations." During the Obama administration, federal officials decided it was not feasible to collect DNA in this sweeping fashion from individuals in immigration detention. The Trump administration has removed this option, and now requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to collect DNA from immigration detainees. It says that DNA collection has become easier and cheaper since the 2005 law was passed. The final rule says the DNA information that will be collected is a "sanitized 'genetic fingerprint'" that "can be used to identify an individual uniquely, but they do not disclose the individual's traits, disorders, or dispositions." Shah says the Trump administration officials have "tried to downplay what they can do with this information." "This isn't DNA from information that's going to be looked at once and then disappear from a database. It's going to stay in governments hands," she says, and she's concerned the way it is used could change over time. "That's why we have a lot of concerns about how this particular program, which targets immigrants in detention, actually is a precursor to deploying this kind of surveillance technology to lots of vulnerable ... communities in the United States and ultimately be used as a tool for full scale surveillance," Shah adds. 9 The Trump administration says the DNA information collected would not, and could not, be used for surveillance. According to the final rule, sample collections would be expected to ramp up over several years, eventually reaching about 748,000 new samples annually. The information will be added to the FBI's Combined DNA Index System, known as CODIS, which authorities use to search for DNA that matches traces of biological material found at crime scenes. The data that will be gathered from immigration detainees per year is expected to be more than the entire database from almost any individual state. The Trump administration has repeatedly suggested that immigrants in general pose a criminal

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threat to the U.S., even though studies have shown that they commit crimes at lower rates than people born in the U.S. Justice Dept sets in motion mass DNA collection from detained immigrants; effort has drawn fierce resistance (USA Today) USA Today [3/6/2020 12:02 AM, Kevin Johnson, 5611K] The Justice Department on Friday set in motion the mass collection of DNA from detained immigrants by issuing a long-anticipated final rule authorizing genetic sampling from potentially hundreds of thousands of migrants placed into federal custody each year. The enormous government collection effort, first outlined in October, builds on a pilot program that has been underway in Michigan and Texas since January.Absent a legal challenge, the expanded program would begin in April. Trump administration officials have cast the effort as a valuable tool to help identify criminal suspects, while civil liberties advocates have denounced the program as an affront to personal privacy. Under the program, the DNA samples would be transferred by federal immigration authorities to a database managed by the FBI, known as the Combined DNA Index System or CODIS. Democratic primary: Warren slams 'bullying' Sanders supporters as she exits race, says candidates are responsible for followers' actions For years, the system has been used by state and local authorities seeking assistance in identifying suspects in violent crimes. Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen said Friday the expanded collection program would "help enforce federal law with the use of science." But civil liberties advocates have voiced fierce opposition, describing the program as an abuse of government authority. Vera Eidelman, staff attorney with the ACLU's Speech Privacy and Technology Project, has characterized the effort as "dehumanizing." "This unjustifiable step towards full population surveillance threatens to subvert our 10 foundational values of freedom, autonomy, and presumed innocence," Eidelman said in November, urging the Trump administration to abandon the plan. Initial authority for the DNA collection, federal officials have said, is set out in the 2005 DNA Fingerprint Act, which provided for collection from non-citizens in U.S. custody. Immigrant detainees, however, have been exempted since the Obama administration, under an agreement between then-Attorney General Eric Holder and then-DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano. New attention was focused on the detainee exemption in August when a whistle-blower complaint was shared with the White House and Congress, asserting that federal immigration authorities had failed to fully carry out the 2005 law. In October, Rosen said the rule change represented a "lawful exercise of the attorney general's authority, provided by Congress, to collect DNA samples from non-United States persons who are properly detained under the authority of the United States." The cost of carrying out the collection program, according to previous estimates, stands at about $13 million, a obligation that will largely on the FBI. On Friday, the Justice Department said that the FBI's laboratory has the capacity to handle the increased DHS sampling "and its capabilities can be scaled up to meet additional capacity." Justice said the FBI will provide DHS with the collection kits, analyze samples, and "ensure that law enforcement agencies use the results in accordance with the FBI's stringent CODIS privacy requirements." New Rule Allows Trump Administration To Collect DNA From Migrants (Daily Caller) Daily Caller [3/6/2020 11:08 AM, Jason Hopkins, 566K] The Trump administration will begin collecting the DNA of all migrants who are apprehended at the border or are in U.S. detention, allowing authorities to store this information in a federal criminal database. The Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a final rule on Friday that will soon allow the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to take DNA samples from every migrant that is placed under its custody. Under the new rule, which is set to go into effect in April, immigration officers will be required take cheek swabs from potentially hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens who appear at the border every year. "Today's rule assists federal agencies in implementing longstanding aspects of our immigration laws as passed by bipartisan majorities of Congress," Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey A. Rosen said in a Friday statement. "Its implementation will help to enforce federal law with the use of science." The DNA samples collected by immigration agents will be stored in the FBI's Combined DNA Index system, a database that is used by law enforcement agencies at the state and local level to identify criminal suspects. The new rule actually pertains to the DNA Fingerprint Act of 2005 — a law that was passed 11 by overwhelming majorities in Congress at the time — which allows DHS agencies to "collect DNA samples from individuals who are arrested, facing charges, or convicted or from non-United States persons who are detained under the authority of the United States." The DNA Fingerprint Act, however, was not implemented after the Obama administration established a waiver. At first meant to be temporary, the Obama administration kept renewing the waiver each year. DOJ and DHS officials reached the conclusion that the failure to collect DNA samples from migrants has enabled individual accused of various heinous crimes to avoid detection from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. The Trump administration has been preparing for a sweeping rollout of migrant DNA collection, having launched pilot programs in the past. These programs have already yielded results, revealing numerous migrants to be lying about their familial relationships in an attempt to circumvent U.S. immigration laws. Under the new rule, refusing to allow immigration officials administer a DNA test will result in a misdemeanor charge. Saliva swabs of every migrant apprehended at the U.S. border will result in large-scale DNA collection. In fiscal year 2019, for example, CBP officials apprehended more than 850,000 foreign nationals, according to the agency's data. DOJ approves plan to collect DNA from arrested

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illegal immigrants (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/6/2020 8:58 AM, Stephen Dinan, 482K] The Trump administration finalized a new policy Friday that paves the way for Homeland Security to collect DNA from all illegal immigrants the department arrests, fulfilling the terms of a 2005 law that the government has been evading for years. Under the new rules, posted online Friday and slated to be published in the Federal Register next week, Attorney General William P. Barr can cancel an Obama-era waiver and order collection of DNA by agents and officers in both U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). It was supposed to be already happening, but in 2010 then-Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. and then-Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano worked out a waiver. It was supposed to be temporary, to give Ms. Napolitano's agencies time to figure out the collection, but it was renewed each year without any debate. The situation was exposed by whistleblowers, who told the U.S. Office of Special Counsel about it. In a report last year, that office said serious criminal suspects had avoided responsibility for crimes, including homicide and sexual assault, for years solely because their DNA wasn't properly collected by CBP or ICE. Prodded by that report, the Trump administration took steps to require collection, and Friday's rule is the final answer. 12 Homeland Security has been preparing for the final policy for months, and began a pilot program in January to test out collection. ICE and CBP say the DNA isn't likely to be processed fast enough to spot targets during the short time they are in custody before they are deported or released, but the agencies said it might generate investigative leads for other federal law enforcement. Those under age 14 won't have DNA taken, nor will those who show up at the border in need of immediate medical attention or with a mental impairment, CBP says. Once ICE or CBP collects DNA, it will be sent to the FBI for processing and entry into the FBI's main DNA database. Refusing to give DNA is a misdemeanor offense. Liberal Democrats on Capitol Hill have complained about the DNA policy, calling it "a serious human rights issue." "This policy reinforces the xenophobic myth that undocumented immigrants are more likely top commit crimes than U.S.-born individuals," three lawmakers, led by Rep. Rashida Tlaib, Michigan Democrat, wrote in a letter to Homeland Security earlier this year. The lawmakers didn't address the 2005 law requiring DNA collection, written by their branch of government, instead calling on Homeland Security to end the collection on its own. Homeland Security has for years collected DNA from those it detained on criminal charges, including those charged with jumping the border. But that didn't include those being detained for investigation of immigration claims such as illegal presence or claiming asylum, which are often part of civil law. The 2005 law, however, applies to all persons in custody, the Trump administration says. Based on last year's numbers, the new rule would have meant nearly 750,000 more DNA samples would be submitted annually, the Justice Department said. Trump administration finalizes plan to collect DNA from illegal immigrants in federal custody (Washington Examiner) Washington Examiner [3/6/2020 8:45 AM, Anna Giaritelli, 570K] The Trump administration finalized a rule that will allow federal law enforcement on the border to fingerprint illegal immigrants when they are arrested, following a decadelong delay in its implementation. The Justice Department on Friday published a final rule that will allow it to mandate the Department of Homeland Security to comply fully with the bipartisan DNA Fingerprint Act of 2005. The change gives Attorney General William Barr the authority to require that Customs and Border Protection begin fingerprinting noncitizens in its custody. Noncitizens have been exempt since the 2010 request of Obama-era DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano. The DNA Fingerprint Act required federal agencies to "collect DNA samples from individuals who are arrested, facing charges, or convicted or from non-United States persons who are 13 detained under the authority of the United States." In 2008, the Bush administration announced plans to implement the law but included four potential exempt groups: immigrants legally in the country, immigrants at a port of entry or asylum-seekers, and immigrants arrested by border agents working in the maritime environment. In 2010, then-Attorney General Eric Holder said the DHS could refuse to collect DNA from immigrants in CBP custody, including those who were arrested illegally crossing the border and those arrested within the country by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Shortly after President Trump took office in 2017, then-DHS Secretary John Kelly mandated the department begin enhancing its biometric capabilities: the way it collects data from a finger, a face, an iris, voice, and DNA. Last August, the Office of the Special Counsel reported to the White House and Congress that CBP had not fingerprinted illegal immigrants. Special counsel Henry J. Kerner said, "CBP's noncompliance with the law has allowed criminal detainees to walk free" and that the Justice Department should reconsider its position on not collecting fingerprints. In October, the Justice Department issued a notice that it was close to starting collection from illegal immigrants. Late last fall, CBP launched a pilot DNA program to begin collecting samples from illegal immigrants in custody in two places on the border. The FBI's national database, the Combined DNA Index System, can be accessed electronically by local, state, and federal forensic laboratories for the investigation of crimes nationwide. In fiscal 2019, which ended last September, CBP encountered 1.14 million people at the border who illegally entered the country between official land crossing points or were deemed unable to enter at those ports of entry. Supreme Court asked to block order threatening Trump's return-to-Mexico asylum policy (Politico) Politico [3/6/2020 12:57 PM, Josh Gerstein, 2003K] The Justice Department is asking the Supreme

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Court to block an appeals court ruling that threatens to prevent the Trump administration from carrying out its remain-in-Mexico asylum policy along much of the southern border starting next week. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals issued an order Wednesday that would halt the policy in California and Arizona starting on March 12. Under the policy put into effect in January 2019, most non-Mexicans who seek asylum at U.S. border checkpoints or while crossing the border illegally are sent back to Mexico to await further hearings on their claims. Critics say the policy violates U.S. immigration laws and puts asylum seekers at grave risk, particularly due to violence in certain regions of Mexico. Last month, a three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit sided with a lower-court judge who said the policy appeared to be illegal. Trump administration officials say that decision caused a "rush on the border" by thousands of asylum applicants whose lawyers told them to return to the U.S. to take advantage of the 14 new ruling. The 9th Circuit quickly lifted its own ruling temporarily at the Justice Department's request, but in an order Wednesday said the decision would take effect in California and Arizona starting next Thursday unless the Supreme Court steps in. The appeals court said it was "very clear" that the Trump administration's policy violates the law and that it was causing "extreme and irreversible harm to" asylum applicants. However, Solicitor General Noel Francisco said in the emergency stay filing with the high court Friday that the greater danger is of chaos at the border. "Absent a stay, the injunction is virtually guaranteed to impose irreparable harm by prompting a rush on the border and potentially requiring the government to allow into the United States and detain thousands of aliens who lack any entitlement to enter this country, or else to release them into the interior where many will simply disappear," Francisco wrote. The 9th Circuit narrowed the effect of its ruling because of an ongoing debate about the power of courts to issue nationwide injunctions. California and Arizona are in the within the 9th Circuit's jurisdiction, while New Mexico and Texas are in other circuits. But Francisco said the geographic distinction the judges sought to draw — and which the Justice Department has sought in other cases — would have little impact because asylum seekers would simply move to the west. "Many of the thousands of aliens in Mexico across the border from States in other circuits would likely make their way to the border with Arizona or California," he wrote. The Justice Department's request Friday was directed to Justice Elena Kagan, who oversees the 9th Circuit, but she is likely to refer the matter to the full court for action. Trump asks Supreme Court to let officials enforce 'remain in Mexico' policy (The Hill) The Hill [3/6/2020 2:32 PM, John Kruzel, 1762K] The Trump administration asked the Supreme Court on Friday to let it enforce a policy that requires asylum-seekers to remain in Mexico while their cases proceed through American courts. The request comes after a lower court deemed the "Remain in Mexico" policy illegal and ordered a suspension that was scheduled to take effect March 12. The policy, known as Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), aims to curb entry into the U.S. by asylum-seekers, many of whom are Central American migrants. The administration asked that it be allowed to continue while it appeals the lower court ruling to the Supreme Court. In its Friday filing, the administration said the policy has helped alleviate the "migration crisis" at the United States' southern border since the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) implemented it a little over a year ago. According to DHS figures, more than 60,000 asylum-seekers have been blocked from entry. 15 The program has been used to "process tens of thousands of aliens applying for asylum ... without the need to detain the applicants in the United States during the weeks and months it takes to process their applications," the filing reads. Critics have blasted the Trump administration's policy as cruel and say it endangers the lives of those fleeing violence and other hardships. Justice Elena Kagan called for MPP's challengers to respond by Monday afternoon, according to a Supreme Court spokesperson. A federal district court in California last April ruled that the policy violates U.S. immigration law and contravenes international human rights norms. The court ordered the administration to stop the practice along the entire U.S. border. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit upheld the lower court's legal ruling, but the appellate court narrowed the injunction to apply to California and Arizona, the two border states under its jurisdiction. The injunction, if takes effect on Thursday, would affect those two states, but would not apply to New Mexico or Texas. Trump administration asks Supreme Court to let it enforce 'Remain in Mexico' asylum policy (CNN) CNN [3/6/2020 11:35 AM, Ariane de Vogue, 5551K] The Trump administration filed an emergency petition with the Supreme Court Friday, asking the justices to allow the controversial "Remain in Mexico" asylum policy to remain in effect pending appeal. The policy mandates that non-Mexican asylum seekers stay in Mexico as they await hearings in the United States. It has resulted in the creation of makeshift camps where hundreds of migrants have waited for weeks if not months in squalid and unsafe conditions. In some cases, migrant families have opted to send children across the US-Mexico border alone. The 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals blocked the policy last week, but is allowing it to remain in effect just long enough for the Supreme Court to consider whether to step in. In court papers, Solicitor General Noel Francisco argued the policy has "dramatically curtailed the number of aliens approaching or attempting to cross the border" and noted that it has "enabled the temporary return of over 60,000." After the appeals court blocked the policy last week, but before it issued a temporary stay of its own order, there was a "rush" to the border. "Predictably, within hours, DHS's orderly processing of migrant arrivals at the border faced chaos," the Justice Department wrote. "Large groups of migrants

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in Mexico began arriving at multiple ports of entry along the Southwest border seeking immediate entry into the country." Lawyers for immigrant rights groups argue the policy violates immigration law and that individuals who are fleeing their homeland out of fears of persecution, are now facing 16 dangerous conditions in Mexico. Francisco is asking the Supreme Court to put the lower court opinion on hold or narrow it to apply only to plaintiffs involved in the case while the appeals process plays out. DOJ asks Supreme Court to preserve 'Remain in Mexico' border policy (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/6/2020 5:49 AM, Stephen Dinan, 482K] The Justice Department petitioned the Supreme Court on Friday to preserve the key program that solved last year's border surge, after a lower court ruled it was illegal. Known formally as the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), and more commonly called "Remain in Mexico," the policy allows the U.S. to push migrants who entered from Mexico back across the border to wait for their immigration court dates. About 60,000 migrants had been subjected to MPP. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued a ruling last week that MPP was illegal, but stayed the order. On Wednesday, the court gave the Justice Department a week to appeal to the Supreme Court or else the injunction against MPP would take effect. In its petition to the Supreme Court on Friday the Justice Department said "chaos" erupted after the original 9th Circuit ruling, with large groups of migrants storming border ports of entry demanding immediate entry. "Relief from this Court is therefore urgently needed," wrote Solicitor General Noel J. Francisco. Justice Department Warns of Border Rush as It Asks Supreme Court to Protect Asylum Policy (Free Beacon) Free Beacon [3/7/2020 5:00 AM, Kevin Daley, 118K] Fearing an unprecedented influx of asylum seekers on the southern border, the Trump administration is asking the Supreme Court to lift a court decision blocking implementation of the "Wait in Mexico" policy, which requires asylum seekers to remain in Mexico until their claims are heard. The Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld an injunction blocking the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) in February. The appeals court reined in the injunction Wednesday, saying the protocol would be blocked only in Arizona and California. The injunction's reduced reach will still foment chaos at ports of entry, the administration told the justices in a Friday legal filing. "The injunction is virtually guaranteed to impose irreparable harm by prompting a rush on the border," Solicitor General Noel Francisco told the justices in a legal filing. "There is no need to speculate about the consequences. Immediately following the 9th Circuit's Feb. 28 decision, hundreds of migrants presented themselves at the border for admission." The Ninth Circuit decision could prove damaging to President Donald Trump's reelection prospects. Unless the injunction is stayed, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will 17 be responsible for housing thousands of asylum seekers pending decisions on their applications. A CBP official wrote in a sworn statement that the agency does not have the capacity to accommodate those migrants and warned of overcrowding and threats to health and safety. Reports of poor conditions at migrant detention facilities beset the administration throughout 2019. The same CBP official wrote that lawyers for Mexican-based asylum seekers contacted the agency within hours of the lower decision seeking admission for their clients. One lawyer asked to bring 1,000 individuals to a port of entry. The Trump administration says the migrants now waiting in Mexico are subject to a provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) that authorizes the attorney general to require that asylum seekers wait outside U.S. borders. The Ninth Circuit rejected that argument, saying that provision applies to applicants who pose a threat to U.S. security. A different INA provision provides that asylum seekers with a credible fear of persecution are entitled to remain in the United States before their claims are heard, the court said. The Ninth Circuit also said MPP leaves asylum seekers in Mexico at heightened risk of violence, in violation of U.S. treaty obligations. The panel noted one migrant-plaintiff currently waiting in Mexico expressed fear of violent retribution from the MS-13 gang. The plaintiff said he left Honduras to escape MS-13 violence, only to learn the gang's Mexican elements are vindictively targeting asylum seekers near the U.S. border. U.S. ambassador to Mexico Christopher Landau submitted his own sworn statement warning that the Ninth Circuit's decision will damage the government's relationship with Mexico. Landau's intervention is significant because the courts are loathe to disturb diplomatic relations. "It is my firm belief, as the United States ambassador to Mexico, that a stay of the panel decision pending further review is imperative to prevent a crisis on our country's southern border and in its critically important relationship with Mexico," Landau wrote. The Supreme Court has become a major arbiter of U.S. immigration policy since 2017. The Trump administration has obtained emergency stays from the justices after interim lower court defeats in cases involving the travel ban and the use of Pentagon funds for border wall construction. The Court will also decide whether the government lawfully rescinded the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program by June. The MPP applies to asylum-seekers who pass through a third country on their way to the United States. Approximately 60,000 aliens were returned to Mexico under the protocol since January 2019. The U.S. and Mexican governments finalized MPP in 2018, after successive waves of Central American migrants journeyed through Mexico to submit asylum claims at U.S. ports of entry. The protocol does not apply to Mexican nationals. Friday's application was referred to Justice Elena Kagan, who hears emergency matters arising from the Ninth Circuit. Kagan ordered the immigrant plaintiffs to file a response on Monday. She will likely refer the matter to the full Court for disposition. 18 The case is No. 19A960 Chad Wolf v. Innovation Law Lab.

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House Democrats to investigate Trump deals with Central America (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/6/2020 8:07 AM, Stephen Dinan, 482K] House Democrats announced Friday they've launched an investigation into the State Department's role in striking deals with Central American countries that have helped stem illegal immigration, saying the agreements might violate U.S. law. House Foreign Affairs Chairman Eliot L. Engel and several subcommittee chairs said asylum-seekers deserve protections in the U.S., and the deals that allow Homeland Security to send some asylum-seekers to other countries they crossed through en route to the U.S. is a slap to the migrants. The U.S. struck a deal last year with Guatemala, and is working on agreements with El Salvador and Honduras. Under the Guatemala deal nearly 700 people have been sent back to that country. But Mr. Engel and his colleagues said few of them have actually applied for protection in Guatemala. He said that's proof they're not getting the protections they need. Homeland Security officials have said people who don't follow through on applications after they're pushed back across the border often realized they don't have a valid claim and, once denied the illegal foothold in the U.S. that they were seeking, they give up and go home. The Trump administration put pressure on the Central American governments by suspending foreign aid money. The flow of money was restored after those countries agreed to do more to stem the tide of their own citizens fleeing north, and of the wave of migrants from elsewhere who are crossing their territory to reach the U.S. Administration officials say true asylum-seekers should apply in the first safe country they reach after leaving home. Those that don't, and instead continue to the U.S., are more likely to be normal illegal immigrants coming for jobs or to reunite with family. Mr. Engel and his colleagues, in their letter, said those migrants deserve a chance to make their case here. 17 attorneys general ask administration to delay public charge rule during coronavirus outbreak (CNN) CNN [3/6/2020 10:48 PM, Delano Massey and Geneva Sands, 5551K] A coalition of 17 attorneys general across the country, led by Washington state's Bob Ferguson, have signed a letter asking the Trump administration to delay the new public charge rule for immigrants while the coronavirus outbreak is ongoing. 19 The public charge rule, which went into effect February 24, establishes the criteria for who can get green cards based on whether they use or are expected to use government benefits, such as food stamps, Medicaid and subsidized housing. The controversial rule was embroiled in a legal battle that ascended through the court system, ending with a 5-4 Supreme Court decision in January that cleared the way for the policy change to begin. Reached for comment, a spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security said, "The public charge rule takes into account the totality of circumstances and no one aspect of an individual's situation would deem them ineligible for change in status. Nowhere in the rule does it say an immigrant will be denied a change in status if they seek medical care." Ferguson is co-leading the multistate coalition challenging the rule. The letter, which was sent to acting Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf and Ken Cuccinelli, the DHS second-in-command, was signed by attorneys general across the country, including from California, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York and Washington, DC. A second letter is from dozens of local lawmakers, mayors and a coroner in Washington state, which has been extremely hard hit. Ferguson's letter blasts the administration as discouraging people from accessing health care they are entitled to in the midst of a public health crisis. "DHS received warnings of the potentially devastating effects of the Rule if its implementation were to coincide with the outbreak of a highly communicable disease -- a scenario exactly like the one confronting our communities with the COVID-19 public health emergency," the letter says. "Your agency completely failed to consider such legitimate concerns." "DHS openly concedes the Rule could lead to 'increased prevalence of communicable diseases,' disenrollment from public programs, and increased use of emergency rooms as a primary method of health care," it says. "Washington State has already had ten deaths attributable to COVID-19. The State is doing everything in its power to limit the spread of the disease and prevent additional fatalities." Ferguson says states, cities, and counties are "undertaking similarly dramatic efforts to limit the spread of the disease and mitigate its harmful effects" and deterring immigrants from using medical benefits "undermines and frustrates our public health professionals' efforts, putting our communities and residents at unnecessary risk." "You have authority to swiftly correct your agency's inexcusable failure to consider the Public Charge Rule's risks to public health and safety," the letter concludes. "We urge that you immediately stay implementation of the Public Charge Rule pending successful containment of COVID-19 to assist our public health professionals and protect our communities." Trump signs $8.3B bill to fund COVID-19 fight, will visit CDC (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 12:38 PM, Staff, 1973K] President Donald Trump signed a $8.3 billion coronavirus funding bill at the White House on Friday after canceling a trip to the headquarters of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and later reviving it. 20 Some of the money is earmarked for local officials on the front lines fighting the coronavirus in the United States. The measure also includes more than $3 billion in vaccine research. There are so far 164 cases in 19 states and 11 people in the United States have died so far, the CDC said in an update Friday. Fifty-four of the cases involved person-to-person spread or are travel-related. The rest are under investigation, the agency said. The House and Senate passed the bipartisan bill Wednesday and Thursday to pledge billions toward fighting coronavirus disease. The $8.3 billion far exceeded the $2.5 billion Trump's administration asked for. Trump was originally

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supposed to sign the bill at CDC headquarters in Atlanta, but the White House said the trip was called off due to the president's reluctance to interfere with agency operations and its "mission to protect the health and welfare of their people and the agency." Later Friday morning, however, White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham told reporters the CDC was back on the schedule. She explained the trip was initially canceled over suspicions that a CDC staff member had contracted the coronavirus, and said the administration was acting "out of an abundance of caution." The staffer's test results were ultimately negative. Trump will visit the CDC after a stop in Nashville to assess the damage from this week's deadly tornadoes. President Donald Trump Signs $8.3 Billion Funding Bill To Fight Coronavirus Into Law (Daily Caller) Daily Caller [3/6/2020 9:50 AM, Christian Datoc, 566K] President Donald Trump signed into law Friday morning the $8.3 billion funding bill to fight the spread of the coronavirus in the United States. Trump and the White House had previously requested $2.5 billion, but congressional leaders from both parties pushed back asking for more. Republicans originally requested around $4 billion while Democrats asked for $8 billion. The difference in the amount requested actually had to do with the length of the budget, with the White House originally calling for one year of funding while Democrats pushed for four to five. The bill passed both chambers earlier in the week by near unanimous votes. Only two congressmen, Arizona Republican Andy Biggs and Colorado Republican Ken Buck, and one senator, Kentucky Republican Rand Paul, voted against the legislation. All three claimed that the requested amount was far too high and called for a reduction to the original amount requested by the White House. National Economic Council Director Larry Kudlow told reporters Friday morning that the White House "might need to come back" for additional funding to fight the coronavirus in the future. Trump left the White House for a multi-stop trip to the South shortly after signing the bill. The administration had originally cancelled his scheduled trip to the Centers for Disease 21 Control and Prevention (CDC) over concerns of a confirmed coronavirus case in the agency, which eventually proved to be false. The president told reporters gathered for the signing that he was going to try to still stop by the CDC if possible, and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar added that he would still be going. Trump will also visit Nashville, Tennessee on Friday to help with the relief effort after a tornado killed dozens earlier in the week before heading to Florida for the weekend. Trump signs $8.3 billion bill to fight coronavirus (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/6/2020 4:05 AM, Staff, 482K] President Trump on Friday signed an emergency spending bill that provides $8.3 billion to fight the coronavirus outbreak. The president signed the bill at the White House with Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar at his side. Mr. Trump originally planned to sign the bill at the Centers for Disease Control in Georgia later on Friday, but he temporarily suspended plans for that visit. He said the CDC itself had a suspected coronavirus case, but it turned out to be negative, so he may visit the headquarters after all. "I may be going. We're going to see if they can turn it around," Mr. Trump said. The virus has killed 12 people in the U.S. and the outbreak has spread to virtually every region of the country. The president told reporters that he doesn't think Americans are panicking over the outbreak. "It'll go away," Mr. Trump said. He also said people were "shocked" by how good the latest job numbers are; the government reported Friday that employers added 273,000 jobs in February. The emergency measure spends billions for vaccine and treatment research; boosts state, local and overseas efforts; and provides low-interest loans to small businesses affected by the outbreak. House and Senate lawmakers overwhelmingly passed the measure, which is more than triple the $2.5 billion initially proposed by the White House. The Senate vote on Thursday was 96-1. "I asked for $2.5 billion and I got $8.3 [billion], and I'll take it," the president said. The president signed the aid bill moments before leaving the White House to tour tornado damage in Tennessee and visit affected families and first responders. He approved disaster aid for the region Thursday night after storms killed 24 people. 22 Where That $8.3 Billion In U.S. Coronavirus Funding Will And Won't Go (NPR) NPR [3/6/2020 7:09 PM, Selena Simmons-Duffin, 4112K] The coronavirus funding bill signed into law by the president Friday puts much more money toward treating and preventing the spread of COVID-19 than his administration requested from Congress last week. The Trump administration's initial request — in the form of a two-page letter to Congress on Feb. 24 — was for $1.25 billion in new funds, with additional money moved from other parts of the federal budget to get to a total of $2.5 billion. The amount authorized Friday is more than three times that. "It's a significant amount of money," says Jen Kates of the Kaiser Family Foundation. In comparison, Congress put $5.4 billion toward the Ebola response in 2014 and nearly $7 billion for H1N1 in 2009 — though, of course, each epidemic is different and requires a different response. "It appears to me to be an appropriate number to definitely begin the fight — and likely handle the fight, assuming nothing goes sideways," says Chris Meekins, a health care policy analyst at Raymond James who, until January 2019, who worked on preparedness and response at the Department of Health and Human Services. So what do taxpayers get for that $8.3 billion? Here are some highlights: $3.1 billion for the health secretary's dispersal The biggest pot of money goes to the Office of the Secretary of HHS, and that funding is available until 2024. "I thought the flexibility they gave within the Office of the Secretary's public health emergency account was good," Meekins says. "It allows us to not just put money toward therapeutic development — also vaccine development — but also purchase additional

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supplies that are needed, like masks and personal protective equipment, which for years had been underfunded by Congress and administrations." Of that money, $100 million is directed to community health centers for underserved groups. "I think that a focus on underserved populations is going to continue to be very important as we see more cases in more states," says Beth Cameron who works on global biological policy for the Nuclear Threat Initiative. During the Obama administration, she served as senior director for global health, security and biodefense on the White House's National Security Council, a position that was eliminated by the Trump administration in 2018. $950 million for state and local health departments Of all of the $950 million for state and local public health response that's to be dispersed via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, half must be allocated within 30 days. "That's great because that will hopefully get around some of the bureaucratic delays we've seen in previous responses," says Dara Lieberman of Trust for America's Health, a nonpartisan public health policy research and advocacy organization. 23 Lieberman says health departments across the U.S. are now in the beginning of the "mitigation phase" of responding to the virus. "They're doing the outbreak investigations, they're trying to implement isolation orders, they're trying to disrupt chains of transmission," she says. "As the outbreak evolves, you'll see different needs and different responses." What will state and local health departments be using this money for? Lieberman says one need may be staffing. "Health departments may have to do some quick hiring or contracting of people," she says. "Laboratories may have to buy equipment and pay people overtime because people may be working 12-hour shifts, six or seven days a week as testing ramps up." Data analytics, she says, is another area where health departments may need to quickly invest, so they can conduct surveillance of how coronavirus infections are spreading. "We've long neglected data modernization among health departments — because we underfund public health so much — so they may have to be investing in those kinds of basic capabilities." $300 million to buy vaccines and treatments Will whatever treatments or vaccines that are eventually developed for coronavirus be affordable? That was a question put to the head of the federal coronavirus task force and HHS Secretary Alex Azar by Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., at a hearing last week. Azar responded that he couldn't guarantee affordability: "We would want to ensure we work to make [a vaccine] affordable, but we can't control that price because we need the private sector to invest." His comment triggered accusations that Azar, a former executive at drugmaker Eli Lilly, had more loyalty to the private sector than to the American public. In Friday's funding package, there's a provision that the vaccines and treatments purchased by the government are to be priced fairly and reasonably. Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, who chairs the House Appropriations health subcommittee, pointed out in a statement that the bill gives "authority for the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make the vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics developed from funding in this bill to be affordable in the commercial market." She urged Azar to make use of that provision. $1.25 billion for international activities The Trump administration's original request to Congress was focused purely on responding to coronavirus on the domestic front. As Azar explained in another congressional hearing last week: "Our activities are really containment and mitigation preparation in the homeland, because we're not going to help the Chinese stop this in China — China will do that or not be able to do that." In the end, the bill the president signed into law does include funding for responding to the spread of coronavirus response internationally. Cameron says that global investment is essential and that she was glad to see it ultimately 24 included. The international funding isn't as much as she was hoping for, she says, but it's a "good start." "It's superimportant to make sure that we are focused not just within the United States," Cameron says. "We don't know which countries are going to be most affected," she explains, and so supporting low- and middle-income countries that might not have the resources to contain outbreaks on their own is a "fantastic investment." What may be missing from the funding package Nothing in this law spells out how much, if any, money will go to reimburse hospitals or patients for medical care associated with COVID-19 treatment. Some announcements came through this week that the diagnostic test will be covered by many private insurers and Medicare and Medicaid, but there will be lots of other expenses associated with COVID-19 care. For instance, if someone is compelled to stay isolated in a hospital for 14 days, who is to pay for that? That question is especially pressing for the more than 70 million Americans who don't have health insurance or are underinsured. "That's the next frontier that's going to have to be grappled with," Kates of KFF says. "If [coronavirus] gets much more widespread, all the challenges of the existing way in which health care is financed and provided in this country are going to be in stark relief. And they're not addressed in this bill." Trump Visits CDC After Coronavirus Fears Throw Schedule Into Chaos (Aspen Public Radio) Aspen Public Radio [3/6/2020 7:00 PM, Franco Ordoñez and Tamara Keith, 1K] President Trump on Friday stopped in at the Atlanta headquarters of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the agency marshaling the response to coronavirus — a major political test for his administration. The trip itself was almost derailed by coronavirus fears, and mixed signals about what was happening created an on-again, off-again drama that played out in front of television cameras. The chaotic impression clashed with the White House quest to show that the public health crisis is under control. "It will end. People have to remain calm," Trump said. Trump and his officials did a 47-minute impromptu news conference,

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answering questions both scientific — and very political. Trump slammed Jay Inslee, the Democratic governor grappling with an outbreak in his state. Vice President Mike Pence had spent time with Inslee on Thursday and praised his work. "That governor is a snake," Trump said, grousing that he expected Inslee would be critical of the job his administration is doing on coronovirus. "Mike may be happy with him, but I'm not. 25 And moments before Pence, at a White House briefing, somberly announced that some 2,500 passengers stranded on the Grand Princess cruise ship off the California coast would be brought to land to be tested and quarantined — Trump said he would rather they stay on the ship. "Our numbers are going to go up," he complained, referring the number of cases of coronavirus. Pence said of 46 tests done so far, 19 crew and two passengers have tested positive. (The crew will remain in quarantine on the ship.) The White House carefully staged a series of events this week to try to show that it had taken charge of the coronavirus response: meetings with Congress and industry leaders, a tour of a vaccine lab at the National Institutes of Health, and Vice President Mike Pence's trip to Washington State to meet local leaders grappling with the outbreak. To cap off the week, Trump was supposed to sign the $8 billion emergency funding package for the response into law in Atlanta at the CDC. Pence even mentioned it in remarks during his Washington visit. But late Thursday night, when the White House issued Trump's daily public schedule, it surprisingly did not include a stop in Atlanta. It took some time for the White House to explain the change. "The president is no longer traveling to Atlanta today. The CDC has been proactive and prepared since the very beginning and the president does not want to interfere with the CDC's mission to protect the health and welfare of their people and the agency," a White House official first explained, in a statement. Trump was still slated to fly to Tennessee to survey tornado damage. Before he left, the White House hastily arranged a bill-signing ceremony. That's when Trump revealed a different explanation for the scheduling snafus. Trump said a CDC employee had showed symptoms of the virus. The White House learned about the suspected case on Thursday. "They had one person who was potentially infected," Trump told reporters. The staffer was tested, then cleared. "It turned out negative, so we'll see if we can do it," he said of the visit. "We're going to try to go," he told reporters before leaving for Nashville. "I may be going, we're going to see if we can turn it around." Trump later said it made sense for him to stop in Atlanta, given that he was on his way from Nashville to Palm Beach, Fla., where he plans to spend the weekend. "It was a big deal with the Secret Service, but they're fantastic and they worked it out," he said. There were no immediate details from the CDC about the suspected case. During the flight to Nashville, White House spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham told reporters on Air Force One that the Atlanta stop was back on the schedule. "What the president said is true," Grisham said, referring to the suspected case. 26 A CDC staffer was suspected of having contracted the virus, so the White House canceled the stop "out of an abundance of caution," Grisham said. A spokeswoman for the CDC did not go into specifics. "CDC has many employees who have deployed in support of the nation's response to COVID-19, some of whom are returning from areas where COVID-19 may be present," Kristen Nordlund said in a statement. "CDC has issued guidance to these employees, including self-quarantine for 14 days after they have returned to their duty stations for those returning from certain areas. They will also undergo daily, active monitoring. No CDC employees have tested positive," Nordlund said. Asked why the initial White House statement had provided a different explanation than the president, Grisham said it had been carefully worded so that it was accurate — including language about the CDC keeping its people safe — without revealing the concern about the possibly infected CDC employee. "Thankfully she's negative, the person," Grisham said. Chaos at hospitals due to shortage of coronavirus tests (Los Angeles Times) Los Angeles Times [3/6/2020 8:00 AM, Emily Baumgaertner, Soumya Karlamangla, 1907K] As COVID-19 cases spike, the test kits needed to help stem the spread of the disease remain in short supply, with healthcare workers across the state reporting widespread failings in the federal government's response to the growing crisis. Federal officials said nearly 1 million tests were expected to be available by the end of this week. But in California, one of the country's hardest-hit regions with 60 cases, the total testing capacity is limited to only 7,400 through the weekend, according to the California Department of Public Health. The inability to test widely and swiftly for the novel coronavirus has impeded the country's ability to beat back the spread of the virus, experts say. Without testing, public health officials don't know where the virus is spreading and where to target efforts to contain it. Twelve Americans have been killed so far by the disease. The shortage of test kits is creating chaos for doctors and nurses as their triage efforts are complicated by testing restrictions and shortfalls. "Last night I had a patient with clear coronavirus symptoms, but the health department didn't think he should be tested," said an emergency room doctor in Downey who spoke on condition of anonymity. "I went from that patient into the next room, where I had an 80-yearold, immune-compromised, diabetic patient. If I'm taking coronavirus in there, it's mild for me, but it's deadly for her." California has only tested 516 people for COVID-19 to date, far below what is probably needed in a state where Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency this week due to the outbreak. Though there are no known instances of community spread of the virus in California, the number of people who have been exposed to the virus appears to be growing 27 daily. About 1,250 Californians who were possibly exposed to COVID-19 on a cruise ship need to be tested for the virus. There are more than 9,000 people in

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California who have recently returned from countries experiencing severe outbreaks. Then there are others who may have been exposed within the community, and are now worried about infecting their families. Renee Schwartz, a 60-year-old North Hills resident, said she was told by her doctors that her sinus infection and breathing problems could probably be COVID-19. But staff at multiple Los Angeles-area hospitals this week told her they don't test for the virus. "I said 'Who does testing? And they said, 'No idea,'" Schwartz said. Though the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday lifted some guidelines so anyone with symptoms can be tested by their physician, local officials can't take advantage of the looser restrictions because of the lack of test kits. In an advisory to physicians later that day, L.A. public health officials said that they would only be testing people with severe symptoms or with milder illness and a travel history to impacted areas. In a letter sent to medical staff at one Downey hospital and viewed by The Times, an infection control coordinator instructed doctors to discharge patients with mild coronavirus symptoms, asking them to self-isolate at home. In the long run, that tactic will make the total number of coronavirus cases virtually unknowable — at least until retrospective testing is available. "Myself and my colleagues have been working in the trenches in the ER, and we can't get people tested," said another doctor who works at a hospital in Downey. Both declined to be identified because they are not authorized to speak to the media. The doctor said another suspected coronavirus patient was a transplant nurse, whose job is to work with immune-deficient patients. "I said, 'Come on! Please! We need to test her!'" Amid the shortage, some healthcare workers also cast doubt on federal officials' stringent approach to testing. One California nurse who was exposed to a confirmed coronavirus patient has symptoms and is in quarantine, but has not yet been tested for the virus by the CDC. "They said they would not test me because, if I were wearing the recommended protective equipment, then I wouldn't have the coronavirus. What kind of science-based answer is that?" the nurse, who asked to remain anonymous, said in a statement read by the National Nurses United's union president Deborah Burger in a news conference in Oakland on Thursday. "I'm a registered nurse and I need to know if I'm positive before going back to care for patients," the nurse added. "Delaying this test puts the whole community at risk." The CDC has not released information on how many Americans have been tested for COVID-19. The data was updated regularly on the agency's website until this week when the figures were removed. 28 In a call with reporters on Tuesday, Dr. Nancy Messonnier evaded a question about whether the narrow testing criteria early in the outbreak was linked to the limited availability in tests and potentially hindered the nation's response to the outbreak. She also would not name the cause of flaws in the early test kits, saying the investigation is ongoing. "What we really need to focus on is where we are today," she said. " We need to be focused on what we're doing today to identify patients who are ill, make sure that they're getting appropriately treated and tested and make sure that we're protecting our communities." It is unclear if those steps are being taken quickly enough as local health departments strain to keep up as the outbreak swells. In Los Angeles County, a 34-year-old woman has been self-quarantining for two days after her doctor told her he suspected her high fever and pneumonia were caused by the novel virus. She has been waiting to hear from the public health department for next steps. "I haven't been contacted, I haven't been tested," she said. "I'm not being treated and I'm still exposing people by staying here at home. I live with family — they have jobs, they have schools." "I'm sick with something obviously," she said. Coronavirus deaths near 3,300 as U.S. scrambles to test thousands (CBS News) CBS News [3/6/2020 9:21 AM, Staff, 2394K] Health officials across the globe were scrambling to contain the coronavirus epidemic Friday, and grasping to better understand it. At least 98,000 people in almost 90 countries have caught the new COVID-19 disease that emerged late last year in China. It has killed almost 3,300 people, but according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins, more than 55,000 patients have recovered from the flu-like illness. Chinese officials have confirmed more than 50,000 people have recovered in that country alone. While it's clear the vast majority infected get only mild cases, authorities have been unable to say definitively how many of those who catch COVID-19 are likely to die from it. To get the data needed to answer that question, and to understand how easily the virus spreads and how best to stop it, the World Health Organization issued a plea Thursday for every country to pull out "all the stops" to test large numbers of people, and to aggressively control outbreaks where they do pop up. There have been 12 deaths in the United States — 11 in Washington state and one in California, which has declared a state of emergency as it tests passengers on a cruise ship quarantined off the San Francisco coast. There were at least 230 confirmed cases in 21 states, including Nevada and Colorado which reported their first cases on Thursday. The Trump administration has faced criticism over the availability of test kits in the U.S. Vice President Mike Pence has said any American would be able to get tested for the disease — but he acknowledged Thursday, as the government raced to distribute tests, that the capacity wasn't there yet. 29 President Trump signed an $8.3 billion dollar emergency spending bill Friday to help fund work on a vaccine, and to help the U.S. catch up to other nations with testing. First Responders Are 'Trying To Stay Ahead' Of Coronavirus (NPR) NPR [3/6/2020 2:58 PM, Will Stone and Brett Sholtis] In Washington state, local fire and emergency services departments are rehearsing their infectious disease protocols and taking new precautions as 911 calls pour in related to a coronavirus outbreak in the Seattle area. And around the country first responders are

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bracing themselves for an increase in calls as more states confirm cases of the new virus. East Pierce Fire & Rescue assistant chief Russ McCallion has devised a checklist for his medics and fire crews to run through when responding to a potential coronavirus patient. His district covers a 150-square mile stretch of Western Washington dotted with housing developments and small towns south of Seattle. The checklist, he says, reminds his crews to perform "doorway triage" of patients, and helps them decide when to wear protective equipment and even when to use special entryways at the hospital reserved for people in isolation. "One of the confounding issues for our responders is that flu symptoms and COVID-19 symptoms are very similar," he says. "We have to maintain that high index of suspicion on every call where the patient presents with fever, coughing and other flu-type symptoms." His fire crews are now instructed to initially wait outside when responding to such calls, while only a few medics go inside, suited up in personal protective equipment, like gowns, gloves and masks. McCallion expects the number of calls to increase as more people are tested and diagnosed in the state. He worries about having enough staff if calls start to go up "exponentially." "You'll see more pressure on the health care system to treat and leave at home, [and] for people to self-monitor their condition rather than going to the hospital," he says. His department is ordering fresh supplies of disinfectant and taking more aggressive measures to sanitize ambulances. Many departments in the region are taking similar steps. "We are gearing up for the worst and trying to stay ahead of it," says deputy chief Chuck DeSmith with the Renton Regional Fire Authority in Renton, Wash. "It does have a different feel." Looming shortages Around the country EMS departments are preparing. One concern they share is a looming shortage of masks. State EMS directors are worried agencies could run out "in the next couple weeks," says Leslee Stein-Spencer, a program advisor at the National Association of State EMS Officials. The shortage will have significant consequences, Stein-Spencer says. When workers get sick, it gets harder to keep ambulance services running. 30 "If it comes to that point, you would look at alternate staffing measures, and you would look at, you know, triaging," she says. "The sickest patients would come to the hospital and the others would not get an ambulance." If cases surge, it may be hard for ambulance companies to get other necessary supplies, says Matt Baily, the director at Susquehanna Township EMS in Harrisburg, Pa. Pennsylvania announced its first two confirmed coronavirus cases on Friday. In recent years, certain supplies have often been rationed, he says. The federal Food and Drug Administration lists nationwide shortages of more than a dozen drugs that are considered essential for emergency workers to do their jobs, he notes. With many drugs made in areas already affected by coronavirus, Baily says he's also bracing for supply chain issues like he saw in 2017, after Hurricane Maria disrupted production at a Puerto Rico facility that makes saline. Congress has approved more than $8 billion in emergency funding for states. The funds will be used to test people for COVID-19, track those who have gotten sick, and provide things like public awareness campaigns. However, Baily says money won't address his need for more employees if they get sick, and money alone won't fix the shortage of masks. He's been fielding calls with everyone from municipal officials to the members of Congress and is developing plans for what to do if someone on his team gets the virus. "We're hoping we don't need anything, but we're planning as though we're definitely going to need all of it," he says. Exposed first, then quarantined For one fire department east of Seattle, staff have already been put into isolation because of possible exposure. More than two dozen first responders discovered they may have been exposed when responding to calls at Life Care Center, a nursing home in Kirkland. Coronavirus has swept through the facility, sickening many people and even killing some residents. Evan Hurley, a firefighter with the Kirkland Fire Department says it's a place his crew already knew well before the outbreak. "It's not unusual for us to respond there on a regular basis because they deal with such sick patients," Hurley says. Hurley says others from his department had been responding to calls in the days before the 31 outbreak for nonthreatening things like nosebleeds. "A nosebleed doesn't require us to be in the same level of protection as, say, somebody who might have ongoing flu symptoms." He says only after the fact did his crew learn some of them could have been exposed to a serious respiratory illness. The firefighters who were possibly exposed are now in isolation, and some have reported flu-like symptoms. Some are concerned they could have put their family members at risk. Hurley isn't quarantined, and this week he continued transporting sick patients from Life Care Center to a nearby hospital. "Believe me we are learning things," says Dennis Lawson, president of the Washington State Council of Firefighters, which represents about 9,000 first responders. Lawson says all the steps departments are now taking – from better screening of suspected cases to more communication between ambulances and hospitals – will keep first responders safer. "You provide the service to the community," he says. "And you're really hoping you have done everything you could... so when you go home to your families you're not taking anything back there to them." Trump wants cruise ship passengers to stay at sea, but leaves decision up to Pence (FOX News) FOX News [3/6/2020 6:41 PM, Marisa Schultz, 8943K] Video: HERE President Trump visited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) headquarters Friday and expressed confidence in the public health response to the new coronavirus while airing a disagreement he has with the vice president on whether to bring the Grand Princess cruise ship passengers onshore in California. "I have great experts, including the vice president ... they would like to have the people come off," Trump said in arguing

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he'd prefer to have the passengers stay idling off the coast of California. "I would rather have the people stay. But I'd go with them. I told them to make the final decision." "I don't need the numbers to double because of one ship," Trump said, noting the U.S. numbers currently of 11 deaths and 240 infected. "Frankly, if it were up to me, I would be inclined to say leave everybody on the ship for a period of time and use the ship as your base," Trump said. The Grand Princess lay at anchor near San Francisco after a traveler from a previous voyage died of the disease and others were being tested for the virus. While the more than 3,500 aboard the 951-foot vessel were ordered to stay at sea, officials scrambled to keep the virus at bay. Pence revealed Friday that 21 people had tested positive. Meanwhile, Trump expressed confidence in the agency's public health response and his 32 own ability to fend off illness. After a day of meetings in Washington, Tennessee, and Georgia where he shook plenty of hands, Trump said he has no plans to give up glad-handing or canceling his crowded campaign rallies. "I feel very secure," Trump said. As for the rallies, Trump said he's had no trouble filling arenas despite the public health concerns. "It doesn't bother me at all and it doesn't bother them," the president said of his supporters. Trump, wearing a red "Keep America Great" campaign hat, got briefed by CDC health officials that up to 4 million tests will be available by the end of next week to test for the new virus. He defended the health officials who took heat for having problems with rolling out tests. "Anybody who wants a test can get a test," Trump said. "They have the tests and the tests are beautiful," Trump said, again urging "calm." Trump then called the tests "perfect" and compared them to his phone call with the president of Ukraine to ask for investigations into the Bidens that got him impeached by Democrats. Trump repeatedly defended the July 25 transcript as "perfect." "This was not as perfect as that [call], but pretty good," Trump told reporters inside a lab. Trump arrived at the CDC at 4:25 p.m. to meet with the doctors and scientists on the frontlines of the outbreak, after the White House temporarily scrapped the trip over concerns a CDC employee had contracted the COVID-19 virus. Steve Monroe, CDC associate director for laboratory science and safety, talked of the rapid test development and admitted initial setbacks. CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield chalked up the early issues of the testing roll out to "quality control." The White House had canceled the trip to Atlanta earlier "out of an abundance of caution" because a CDC staff member was suspected to have contracted the coronavirus and officials did not think the test results would be returned in time before the president's trip Friday, press secretary Stephanie Grisham told reporters Friday aboard Air Force One. "We were informed that there may have been a person with the virus and they now find out that that was a negative test," Trump said earlier, telegraphing the Secret Service was working to resume the trip. "They've tested the person very fully and it was a negative test." The on-again, off-again nature of the trip epitomized the heightened precautions Americans are taking -- from companies and schools to lawmakers and the White House -- on how best to safeguard against the spreading virus. The White House initially gave a different reason for the CDC trip being erased from his 33 schedule, saying Trump didn't want to "interfere" with the important work at the epicenter of the U.S. response. "The president is no longer traveling to Atlanta today," a White House official said Friday morning. "The CDC has been proactive and prepared since the very beginning and the president does not want to interfere with the CDC's mission to protect the health and welfare of their people and the agency." But later Friday, at the signing of a $8.3 billion coronavirus spending bill, Trump said the reason the trip had been in jeopardy was because of the suspected new case at the center, but a test cleared the staffer. "They had one person who was potentially infected," Trump said. Money is on the way to combat the new virus. The bipartisan $8.3 billion spending bill passed the House and Senate with near-unanimous support to tackle the coronavirus outbreak that has killed nearly 3,400 people worldwide, mostly in China. "We're doing well, but it's an unforeseen problem," the president said of the U.S. response in the White House's Diplomatic Reception Room. The spending measure will fund the development of vaccines, medications to treat the disease and diagnostic tests all while helping state and local governments -- and foreign governments -- fight the coronavirus, which causes a disease officially known as COVID-19. The coronavirus originated in Wuhan, China, before spreading worldwide. It has now infected nearly 100,000 people total with cases on every continent but Antarctica, with at least 232 cases in the United States. Worldwide, 3,383 people have died from the coronavirus, including at least 11 in the United States. Trump's visit to Georgia brought the commander-in-chief up close and personal with dicey GOP senate primary politics. Newly-appointed Georgia Sen. Kelly Loeffler flew with Trump aboard Air Force One, in a boost for her campaign. But on the tarmac, Trump was greeted by Rep. Doug Collins, R-Ga., who is running for the Senate seat against Loeffler. Collins was with Gov. Brian Kemp, who appointed Loeffler to the seat, despite Trump's preference for Collins, who had been a fierce defender of the president during impeachment. Loeffler, a financial executive who co-owns the WNBA's Atlanta Dream, deplaned with Trump and very quickly shook Collins' hand in a seemingly awkward exchange, according to pool reports. Kemp, Loeffler, Collins and Sen. David Perdue, R-Ga., joined Trump during the tour. Trump first visited tornado-ravaged parts of Tennessee after the storms left 24 dead and many more injured. From Georgia, Trump headed to Mar-a-Lago for the weekend for GOP fundraising events. Cruise lines planning 'significant' anti-coronavirus measures (Politico) 34 Politico [3/7/2020 7:20 PM, Lorraine Woellert, 2003K] Cruise lines are

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developing standards for shipboard coronavirus testing and plans for evacuating sick passengers and crew, protocols that could be deployed as soon as next week. Vice President Mike Pence announced the effort Saturday after meeting with industry leaders in Port Everglades, Florida, calling the changes "significant" and telling the cruise industry to "step up." Over the next 72 hours, the industry will work with the Centers for Disease Control and Department of Homeland Security to set protocols for screening passengers, shipboard testing and quarantines, and moving sick people to land. "This will be an industry-led effort," Pence told reporters. "We anticipate early next week that the cruise line industry and our administration will be able to announce significant progress in ensuring that we're doing all we can to protect the health and well-being of the passengers of our cruise lines, the crews, and just as importantly the communities to which they return." The cruise industry is reeling from a string of on-board outbreaks and the shutdown of some routes. But even as Pence and federal officials urged calm on Saturday and downplayed the risk of COVID-19 to average Americans, the vice president advised senior citizens with underlying health conditions -- those most at risk from the virus -- to avoid cruising. "This would be a good time to practice common sense and avoid activities, including traveling on a cruise line, that might unnecessarily expose them to the coronavirus," Pence said as cruise executives stood by. "We're looking to the cruise line industry for action and for guidance and for flexibilty with their passengers who fall into that category," Pence said. "We're going to be looking for leadership from the cruise line industry" Adam Goldstein, who stepped down as vice chairman of Royal Caribbean last week, said work already was under way. "I want to state in very simple terms the determination of the industry to follow through on the commitments discussed in the meeting," said Goldstein, who remains at the helm of the Cruise Lines International Association. "We are hard at work already, even since the meeting ended. We look forward to an integrated and fruitful dialogue," Goldstein told reporters. The Grand Princess cruise ship was moored off the coast of California for days after dozens of people on board tested positive for the virus. On Saturday, a second cruise ship was stalled on California waters while a patient was tested for coronavirus. "We are tracking at this point a ship that may have shared crew with the Diamond Princess or the Grand Princess," Pence said. "They're doing a full medical assessment of crew on that ship." 35 White House considers tax relief for airlines, travel firms amid coronavirus (Reuters) Reuters [3/6/2020 4:04 PM, Steve Holland and Susan Heavey, 5304K] The Trump administration is weighing tax relief for airline, cruise and travel industries to help such companies cope with a growing coronavirus outbreak that has dried up bookings, a source familiar with the plan said on Friday. The move, which could include tax deferrals, is one of several targeted steps that the administration is considering to try to limit the economic damage from the epidemic, which could stifle consumer spending and keep many workers at home. White House Economic adviser Larry Kudlow said it was too early to determine the magnitude of the slowdown and the nation's overall economy remained fundamentally strong and was not headed for a recession. The Labor department released strong February payrolls data on Friday, reflecting surveys taken before the virus' rampant spread outside China became apparent. U.S. officials were concerned about people who may have to stay home because of the outbreak and lose wages, as well as about small business and airlines, among others, Kudlow told reporters at the White House. "We're worried about small business. We might be worried about small farms. We might be worried about some sectors of the economy that are really hard hit," Kudlow said. "There are a lot of things we can do for cash flow purposes, possibly deferred tax purposes, and we can set up mechanisms to do that," Kudlow said, adding that they would be "microforms of assistance." Kudlow did not name the specific industries that could get tax deferments and a Treasury spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The Washington Post first reported here that the administration is considering the idea. Kudlow said the administration may have to go to Congress to seek additional funding, but aid would be "targeted micro-forms of assistance." "We are at the moment are not going to do these gigantic packages where we put in helicopter money for everyone," he added. The Federal Reserve this week announced an emergency half-percentage point rate cut to try to blunt the coronavirus' impact. U.S. and global markets have slid for the past two weeks as the spread of coronavirus outside of China has raised investors' fear of the outbreak's impact as the number of cases neared 100,000 worldwide. In the United States, the death toll from the respiratory illness rose to 15. The U.S. market slide alone had wiped out nearly $4 trillion of value through Thursday. U.S. President Donald Trump could act via an executive order, or he could also turn again to Congress, which this week approved an $8.3 billion bill aimed at efforts to boost the U.S. 36 response to the outbreak, including money for drug and vaccine development as well as the public health efforts. Trump signed the measure into law earlier on Friday. "We're looking at different options," Trump said on Friday when asked whether he was considering deferring taxes for companies as he toured tornado damage in Tennessee. Earlier, at the White House, Trump called for another Fed rate cut to eliminate a "competitive disadvantage" for the United States compared to Europe and China. Kudlow said the administration was not inclined to enact a temporary payroll tax cut, or lowering tariffs on imports, which some experts have said could ease global supply chain problems. How Congress is prepping in case of a coronavirus outbreak on Capitol Hill (CNN) CNN [3/6/2020 5:23 PM, Manu Raju and Ted Barrett, 5551K] House and Senate authorities are

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preparing in case of a coronavirus outbreak on Capitol grounds, with lawmakers and aides discussing how to keep Congress functioning if the disease threatens Hill operations. A number of House and Senate offices have begun practicing how they would operate if a chunk of aides were forced into quarantine and had to work from home, congressional sources say. US Capitol Police are working to ensure that secure communications can continue off-site. The leaders of key congressional committees, along with law enforcement authorities and the Capitol physician's office, have informed each lawmaker's office to prepare contingency plans in case of an outbreak. And lawmakers say it's possible that more extreme measures could have to be taken -- such as limiting tourists in the Capitol or moving legislative business off-site -- though those measures are not yet seriously being considered. The uptick in discussions reflects the growing realization that it's only a matter of time before an aide or a member of Congress tests positive for the disease or is exposed to it, something that could cause staff or lawmakers to be quarantined for two weeks and upend legislative business on the Hill. Moreover, lawmakers and aides tell CNN that the current concerns rest on the likelihood of coming into contact with an individual who contracted the virus. That became a more distinct possibility after several coronavirus cases were reported Thursday in nearby Montgomery County, Maryland -- and after some attendees of an American Israel Public Affairs Committee conference were in contact with an individual who contracted coronavirus. Many aides and lawmakers also attended the AIPAC conference, and the Capitol physician's office indicated it was monitoring the situation. The signs the Capitol is preparing are visible, with hand sanitizers littering virtually every corner of the building. "It's good to have it these days," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said as he took a glob of Purell from his leadership suite and walked into a party lunch. 37 In the basement of the Capitol on Wednesday, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi met with McConnell and the two other top leaders of Congress -- Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy -- in a classified session with law enforcement authorities and the Capitol physician's office to discuss how to keep operations intact in case of an outbreak. "The police chief gave us a presentation about what was being done to make sure that the police, the security that protects the Capitol is secure as well," Pelosi told reporters Thursday. "The leadership of the Capitol is always concerned about the security of the Capitol. And now it is coming down more in terms of not only security, but the health security." Senate Rules Chairman Roy Blunt, a Missouri Republican who has privately met with the Senate sergeant-at-arms and Capitol physician's office about planning for an outbreak, said that "past practice" isn't "very definitive on this." "I think it was actually 1918 that the Capitol was actually closed for health reasons," Blunt said, referring to the pandemic flu that affected one-third of the world's population. "There would need to be something that was very concentrated in Washington, DC, before that's even a worthy discussion." In an email this week to senior Senate aides, which was obtained by CNN, the Senate Rules Committee advised offices to prepare contingency plans. "This is a great opportunity to review and update your office's continuity of operations plan," the email said, adding that disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizers would be approved expenses. Each office has its own contingency plan. One Senate source said his office's plan is to ensure that everyone can access email and servers remotely, while only two top aides and the senator work from Capitol Hill until the virus is under control. In a memo to lawmakers from Paul Irving, the House sergeant-at-arms, lawmakers and staff are advised to take practical steps, such as staying home while sick and throwing tissue in the trash after it's been used. "Avoid close contact with people who are sick," Irving wrote. "Maintain at least six feet of distance from anyone exhibiting obvious symptoms." How Congress has responded to past threats to operations Lawmakers have been forced from the Capitol in the past and made adjustments to keep Congress operating. In 1812, after British troops burned the Capitol, lawmakers met elsewhere in Washington for five years, according to a 2005 Congressional Research Service report that examined continuity-of-Congress planning. On September 11, 2001, members fled the Capitol after planes hit both towers of the World 38 Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon outside Washington and a fourth plane -- feared to be heading to the Capitol -- crashed into a field in Pennsylvania after passengers overcame their hijackers. Lawmakers holed up at the nearby US Capitol Police headquarters and other locations where they received intelligence reports about who was behind the attacks and tried to make sense of the tragedy. Both chambers reopened the next day. Congressional operations were disrupted further by anthrax attacks in October 2001 and ricin attacks in February 2004, which displaced senators and staffs from their office buildings across the street from the Capitol. They set up makeshift offices in their townhouses, apartments and even cars to continue their work. The poison attacks did not impact floor action. Most recently, in August 2011, a rare earthquake centered in Virginia rumbled along the East Coast. The shaking could be felt in the Capitol and nearby House and Senate office buildings, which were evacuated so they could be inspected for damage. The Senate needed to convene later that day to meet its constitutional requirement to meet every three days unless formally adjourned. Wary of entering the old and possibly dangerously damaged building, officials hastily convened a brief session in an office building next to Union Station, a few blocks away. As coronavirus fears now consume the country, there are clear signs too in the Capitol that the virus is getting more attention, with people fist-bumping instead of shaking hands and lawmakers openly advising people to wash their

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hands. Pelosi said she recalled continually reminding the late President George H.W. Bush to keep washing his hands, particularly as he traveled. And others say they are doing that as well. "I just wash my hands a lot more," said Republican Sen. Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, who said he was worried about "retreating" from his duties because of the outbreak. But Cramer also said he might reconsider going on official congressional delegation travel if it were going into a location hard hit by the disease. 2 members of Congress in isolation after potential exposure to coronavirus (San Francisco Chronicle) San Francisco Chronicle [3/8/2020 10:33 PM, Ashraf Khalil and Michael Balsamo, 1670K] Two members of Congress, Sen. Ted Cruz and Rep. Paul Gosar, said Sunday they are isolating themselves after determining they had contact at a political conference with a man who has tested positive for coronavirus. Cruz, R-Texas, said he had brief contact with the man at the Conservative Political Action Conference nearly two weeks ago and would spend the next few days at his home in Texas until a full 14 days had passed since their interaction. Gosar, R-Ariz., said he had sustained contact with the man at CPAC and that he and three members of his senior staff were under self-quarantine. His office will be closed for the week, Gosar said in a tweet. Besides Cruz and Gosar, the CPAC schedule listed three other senators and 12 House members who were scheduled to speak. They included No. 2 House GOP leader Steve 39 Scalise of Louisiana, No. 3 Republican leader Liz Cheney of Wyoming and congressman Mark Meadows of North Carolina, who has since become President Trump's choice to be White House chief of staff. Also on the schedule was Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, the wife of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. Both Trump and Vice President Mike Pence spoke at CPAC, but the White House said there was no indication that either had met or were in "close proximity" to the infected attendee. Cruz said he met the man being treated for coronavirus 10 days ago at CPAC in suburban Oxon Hill, Md. The Texas Republican said he's not experiencing any symptoms, feels fine and has been advised by medical authorities that the odds of transmission were extremely low. Yet out of an abundance of caution, Cruz said he will remain at home. He said medical authorities advised him that those who have interacted with him in the last 10 days should not be concerned about potential transmission. David Popp, spokesman for McConnell, said Sunday evening that no changes have been made in the chamber's schedule in the wake of Cruz's decision to remain in Texas. McConnell has spoken with Cruz, Popp said. The Senate has a vote scheduled Monday evening and plans to be in session this week considering energy and possibly other legislation. The Senate and the House are set for a one-week recess the week of March 16. Meanwhile, Maryland reported two new cases on Sunday, raising to five the total confirmed cases in the state. Virginia reported its second case. In a separate case of coronavirus, a prominent Episcopal church in Washington suspended all activities after announcing that one of its senior leaders was the first person in the nation's capital to test positive for the virus. The Rev. Timothy Cole, the rector of Christ Church Georgetown, was in stable condition after being hospitalized Saturday night, according to a statement from the Rev. Crystal Hardin, the assistant rector. According to Christ Church Georgetown website, Cole has been the rector since September 2016, is married and has two children. Trump picks Mark Meadows to be new White House chief of staff (Washington Post) Washington Post [3/6/2020 10:04 PM, Seung Min Kim and Josh Dawsey, 12625K] President Trump announced Friday that he has selected outgoing Rep. Mark Meadows (RN.C.) as his next White House chief of staff, tapping one of his most stalwart congressional allies to run the White House as he navigates a global health crisis in a reelection year. "I have long known and worked with Mark, and the relationship is a very good one," Trump tweeted shortly after arriving at his South Florida resort, where he is spending the weekend. Meadows replaces acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney, who is being appointed 40 the U.S. special envoy for Northern Ireland, Trump said in a follow-up tweet. The president thanked Mulvaney for "having served the administration so well." The envoy position has been vacant under the Trump presidency. Mulvaney stepped into the role in an acting capacity in early January 2019 on the departure of John F. Kelly. Meadows will be Trump's fourth White House chief of staff, after Mulvaney, Kelly and Reince Priebus. Meadows, a four-term lawmaker, announced in December that he would not run for reelection and hinted in his statement that he would join either the administration or Trump's 2020 campaign. The former leader of the conservative House Freedom Caucus made his mark on Capitol Hill as a frequent thorn in the side of GOP House speakers while developing a close relationship with the president, becoming one of his most fervent defenders. Trump often calls Meadows early in the morning and late at night, after growing distrustful of House Republican leadership and developing an appreciation of Meadows's appearances on cable television. Mulvaney was given advance notice of the tweet, a senior White House official said, but did not learn about the job change until the president had already offered Meadows the job. Mulvaney's departure is likely to mean broad changes in the West Wing. He also had been a member of Congress and of the Freedom Caucus before joining the administration, and he installed in government posts a number of die-hard loyalists and conservatives who often bragged about getting things done below the radar. Some of those aides, particularly his principal deputy, Emma Doyle, had already seen their responsibilities shrink in recent months. Meadows has developed close ties with senior adviser Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law, who advocated for putting him in the post. Mulvaney had also served as the director of the White House Office of Management and

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Budget and as the interim head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Russ Vought is now the acting OMB chief and could be nominated for the permanent post, according to two White House officials. Trump sees Meadows as a fierce political operator who can be helpful to him as he goes into a stretch where his reelection campaign is likely to take him on the road three, and perhaps more, days per week. The president recently had dinner with Meadows and his wife at the Trump International Hotel in Washington, a White House aide said. And at the recent wedding of White House aides Stephen Miller and Katie Waldman, Meadows sat next to Trump at the head table, attendees said, although Mulvaney did not. Meadows thanked Trump in a statement Friday night. "It's an honor to be selected by President Trump to serve alongside him and his team," he said. "This President and his administration have a long list of incredible victories they've delivered to the country during 41 this first term. With the best yet to come — and I look forward to helping build on that success and staying in the fight for the forgotten men and women of America." He has recently been at the White House nearly every day, advisers say, meeting with the president and others, particularly Kushner. He was seen last week having lunch with Marc Short, Vice President Pence's chief of staff, in the White House Mess. Aides had spoken of the two men having a deal for several months, and Trump began telling people on Thursday evening and Friday morning that he was going to tap Meadows, a person familiar with the choice said. Meadows was instrumental in Trump's impeachment defense, sometimes talking to the president four or five times a day, other advisers say. Trump did not have a volcanic fallingout with Mulvaney but never fully trusted him and kept him in the job in an acting capacity. Like Mulvaney, Meadows is unlikely to prove as stiff a disciplinarian as Kelly, who encouraged the president when leaving to find someone who would challenge him or else he would find himself impeached. One longtime Trump adviser said it was a questionable choice to install Meadows, given that he has no experience leading such a large operation. "The president, and I've heard him say this, sees Mark as very good politically," said the person, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations. "But the president is a political animal. He needs someone who will actually take care of the store for him while he's out running for reelection. And there's a question in my mind whether Mark can do that." Meanwhile, Mulvaney often seemed out of the loop and sometimes even blissful about it. He regularly traveled away from the president on weekends. When Trump clashed with national security adviser John Bolton last year and fired him, Mulvaney was in North Carolina, politicking for members of Congress. At times in recent months, one close Trump adviser said, the president would say there was no need to loop Mulvaney into a particular discussion. Mulvaney did not accompany the president Friday to Tennessee to survey storm damage, Atlanta to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or South Florida for the weekend. At a White House meeting with Trump, Pence and chief executives of major airlines earlier this week, Mulvaney stood off to the side, even as other senior administration officials sat at the table. Trump has been displeased generally with the administration's handling of the novel coronavirus and has grown angry with Mulvaney on several occasions, aides said. In a recent talk at the Oxford Union in England, Mulvaney seemed at peace with the idea that his days could be numbered. "Generally speaking, this job does not last that long. Who knows how much longer I'm going 42 to last?" Mulvaney said during the February remarks. Meadows prides himself on being an operator in Washington. He is often at some of the city's swankiest parties and galas, including the Meridian Ball, and at the British Embassy and other black-tie events. He also maintained close relationships with key congressional Democrats, such as the late representative Elijah E. Cummings (Md.), who was chairman of the House Oversight and Reform Committee. He keeps a place in North Carolina but has spent much of his time in Washington in recent years. "Mark is a really savvy strategist. You love him or hate him, but anyone who knows him knows he thinks three-dimensionally at all times," a senior administration official said. "That'll be his biggest value-add to the White House. He thinks of angles and approaches that others won't, and thinks steps ahead. He'll be crucial in helping get out of the cycle of being totally reactive." Some in the president's orbit, though, worry that Meadows is duplicitous. Several current and former Trump aides say they feel he often tells the president one thing but sometimes tells lawmakers or Capitol Hill staffers something entirely different. North Carolina's Mark Meadows will leave Congress early for White House post (USA Today) USA Today [3/6/2020 11:06 PM, Joel Burgess, Asheville Citizen Times, 561lK] Rep. Mark Meadows, who announced in December that he would retire at the end of his term, will resign well ahead of that time to become White House chief of staff. President Donald Trump said in a tweet Friday night that acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney, a former congressman who served multiple roles at the White House, is leaving his job and the president is appointing Meadows, a North Carolina Republican, in his place. Meadows announced on Dec. 19 that he would retire after four terms. His seat may remain vacant until the end of his term in January, party officials said. State law allows Gov. Roy Cooper to set a special election. But 11th District Republicans are still in the process of picking their nominee after no candidate in the March 3 primary got more than 30% of the vote. With no GOP nominee until the May 12 runoff, tapping someone to fill the immediate vacancy may prove too complicated, said Aubrey Woodard, chair of the GOP 11th District Executive Committee. "We're thinking due to the timeline that (Cooper) may elect to have it stay vacant," Woodard said. A call and email

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to Cooper's press office late Friday following Trump's announcement got no immediate response. The Republican runoff will feature first-place finisher Lynda Bennett of Haywood County against second-place finisher Madison Cawthorn of Henderson County. 43 The winner of that runoff in May would face Democrat Moe Davis in November. Meadows' White House appointment muddies those waters. Chairs of the Democratic and Republican committees for the 11th District said after the congressman's announcement that they were consulting with experts to understand the next steps. The shake-up in one of the most powerful positions at the White House follows Trump's acquittal in his Senate impeachment trial and a recent push to appoint highly loyal Trump associates to top jobs and push out others. "I am pleased to announce that Congressman Mark Meadows will become White House Chief of Staff. I have long known and worked with Mark, and the relationship is a very good one," Trump said in a tweet. Trump thanked Mulvaney for "having served the Administration so well" and said he would become the U.S. special envoy for Northern Ireland. David Cohen, a political science professor at the University of Akron who studies the office of chief of staff, said it was clear the move had been in the works for some time given Meadows' decision not to run for re-election. "Meadows clearly knows Congress and is a loyal protector of the president, so he brings that to the job," Cohen said. "But Trump has never empowered any of his chiefs with the tools to be effective. He is resistant to changing his leadership methods to allow for a strong chief of staff to run the White House. It is doubtful that he will start now." Meadows has been an ardent supporter of Trump, most recently fighting the drive in the House to impeach the president. Just two years after his election to the House, he helped found the Freedom Caucus, which has championed conservative causes. During his tenure, Meadows has pushed for tax cuts, fewer government regulations and cuts in federal spending. And in 2015, he helped push House Speaker John Boehner out of his job. He has had a hand in two federal government shutdowns. In 2013, he engineered a shutdown in an attempt to strip funding from the Affordable Care Act. In 2018, Meadows encouraged Trump not to accept a bill to fund much of the government without $5 billion in money for a border wall and rallied others on the right to do the same. "For everything there is a season. After prayerful consideration and discussion with family, today I'm announcing that my time serving Western North Carolina in Congress will come to a close at the end of this term," Meadows said in a statement issued Dec. 19. [NY] Exclusive: NY Gov. Cuomo speaks out after declaring state of emergency over coronavirus (FOX News) FOX News [3/8/2020 11:00 AM, Staff, 8943K] MARIA BARTIROMO, ANCHOR: Good Sunday morning, everyone. Thanks so much for joining me. 44 I'm Maria Bartiromo. Welcome to "Sunday Morning Futures." Six states have declared a state of emergency, as coronavirus continues to spread across the country. Italy is closing its borders, with 16 million people right now under quarantine in the northern part of Italy. This as New York has declared a state of emergency amidst the number of coronavirus cases spiking across the country. Coming up in this exclusive interview, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo is here to address the worrisome signs and what to do next. Plus, he was named one of TIME magazine's top 20 physicians and scientists in the country. White House task force member and renowned neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson what's about to change in the face of this deadly disease. Also here, Congress moving to help, as President Trump signs into law and $8.3 billion stimulus package to address the economic impact of coronavirus, among other impacts. House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy joins me live, along with Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Doug Collins, to talk about that and this week's markup of FISA surveillance tools, which are about to expire. Then, Four-Star General Jack Keane on whether the fallout from coronavirus is all too much for Chinese President Xi Jinping's continued tenure, as the general gets set to receive the highest civilian honor ever from the president this week. All that and a lot more, as we look ahead right now on "Sunday Morning Futures." And we begin this Sunday morning with the very latest on coronavirus. There are more than 400 confirmed cases of the virus now, 19 deaths in the United States; 89 of those confirmed cases are in New York state. Governor Andrew Cuomo has declared a state of emergency due to this virus. He joins me now in an exclusive interview. And, Governor, it's a pleasure to see you this morning. Thanks very much for being here. GOV. ANDREW CUOMO, D-N.Y.: Good to be with you, Maria. BARTIROMO: Tell me about the state of emergency. Why declare it? What does that mean for the rest of us? What do we need to understand? CUOMO: Yes, it sounds more alarming than it is, state of emergency. It's actually an administrative action, Maria, so the state can move a little faster governmentally. We need to purchase supplies, equipment. We need to hire staff. 45 And the state has some flexibility in administrative operations once you declare a -- quote, unquote -- "state of emergency." So, especially at these times, it sounds more alarming than it actually means. BARTIROMO: OK. So, I know that you want to make sure people stay calm, and you don't want a lot of panic, on top of everything we're hearing and everything we're seeing. Are you expecting this to get a lot worse, the number of cases spiking in the last day? I know that's partly because we're beginning testing. I want to ask you about the test kits in a moment. But how -- how severe is this going to get? CUOMO: Yes, the -- Maria, it's -- it's important that we communicate clearly. You're exactly right. I don't want -- people to stay calm, and, therefore, I'm telling them what I need to tell them to keep them calm. If they know the facts, they will be calm. Yes, we're testing aggressively. Yes, you will see the number of tests -- people who test

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positive going up. Yes, a large number of people will be infected, is my guess, by the end of the day. But remember what we're really trying to do here is avoid the massive disruption of closing everything down for two weeks, the way China did, the way Italy is doing. And we're trying to protect the vulnerable populations for whom this coronavirus could really be dangerous, senior citizens, immune-compromised. That's what we're trying to do. We're not dealing with Ebola virus. We're not dealing with a SARS virus. You have to keep in perspective, if I get the -- if I get coronavirus, what is going to happen to me, right? That's what people want to know. And it's not -- it's like a bad flu. Unless you're in the vulnerable populations, you will you will most likely get sick, and then you will recover. But we want to try to contain it because we don't want to go to these massive quarantines that you're seeing in other countries, and we don't want to expose our vulnerable populations. BARTIROMO: Let me ask you about mass transit, because, already, we have seen Amtrak announce that it is shutting down the Acela service until May. Are you planning on shutting down mass transit? CUOMO: Look, what we do here is, we calibrate to the facts as we know them at the time. So, as the facts change, you change your strategy. But, at this time, there's no reason to close down mass transit, Maria. We haven't had -- to 46 the extent we have big numbers in New York, it's actually in Westchester, which is a suburban community, as you know, where you have a cluster of cases. And once you get that cluster, they tend to exponentially increase. And that's what we're dealing with in Westchester. But, in New York City, we have a relatively minor number so far. BARTIROMO: Well, you mentioned Westchester, as many as 70 cases in Westchester, many linked to that one individual who got it through community transmission. Tell us about that case. And he commuted on Metro North. So, I mean, it's an easy -- it's an obvious question. If he got it on Metro North, if there's community transmission, how vulnerable is public transit? CUOMO: Yes. Well, you would have known by now, right, because the manifestation period is about a couple -- a couple of weeks. So, if people had gotten it next to him, in that situation, you would see -- be seeing the cases now. Westchester is interesting, and we're keeping an eye on it, because it was one individual, who then attended a number of large gatherings. And that's where you're seeing the spread. And that's what we have to keep in mind. It's these large gatherings where you can expose a number of people in a very short period of time. And then it's like dominoes, right? Then you just -- then the tree continues to expand with branches. And that's what we're seeing in Westchester. We're up to about 70 cases in Westchester now. New York City, we only have 11. So, you really see what can happen with those large gatherings and the cluster. And that's what we have to focus on. BARTIROMO: And that's why Amtrak suspended service. It just suspended service between D.C. and New York. But it was the Acela service between D.C. and New York that they're not going to start up again until May. Let me ask you about the testing. Why are we starting the testing now, Governor? Because we have known this now for, what, about two months? I know there was an issue with the CDC sending the states tests and then saying, wait, don't take the test yet. They're defective. [Editorial note: consult source link for extended commentary] [Editorial note: consult video at source link] [PA] Pennsylvania governor confirms first two cases of coronavirus (The Hill) The Hill [3/6/2020 10:49 AM, Marina Pitofsky, 1762K] Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf (D) confirmed the first two presumptive positive cases of coronavirus in the commonwealth Friday, telling residents that area officials have been 47 preparing for the virus. "This is not the first rapidly-spreading virus we have faced in our commonwealth and it will not be the last. We are prepared to mitigate the spread of this virus," Wolf said in a Friday statement. One of the patients is an adult from Wayne County. The person recently traveled to a country where coronavirus is present, according to the Friday statement, and they are in their home in isolation. The second person is from Delaware County and is also in their home in isolation. That person recently traveled to an area of the U.S. where coronavirus cases have been confirmed. Dr. Rachel Levine, the Pennsylvania secretary of health, predicted in the Friday statement that, "further spread of this virus throughout the nation will likely occur." "We encourage people to prepare for potential life disruptions. The same family emergency plans and kits that we use to prepare for flu or norovirus, and even snowstorms and floods, are important now. Pennsylvanians should continue to help stop the spread of viruses by washing your hands, covering coughs and sneezes, cleaning surfaces and staying home if you are sick," she continued. Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Director David Padfield confirmed Friday that state officials partially activated the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center earlier this week to support a response to the infections and planning efforts around the virus. As of Friday, there are more than 100,000 confirmed cases of coronavirus worldwide and over 3,300 fatalities. [DC] Officials confirm first coronavirus case in nation's capital (AP) AP [3/7/2020 9:57 PM, Michael Balsamo and Darlene Superville, 1973K] A man in his 50s tested positive for coronavirus — the first presumptively confirmed case in the nation's capital — and another person who traveled through the city has also tested positive in Maryland, officials said. District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser said Saturday the man in the initial case started exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 in late February. He was admitted to a Washington hospital on Thursday and appeared to have no history of international travel and no close contacts to any other confirmed cases across the U.S., Bowser said. "With his test yielding presumptive positive, D.C. Health has started its investigation in keeping with CDC guidelines," Bowser said. The

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investigation includes tracing the man's movements, though the mayor declined to say where in Washington the man lived. Virginia recorded its first case Saturday when a U.S. Marine stationed at Fort Belvoir was found to have the virus. President Donald Trump said he wasn't concerned "at all" about the coronavirus getting 48 closer to the White House after the first Washington case was confirmed and officials said an attendee of a recent political conference in the capital where Trump himself had spoken also tested positive for the virus. "No, I'm not concerned at all. No, I'm not. We've done a great job," Trump said. Though the man in the initial Washington case had no travel history and no contact with anyone confirmed to have coronavirus, the man was tested for COVID-19 because he was considered to be at risk for complications, said Dr. Anjali Talwalkar, the principal senior deputy director for the district's health department. The second man, who passed through Washington, is also in his 50s and lives in Nigeria, but had been staying with family members in Washington recently, officials said. He tested positive in Maryland, where he remains hospitalized, Bowser said. On Sunday, health officials said they had determined as part of their investigation that "an individual's visitation to Christ Church Georgetown warrants precautionary measures." In a statement, they recommended the church temporarily halt services and district health officials were reaching out to congregants and visitors. The church's rector did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment. "We are currently conducting an intensive investigation to identify any exposures to COVID19 that may have occurred at the church," the statement said. Officials had no plans to cancel any events, including the annual Cherry Blossom Festival, which starts on March 20 and draws thousands of tourists. "We recognize that it is fluid and every day we will monitor the situation on the ground in the district," Bowser said. Officials also stressed they were prepared for the spread of the virus and have been coordinating preparedness with a variety of agencies. Dr. Jennifer Smith, who leads Washington's public health laboratory, said officials have the capability of testing about 50 patients per day. The district has also ordered more than 42,000 masks to be delivered to the district's fire and emergency medical workers, officials said. Officials said they were in contact with their counterparts at health departments across the U.S., including in New York and California, after two people who attended the American Israel Public Affairs Committee event in Washington were diagnosed with coronavirus. Meanwhile, Maryland officials warned Saturday that a person who attended the recent Conservative Political Action Conference in the suburb of Oxon Hill had tested positive for the virus. Both Trump and Vice President Mike Pence spoke at the conference. The White House said Saturday there was no indication that either had met or were in "close proximity" to the infected attendee. When asked whether his campaign rallies would would continue in light of the CPAC case, the president replied, "We'll have tremendous rallies." Trump held his most recent campaign 49 rally last Monday in Charlotte, North Carolina. He waved off other questions to join a dinner for the president of Brazil, who was visiting Trump at the president's home in south Florida. The Marine at Fort Belvoir was the first military case of coronavirus reported inside the U.S., said a Pentagon official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the case. The Marine was being treated at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, located south of Washington, and had recently returned from an overseas assignment, Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman said on Twitter. [DC] Former acting Homeland Security inspector general indicted in data theft of 250,000 workers (Washington Post) Washington Post [3/6/2020 2:15 AM, Spencer Hsu, 12625K] A former acting inspector general for the Department of Homeland Security and a subordinate have been charged with stealing government software and databases containing personal data on more than 250,000 government employees, the Justice Department said. Charles K. Edwards, 59, of Sandy Spring, Md., and Murali Yamazula Venkata, 54, of Aldie, Va., were indicted in Washington on 16 counts, including conspiracy to commit theft of government property and to defraud the United States, theft of government property, wire fraud and aggravated identity theft, the Justice Department said. Venkata was also charged with destroying records. Prosecutors alleged that from October 2014 to April 2017, Edwards, Venkata and others conspired to steal proprietary information from the DHS inspector general's office so Edwards's company, Delta Business Solutions, could sell an enhanced version to the Agriculture Department. Edwards left DHS in December 2013 but continued "to leverage his relationship with Venkata" and other employees, the government alleged. Attorneys for Edwards and Venkata could not immediately be reached for comment. The data theft affected the personal information of DHS and Postal Service employees, the government said. The indictment is part of an ongoing investigation by DHS and Postal Service inspectors general and was announced by the two agencies, the Justice Department and the U.S. attorney's office for the District of Columbia, which is prosecuting the case. The case appears to match details revealed in the April guilty plea of a DHS federal technology manager. The manager admitted to conspiring with a former acting inspector general matching Edwards's description to steal a database managing more than 150,000 internal investigations and containing personal data of nearly 250,000 DHS employees, court filings show. The manager gave copies of the database to the former executive to develop a commercial version for resale. The database was valued at more than $3.1 million and included "critical, confidential information," a federal judge said at a plea hearing. 50 Sonal Patel, 44, of Sterling, Va., was released on personal recognizance and has been cooperating with the government pending sentencing. She faces up to five

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years in prison after pleading guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit theft of government property. According to plea filings, Patel worked as a branch chief in the information technology division of the inspector general's office. From October 2014 until 2017, Patel used her position to access and copy source code and database information of DHS and Postal Service employees to pass to co-conspirators, the government said. In June 2016, her plea statement said, she handed two DVDs with copied data to a coconspirator "on the side of the road" before the latter boarded a flight from Dulles International Airport to meet with software developers in India. Court filings also show that the co-conspirator worked at DHS from February 2008 until 2013, including as acting inspector general, and before that at the Transportation Security Administration and the Postal Service, where the individual supervised Patel. [DC] Former senior US Homeland Security official indicted for theft (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 1:43 PM, Staff, 1973K] A former senior official in the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been indicted for stealing government software and selling back a commercial version to US agencies, the Justice Department said Friday. Charles Edwards, 59, a former acting DHS inspector general, and a former subordinate, Murali Yamazula Venkata, 54, were indicted on 16 counts by a federal grand jury in Washington, the department said in a statement. The two are accused of conspiracy to commit theft of government property, wire fraud, identity theft and other charges. According to the indictment, Edwards, Venkata and others, from October 2014 to April 2017, stole proprietary software from the DHS Office of Inspector General along with sensitive government databases containing personal identifying information of DHS and US Postal Service employees. Edwards's company, Delta Business Solutions, then sold an enhanced version of the management software to the Office of Inspector General for the US Department of Agriculture, the indictment said. The Justice Department said Edwards hired software developers in India to develop commercial alternatives to the government software. Another alleged conspirator, Sonal Patel, a DHS technology manager, pleaded guilty in April of last year to one count of conspiracy to commit theft of government property and agreed to cooperate with investigators. [DC] Ex-inspector general at U.S. Department of Homeland Security indicted for stealing government property (Reuters) 51 Reuters [3/6/2020 12:21 PM, Sarah N. Lynch, 5304K] The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's former top watchdog, tasked with rooting out waste, fraud and abuse, was indicted on Friday on charges he plotted to steal the government's proprietary software and confidential databases to boost his private business, the Justice Department said. The indictment charges Charles K. Edwards, 59, who served as the acting inspector general at DHS from 2011 to 2013, as well as one of his subordinates, Murali Yamazula Venkata, with conspiracy to commit theft of government property and to defraud the United States, theft of government property, wire fraud and aggravated identity theft. Venkata, 54, also was charged with destroying records. Reuters could not immediately identify attorneys representing the two. The Justice Department said that from October 2014 to April 2017, Edward and Venkata plotted to steal the software used by the inspector general's office at DHS, along with databases containing highly sensitive personal information about employees at DHS, as well as the U.S. Postal Service. The goal, the department said, was to use that software as a model so that Edwards' company, Delta Business Solutions, could sell an "enhanced version" to the inspector general's office at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The department added that Edwards tried to leverage his relationships with people at the DHS inspector general's office, including Venkata and other employees, after his December 2013 departure. [DC] Former Homeland Security watchdog charged with defrauding the government (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/6/2020 7:13 AM, Jeff Mordock, 482K] Charles Edwards, the former top watchdog at the Department of Homeland Security, was charged Friday with stealing software from one government agency so his company could resell it to another agency for a profit. Mr. Edwards, who served as Homeland Security's inspector general until his resignation in 2013, faces a 16-count indictment including conspiracy, theft, wire fraud and identity theft charges. Prosecutors say Mr. Edwards stole confidential and proprietary software from the Homeland Security Inspector General's Office. They said the theft was part of a scheme to sell the same software to the Agriculture Department's inspector general. Although Mr. Edwards had stepped down from his position at the time of the alleged theft, prosecutors say he leveraged his relationship with DHS-OIG employee Murail Yamazula to help steal the software. Ms. Yamazula, who is also named in the indictment, faces the same charges as Mr. Edwards and an additional charge of destroying records. 52 The databases were said to include sensitive government information containing personal identifying information of Homeland Security and Post Office workers, according to court documents. [VA] US Marine contracts coronavirus in Virginia, the first case in the state (The Hill) The Hill [3/7/2020 9:41 PM, J. Edward Moreno, 1762K] A U.S. marine in Fort Belvoir, Va., tested positive for the COVID-19 coronavirus, Virginia health officials announced Saturday. According to Department of Defense spokesperson Jonathan Hoffman, the patient is currently being treated at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital. "The Marine recently returned from overseas where he was on official business. Secretary Esper and the White House have been briefed," Hoffman tweeted. The marine is the first service member serving domestically to contract the virus. Shortly after the confirmed case was announced, Democratic Virginia Sens. Tim Kaine and Mike Warner weighed in on the situation. "We are carefully monitoring

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the coronavirus case announced in Virginia today and are committed to doing everything we can to ensure the Commonwealth is getting the federal support it needs to respond," the senators said in a joint statement. The case comes amid news of confirmed presumptive cases in Washington, D.C., and the surrounding area. Saturday morning, the American Conservative Union (ACU) announced an attendee of their annual conference tested positive for the virus as well. [GA] Cruise Ship Carrying 3,500 Passengers Headed to Georgia Military Base for Coronavirus Testing, Quarantine (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/8/2020 1:46 PM, Penny Starr, 1973K] A Grand Princess cruise ship is headed to Georgia from California, where 32 Georgians and thousands of others on the boat will be transferred to Dobbin Air Reserve Base in Marietta, Georgia, for coronavirus testing and quarantine as required. Local media reported on Georgia Governor Brian Kemp's statement: "I have learned that thirty-four Georgians and additional American citizens from the eastern United States who are currently on the Grand Princess cruise ship off the California coast will be securely transferred to Dobbins Air Reserve Base in Marietta, Georgia. These passengers will undergo testing and be quarantined for possible exposure to COVID-19. They are expected to arrive at Dobbins late Monday, March 9 or early Tuesday, March 10. I am confident that Dobbins is equipped to provide high-quality care for Americans in need while keeping Georgia families safe, and our state stands ready to assist our federal partners if requested. In the days and weeks ahead, I encourage Georgians to pray for the patients affected by COVID-19 and their healthcare providers. We must continue to support one another, trust the advice of the medical community, and remain vigilant. 53 My office remains in constant communication with the Trump Administration, lawmakers, and state and local officials to ensure the health and safety of families across Georgia and our country. We will continue to provide updates as soon as they become available." Princess Cruise officials said the ship is expected to arrive late Monday, according to Atlanta Cox Media affiliate WSB-TV. The ship is carrying 3,500 people from 54 countries. As Breitbart News reported, Johns Hopkins University has launched a website to keep track of data about the virus. On Sunday the dashboard said 107,593 coronavirus cases have been confirmed around the world; 3,653 deaths have been reported; and 60,659 have recovered after becoming infected. In the United States, 437 cases of the virus have been confirmed and 17 deaths have been reported. [FL] Pence says US tracking another cruise ship over coronavirus concerns (CNN) CNN [3/8/2020 8:43 PM, Kelly Mena and Jamie Crawford, 5551K] Vice President Mike Pence said Saturday that the United States is taking "decisive action" to deal with the crew of a cruise ship that may have also worked on one of the Princess line ships that have already dealt with the novel coronavirus outbreak. "We are tracking at this point a ship that may have shared crew with the Diamond Princess or Grand Princess and we have taken decisive action to hold until we do a full medical assessment of the crew on that ship and we'll just continue to lean into this effort," Pence said at a news conference in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Pence did not name the ship in his remarks nor provide more details about what action is being taken. The Grand Princess remains off the coast of California with passengers and crew in quarantine. Pence earlier Saturday met with executives of the cruise line industry. At the meeting officials discussed ways the industry could ramp up efforts to mitigate the threat of coronavirus. During his news conference following the meeting, Pence announced a new plan to combat coronavirus on cruises. There will be enhanced entry and exit screening for cruise passengers, as well as on-board testing for coronavirus, Pence said. There will also be new quarantine standards for those who took a cruise and need to be quarantined, which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will coordinate. The cruise line industry is working with the CDC, Department of Homeland Security and the Coast Guard over the next 72 hours to implement the plans. Health officials briefing the media at the White House Saturday afternoon could not say exactly how many people had been tested related to using the 5,861 tests conducted by the CDC and public health labs across the country. FDA Commissioner Dr. Stephen Hahn said 1,583 patients have been tested by the CDC. 54 But Hahn and the government don't know how many patients received tests from the 2,361 specimens collected by state and local labs. Hahn said the CDC has shipped enough tests to check 75,000 people through public health labs. In addition, Hahn said, 1.1 million tests have been shipped to non-public health labs by a private manufacturer as of Friday night. Federal officials say 2.1 million tests will be shipped out by Monday, with a further goal of 4 million tests to be shipped by the end of next week. As of Saturday evening, there were more than 400 cases of the novel coronavirus in the United States, according to the CDC, as well as state and local governments. [FL] Cruise docks at Florida post after virus test of 2 staff (AP) AP [3/8/2020 6:01 PM, Kelli Kennedy, 241K] The Regal Princess cruise ship pulled into a Florida port late Sunday night, after being held off Florida's coast for hours while awaiting results for two crew members who eventually tested negative for coronavirus. The Regal Princess was originally to have docked Sunday morning in Port Everglades but instead spent most of the day sailing up and down the coast. The Coast Guard delivered testing kits to the Regal Princess and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a "no-sail order" for the ship. The crew members in question had transferred more than two weeks ago from the Grand Princess cruise ship in California where nearly two dozen on board have tested positive for the virus, including 19 crew members, according to Princess Cruises. The cruise line said in a statement earlier Sunday that the crew members of the Regal Princess shouldn't pose a risk

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to anyone on board because they did not exhibit respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and were well beyond the advised 14-day virus incubation period. A Port of Everglades spokeswoman, Ellen Kennedy, said later Sunday that the CDC had cleared the ship to enter port. She told The Associated Press by email that the ship would be docking at a cruise terminal in the port about 10 p.m. Sunday. A Princess Cruises statement issued early Monday said the CDC issued the clearance after the test results came back negative. After the ship docked, passengers stood on their balconies as they waited to disembark, the South Florida Sun Sentinel reported from scene. The first passengers were let off about an hour after the ship pulled into port. "The crew was wonderful," Elizabeth Goetsch, of Wisconsin, told the Fort Lauderdale paper. "I wasn't really worried about the health issues because they encouraged us and they calmed us." Penny Sitz, of Minnesota, was on her first cruise and echoed the praise for the "fantastic" staff members, saying they were constantly cleaning and "making us wash our hands all the time." 55 Guests in need of hotel rooms would be allowed to reboard the ship for the night, the statement said, and compensation for "unexpected expenses" would be considered on a case-by-case basis. The stall came a day after the governor's office confirmed that two people who tested positive for the new coronavirus have died in the state, the first deaths on the East Coast attributed to the outbreak in the U.S. Helen Aguirre Ferre, a spokeswoman for Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, confirmed the deaths on Twitter, writing the individuals were in their 70s and had traveled overseas. DeSantis met with Vice President Mike Pence, Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott and heads of the cruise line industry on Saturday to devise better ways for cruise lines to deal with the outbreak. Cruise line heads agreed to enhance entry and exit screenings and establish shipboard testing for the virus, along with new quarantine standards established by the CDC. The industry was asked to devise and fund a new plan on how to transport any cruise passengers who contract the disease. Some of the new protocol was expected to start taking effect early this week. The cruise lines "need to take action to make sure they are keeping their passengers safe and do not end up putting undo burden on federal resources," DeSantis said. On Sunday, the U.S. State Department issued an advisory against travel on cruise ships, particularly for travelers with underlying health conditions. The statement said the CDC noted an "increased risk of infection of COVID-19 in a cruise ship environment." It is unclear how many people are on board the Regal Princess, but the cruise line's website said it has a capacity of 3,560 guests. The vessel's next cruise scheduled to leave Port Everglades for a seven-day Caribbean trip Sunday was also canceled. The cruise line said guests would receive a full refund and offered $300 reimbursement for one night's hotel costs. [WA] Coronavirus Motel Ignites Clash at Epicenter of Seattle Outbreak (Bloomberg) Bloomberg [3/6/2020 3:14 PM, Noah Buhayar and Nic Querolo, 6400K] Video: HERE What started as a bold plan to slow the spread of the coronavirus in the Seattle area is quickly devolving into a Nimby battle. Officials in King County, Washington, the epicenter of the outbreak in the U.S., said this week they would use emergency powers to buy and renovate an Econo Lodge south of Seattle to house virus patients. The move led to a swift rebuke from the mayor of Kent, Washington, the suburb near Seattle-Tacoma International Airport where the 85-room motel is located. Workers and residents nearby are livid, and some have asserted that wealthier parts of the county never would have been picked. "We're one of the largest cities in the county, and we know we have a role to play in 56 preventing the spread of the virus," Kent Mayor Dana Ralph said in a phone interview. "But we were not included in the conversation or decision making." This type of consternation is common when a community pushes back against an unwanted project -- inspiring the term Nimby for "not in my backyard." This time, the backlash comes as health officials try to contain a spreading public health crisis, revealing a challenge that many communities across the U.S. may face as they try to slow the outbreak. "Washington state counties are not the only places where that is going to be discussed," said Irwin Redlener, a disaster preparedness expert and public health professor at Columbia University in New York. "We might have to adopt procedures and protocols that would be unacceptable in the absence of a true national emergency. In other words, our standards might have to get much more lax." Kent isn't alone in fighting quarantine plans. Last month, federal officials scrapped a proposal to move coronavirus patients from a cruise ship to a FEMA facility in Anniston, Alabama, after opposition from residents and the city council. There's also been controversy over a proposal to place some patients in a state-owned facility in Orange County, California. Ralph said King County had been considering buying the Econo Lodge for some time, potentially as a location for isolating people with hepatitis A, measles and tuberculosis. The current plan includes $4 million for the purchase of the motel and another $1.5 million in emergency funds for renovations and to hire as many as 11 existing employees. The facility could open within two weeks. King County officials are also looking to set up quarantine housing at other sites, including in Seattle. The motel will be used for patients who are infected with the coronavirus but aren't seriously ill, part of an effort to keep hospital beds available for people who need them. County officials said it was the only property on the market that meets its criteria: separate heating and cooling systems for each room and doors that open to the outside, rather than a hallway. "From that perspective, a motel is a very good solution," said David Abramson, a professor at New York University's School of Global Public Health. "They're almost entirely private spaces." That's little comfort for people in Kent, a working-class suburb home to a

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massive Amazon.com Inc. fulfillment center, Jeff Bezos's Blue Origin space venture and Boeing Co. facilities. On Thursday morning, cars raced by on the highway behind the motel, where a room with a single bed was going for $78.68 a night. Trucks were parked at the edge of the property, which sits near a Denny's, a bowling alley and a Ford dealership. Inside, confusion and anger reigned. The front-desk worker at the motel, who asked to not be identified by name, said that she had learned about the plan to quarantine coronavirus patients from news reports and was strongly opposed. She had yet to hear from her manager whether she would still have a job. And, even if she did, she wasn't sure she 57 wanted it for fear of infecting her family. At the gas station across the street, a steady stream of customers gave Rupali Handa, 35, and her coworkers an earful about the plan, some saying that a quarantine site wouldn't have been proposed for a wealthier part of the region. "I'm sorry for the people who are going through this," Handa said of those who've contracted the illness. But officials should quarantine people "somewhere else." [WA] First U.S. College to Close Classrooms as Virus Spreads. More Could Follow. (New York Times) New York Times [3/6/2020 11:01 AM, Mike Baker, Anemona Hartocollis, and Karen Weise, 23673K] The University of Washington said on Friday that it would cancel in-person classes and have students take courses and finals remotely while the Seattle area grapples with a growing coronavirus outbreak, in a move that other colleges around the country are preparing to follow if the virus becomes more widespread. Over the last few days, a growing number of universities have mobilized emergency planning teams to envision what a shutdown would look like, especially if students bring the virus back with them from spring break, which starts Friday on many campuses. Already, some students have been warned that they should be prepared to learn online, as many students studying abroad in Europe and Asia have been forced to do. At Stanford University, officials announced late Friday that classes would not meet in person as of Monday, and that any looming exams would be changed to a take-home format. The level of concern rose on Thursday with the announcement that a junior at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee who had been studying in Italy had tested positive for the virus after his study abroad program was canceled and he returned to his hometown, Chicago. The University of California, Los Angeles, also said three of its students were being tested and self-isolating off campus. "I'm like on the run from the virus," said Zara Khan, a junior at the University of California, Berkeley, who left a study abroad program in Florence for London five days ago. "I could go back to the States," she said on Friday, "but that's not even safe anymore." The University of Washington, with 50,000 students on three campuses across the Seattle region, was apparently the first large college in the United States to make the shift entirely to online classes amid virus concerns. It said the change would begin Monday and continue through the remainder of the winter quarter, which ends March 20. The university's president, Ana Mari Cauce, said she was hopeful that normal classes would resume during the spring quarter. The announcement was the most sweeping decision yet for leaders in the Seattle area rushing to contain the spread of the coronavirus, which has been linked to at least 14 deaths and 84 infections in the state. "Our goal is to complete this academic quarter with as little disruption to our students and their educational progress as possible," Ms. Cauce said. The university also announced on 58 Friday that one of its employees had tested positive for the coronavirus but said the decision to close classrooms had been made before that. Seattle University, with about 7,300 students, also said it would move to online classes for the rest of the winter quarter, and Northeastern University in Boston will do the same for students on its Seattle campus. The Lake Washington Institute of Technology's 6,000student campus in Kirkland, Wash., shut down for cleaning after several students and faculty members visited a nursing home near Seattle where many coronavirus cases have been confirmed. And in New York City, Yeshiva University canceled classes on two of its campuses until March 10 after a student tested positive for the virus this week. Other universities have warned their students to be prepared for similar actions if they become necessary. Duke University sent a campuswide alert on Thursday laying out extensive guidance for students leaving for spring break, advising them to avoid unnecessary travel and stay away from events or venues with a lot of people. The note said the school was bracing for the possibility that on-campus classes would have to end if a student or teacher got infected, and students could be forced to finish the semester remotely. "We hope this will not be necessary but want to be prepared," Duke said. Concern that classes could be canceled after spring break is rampant on many campuses, with shutdown rumors spread from student to student by text message and reinforced by professors who have been told by administrators to start thinking about putting their classes online. An email sent by the dean of Yale College on March 3 caught the attention of some students when it said, "And if you will be traveling home for spring break, consider bringing any items you will want with you if your return to campus is delayed." When some students began to interpret that as a warning that the school could close, Yale officials denied any plans to close and warned against spreading panic. "In making any decisions about new actions we might take in response to Covid-19, such as the implementation of social distancing or a full or partial closure, Yale leadership will rely on guidance from federal, state and local authorities, and from our own faculty and staff experts," said Karen Peart, a Yale spokeswoman. But students and professors said it was hard not to think that spring break could be a turning point. "Spring break is actually what's making the timing of the spread especially alarming, because everyone's leaving,"

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said Kahlil Greene, Yale's undergraduate student body president. "Everyone's dispersing and then everyone's coming back together. In many people's minds, that makes it more likely that something is going to happen on campus." Some colleges are encouraging students not to travel. Schools like Duke, New York University and the University of Chicago are asking students and faculty to register their travel plans, even locally, on a web-based form developed for emergencies like earthquakes and terrorist attacks. And many universities have canceled school-sponsored 59 spring break trips abroad. The University of Chicago, Fordham and others sent email messages to families in recent weeks saying they would support students who wanted to remain in the dorms over spring break, to avoid the risks of traveling. The University of Pennsylvania is adding extra dining hours for students who want to stay. Many universities are also discouraging trips to China, Italy, Iran, South Korea and Japan, where the infection is more severe, and asking students and faculty members to isolate themselves for two weeks if they return from those countries. Syracuse University said on Friday that it was watching travel warnings from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention closely, and would re-evaluate whether to continue study abroad programs in places like the United Kingdom, Spain, France and Chile. Alexandra Lupo, a junior at Fordham, had been in Italy for about two months studying in Florence, a popular destination for study abroad students interested in art and culture, when she learned that her program was being shut down. The coronavirus was spreading, administrators said in a surprise meeting. Everyone should leave the city by March 1. Instead of giving up and going back home to New Jersey, Ms. Lupo decided she would fly off to London with a friend she had met in the program. Over spring break, she and her friend will be traveling to Amsterdam and Dublin. "I'm lucky I was still able to do that with everything that was going on," Ms. Lupo said. Not every student studying abroad was so fortunate. Several N.Y.U. students bound for Shanghai saw their program canceled after the coronavirus swept through China, so some transferred to Florence — until it was shut down. Since returning from Italy to her home in Weston, Conn., Molly Morris, a student at Lafayette College in Easton, Pa., has been following her doctor's advice to stay away from other people and monitor her temperature. She is not allowed to go to the grocery store or exercise class. After her isolation period, at the end of next week's spring break, she plans to go to New York City for her mother's birthday, to visit some museums and restaurants. Some students are hoping to salvage at least the minimum accomplishment of getting credit for their courses through online learning. But students and instructors alike describe the remote courses as improvisational and primitive. "It's a bit of a disaster," said Marilynn Johnson, a history professor at Boston College whose study abroad program in Venice was shut down. "I feel like I'm teaching out to the void." But it may be good preparation for what is to come. 60 "Everybody's making contingency plans back in the U.S. over spring break," Dr. Johnson said. "I think people are anticipating that the same thing may happen in the U.S. that's happening in Europe. They're suddenly going to come back and find out that there's a ban on large gatherings, and that the universities have suspended in-person classes." Her colleagues, she said, are posting "tips and tricks" for online teaching in a shared Google Doc. One professor in Florence, who was teaching an Italian language immersion class until his students left, has been going around the city filming scenes and using them for his online lessons. "He's a funny man, so it's funny, but it's sad we're not there," said Ayden Mallory, an N.Y.U. student who returned from Florence. But she is finding it hard to motivate herself to study Italian when she is in "cold, cold Boston." She thinks about how this whole episode will seem when she looks back on it some day. "I feel sometimes sad, sometimes angry, sometimes laughing," she said. "But it also feels monumental as well." [WA] As coronavirus quietly spread, a nondescript nursing home became the deadliest hot spot in the U.S. (Washington Post) Washington Post [3/7/2020 6:00 AM, Maria Sacchetti and Jay Greene, 12625K] The final weeks of February brought an unusual flurry of 911 calls from the Life Care Center of Kirkland. A lieutenant at the local fire department suggested alerting county health officials: The nursing home might have been hit with another run of the flu. Emergency crews dispatched as they would with any routine call, without hesitation, said Fire Chief Joseph Sanford. "No one had any idea," he said, "that covid was here." Covid-19, the new global threat caused by the novel coronavirus, already was barreling through the nursing home with frightening speed, turning the 100-plus-bed facility into the outbreak's deadliest place in the United States. Within days, dozens of people in this quiet Seattle suburb would be under quarantine, including college students, three police officers and 28 firefighters. Nationwide, at least 19 people have died after becoming infected with the respiratory virus. Fourteen have been linked to the Life Care Center, succumbing in the past two weeks, according to King County public health officials. Many more Life Care residents have been exposed to the virus, as well as some staff members. Late Thursday, officials evacuated 15 residents to local hospitals without saying why. The more than 60 residents who remain are confined to their rooms, leaving the overstuffed furniture and polished tile halls strangely empty. Six are exhibiting coronavirus symptoms, the facility said Sunday. Seventy of Life Care's 180 employees also are showing signs of the disease. The healthy staffers who are still working there wear blue smocks, face masks and gloves as they tend to residents around the clock. Visitors are banned, so relatives stand outside, communicating with their loved ones through window panes. The outbreak at the nursing home has placed Kirkland at the center of the unfolding 61 mystery surrounding the coronavirus.

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Washington state has been particularly hard hit, with two more facilities for seniors reporting infected residents on Friday. The Life Care center has seen a dramatic spike in deaths since the first patient found to have covid-19 was taken from the facility on Feb. 19. There have been 26 deaths in the fewer than three weeks since then — typically, there are three to seven deaths in a month. Thirteen of those who died tested positive for covid-19, but the center does not know how many of the others were tested for the virus. The facility has requested more testing kits, said Timothy Killian, a press liaison for the Life Care Center of Kirkland. But as of Saturday, Life Care had received only 45, far fewer than the number of residents and staff now housed there. While the facility is accustomed to dealing with infectious disease, staff were struck by the fast-moving virus, Killian said. "Our experience with this so far has shown that the virus is volatile unpredictable," he said. "We've had patients who within an hour's time show no symptoms to going to acute symptoms and being transferred to the hospital. And we've had patients die relatively quickly under those circumstances. Everything we've learned so far is that we know very little about how fast this may act." [Editorial note: consult source link for extended commentary] [WA] This nursing home is at the center of Washington's coronavirus. Here's what one first responder saw there (CNN) CNN [3/8/2020 10:27 AM, Jake Tapper, 5551K] When first responders reported last week to a hard-hit nursing home in Washington state, the epicenter of the nation's coronavirus outbreak, they found an understaffed facility with inadequate gear attempting to serve dozens of patients vulnerable to catching the virus. Just three staff members reported to Life Care Center in Kirkland, Washington, between Tuesday night and Wednesday morning to serve about 90 residents, a first responder familiar with the situation told CNN. Still, neither the King County Health Department nor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sent personnel Thursday to provide assistance -- though they have since. First responders were concerned that staff members were not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment to handle the high number of patients with probable coronavirus. They also arrived to the facility to find employees using positive pressure bag valve masks to ventilate potential coronavirus patients -- even though firefighters have been told not to use such masks, as they can disperse more particulate into the air, the responder said. The children and other relatives of patients in the facility have been attempting to sound the alarm about conditions in the facility for weeks. A spokeswoman for the city of Kirkland told CNN that "our firefighters are taking direction from King County Emergency Medical Services regarding the personal protective equipment. At this time we have been told to continue providing respiratory support 62 including positive pressure bag valve masks." CNN has reached out to the county medical services officials, Public Health Seattle-King County and the Washington state Department of Health for reaction. CNN has also sought comment from representatives of Life Care Center and the CDC -- both of which so far have not responded. A spokesperson for the Life Care Center said during a news conference Saturday that the CDC has now provided it with extra nurses, practitioners and doctors. State governments are working to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus in the US, as federal officials say more testing for the illness will likely see the number of known cases increase. As of Saturday night, there were at least 19 deaths in the United States -- at least 14 of them tied to the Life Care Center in Kirkland alone, according to a Seattle and King County Public Health news release. Two new coronavirus deaths out of 16 total recorded in the state are linked to the facility, according to the release. A man in his 70s, who was a resident at the care home, died on March 2, while a woman in her 80s, who was also a Life Care resident, died on March 5, officials said. While staff are caring for patients to the best of their ability, "we cannot make any promise that exposure, further exposure, within the facility is not happening," said Tim Killian, a spokesman for Life Care Center of Kirkland. Some Life Care Center residents have gone from no symptoms to acute symptoms within an hour, Killian said. "We've had patients die relatively quickly under those circumstances," he said. Killian told reporters during a Saturday briefing that 70 employees are showing coronavirus symptoms. Those employees have been asked not to return to work. As of February 19, the facility employed 180 staff members and housed 120 residents. Fiftyfour residents have since been transferred to various hospitals, Killian said, and all residents at the facility are confined to their rooms. On Thursday, the facility received 45 coronavirus tests, the results of which are still pending, he said. Life Care Center of Kirkland said in a statement later Saturday that they had received additional testing kits from the Washington State Department of Health and are now able to test all remaining residents in their facility. The tests are currently being administered, according to the facility's statement. While the Trump administration -- through a response effort led by Vice President Mike Pence and a White House task force -- has sought to assure the American public, officials have still not explained why the federal government has been so slow to distribute testing kits in bulk and has dragged its feet on removing restrictions for who can conduct diagnosis. 63 Health officials briefing the media at the White House Saturday afternoon could not say exactly how many people had been tested related to using the 5,861 tests conducted by the CDC and public health labs across the country. Various factors impact the number of people who can be tested, including the fact that most people receive at least two tests -- swabs for the nose and the throat. FDA Commissioner Dr. Stephen Hahn said Saturday that 1,583 patients have been tested by the CDC but that the government doesn't know how many patients received tests from the 2,361 specimens collected by state and local

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labs. Each day the number of tests is rising, and the numbers are soon expected to dramatically jump, he said. Federal officials say 2.1 million tests will be shipped out by Monday, with a further goal of 4 million tests to be shipped by the end of next week. [CA] Coronavirus: 21 People On Grand Princess Cruise Ship Test Positive (NPR) NPR [3/6/2020 7:35 PM, Bill Chappell and Vanessa Romo, 4112K] Twenty-one people aboard the Grand Princess cruise ship off the coast of California have tested positive for the coronavirus disease COVID-19, Vice President Pence announced Friday. The Grand Princess had been returning to San Francisco after a cruise to Hawaii and has been kept away from port while a small portion of the roughly 3,500 people on board are tested for the coronavirus. Pence said of 46 tests conducted so far on the ship, 19 crew members and 2 passengers tested positive, while 24 people were negative and one was inconclusive. On Wednesday, health officials in California's Placer County said that a former passenger on the Grand Princess had died from COVID-19 — the state's first known death from the coronavirus. The ship will now be brought into a noncommercial port where all passengers and crew will be tested for coronavirus, Pence said during a briefing at the White House. Some people onboard may be quarantined, he said, emphasizing that measures will be taken to avoid spreading the virus. The vice president said it's likely the 1,100 crew on the Grand Princess were exposed to coronavirus on "two different outings" and said they will remain in quarantine aboard the ship. Some of the passengers will be quarantined on U.S. military bases, including two already used for similar situations, according to Health and Human Services official Robert Kadlec. He said the Pentagon also was identifying other quarantine settings. California National Guard helicopters have been ferrying coronavirus test kits back and forth from the ship. Samples of those tested so far were collected on Thursday, according to Princess Cruises. 64 Officials are also working to track down thousands of people who were on an earlier Grand Princess cruise from San Francisco to Mexico and might have been exposed to the coronavirus. New cases in the U.S. The U.S. death toll rose to 15, after a Seattle-area hospital confirmed an additional coronavirus death Friday. Fourteen people have now died in Washington state, and one person has died in California. There are at least 260 coronavirus cases in the U.S., according to a tracking tool created by the Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering. That figure includes residents across more than 20 states and about 40 people who were repatriated from outbreak sites in China and Japan. About two dozen states have reported cases of the respiratory virus. Washington state has reported the largest number of cases: 79. California now has 69 confirmed cases, according to the California Department of Public Health. Placer County — where the state's first death occurred — reported more cases Friday. Three people newly diagnosed with COVID-19 had all traveled on the same Grand Princess cruise as the county resident who died, according to local health officials. That voyage was from San Francisco to Mexico and lasted from Feb. 11 to 21. In Nevada, one of two recently reported cases is a Reno man who is also linked to the Grand Princess. The man's "condition is stable and he is self-isolating at home," according to the Washoe County Health District, which includes Reno. The other Nevada case is in Clark County. Both of the Nevada cases involve men who are in their 50s, health officials say. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Friday that his state has 33 confirmed coronavirus cases, adding that roughly 4,000 people are under "precautionary quarantine" because of possible exposure or their medical circumstances. A number of states announced their first confirmed coronavirus cases Friday: Kentucky, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Pennsylvania. Minnesota and Indiana reported their first presumed cases. Indiana's involved an adult who had visited Boston, member station WFYI reports. Worldwide, the number of coronavirus cases has surpassed 100,000, including more than 80,000 in China. To avoid spreading any virus, the World Health Organization recommends people wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if a sink isn't available. Face masks should only be used by people who are either sick or caring for someone who is, the WHO says. Alabama church members quarantined in Bethlehem 65 More than a dozen members of an Alabama church have been placed under quarantine orders during a tour of the Holy Land, after the Bethlehem hotel where they were staying was informed that a former guest had tested positive for the coronavirus in Greece. The group includes the leadership of the 3Circle Church; they initially arrived in the area on March 1. Church members say they were initially told to leave the hotel — but were then told to return. When they did, they faced a quarantine, along with the hotel staff. "So far, 7 hotel employees have tested positive for the coronavirus," a church pastor said in a statement sent to NPR's Daniel Estrin. Hotel staff echoed the church members' description of local authorities taking a confusing approach to the quarantine, according to The Jerusalem Post. The manager of the Angel Hotel told the newspaper that the Americans had looked for other lodging in the area but were turned away by every hotel. The group is now being told to stay in their rooms for 14 days; Estrin adds that Israel has "sealed off movement in and out of Bethlehem." The pastor tells Estrin that the group has reached out to the U.S. Embassy about their predicament. "The hotel employees have been incredibly helpful to the team during this process," the pastor said. "The 3Circle team is asking for help and clarity, but most importantly, prayers." In an update posted to the church's Facebook page, the group said the mayor of Beit Jala, on the western outskirts of Bethlehem, had ensured their medications were delivered to the hotel. "We are deeply grateful, and are so humbled by the incredible hospitality and kindness we have experienced from the people

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in this area," the church members said. Washington State grapples with outbreak EvergreenHealth Medical Center in Kirkland, Wash., said Friday that a 12th patient has died from COVID-19. Most of the patients who died had been residents of the Life Care Center of Kirkland, a nursing home identified as the site of a coronavirus outbreak. The University of Washington announced Friday that it is halting all in-person classes and told students they should attend online sessions instead, starting Monday and lasting through the end of the winter quarter on March 20. The school says all final exams "will not be conducted in person, but may be conducted online when feasible, and at the instructor's discretion." The university's move is meant to support social distancing – maintaining roughly 6 feet of personal space. The CDC says that in areas experiencing an outbreak, the practice can "limit exposure by reducing face-to-face contact and preventing spread among people in 66 community settings." After announcing the decision, the school said one of its staff members has tested positive for the coronavirus and is in self-isolation. U.S. coronavirus testing had 'missteps' More laboratories around the U.S. are finally gaining the ability to test for the coronavirus disease, after what Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, calls "missteps" in the federal government's plan to create, produce and distribute tests. Six U.S. states — Alabama, Maine, Ohio, Oklahoma, West Virginia and Wyoming — currently have no labs with the verified ability to run COVID-19 diagnostic tests, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Thursday afternoon. "We're not there yet, but soon," Fauci said of the effort to make testing more widely available. As NPR's Allison Aubrey reports, "Some academic hospitals are developing their own tests and commercial options are expanding really quickly." The results, she adds, "can take three or four days" before they're reported to local health officials and the CDC. Vice President Pence acknowledged a shortage of tests on Thursday, saying: "We don't have enough tests today to meet what we anticipate will be the demand going forward." To address the growing crisis, President Trump signed an emergency funding package worth some $8 billion Friday morning. The president signed the coronavirus bill at the White House. He had been scheduled to sign it at the CDC headquarters in Atlanta, which he toured later in the day. [CA] Nearly Half of 46 California Cruise Ship Passengers Tested Have Coronavirus, as U.S. Cases Top 400 (US News & World Report) US News & World Report [3/8/2020 12:00 PM, Robin Foster and E.J. Mundell, 3020K] Nearly half of the 46 passengers tested aboard a cruise ship anchored off the California coast have the new coronavirus, Vice President Mike Pence announced Friday, as the total number of U.S. cases topped 400 and the death count climbed to 19. The infection of 21 people on the Grand Princess -- 19 crew members and two guests -- fueled fears that the virus may be circulating widely among the more than 3,500 people aboard the ship. The ship has been held off the coast since Wednesday, when a man who had traveled on the first leg of the cruise died of COVID-19. Officials plan to allow the ship to dock in Oakland, Calif., on Monday, where all passengers and crew will be tested for the disease and will be taken to quarantine facilities, New York Times reported. Just last month, 700 people aboard another Princess Cruises ship, the Diamond Princess, became infected with coronavirus while the ship was quarantined for weeks in Yokohama harbor, in Japan. 67 "Cruise ships are posing probably one of the biggest challenges that we are seeing in this outbreak," Dr. Jeanne Marrazzo, infectious diseases director at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, told CNN. "We know these cruise ships are essentially … we've been calling them incubators, they are incredibly very healthy environments for the pathogens that we're talking about." Across the rest of America, half of the country's 50 states have reported coronavirus cases, the Washington Post reported. On Friday, Florida confirmed two travel-related coronavirus deaths, the first reported on the East Coast. Meanwhile, New York declared a state of emergency as more than 2,700 New Yorkers have been asked to self-quarantine in the New York City area. The state now has a total of 89 cases, the Times reported. And Maryland on Thursday declared a state of emergency as it reported its first three cases of coronavirus. All three cases were travel-related, a couple in their 70s and a 50-year-old woman, the Post reported. Reacting to the crisis, President Donald Trump on Friday signed an $8.3 billion coronavirus package passed Thursday by the U.S. Congress. Pence said earlier this week that all restrictions on coronavirus testing would be lifted and the costs of testing would be covered by all forms of health insurance, but he conceded Thursday that "we don't have enough tests today to meet what we anticipate will be the demand going forward," the Times reported. No immunity Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) released a troubling new statistic on the coronavirus. "Globally, about 3.4% of reported COVID-19 cases have died," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said during a media briefing this week, the Times reported. "By comparison, seasonal flu generally kills far fewer than 1% of those infected." The estimate most likely takes into account the growing number of infections being recorded outside China, mostly in South Korea, Iran and Italy, the Times reported. As the WHO's Tedros explained, "while many people globally have built up immunity to seasonal flu strains, COVID-19 is a new virus to which no one has immunity," meaning more people can be infected and some will suffer severe illnesses. The coronavirus does not transmit as efficiently as the flu but "causes more severe disease," he added. Prior estimates, including a study of more than 1,100 cases in China, had put the death rate at 1.4% of cases. But Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and other experts have also suggested that the death rate may be lower than current

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estimates, because they do not take into account the number of milder cases of COVID-19 that do not get reported. 68 More states report cases Washington state continued to contend with an outbreak involving the Life Care Center nursing home in the town of Kirkland, CNN reported. State officials said a total of 16 people have now died from COVID-19 infection, with most either living at or connected with the nursing home. According to the Washington state health department's website, at least 79 cases have been reported so far in the state, but more cases are expected. State officials said residents at three more senior care centers have been diagnosed with coronavirus, CNN reported Friday. Two were in Seattle and the other in Issaquah, about 20 miles east of Seattle. While most people with robust immune systems appear to recover from COVID-19, frail and elderly nursing home residents may be in particular danger, experts noted. Officials in Seattle say special isolation centers are being opened to house people who may have had contact with people already affected by the new coronavirus. Scientists say that genetic analysis of the virus in Washington state suggests the coronavirus may have been spreading within the community for as long as six weeks before the first case was detected, the Times reported. Last week, the Trump administration placed travel restrictions on three foreign countries that are battling COVID-19 outbreaks. A complete travel ban was issued for Iran, while the highest-level travel advisory was issued for parts of Italy and South Korea. The travel advisory urges Americans to avoid all nonessential travel to affected areas of those two countries. Cases of infection have now been spotted in 94 countries and on every continent except Antarctica, according to the WHO. 'Get ready' WHO has now reported more than 105,000 cases of coronavirus worldwide, including more than 3,500 deaths, the vast majority of which have occurred in China, where the outbreak began. Internationally, hopes of containing the coronavirus are fading fast. "This is not a drill," Tedros, of the WHO, said Thursday. "This is not a time for excuses. This is a time for pulling out all the stops." In Asia, South Korea and Iran are each battling major outbreaks of COVID-19. And in Europe, Italy on Sunday ordered a travel lockdown in its prosperous northern region around Milan, as it tried to contain a major outbreak of COVID-19. "We are facing an emergency," Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said in an early morning news briefing, the Times reported. 69 In Japan, a state of emergency has been declared in a northern province because of the growing number of coronavirus cases there, the Associated Press reported. Japan has also taken the unusual step of closing all schools for the month of March to protect children. [CA] 21 test positive for coronavirus on cruise ship off California coast, Pence says USA Today [3/6/2020 6:39 PM, Morgan Hines, 5611K] Video: HERE Vice President Mike Pence said Friday that the Princess Cruises' Grand Princess cruise ship off the coast of California will dock this weekend in a "non-commercial port," and that all passengers and crew will be tested for the coronavirus. Speaking at the White House on Friday evening, Pence said that 46 people aboard the ship had been swabbed. Of those, 21 tested positive for the virus, he said, 24 were negative and one of the tests was inconclusive. Pence said that of the 21 who tested positive, 19 were crew members and two were passengers. "It's very likely that the crew was exposed on two different outings," Pence said. "And we know the coronavirus manifested among the previous passengers." The vice president said that crew members would likely be quarantined on the ship. "We will be testing everyone on the ship," Pence said. In an announcement late Friday afternoon local time, Grand Princess' captain shared the test results with the people on board over the loudspeaker. In a video obtained by USA TODAY, he can be heard saying the people infected on board "will continue to stay quarantined in their staterooms," until they can be transferred to hospitals on shore. The captain also said the California Department of Public Health requested all guests continue to stay in their rooms. In an update issued after Pence's Friday announcement, Princess Cruises said the "ship's doctor is in the process of informing the guests and crew of their individual results. All guests and affected crew will remain isolated in their rooms." It remains unclear exactly when and where the ship will dock, and Princess Cruises said it is "awaiting official specific plans for future positioning of the ship from relevant authorities." More than 3,500 people were waiting for news of the test results as more cases connected to the ship came to light. Princess Cruises said the ship is providing food and beverages via room service, offering free Internet and telephone service for passengers to stay in contact with families and working with the CDC to determine if additional precautionary measures are needed. The cruise line's medical team also is collecting information from guests regarding prescription refill needs. In addition to a 71-year-old man who died from coronavirus after sailing on the ship's previous voyage, The Associated Press reports health authorities disclosed that at least 70 nine other people who were on the same excursion were also found to be infected. And some passengers from that trip stayed aboard for the current voyage. Carson City Health and Human Services in Nevada confirmed on Friday that it is also monitoring "a few" individuals in its jurisdiction who have ties to the Grand Princess cruise ship. Officials ordered the ship to stay at bay until testing is concluded of those on board who were on the previous voyage and those on board who are displaying coronavirus symptoms. "The ship will not come on shore until we appropriately assess the passengers," California Gov. Gavin Newsom had said Thursday. The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety in California confirmed on Twitter that another cruiser who may have been on the ship has died, though it's unclear if he had coronavirus. [Editorial note: consult source link for extended commentary] [CA] Grand Princess cruise

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remains off shore, waiting for answers about docking and testing (USA Today) USA Today [3/7/2020 6:44 PM, Morgan Hines and Curtis Tate, 5611K] Video: HERE The more than 3,500 people on Princess Cruises' Grand Princess remained in limbo Saturday evening as they awaited further information on when and where the cruise ship will dock, after 21 people aboard tested positive for coronavirus on Friday. The ship's passengers were supposed to disembark this weekend but have not heard yet from federal, state and local authorities about where that will take place and when. "We await a decision as to where we will be berthing the ship," said Jan Swartz, president of Princess Cruises, in a conference call with reporters. Officials also have not communicated a plan for testing passengers and crew for coronavirus. Only 45 passengers and crew members have been tested, and of those who tested positive, 19 were crew members and two were passengers. Grant Tarling, the chief medical officer for Carnival Corporation, the parent company of Princess Cruises, said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had not established a testing protocol for the ship, nor had it said how many passengers and crew members would be tested. "We have not been told that by the CDC," he said. "We are waiting for CDC to provide definitive information about that." Swartz said that Princess Cruises made recommendations to the agencies that will decide what to do with the ship, based on its experience last month with the Diamond Princess, which was quarantined off the coast of Japan. More than 700 of that ship's passengers developed coronavirus, and six have died. "We need to get the ship into a port as soon as possible," she said. 71 Grand Princess passengers could be disembarked to face quarantine, possibly at U.S. military bases or other sites. That's what happened to hundreds of passengers who were exposed to the virus on the Diamond Princess in January. In his most recent comments about the ship, President Donald Trump, speaking Friday at the U.S. Centers for to Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, said he would prefer not to allow the passengers onto American soil but will defer to the recommendations of medical experts. "I don't need to have the numbers (of U.S. cases) double because of one ship that wasn't our fault," Trump said in a Fox News interview. "And it wasn't the fault of the people on the ship either. OK? It wasn't their fault either. And they are mostly American, so I can live either way with it." Speaking at the White House on Friday evening, Vice President Mike Pence said that 46 people aboard the ship, which was being held off the coast of California, had been tested for coronavirus. Of those, 24 were negative and one of the tests was inconclusive. Pence said that of the 21 who tested positive, 19 were crew members and two were passengers. "Those that will need to be quarantined will be quarantined. Those who will require medical help will receive it," Pence said. Kailee Higgins Ott, 17, is on board Grand Princess with her mother. She said Saturday that they were doing fine. At this point, she just wants more information. "Part of me wants to get tested and have a plan set soon," she told USA TODAY. "But part of me also doesn't want that. I feel nervous if we have to move to a military base because I don't know how that will be like. Right now we are being treated well and it's not that bad in the room so moving to a different location would be weird." Some of the announcements from the captain, she said, have been confusing. "I think the captain could say more because we are reading more than what the captain is telling us on the news about the whole situation," she added. Princess Cruises said the ship is providing food and beverages via room service, offering free Internet and telephone service for passengers to stay in contact with families and working with the CDC to determine if additional precautionary measures are needed. The cruise line's medical team also is collecting information from guests regarding prescription refill needs. The company announced Wednesday those on board may have been exposed to coronavirus after sailing with 62 passengers who officials say had previously been on the ship's Mexico voyage with a 71-year-old California man who eventually died from the virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised guests stay in their rooms starting Thursday but had not declared a quarantine, according to a Thursday statement from Princess Cruises provided by spokesperson Alivia Owyoung Ender. 72 A Coast Guard helicopter lowered test kits onto the 951-foot Grand Princess by rope Thursday. On Friday evening, personal protective equipment was delivered to the ship via a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter, the line said Saturday. The new gear was meant to supplement the supply already on board. As of Saturday morning, coronavirus had infected more than 102,000 people globally and killed 3,491, according to Johns Hopkins data. More cases related to Grand Princess continue to emerge As passengers remained on the Grand Princess, more cases connected to the ship came to light. Late Friday, the Chicago Department of Public Health said an employee of the Chicago Public Schools had tested positive for coronavirus — the city's first case and the sixth in Illinois. The woman, in her 50s, had disembarked from the Grand Princess in San Francisco on Feb. 21 and returned to Chicago on Feb. 24. She is currently hospitalized and in stable condition, city officials said. The woman had returned to work, but stayed home once she started developing symptoms, officials said. The test came back positive on Friday. The school where she works, Jacqueline B. Vaughn Occupational High School, will be closed next week. The city's school system and health department "have already begun an extensive outreach effort for every student, employee and family in this school community to inform them of the confirmed case," Mayor Lori Lightfoot said in a news conference late Friday. Carson City Health and Human Services in Nevada confirmed on Friday that it is also monitoring "a few" individuals in its jurisdiction who have ties to the Grand Princess cruise

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ship. “In many respects, our ships are small floating cities. Just as life happens in cities for good and for bad, life also happens onboard our ships," Princess Cruises’ president Jan Swartz said in a video posted to Twitter Friday morning. This isn’t Princess Cruises’ first coronavirus cruise situation Princess Cruises also owns the Diamond Princess, the ship that was quarantined in Yokohama, Japan, and experienced a coronavirus outbreak that infected nearly 700 passengers. Six have died. “We learned a lot from our recent experience in Japan, and we are taking those lessons into account as we continue to support our fleet and our guests," Swartz said in the video on Twitter. 73 On social media, the cruise line was busy replying to a myriad of tweets from concerned customers with upcoming cruises, assuring them their bookings could be canceled. Princess is allowing people who have a cruise booked through May 31, 2020, can make changes to their reservations. Maryland residents tested positive after cruising on Egyptian ship Meanwhile, three Maryland residents tested positive Thursday for the coronavirus after traveling on an Egyptian cruise on the Nile River, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan said on Friday evening. The married couple in their 70s and an unrelated woman in her 50s, all from Montgomery County, are the first patients to test positive for coronavirus in the state. "This does appear to be the same cruise ship the World Health Organization (WHO) announced today has 12 workers who have been placed in quarantine for 14 days" after testing positive, said Hogan. "And our three Maryland cases appear to be linked to six confirmed coronavirus cases in Texas." On Thursday, Texas health departments announced positive coronavirus tests for several Harris County residents who had recently traveled abroad together. A cruise ship on Egypt’s Nile River with over 150 tourists and local crew was in quarantine Saturday in the southern city of Luxor, after 12 people tested positive for the new coronavirus. A Taiwanese-American tourist who had previously been on the same ship tested positive when she returned to Taiwan. The World Health Organization informed Egyptian authorities, who tested everyone currently on the ship. Health authorities found a dozen of the ship’s Egyptian crew members had contracted the fast-spreading virus, but did not show symptoms, according to a statement Friday. The statement said the 12 will be transferred to isolation in a hospital on Egypt’s north coast. The passengers — who include Americans, French and other nationalities — and the crew will remain quarantined on the ship awaiting further test results. Egyptian authorities have been tight-lipped about the virus outbreak, previously reporting only three confirmed cases. That’s even as the wider Mideast now has over 6,000 confirmed cases. [CA] Passengers aboard cruise ship off California amid coronavirus outbreak to be transferred to military posts for quarantine (FOX News) FOX News [3/8/2020 5:59 PM, Bradford Betz, 8943K] American passengers on the Grand Princess, a cruise ship that has been languishing off the coast of Northern California since Thursday because of the coronavirus, will be transferred to military posts in California, Texas and Georgia to be tested and for a mandatory 14-day quarantine, federal health officials said Sunday during a news conference with Gov. Gavin Newsom. 74 Health and Human Services officials said nearly 1,000 California residents on the ship will complete the quarantine at Travis Air Force Base north of San Francisco and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar near San Diego. Residents of other states will complete the quarantine at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland in Texas or Dobbins Air Reserve Base in Georgia. The officials said all will be monitored for symptoms of COVID-19 throughout their quarantine, adding that crew members who tested positive for the virus would remain on the ship. The Grand Princess ship, which has been carrying over 3,500 people from 54 countries, is expected to dock at the Port of Oakland, Calif., on Monday. It has been some 10 to 12 miles offshore since Thursday. Of the 21 people infected aboard the ship, 19 crew members and two passengers had tested positive for COVID-19. As of Friday, only 45 of the ship’s passengers had been tested. The ship canceled its final stop in Mexico en route to San Francisco from Hawaii after officials learned a man who had been on the ship last month contracted the virus and died. Passengers have been on the ship since Feb. 21 when they left California for Hawaii. The ship’s chief medical officer, Dr. Grant Tarling, said the company believed the man, who didn’t show any symptoms until he was on board, contracted the virus before boarding, The Mercury News reported. Newsom said California residents will take priority, followed by non-California residents who are U.S. citizens, and then non-U.S. citizens. Those who have tested positive for the virus will be sent directly to California hospitals, officials said. Newsom urged for patience, saying the process could take two to three days. Federal officials said the State Department was working with the home countries of several hundred passengers to arrange for repatriation to their countries. [CA] COVID-19: Grand Princess with 21 positive cases to dock in U.S. Monday (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/8/2020 1:19 PM, UPI, 1973K] A cruise ship where at least 21 people have tested positive for COVID-19 will dock in the United States on Monday, cruise line officials said Sunday. The Grand Princess cruise ship will dock in Oakland, cruise line Princess Cruises announced after the ship has been waiting off the coast of San Francisco awaiting clearance to return to land amid the outbreak of the coronavirus. Guests who require medical treatment and hospitalization will be disembarked first, followed by guests that are California residents who will undergo a health screening before being sent to a federal facility in the state for testing and isolation. Guests from outside California will be transported to facilities in other states and the crew will be quarantined and treated aboard the ship. 75 Another Princess cruise ship, the Regal Princess, was held up off of the southeast coast of Florida on Sunday as it

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awaits tests for coronavirus from two crew members who were transferred from the Grand Princess. The crew members have not exhibited symptoms of the virus, Princess said. The Coast Guard delivered testing kits to the ship from a small boat Sunday morning. The cruise line canceled the next cruise from Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale. Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, wrote on Twitter that the Trump administration has decided to quarantine some of the passengers from the Grand Princess at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio where 230 people have already been quarantined while calling for more tests in the state. "Many of us have expressed to the Trump administration serious concerns with how the administration has handled the quarantine and treatment of infected patients," Castro wrote. "For example, we still do not have the testing kits we need to truly determine community spread." The United States has 437 cases of coronavirus and 19 deaths, according to figures from Johns Hopkins. Sixteen of the deaths are in Washington state, two in Florida and one in California. The cases includes 46 repatriated from the Diamond Princess in Japan and two from Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the outbreak. Virginia health officials announced a second presumptive case of coronavirus in the state, an 80-year-old Fairfax resident who traveled on a similar Nile River cruise linked to three positive tests in Maryland. President Donald Trump on Sunday responded to criticism of his administration's handling of the outbreak writing on Twitter that the White House has a "perfectly coordinated and fine-tuned" plan for the virus. "We moved VERY early to close borders to certain areas which was a Godsend. V.P. is doing a great job. The Fake News Media is doing everything possible to make us look bad. Sad!" Trump wrote. Presumptive positive cases refer to patients who have tested positive for the virus but have not yet been confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Anthony Fauci, head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said that the U.S. government could shut down some sections of the country due to outbreaks of COVID-19. Fauci, a member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force led by Vice President Mike Pence, told Fox News that "anything is possible" in regards to measures widespread lockdowns in areas affected by the coronavirus could take place in the United States. "I don't think it would be as draconian as nobody in or nobody out but if we continue to get 76 cases like this particularly at the community level there will be what we call 'mitigation,' where we have to essentially do social distancing, keep people out of crowded places, take a look at seriousness, do you really need to travel and I think it's particularly important among the most vulnerable," he said. Fauci's comments come after Italian Prime Minister signed a decree placing millions of residents of northern Italy into lockdown in response to the virus. Italy's Civil Protection Department reported the country had 5,883 COVID-19 cases and 233 deaths in the nation before the decree was announced. [CA] Two U.S. health screeners at LAX test positive for coronavirus: internal email (Reuters) Reuters [3/6/2020 9:48 PM, John Shiffman, 5304K] Two federal health screeners at Los Angeles International Airport have tested positive for the coronavirus, according to an email sent to their colleagues on Friday, which was seen by Reuters. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention employees were conducting screenings of passengers arriving from overseas, including from China, and have been directed to self-quarantine until March 17, the email said. "At this time, we cannot confirm where these two screeners were exposed," said the email, which was sent by a senior CDC official. "Let us keep our colleagues in our thoughts during this period." The CDC could not be reached immediately for further comment. At least one other health screener at LAX previously tested positive for the virus. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security on Wednesday reported that a federal contractor may have been exposed while conducting medical screenings at Los Angeles International Airport. [CA] A second LAX screener is among 2 new LA County virus cases (San Diego Union Tribune) San Diego Union Tribune [3/6/2020 3:55 PM, Stefanie Dazio, AP, 241K] Another health screener at Los Angeles International Airport is one of two new confirmed coronavirus cases in Los Angeles County, Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer announced Friday. The new cases bring the county's total to 13, including one traveler from Wuhan, China, who has already recovered, she said. Ferrer said the newly confirmed screener case is a person who worked at the same LAX quarantine station at the same time as a screener whose diagnosis was announced Wednesday. They are likely to have had the same exposure, but the federal Centers for Disease Control has been asked to do the investigation because the quarantine station is under U.S. Customs and Border Protection jurisdiction, Ferrer said. 77 The second new case is person was in a group that traveled to northern Italy, she said. Eight members of that group have now tested positive and are in isolation. "With these new cases we still do not have any known public exposure but we have identified a list of close contacts — families, friends, health care workers — that are all being interviewed and as appropriate they will be subject for quarantine for 14 days from their last exposure to a confirmed case," Ferrer said. [CA] Dozens of health screeners at LAX ordered to self-quarantine: U.S. official (Reuters) Reuters [3/7/2020 5:52 PM, John Shiffman, 5304K] Dozens of health care screeners and other employees at Los Angeles International Airport have been ordered to self-quarantine, after two colleagues tested positive for the coronavirus, a federal official told Reuters. The two screeners were tasked with checking passengers arriving at LAX on international flights into the United States. A government official who was briefed on the matter said it is not yet clear if the screeners were infected by passengers, others at the airport or in their own communities. The airport workers who have been told to

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self-quarantine are believed to have come into contact with the two stricken screeners, the official said. They have been told to selfquarantine until March 17, the official said. The official said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Department of Homeland Security were making plans to reposition at least 25 people to replace the selfquarantined staff at LAX. Spokespeople for the CDC and DHS were not immediately available for comment. At least one other health screener at LAX previously tested positive for the virus. The DHS said on Wednesday that a federal contractor may have been exposed while conducting medical screenings at the airport. [Mexico] Earthquake: 5.6 quake felt near Mexico border (Los Angeles Times) Los Angeles Times [3/6/2020 11:54 PM, Staff, 1907K] A magnitude 5.5 earthquake was reported Friday evening at 7:52 p.m. Pacific time 27 miles from San Luis, Ariz., according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The earthquake occurred 32 miles from Calexico, Calif., 34 miles from Somerton, Ariz., 35 miles from Yuma, Ariz., and 39 miles from El Centro, Calif. In the last 10 days, there have been two earthquakes of magnitude 3.0 or greater centered nearby. An average of six earthquakes with magnitudes between 5.0 and 6.0 occur per year in the United States, according to a recent three-year data sample. 78 The earthquake occurred at a depth of 6.2 miles. [Guatemala] Immigration Officers Say Asylum Deal With Guatemala Is Unlawful (New York Times) New York Times [3/6/2020 1:55 PM, Zolan Kanno-Youngs, 23673K] A union representing federal asylum officers said on Friday that a Trump administration policy that diverts migrants at the southwestern border to Guatemala unlawfully sends a vulnerable population to a country "in which their lives and freedom are directly threatened." In an amicus brief filed in Federal District Court in Washington, a union representing 700 asylum and refugee officers with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services said the deal with Guatemala violates international treaty obligations by deporting migrants to a country where they are likely to face persecution. Under the asylum deal, initially described as a "safe third country agreement," the administration can deport migrants at the southwestern border seeking safety in the United States to Guatemala to seek refuge there. "This is unlike anything they've seen before," said Muhammad Faridi, a lawyer for the union, National CIS Council 119. "These people are being forced to scurry out department directives, which run contrary to the laws these people have been trained to implement." The accord is one of multiple policies enacted by the Trump administration that have severely restricted asylum after a surge of illegal crossings last year. Officials at the Department of Homeland Security had said the policy would apply only to migrants who had not sought protections in Guatemala on their way to the United States. But the department indicated in January that the pact could extend to Mexican migrants, though that is not currently in effect. Homeland Security Department officials have said the policy is meant to encourage migrants to apply for protections closer to their home countries. But in theory, it means that an asylum seeker from Juárez, Mexico, could be deported from the El Paso border crossing a mile from his home to the Guatemalan border nearly 2,000 miles away. As of Wednesday, more than 800 Honduran and Salvadoran migrants have been sent back to Guatemala under the agreement, according to the Guatemalan Institute of Migration. "It has turned the American asylum system on its head," the union said in its brief, filed in support of a lawsuit against the policy. Referring to the Central American countries of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, the filing noted, "Rather than have their asylum claims heard, refugees from the Northern Triangle countries are permanently removed to other Northern Triangle countries — which are themselves some of the most dangerous countries on earth and are the source of large numbers of refugees." In the brief, the asylum officers said enforcing the policy violated their oath. The State Department's own country condition reports on Guatemala warn about rampant gang activity and high levels of violence. The country's asylum system is also feeble compared with that of the United States; the migration office there reported that in 2018, a staff of eight processed only 262 requests for refuge. 79 The Department of Homeland Security did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Migrants at the southwestern border also no longer have a chance to relay their claims to asylum officers, according to the court filing. Before the policy took effect, an asylum seeker would normally be detained and then speak with an officer who would assess the migrant's fear of returning to his or her home country. Migrants eligible to be deported to Guatemala receive no such screening. They are instead given a "tear sheet," where they must indicate whether they fear persecution in Guatemala. Any migrant would then need to show that he or she is "more likely than not" to face such danger if forced back there. "What was once a leading light in the international refugee protection system is being transformed into a refugee deterrence system," said Michael Knowles, a spokesman for the National CIS Council. "That's horrifying to us and should be to any patriotic American." The Trump administration has credited the accord, as well as a policy that forces migrants to wait in Mexico as their cases are adjudicated, with quelling an increase in migration and relieving overcrowded detention facilities. (That policy, known as "Remain in Mexico," was also the subject of another court filing on behalf of the asylum officers' union.) An appeals court in California on Wednesday granted the administration's request to allow the restrictions to stay in effect for another week until the Supreme Court reviews them. Mark Morgan, the acting commissioner of Customs and Border Protection, said on Thursday that the administration would also soon enforce a deal with Honduras that will deport asylum seekers there. "I'm literally waiting to get the word any moment," he said. [Guatemala]

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Guatemala seeking to limit migrants under asylum deal with US (The Hill) The Hill [3/6/2020 2:54 PM, J. Edward Moreno, 1762K] Guatemala's new administration is seeking to cut the number of foreign migrants the U.S. can send to the country under an agreement that was reached last November, Reuters reported Friday. The U.S. has sent hundreds of asylum-seekers from Honduras and El Salvador to Guatemala since the Asylum Cooperative Agreement was reached with Guatemala's previous administration. The Trump administration is seeking to expand the program, but Guatemalan Foreign Minister Eduardo Hernandez told Reuters that the number of migrants sent cannot exceed their "very limited" capacity. "We have only one runway" and one migrant reception center, Hernandez told Reuters, adding the agreement "cannot exceed our installed capacity." 80 Critics of the agreement say it's an effort by the U.S. to offshore immigration detention to places that have inadequate resources. In Guatemala, nongovernmental organizations have been sheltering foreign migrants sent to the country under the deal. Under the original agreement, the United States agreed to only include individual adults, but Hernandez told Reuters talks were underway to extend it to include families with children. [Guatemala] Guatemala Seeks to Limit Migrants Returned Under U.S. Asylum Agreement (Reuters) Reuters [3/5/2020 1:08 PM, Frank Jack Daniel and Sofia Menchu, 3020K] Guatemala's new government is trying to limit the number of foreign migrants the United States sends its way under an agreement that makes the Central American nation a buffer zone to reduce U.S. asylum claims. The United States has sent hundreds of Honduran and El Salvadoran asylum seekers to Guatemala under the agreement implemented in November and is now seeking to expand the program. However, Guatemala's priority in ongoing talks with U.S. officials is to make sure the number sent back daily does not exceed its "very limited" capacity to process new arrivals, deputy foreign minister Eduardo Hernandez told Reuters. "We have only one runway" and one migrant reception center, Hernandez said in an interview last week. The agreement "cannot exceed our installed capacity." As it stands, the deal is one of a series of overlapping measures the Trump administration sees as key to bringing down irregular migration into the United States. U.S. President Donald Trump has made his performance on controlling immigration a plank of his 2020 reelection campaign. Known as an Asylum Cooperative Agreement and signed by the previous Guatemalan government, the deal is similar to the safe third country agreement under which asylum seekers who pass through Canada must apply for refuge there rather than in the United States. Critics of the arrangement, and similar U.S. deals with Honduras and El Salvador, say those countries do not offer adequate conditions for protecting at-risk migrants and that their asylum systems are too rudimentary to cope. Under President Alejandro Giammattei, who took office in January, the Guatemalan government has promised to give more information about the deal, which was negotiated behind closed doors and was only partially made public. Hernandez said the government was working with U.S. counterparts to produce clear implementation rules governing issues such as how many families with children Guatemala accepts, whether to extend the deal to more nationalities, and how many foreign asylum seekers it would take per day. "If it is possible, we want to add an annex, something succinct, simple, direct, clear and that leaves no space for interpretation," he told Reuters last week. 81 Under the initial agreement, the United States agreed to only include individual adults, but Hernandez said it was later extended to include families with children. Casa de Migrante, a non-governmental shelter that receives the returned foreign migrants, say pregnant women and young children showing signs of chronic stress were among the people U.S. officials had placed in the program. Data released by the Guatemalan Immigration Institute, a government agency, show that through March 3 a total of 789 people have been returned, including 311 children. The Trump administration on Thursday announced it set aside 10,000 H2-B temporary nonagricultural work visas for Guatemalans, El Salvadorans and Hondurans, as part of a broader expansion of such visas. The nationality-specific set-aside is unusual for such programs, and appeared to be in recognition of the asylum deals. The deal with Honduras could be implemented imminently, acting U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Mark Morgan said on Thursday. Morgan said the United States continued to negotiate to increase the number of asylum seekers taken by Guatemala. Immigration and Customs Enforcement [NY] Bill De Blasio's NYC: Illegal Alien Accused of Child Rape Freed into U.S. (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 7:35 PM, John Binder, 1973K] New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's (D) sanctuary city policy is responsible for freeing an illegal alien who has been accused of child sex crimes, including rape. Miguel Federico Ajqui-Ajtzalam, a 20-year-old illegal alien from Guatemala, was arrested by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency after the New York Police Department (NYPD) freed him following his arrest for felony second-degree rape and second-degree sexual abuse of a person less than 14-years-old. According to the NYPD, Ajqui-Ajtzalam in 2018 was in a sexual relationship with a 13-yearold girl and had allegedly raped her five times throughout the year. The illegal alien was 19years-old at the time. When the girl's mother reported the man, he was subsequently charged with statutory rape. After his arrest by NYPD, though, Ajqui-Ajtzalam was arraigned and released from police custody. The NYPD ignored ICE's request that he be turned over to them for arrest and deportation. Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez defended his decision to free Ajqui-Ajtzalam: The case was reported by the girl's mother, alleging that her daughter had a sexual relationship with an older teenager, which constituted statutory rape … Accordingly, we did not request

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bail for this nonviolent felony that allegedly took place a year-and-a-half ago. 82 ICE official Thomas Decker said it is “inconceivable” that New York City officials would release an illegal alien charged with rape and sexual abuse of a child. “It’s frightening that our detainer was ignored and he was released onto New York City streets to possibly re-offend,” Decker said. “The safety of city residents, especially the more vulnerable, continues to be a priority for ICE enforcement.” Ajqui-Ajtzalam, according to ICE, first crossed illegally into the U.S. through the southern border on September 23, 2016. The illegal alien was processed as an Unaccompanied Alien Child (UAC) and released into the U.S. after less than two months. He was initially encountered by U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) on Sept. 23, 2016 after illegally entering the U.S. without inspection. Ajqui-Ajtzalam was supposed to show up for his removal proceedings at a later date but never did. Now, Ajqui-Ajtzalam is in ICE custody, where he is awaiting deportation. As Breitbart News reported in January, the sanctuary state of New York released more than 7,500 criminal illegal aliens back into communities last year, including convicted murderers and sexual abusers. [TN] The US is deporting a Tennessee man who was an armed guard at a Nazi concentration camp (CNN) CNN [3/7/2020 7:16 PM, Jay Croft and Christina Maxouris, 5551K] A US immigration judge has ordered a Tennessee resident, who served as an armed guard at a Nazi concentration camp during World War II, be deported to Germany. Judge Rebecca L. Holt determined after a two-day trial that Friedrich Karl Berger’s "willing service as an armed guard of prisoners at a concentration camp where persecution took place constituted assistance in Nazi-sponsored persecution," the Justice Department said in a statement Thursday. Holt found Berger eligible for removable under the 1978 Holtzman Amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act. Berger, who is a German citizen, worked at a Neuengamme sub-camp near Meppen, Germany, in 1945, where prisoners included "Jews, Poles, Russians, Danes, Dutch, Latvians, French, Italians and political opponents" of the Nazis. Prisoners were held in "atrocious conditions and were exploited for outdoor forced labor, working to the point of exhaustion and death," Holt and the court found. The judge also found, and Berger admitted, that he "guarded prisoners to prevent them from escaping during their dawn-to-dusk workday, and on their way to the worksites and also on their way back to the subcamp in the evening," according to the Justice Department. In the opinion finding, Holt also cited Berger’s role in a March 1945 evacuation to the Neuengamme main camp. After the Nazis abandoned Meppen, Berger "helped guard the prisoners" in "a nearly two-week trip under inhumane conditions, which claimed the lives of 83 some 70 prisoners." Berger also "never requested a transfer from concentration camp guard service" and continues to receive a German pension that includes "his wartime service," the Justice Department said in its statement. "The United States will not serve as a safe haven for human rights violators and war criminals," David C. Shaw, who oversees war crime cases of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, who oversees the Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center, said in a statement. "We will continue to pursue these types of cases so that justice may be served." Berger, now 94, told the Washington Post that he was ordered to work in the camp for a short time and did not carry a weapon. "After 75 years, this is ridiculous," he told the newspaper in a recent phone interview. "I cannot understand how this can happen in a country like this. You’re forcing me out of my home." Berger’s attorney Hugh Ward did not immediately respond to CNN’s request for comment. However, Ward told local news station WBIR, that he is "reviewing the judge’s ruling and considering appealing." [Editorial note: consult source link for video] [AL] Illegal Alien Accused of Physically Abusing, Raping His Step-Children (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 8:07 PM, John Binder, 1973K] An illegal alien has been arrested after being on the run from law enforcement for alleged child abuse and child sex crime charges. Jose Bulmaro Cruz-Guillen, an illegal alien from Mexico, was arrested evading child abuse and child sex crime charges for incidents that occurred in 2014 and 2019, according to WBRC.com. The illegal alien had been twice arrested last year for crossing illegally through the United States-Mexico border. According to law enforcement officials, Cruz-Guillen was investigated in 2014 for allegedly repeatedly punching his four-year-old stepson in the face and on his body. Then, years later in 2019, Cruz-Guillen was indicted for allegedly sexually abusing his stepdaughter for years. The abuse allegedly involved first-degree rape, first-degree sodomy, and sexual abuse of a child less than 12-years-old. Before his trial, Cruz-Guillen fled Etowah County, Alabama, in hopes of evading the charges. Last month, though, the Gulf Coast Regional Fugitive Task Force in Augusta, Georgia. arrested Cruz-Guillen and extradited him back to Alabama to face the charges. [ID] Illegal Alien, 31, Charged with Raping 14-Year-Old Girl in Idaho (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 8:03 PM, John Binder, 1973K] An illegal alien has been charged with allegedly raping a 14-year-old girl in Caldwell, Idaho, after providing her with alcohol, according to law enforcement officials. 84 Jaime Galvan, a 31-year-old illegal alien with an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainer, was charged with raping the 14-year-old girl after the two met up and he served her two pre-mixed alcoholic cocktails, the Idaho Press reported. The girl told police that Galvan told her to lay down after she became dizzy from the drinks. That’s when Galvan allegedly started touching the girl and raped her. Galvan was asked to stop by the girl but continued, the girl told police. The girl said the rape occurred for about five minutes. Afterward, the girl said Galvan put her pants back on her and left the room. Galvan is currently being held on a $500,000 bond. Should he be released from custody at any point, he will

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be turned over to ICE agents for arrest and deportation. [CA] ICE agent charged with sexually abusing foster child (Los Angeles Times) Los Angeles Times [3/6/2020 10:24 PM, Matthew Ormseth, 1907K] An agent with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was arrested Thursday and charged with sexually abusing a foster child in his care, according to the Los Angeles County district attorney's office. Carlos Nava, 30, pleaded not guilty Friday to seven counts of performing sex acts on a child, the district attorney's office said. Nava's attorney didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. Kelsey McKeever-Unger, the deputy district attorney handling the case, identified Nava as an ICE agent. A spokeswoman said the agency "holds its officers to the highest standards of professional conduct and does not tolerate those who violate the law." The Department of Homeland Security's inspector general helped the Pomona Police Department with its investigation of Nava, she added. Between December 2017 and May 2019, Nava, who lived in Pomona, performed sex acts on the teen, according to a complaint filed in Pomona Superior Court. Nava was the teen's foster father, McKeever-Unger said. As of Friday morning, Nava was being held in lieu of $250,000 bail, McKeever-Unger said. He is due to return to court April 9. If convicted on all counts, Nava could face up to seven years in prison, the district attorney's office said. [CA] San Francisco Ignored ICE And Released An Illegal Alien Who Had Been Arrested Seven Times (Daily Caller) Daily Caller [3/6/2020 4:45 PM, Jason Hopkins, 566K] San Francisco ignored multiple pleas by federal immigration authorities to transfer custody of a criminally convicted illegal alien, revealing how far city leaders will go to refuse cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). ICE's Enforcement and Removal Operations officers apprehended an unnamed illegal alien near a courthouse in San Francisco, California, on Tuesday, the agency revealed in a press release. The arrest marked the latest development in an ongoing saga between ICE and 85 San Francisco officials regarding this particular alien, whom they refused to hand over despite his extensive criminal history. The illegal alien, who was not identified by the agency, had been arrested by local law enforcement at least seven times in the past five years. ICE had lodged eight detainers with law enforcement following his arrests, but the agency said that because of "sanctuary laws," he was able to be released back into the community each time. "For many years, the city and county of San Francisco has refused to cooperate with ICE — much to their own detriment," said ICE San Francisco Field Office Director David Jennings. "Criminals like this individual are released to reoffend again and again," Jennings continued. "A simple phone call to ICE to arrange the secure transfer of such individuals would serve the hard working residents of the city far more than a misguided sanctuary policy that, as proven here and numerous times in the past, goes to great lengths to protect criminals under the guise of protecting the citizenry." The illegal alien was a convicted criminal, carrying three felony convictions for seconddegree burglary from 2019, 2017 and 2016. Fortunately for federal immigration authorities, the individual was finally apprehended by ICE agents Tuesday, and he remains pending immigration proceedings. He will likely be deported back to his home country. ICE criticized San Francisco for ignoring its detainer requests, which are requests by the agency to local law enforcement, asking them to hold on to an illegal alien in their custody long enough for an ICE agent to arrive and make an apprehension. When an illegal alien is arrested by local law enforcement for an unrelated crime, ICE is typically alerted and will lodge an immigration detainer to whichever officials have custody of the individual. However, more states and localities across the country are ignoring ICE detainer requests, and refusing to cooperate with the agency for most instances. San Francisco, a progressive bastion within a deep blue state, is no exception. "Our department is not involved in immigration enforcement," Paul Miyamoto, the city's newly elected sheriff, declared in February. "We feel that is a federal matter, and our realm of interest is public safety, and you can't really have a safe community if the community members are afraid to come to us to report crimes." Miyamoto's directive, however, is mostly redundant given that California law already restricts most cooperation between the state's law enforcement and ICE. The California Values Act, which has been in effect since January 2018, prohibits local and state agencies from horning ICE detainers, and further restricts the agency's ability to apprehend criminal illegal aliens. Jennings left the door open for a sit-down conversation with San Francisco leaders about what's best for community safety, but he also made clear that he will not stand for sanctuary laws that keep his agents from removing criminal illegal aliens. "I welcome any conversations city officials, or the new sheriff wish to have regarding public 86 safety cooperation," he said. "Our officers will not have their hands tied by sanctuary rules when enforcing immigration laws to remove criminal aliens from our communities." [CA] ICE defies sanctuary law to arrest illegal immigrant at San Francisco courthouse (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/6/2020 9:47 AM, Stephen Dinan, 482K] Blocked from picking up a repeat-felon illegal immigrant at a California jail last year, ICE officers tracked him down at a court appearance earlier this week and made the arrest outside of San Francisco's Hall of Justice, defying a state law that claims to ban such arrests. ICE said it had tried nine times since 2014 to get local authorities to turn over the man, 43year-old Alberto Uc Ponce, but each time those "detainer" requests were rebuffed. His most recent release in defiance of ICE came after an arrest on drug and burglary charges just after Thanksgiving last year. Stymied by the local authorities, ICE officers tracked down Mr. Uc Ponce as he was about to enter the courthouse for a hearing on one of his local charges, and made the arrest. The

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move is the latest escalation between the Trump administration and California over immigration enforcement, with the feds pushing back hard on the state's sanctuary policies through lawsuits, subpoenas, and now going to courthouses despite the state law. "Our officers will not have their hands tied by sanctuary rules when enforcing immigration laws to remove criminal aliens from our communities," said David Jennings, director of ICE's San Francisco field office. California last year enacted Assembly Bill 668, which attempted to make courthouse arrests without a judicial warrant illegal. That was aimed at ICE, which when it's enforcing civil immigration laws cannot obtain a judicial warrant, but makes arrests on administrative warrants instead. Mr. Jennings said ICE won't let that law govern how federal officers, following laws passed by Congress, do their jobs. And he said it's San Francisco that suffers by protecting people like this week's target, who had three felony convictions for burglary in 2016, 2017 and 2019. "Criminals like this individual are released to reoffend again and again," Mr. Jennings said. "A simple phone call to ICE to arrange the secure transfer of such individuals would serve the hardworking residents of the city far more than a misguided sanctuary policy." He told The Washington Times that San Francisco could have turned Mr. Uc Ponce over even under California's main sanctuary law, given the felony-level convictions on his record. But San Francisco refused. "I would have much rather picked this guy up, or any guy like him, at the jail," Mr. Jennings said. "We don't have those options, so I have to target them wherever I find them." 87 San Francisco's district attorney and public defender issued a joint statement condemning the arrest. "ICE actions in or near our courthouses deters people from accessing our justice system, making us all less safe," said San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin. Public Defender Mano Raju promised to mount a legal defense for the man. His office said it will hold a press conference next week on the matter. Mr. Jennings said his office enforces federal law, and "whatever their opinion is on state law really isn't my concern at this point." The number of sanctuary cities has skyrocketed under President Trump as anti-Trump local officials seek ways to resist his get-tough immigration policies and to stymy federal law. Mr. Trump has pushed back, looking to withhold federal grant money from jurisdictions that refuse to cooperate. And in recent months the Justice Department and ICE have stepped up their tactics. Attorney General William P. Barr has sued California, New Jersey and King County, in Washington, over sanctuary policies. And ICE has begun to use a new tactic of issuing subpoenas to try to pry information about illegal immigrants from jurisdictions who say their hands are tied. Several California localities have complied with those subpoenas in recent weeks, suggesting that tactic may have some worth. ICE said Friday that it made an arrest earlier this week San Diego authorities, who'd released an illegal immigrant under the state's sanctuary law, complied with a subpoena revealing a last known residence. Hector Manuel Bautista-Cardenas, 31, a twice-deported Mexican who is facing domestic violence charges, was picked up Tuesday near that last known residence. But states are also fighting back. After New York approved a sanctuary law denying ICE and Customs and Border Protection access to its state motor vehicle bureau records, CBP said it could no longer approve New Yorkers for trusted traveler programs. No data means CBP can't vet applicants, officials said. New York has sued, complaining that it feels singled out and calling the ouster from trusted traveler programs retaliatory. [CA] City officials allege ICE defied 'sanctuary' law with San Francisco courthouse arrest (Washington Examiner) Washington Examiner [3/6/2020 4:25 PM, Andrew Mark Miller, 570K] Video: HERE San Francisco city officials lashed out at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement after 88 federal agents arrested an illegal immigrant on the steps of a courthouse in what they describe as a violation of the "sanctuary" law in California. San Francisco public defender Mano Raju said the arrest was conducted without a judicial warrant, which therefore "violates state law." "California law explicitly forbids a civil enforcement agency, including ICE, from making a civil arrest without a warrant outside a courthouse," Raju said, according to KTVU Fox 2. "ICE's illegal conduct undermines community trust and public safety." Raju added that arrests such as this "scare people" and constitute "illegal activity." ICE responded by arguing that states "cannot and will not govern the conduct of federal officers." "For many years, the city and county of San Francisco has refused to cooperate with ICE, much to their own detriment," ICE San Francisco Field Office Director David Jennings said in a statement. "Criminals like this individual are released to offend again and again. A simple phone call to ICE to arrange the secure transfer of such individuals would serve the hard-working residents of the city far more than a misguided sanctuary policy, that, as proven here and numerous times in the past, goes to great lengths to protect criminals under the guise of protecting the citizenry." An ICE spokesman released a statement saying that the man, who has not been identified by ICE or city officials, has three felony burglary convictions and an ICE detainer request lodged against him since 2018 that was ignored. ICE officials also violated the state law prohibiting immigration arrests at a courthouse weeks ago in Sonoma County by arresting three people. In an open letter to the public last year, ICE explained why the agency is not bound by sanctuary city laws. "Section 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act provides ICE officers the authority to arrest aliens without a judicial warrant," the statement read, adding that "no judge in this country has the authority to issue a warrant for a civil immigration violation." Citizenship and Immigration Services Donald Trump Rejects Lindsey Graham's Push for DACA Amnesty (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 11:09 AM, Neil Munro, 1973K]

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President Donald Trump and a group of GOP senators quickly rejected a DACA amnesty deal pushed by Sen. Lindsey Graham on Thursday afternoon – but left the door open to future negotiations. They will now wait until after the Supreme Court decides on the legality of Barack Obama's work permit giveaway to 800,000 younger illegals, says multiple media reports. The quick amnesty pitch by Graham (R-SC) was rejected when GOP Senators urged Trump to wait until the court releases its decision, due by June. The court's decision may 89 give Trump more leverage as he tries to get an immigration reform deal from Democrats, a GOP source told Breitbart News. Politico reported: Trump told Republican senators at the White House Thursday that he will punt on a proposal until after an upcoming Supreme Court ruling that could overturn the temporary protections for Dreamers the Obama administration implemented, known as the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. Graham used Politico to spin Trump's rejection as a win for his pro-employer, cheap-labor policies. He told Politico: "The take away for me is if the court rules in the president's favor, we're not going to allow these folks to have their lives turned upside down, but we will try to put together a package that protects the DACA population," Graham said, adding the package will also address "how the system is so broken." Fox News reported also reported Graham's spin: Sen. Lindsey Graham on Thursday said President Trump is "receptive" to a package that would keep protections for certain illegal immigrants shielded from deportation under an Obama-era order, while addressing underlying issues within the immigration system, after a meeting with Republican senators at the White House. "It was good," he said when asked by Fox News about the meeting. "We don't know what's going to happen in June, the president's already put an offer on the table for 1.8 million DACA-eligible folks to have a pathway to citizenship, but he wants to get something to address the underlying problem." The labor and wages issue cuts to the heart of Trump's presidency. He won the 2016 election on an American First" policy and swore on inauguration day he would push a "Hire American" policy. But business interests — and his own sympathy for employers — have pushed back on his "Hire American" policy. The result is Trump zig-zags his way forward with a mix of tough border rules and economic growth policies that have spiked stock for investors and raised wages for lower-skilled bluecollar workers. Trump sometimes boasts about the wage gains for blue collars, but his zigzag policies have done little for white collar college graduates — or reduce the resident population of at least one million Indian visa workers. The GOP Senators at the meeting included Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah), Ted Cruz (R-Texas), Kevin Cramer (R-ND), Tom Cotton (R-Ark), Martha McSally (R-Ariz), Ron Johnson (RWisc.), David Perdue (R.Ga.) and Thom Tillis (R-NC). Lee and Cramer are backing the much delayed S.386 bill, which would offer green cards and citizenship to roughly 60,000 Indians each year if they take college graduate jobs from American graduates. Many business groups back Lee's legislation because it would 90 depress Americans' salaries and boost investors' stocks. Tillis is not a co-sponsor of S.386 but has repeatedly backed legislation allowing employers to import more foreign workers for employers. In 2017, Johnson backed a bill that would allow states to import foreign workers to replace millions of Americans. The intention of the bill, he said, was "making sure that American businesses have the labor they need." Chilean Nationals on Tourist Visas Burglarize Homes of Wealthy in New York, California (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/8/2020 9:07 PM, John Binder, 1973K] Five nationals from Chile have been arrested after securing tourist visas to travel to the United States with the intention to allegedly burglarize wealthy residents of California and New York. Chilean nationals Amaro Rosas, Bayron Palta, Fabian Catalan, Juan Rosas, and William Perez were arrested by Nassau County, New York, law enforcement officials after they were tied to a series of burglaries in the wealthy neighborhoods of Sands Point, Locust Valley, Great Neck, and Glen Cove. The Chilean nationals are part of a burglary ring that were able to legally arrive in the U.S. after securing B-2 tourist visas. Nassau County officials said the five men entered on their tourist visas through the U.S.-Mexico border and arrived in southern California before making their way to New York. When they first arrived in the U.S., Nassau County officials said the Chilean nationals burglarized homes in the wealthy Beverly Hills, California, neighborhood — where some of the nation's wealthiest elite have residences. Then, after burglarizing those homes, Nassau County officials said the five men traveled to New York where they allegedly broke into Long Island homes in four neighborhoods. The Chilean nationals allegedly stole $30,000 worth of watches and $8,000 in cash, according to Nassau County officials. Nassau County officials said the Chilean nationals gave them fake IDs from Argentina and warned that this is the third group of Chileans to be arrested for burglary in Long Island after being allowed to legally enter the U.S. on tourist visas. All five men are being held without bail. [IL] With No Braille Option, a Blind Man Failed His Citizenship Exam (New York Times) New York Times [3/7/2020 6:00 AM, Jacey Fortin, 23673K] Lucio Delgado was excited when he went to the post office last month to pick up an envelope from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Enclosed were the results of a citizenship test that Mr. Delgado, a 23-year-old green card holder from Mexico, thought he had aced. He and his sister, who accompanied him, opened 91 the envelope in the post office. The letter inside said he had failed the reading portion of the test and was ineligible for naturalization. Mr. Delgado, who is blind, was crushed. When he took his test in May, the reading section had not been available in Braille. At an appointment with federal agents months later, he explained the problem and thought they were

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prepared to help him. He decided to share his story publicly. "I thought, 'Well, I doubt I am the only blind immigrant or immigrant with disabilities who has been denied his or her naturalization request due to a mistake,'" he said on Friday. The exposure seemed to work: The immigration authorities scheduled an appointment with Mr. Delgado for next week. But his lawyer, Darcy Kriha, said publicity might not work for everyone trying to navigate the daunting bureaucracy that is often associated with immigration. "It's not hard to imagine that there have been undocumented people and their families who have not come forward because they're afraid of being deported," Ms. Kriha said. "We're going to be working on trying to figure out how widespread the problem is and how it impacts undocumented individuals who have much more to lose." Citizenship and Immigration Services has acknowledged its challenges in the past. The results of a self-evaluation in 2018 showed that individual employees had a "strong commitment" to accessibility for people with disabilities. "Despite this commitment, U.S.C.I.S. identified gaps and barriers, many of them systemic or procedural in nature," the report said. It said there had been problems with accommodating requests efficiently and a lack of materials in Braille. "U.S.C.I.S. has policies in place to ensure accommodations are provided for people with disabilities when requested and we make every effort to ensure that these policies are followed at all times," the agency said in a statement on Friday. "If U.S.C.I.S. becomes aware of an error in adhering to these policies, we make every effort to ensure corrections are made." The agency said it would provide Braille English tests for any blind or visually impaired citizenship applicant who requested them. Many people who are blind do not use Braille, in part because new technologies have given them different ways to access text, said Mary Rosenberg, a lawyer with Access Living, a Chicago nonprofit that promotes disability rights. "But yeah, it's definitely a problem that people who need it, and who request Braille in 92 various government forums, don't receive it," she said. Mr. Delgado, who has been blind since birth, came to the United States when he was 16. He said he left his home in the Mexican state of Guerrero because he wanted better educational opportunities, and because his family feared the growing influence of drug cartels in his home city, Iguala. Mr. Delgado and his relatives, who now have green cards, live in Pembroke Township, Ill., a rural area about 70 miles south of Chicago that is one of the poorest places in the state. Mr. Delgado prepared meticulously for his citizenship test, which includes a civics exam with questions about American history and government and an English test that involves reading and writing. He went to an optometrist for documentation to prove that he was blind. He requested a Braille reading test months ahead of his appointment. He scoured the Citizenship and Immigration Services website for practice tests and took every one he could find. On May 21, the day of the exam, he traveled two hours on public transportation to the agency's office in downtown Chicago. He said he aced the civics part of the test — no wrong answers — and completed some of the English exam orally. But when it was time to test his reading skills, an agent told him that the agency did not have the materials in Braille and offered a version of the test in large print instead. "And of course I had to say, 'I'm totally blind,'" Mr. Delgado said. The agent, he said, told him to go to another eye specialist — an ophthalmologist this time — within a month to get further proof of his blindness. But Mr. Delgado is uninsured. "I had some doubts because I was wondering, 'Why do they want me to visit another eye specialist?'" he said. He made calls to Citizenship and Immigration Services and eventually was able to set up another appointment in Chicago on Sept. 17. Once there, agents told him they would probably be able to smooth things out so he could be naturalized. So when the letter arrived at the post office last month, Mr. Delgado was hopeful — until his sister told him what it said. "I felt like my world was crumbling," he said. That might have been the end of it. But Mr. Delgado shared his story with friends on social media, who encouraged him to contact news outlets. It worked: CBS Chicago first reported on his story last week. And this week, an agent with Citizenship and Immigration Services called Mr. Delgado to make another appointment, he said. "I was astonished," he said. "I didn't know what to say." In its statement on Friday, Citizenship and Immigration Services said that it was "unable to 93 comment on individual cases due to privacy protections," so it is unclear what will happen when Mr. Delgado goes for his third appointment next week. Mr. Delgado is not sure if he will be asked to take the English reading test in Braille, or at all. But he has been cramming for the exam — again — just in case. Customs and Border Protection Military to Be Sent to Border Before Supreme Court's 'Remain in Mexico' Ruling (New York Times) New York Times [3/6/2020 1:41 PM, Zolan Kanno-Youngs, 23673K] The Trump administration will deploy 160 troops to two ports of entry along the southwestern border before a Supreme Court decision that officials fear could prompt large crowds of migrants to seek entry into the United States. Under authority that President Trump granted in 2018, Customs and Border Protection will send two teams of 80 military police, engineers and aviation units to San Ysidro, Calif., and El Paso, as the Supreme Court considers the legality of an administration policy that forces asylum seekers to remain in Mexico as their cases are adjudicated. Senior officials at the agency said on Friday that the move was a response to migrants who crowded the entry points last Friday when an appeals court in California said the policy was illegal and ruled that asylum seekers must be allowed into the United States. The decision by the Federal Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit to block the so-called Migrant Protection Protocols was stayed within hours to allow the government time to appeal the ruling. The appeals court on Wednesday granted the Trump

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administration's request to keep the restrictions, more commonly known as "Remain in Mexico," in effect until Wednesday, when the Supreme Court reviews the case. If the Supreme Court does not grant the government's request to take up its appeal of the Ninth Circuit's injunction, the appeals court's decision to block the policy will take effect on Thursday, although only in the border states within its jurisdiction, California and Arizona. Even though such a decision would not affect Texas, officials said the military was needed there in case migrants rushed the entry point. Customs and Border Protection has been able to deploy "crisis response forces" since November 2018, when hundreds of migrants approached the border in San Diego, prompting the agency to close the border crossing and fire tear gas to push back migrants. The military was not involved in that clash. The officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity to brief reporters on the plan, said the troops would start the temporary assignment on Saturday and remain in place for at least two weeks. They will not conduct any immigration processing or enforcement, officials said. They said the military teams were there to ensure the flow of traffic between the ports in the event that the "Remain in Mexico" policy is again overturned. The Customs and Border 94 Protection officials declined to say whether the military would at any point forcibly remove migrants from the ports. Lt. Col. Chris Mitchell, a Defense Department spokesman, said the active-duty troops would be placing temporary barriers at the ports of entry and "provide force protection" for the border officers. More than 5,000 active-duty troops and members of the National Guard are already stationed at the border to secure ports of entry, hold training sessions, provide support at holding facilities and help with border wall construction. An internal document from the Department of Homeland Security concluded in November 2018 that the probability of American border officials facing violence at the southwestern border was "minimal." The "Remain in Mexico" policy has been one of the more consequential border policies that the Trump administration has enacted. It has forced around 60,000 migrants, many fleeing violence and persecution, to wait in Mexico where they have been subject to kidnappings and cartel violence. It has also driven a decline in the number of migrants taken into custody, to 37,119 last month from more than 144,116 in May 2019. Arrests at the border did increase last month by about 1.25 percent from January, when 36,660 migrants were taken into custody. Pentagon sends more troops to the border ahead of SCOTUS decision (Politico) Politico [3/6/2020 3:43 PM, Lara Seligman, 2003K] The Pentagon is sending a crisis response force of roughly 160 troops to the southern border ahead of a Supreme Court decision that officials fear could prompt a new migration crisis. The Trump administration today said it would send the service members to two points on the southwest border — San Ysidro, Calif., and El Paso, Texas — to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection by placing temporary barriers and providing protection for border officers. The decision comes as the Supreme Court weighs a decision on an administration policy that forces asylum seekers to remain in Mexico as they wait to appear before a judge. The fear is that if the court blocks the restrictions, more commonly known as "Remain in Mexico," large crowds of migrants could seek entry into the United States. The troops are from the 687th Engineer Construction Company and the 519th Military Police Battalion, both from Fort Polk, La., according to the DoD. Additionally, the Texas governor has ordered the Texas National Guard to deploy troops from the 136th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade to the Brownsville area to do "quick reaction force training" in support of CBP. More than 5,000 active-duty troops and members of the National Guard are already stationed at the southern border to support CBP in securing ports and constructing the border wall. Pentagon Sends Troops to California Border amid Fears of Border Rush (Breitbart) 95 Breitbart [3/6/2020 6:03 PM, Neil Munro, 1973K] The government is sending 160 soldiers to help border agents block the migrant surge that is expected if the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals strikes down the Migrant Protection Protocols. The MPP program has sent roughly 60,000 migrants back into Mexico, prior to their eventual asylum hearings in the United States. The return policy deters migration by preventing migrants from getting the U.S. jobs they need to repay their smuggling loans — unless they eventually win their backlogged courtroom claims. Some of the 30,000 migrants waiting in Mexico rushed for the border February 28 when the court declared the MPP program to be illegal. The court then quickly put a stay on its decision to block the MPP until March 12, pending any Supreme Court intervention. The California-based court also decided to allow the MPP program to operate in Texas. Officials at the Department of Justice have asked the Supreme Court to extend the delay. Administration officials are sending the troops to the border out of fear the migrants will try to overwhelm the border defenses on March 12. Officials also said the extra troops could help prevent the migration of people with diseases, such as the Covid-19 disease from China. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency's "mission is to secure our nation's borders, and measures such as the Crisis Response Force employment allow CBP to do just that," a senior agency official told reporters March 6. He continued: Based on the pending MPP decision, continued concerns of large groups attempting to forcibly enter through [Ports of Entry] PoEs, and Covid-19 containment and mitigation concerns, CBP has activated the Crisis Response Force. The Crisis Response Force will provide military police support, engineering support, and aviation support to CBP. Approximately 160 active-duty personnel will reposition from their CRS standby location at Fort Polk, Louisiana, to the southwest border in support of CBP. Approximately 80 personnel will be deployed to PoE in El Paso, Texas, and

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approximately 80 personnel will be supporting the San Ysidro Port of Entry in California. The CRF will remain at or adjacent to the selected PoEs as the operational environment evolves. If necessary. the CRF has the ability to lift-and-shift via air or ground from one PoE to another PoE to support CBP. The employment of the CRF is one element of CBP's larger, comprehensive border security efforts to help CBP ensure everyone's safety and security, to include travelers, asylum seekers, business stakeholders, and our own employee. This CRF effort should not be confused with a current and distinct Texas National Guard 96 annual training status deployment that is being conducted as the port of entry in Brownsville, Texas. Texas National Guard routinely conducts training events with CBP components. The MPP program has played a crucial role in blocking the rush of Central Americans through the "Flores" legal loophole in the bord wall. Migrants open the loophole by bringing a child, so forcing officials to release them into the U.S jobs market after just 20 days. In February, officials released just 2,000 migrants out of 36,000 arrivals. In May, border officials released 80,000 migrants as 140,000 arrived at the border. However, border agents have not stopped the flow of illegals, nor the legal inflow of "Unaccompanied Alein Children." In Washington, Congress continued to support the huge inflow of visa workers including H2B blue-collar workers, H-2A agriculture workers, and H-1B white-collar workers. Trump administration dispatching "crisis response force" to southern border (CBS News) CBS News [3/6/2020 1:43 PM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 2394K] The Trump administration is dispatching military personnel to the U.S.-Mexico border to help officials there respond to large groups of migrants it believes may form if courts block one of its main policies to restrict asylum, senior immigration officials said Friday. A "crisis response force" of 160 military police, aviators and engineers will be deployed over the weekend to ports of entry in El Paso and San Diego, two of the most highly transited crossings along the U.S. southern border. Senior officials with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) said the agency asked the Pentagon for assistance in response to a court order last week that briefly blocked the socalled "Remain in Mexico" policy, which requires asylum-seekers to wait in Mexico for their chance to appear before a U.S. immigration judge. Though officials said the military units will help ensure ports of entry operations are not disrupted by large groups of migrants, it is unclear what their specific functions will be. The senior CBP officials confirmed the Pentagon personnel will not engage in immigration enforcement, but would not say if it would help in the forcible removal of migrants who show up at ports of entry. CBP temporarily closed some ports of entry last Friday when groups of migrants congregated near them to see if they could get some relief through the initial order by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, which said the asylum policy, known officially as the Migrant Protection Protocols, was likely illegal. "CBP ports of entry are not designed or equipped to handle extremely large groups of travelers arriving at the same time, and temporary closure of a POE is contemplated as an extreme option as necessary for public safety and border security," one senior CBP official said on a call with reporters Friday. The deployment, which is slated to last two weeks but could be extended, comes days 97 before the administration will be required to stop implementing the "Remain in Mexico" policy in California and Arizona. Under the program, U.S. officials have returned more than 60,000 Latin American asylum-seekers to northern Mexico, including areas plagued by rampant crime and violence. The controversial program was briefly halted last week after the 9th Circuit issued an order upholding a ruling by a federal judge against the policy. But the court agreed to pause its own order hours later after administration lawyers rushed to defend the policy, arguing that a surge at the border could occur if it remained halted. On Wednesday, the 9th Circuit said it would continue to pause the order until March 11. But the court reaffirmed its holding that the policy is illegal, and said it would only agree to stay the injunction by a federal judge against the program outside of its jurisdiction. The administration responded on Friday by asking the Supreme Court to intervene and to set aside the lower court injunction against the policy. Justice Department lawyers again warned of a "rush on the border" if the program was again blocked, even if only partially. Unless the Supreme Court issues an order, the injunction against the policy will be reinstated on March 12 in states covered by the 9th Circuit, which includes California and Arizona. [Editorial note: consult source link for video] Trump administration to send approximately 160 troops to southern border as it awaits asylum policy ruling (CNN) CNN [3/6/2020 1:12 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 5551K] The Trump administration is deploying troops to the southern border as a result of uncertainty over the future of one of its key asylum policies, US Customs and Border Protection announced Friday. Last week, a federal appeals court blocked the so-called "Remain in Mexico" policy, which requires migrants to wait in Mexico until their court date in the US. Following the ruling, groups amassed at some locations along the border, but while the ruling has been temporarily paused, senior agency officials told reporters Friday that last week's events prompted concerns about personnel safety. Several ports of entry were closed or partially closed last week. "Based on the pending ... decision, continued concern of large groups attempting to forcibly enter through (ports of entry), and COVID-19 containment and mitigation concerns, CBP has activated the crisis response force," the official said. As a result, the Defense Department is deploying its Crisis Response Force in support of CBP. Approximately 160 active duty personnel will be shifted from their standby location in Louisiana to the southern border. Around 80 will go to the Paso del Norte port of entry in Texas and another 80 will go to the

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San Ysidro port of entry in California. The troops, who will arrive "no later" than Saturday, are not engaging in immigration enforcement, an official said. They are expected to be in place for two weeks. 98 Earlier Friday, the Justice Department filed an emergency petition with the Supreme Court, asking the justices to allow the Remain in Mexico asylum policy to remain in effect pending appeal. The 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals had blocked the policy, but is allowing it to remain in effect just long enough for the Supreme Court to consider whether to step in. The policy has resulted in the creation of makeshift camps where hundreds of migrants, many of whom are from Central America, have waited for weeks if not months in squalid and unsafe conditions for their immigration hearings. In some cases, migrant families have opted to send children across the US-Mexico border alone. Acting Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf told lawmakers this week that the policy, formally known as Migrant Protection Protocols, "has an uncertain future," citing the 9th Circuit ruling. Senior CBP officials said that the Crisis Response Force has been deployed as a matter of preparedness. The force has previously been utilized in San Diego when a migrant caravan arrived and in Eagle Pass, Texas, in February 2019. The two latest locations were chosen based on the ports' history and where migrants have previously amassed. Trump to deploy 160 active duty troops to border in response to court rulings, coronavirus (USA Today) USA Today [3/7/2020 3:07 PM, Rafael Carranza, Arizona Republic, 5611K] Video: HERE President Donald Trump's administration will immediately deploy 160 active-duty soldiers to two key cities along the U.S.-Mexico border in response to a series of adverse federal court rulings limiting the implementation of his restrictive border enforcement policies, as well as growing concerns over the spread of the new coronavirus. U.S. Customs and Border Protection announced Friday that it would deploy 80 active duty troops to San Diego's San Ysidro border crossing and 80 more to El Paso's Paso del Norte bridge as early as Saturday to provide "military police support, engineer, and aviation support" to customs officials at those two ports of entry. The border agency's announcement emphasized the role that a Feb. 28 ruling from the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco factored into their decision to deploy troops to those two cities. A panel of judges blocked the U.S. government from sending asylum seekers to Mexico for the duration of their proceedings under the Migrant Protection Protocols, also known as "Remain in Mexico," finding that the program was in violation of U.S. immigration laws. In response, dozens of asylum seekers sent back under MPP congregated at border crossings from Tijuana to Brownsville, Texas, asking to be let into the country. CBP temporarily shut down at least one border crossing in El Paso to keep people from rushing the port of entry. "CBP Ports of Entry (POEs) are not designed or equipped to handle extremely large groups 99 of travelers arriving all at the same time and temporary closure of a POE is contemplated as an extreme option, as necessary for public safety and border security," the agency said in a written statement. "Compounded in response to Friday's (Feb. 28) amassment of large groups in Mexico with the potential to forcibly enter the United States, CBP closed or partially suspended operations at multiple locations in order to maintain safety and security." The 160 troops are part of the Defense Department's Crisis Response Force, which the Pentagon has made available to CBP since Trump initially deployed soldiers to the border in November 2018 in anticipation of the arrival of a large caravan. A CBP spokesman said the deployment to San Diego and El Paso would begin Saturday and last for two weeks. The agency has the option, based on current needs, to extend the deployment and even "lift and shift" to other border crossings, he said. The timing of the troops' deployment is tied to an upcoming deadline that the 9th Circuit set this week. The federal judges presiding over the case allowed "Remain in Mexico" to continue, but only until March 11. At that point, the court will block the program in Arizona and California – the states under its jurisdiction – unless the Supreme Court stays its ruling. To date, the Supreme Court has not intervened. The U.S. government has sent back more than 60,000 people, mostly Central American migrants, to await their asylum proceedings in Mexico. The two border cities of Tijuana, located across from San Diego, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, across from El Paso, received the most returned migrants. Top U.S. officials, including CBP's Acting Commissioner Mark Morgan, have called the Migrant Protection Protocols a "game-changer" that have allowed them to reduce the flows of large numbers of Central Americans to the U.S.-Mexico border. Customs and Border Protection also cited the U.S. government's "COVID-19 containment and mitigation concerns" in its decision to deploy the military. The agency said it faces a "delicate" balance in providing border security while facilitating legal trade and travel that last year topped $600 billion in goods and services between the U.S. and Mexico. More than 188 million people crossed the border, according to government figures. Community groups and elected leaders along the U.S. border reacted with a mix of concern and outrage at the Trump's administration's response to the court's rulings, as well as the use of coronavirus worries as justification to deploy troops. U.S. Rep. Veronica Escobar, a freshman Democrat from El Paso, said in a written statement that the Trump administration is using COVID-19 as "an excuse to sow fear about asylum seekers in an effort to continue to violate the law." "While it is no surprise, it is nonetheless deeply disappointing that the Trump administration would use the coronavirus as an excuse to sow fear about asylum seekers in an effort to 100 continue to violate the law," Escobar said. "It is because we are all concerned about the coronavirus that we need to focus our resources on our real challenges, like the limited number of tests available, something that troops on the border

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won't address." Dylan Corbett, founding director of Hope Border Institute – a binational advocacy group in the El Paso-Juárez region – expressed concern over the deployment. "There's always a liability and risk when you send military to the border, knowing that you are sending them for a mission that they have not been trained," he said. Corbett added that it's troubling that the government doesn't have a clear, comprehensive plan for dealing with COVID-19, but recently decided to shut down the ports of entry instead of processing migrants. That's a sentiment echoed by Vicki Gaubeca, the director for the San Diego-based Southern Border Communities Coalition, a collective of more than 60 community and advocacy organizations along the border. "We don't need more boots on the ground. What we need are more trauma specialists, more medical professionals, more asylum officers," she said. Gaubeca called the situation "a crisis that is of the (Trump) administration's own making" because it chose to implement an illegal program. She and other advocates were anxious about whether the Supreme Court would step in and side with the Trump administration. "We have volunteer groups in the communities where they're going to be deploying the military who stand at the ready to receive these individuals," she said. "So it's not something the government has to do alone." Trump Administration Deploying 'Crisis Response Force' At Southern Border In Wake Of Court Decision (Daily Caller) Daily Caller [3/6/2020 12:24 PM, Jason Hopkins] The Trump administration is deploying a "crisis response force" at the U.S.-Mexico border in preparation for the likelihood of a large influx of migrants. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced Friday that roughly 160 active duty soldiers will be deployed at two ports of entry along the southern border to assist the agency. Around 80 personnel will be sent to El Paso, while another 80 will be sent to California. The administration's decision to deploy military police support stems from the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals' decision to block Migrant Protection Protocols — a program that keep thousands of asylum seekers in Mexico — in California and Arizona beginning March 12. Senior CBP officials, in a conference call with reporters on Friday, cited concerns that the court decision will not only instigate a large-scale influx of migrants that the agency will be unable to control, but could also contribute to the possible spread of coronavirus at the border. 101 "As demonstrated last Friday, following the 9th Circuit's [Migrant Protection Protocol] ruling announcement, the balancing between facilitating the flow of legitimate trade and travel while upholding our national border security mission and the safety of the public and our personnel is delicate," a senior CBP official said Friday. "CBP ports of entry are not designed or equipped to handle extremely large groups of travelers arriving at the same time, and temporary closure of a [port of entry] is contemplated as an extreme option as necessary for public safety and border security," the official continued. The move marks a back-and-forth between the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals and the administration. The federal appeals court on February 28 blocked the administration's Migrant Protection Protocols — also known as the Remain in Mexico program — across the entire southern border. This led to a large number of migrants rushing the border, and prompted U.S. immigration officials to temporarily shut the border down. The court ruling was quickly put on hold, allowing the program to remain in place. However, on Wednesday the court ruled that it will block the program down in Arizona and California — two states under its jurisdiction — beginning on March 12, unless the Supreme Court weighs in beforehand. The Department of Justice has issued a stay application with the Supreme Court, but it's not clear if the nation's highest court will act before the due date. "Based on the pending [Migrant Protection Protocol] decision, continued concerns of large groups attempting to enter through [ports of entry], and COVID-19 containment and mitigation concerns, CBP has activated the crisis response force," the senior CBP official said. This force will provide military police support, engineering support, and aviation support, the official noted. The crisis response force will be deployed "no later than March 7" and last for two weeks. With 'Remain in Mexico' in limbo, Trump administration sends troops to San Diego border (San Diego Union Tribune) San Diego Union Tribune [3/6/2020 5:19 PM, Phil Diehl, 241K] The Trump administration is sending 80 troops to the San Ysidro port of entry in San Diego and another 80 troops to El Paso to assist U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents with security, officials said Friday. The move is the result of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision last week to block the administration's "Remain in Mexico" policy, also known as Migrant Protection Protocols, under which nearly 60,000 immigrants have been forced to wait in Mexico for the completion of their U.S. immigration cases. When the court order came down last Friday, large groups assembled in Mexico with the potential to forcibly enter the United States, said CBP spokesman Ralph DeSio. As a result, the Border Patrol temporarily closed the Paso Del Norte Bridge in downtown El Paso and several other border crossings. 102 At the San Ysidro Port of Entry, about 30 migrants enrolled in Remain in Mexico waited with attorneys for several hours that afternoon, requesting they be processed into the U.S. per the court's order. While one CBP supervisor raised his voice during a tense exchange with the attorneys, the group of asylum seekers was orderly and took care not to block other border foot traffic. "The balance between facilitating the flow of legitimate trade and travel while upholding our national border security mission and the safety of the public and our personnel is delicate," DeSio said in a statement. "Ports of Entry are not designed or equipped to handle extremely large groups of travelers arriving all at the same time, and temporary closure of a (port of entry) is contemplated as an extreme option, as necessary for public safety and

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border security." The migrants across the border were turned away last Friday. Then the 9th Circuit agreed to temporarily stay its own order, but only until next Wednesday so the U.S. Supreme Court has enough time to decide whether it will take up the government's petition for a writ of certiorari. If the high court does not decide by then, then the 9th Circuit has ruled that Remain in Mexico shall be lifted Thursday in its jurisdiction — California and Arizona. The order does not apply to other border states outside its jurisdiction — New Mexico and Texas. To prepare for the possibility of Remain in Mexico being lifted, the Defense Department has a "crisis response force" that can provide police, engineer and aviation support at select ports of entry, DeSio said. "There is continued concern of large groups attempting to forcibly enter through the San Ysidro port," DeSio said. He described the deployment as "one element of CBP's larger, comprehensive border security efforts to help CBP ensure everyone's safety and security, to include travelers, asylum seekers, business stakeholders and our own employees." Defense Department personnel will be involved in any action related to the coronavirus, he said. Immigration-related screenings will only be done by Border Patrol personnel. The troops are from the U.S. Army's 687th Engineer Construction Company and the 519th Military Police Battalion at Fort Polk, La., according to a Defense Department statement. In addition, the governor of Texas has ordered the Texas National Guard to deploy a team of soldiers from the 136th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade to the Brownsville, Texas, area to conduct "quick reaction force training" in support of CPB. Officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity to brief reporters on the plan, said the troops would start the temporary assignment Saturday and remain in place for at least two weeks. More than 5,000 active-duty troops and members of the National Guard are already stationed at the border to secure ports of entry, hold training sessions, provide support at holding facilities and help with border wall construction. Some were deployed to the San Diego border in response to a migrant caravan that arrived in Tijuana in late 2018. 103 At one point a demonstration in Tijuana ended with a large group of migrants rushing the border fence and CBP officers responded with tear gas. Troops were not involved in the clash but had been tasked with reinforcing the border barriers, including stringing loops of razor wire and moving concrete blockades near ports of entry. The Obama administration sent about 1,200 National Guard soldiers, including 260 to San Diego, to safeguard the border as part of the one-year Operation Phalanx that ended in 2012. More Migrants Deported than Apprehended at Border over Last 5 Months, Say Feds (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 9:23 AM, Bob Price, 1973K] During the past five months, federal law enforcement officials deported or repatriated approximately 14,000 more migrants than arrived at the U.S.-Mexico Border. CBP Acting Commissioner Mark Morgan said this illustrated the results of ending "Catch and Release." "In the past 5 months, since the president announced the end of 'Catch and Release,' approximately 14,000 more unlawful aliens were deported or returned than arrived at the southwest border," DHS officials tweeted on Thursday. Commissioner Morgan told reporters on Thursday that new policies put in place by the Trump Administration led to fewer asylum seekers being released into the interior of the United States. "The last five months, the number of those we remove have outpaced the number of those we encounter at the Southwest border," Morgan said. "We are applying a consequence or a removal pathway to 95 percent of those we encounter," Morgan said. He went on to describe this as "the end of catch and release." Since the beginning of the current fiscal year (October 1, 2019), Border Patrol agents and CBP officers apprehended or classified as inadmissible 202,226 migrants. During that same period, immigration officers or CBP officers removed or repatriated 216,132 migrants. This resulted in a net outflow of 13,904. The number of migrant crossings historically increase from January to February. In 2019, the number of migrant apprehensions increased by 30 percent. However, this year, the numbers only increased by about 1.3 percent (430 migrants). "Because of our reforms, we are not positioning ourselves for another 2019," DHS officials said in a written statement. "We're averting it. Officials said February 2020 was the 3rd best February in the past 21 years. 200 Pounds of Meth, Fentanyl, Cocaine, Heroin Seized at Interior Immigration Checkpoints (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/8/2020 11:15 AM, Bob Price, 1973K] Yuma and San Diego Sector Border Patrol agents seized in excess of 200 pounds in methamphetamine, fentanyl, cocaine, and heroin at interior immigration checkpoints and 104 through traffic stops in Arizona and California. Officials estimated the drugs to be worth more than $2 million. Welton Station Border Patrol agents assigned to the Interstate 8 Immigration Checkpoint on March 5 observed a shuttle van approaching for inspection. During an inspection and interview, a K-9 detection team alerted to the possible presence of drugs inside the van, according to information obtained from Yuma Sector Border Patrol officials. The agent referred the driver of the shuttle van to a secondary inspection station. During a more intensive search, agents found two U.S. citizen teenagers with drugs taped to their legs. Agents determined the drugs to be fentanyl weighing more than one kilogram. Officials explained this is approximately 540,000 lethal doses. Only two milligrams absorbed, inhaled, or swallowed can be fatal, officials warmed. The agents arrested the two juvenile teens and seized the drugs and the van. Border Patrol officials did not provide an estimated value of the drugs. An article posted by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) estimated the value of fentanyl at about $900,000 per kilo. San Diego Sector Border Patrol agents conducted a traffic stop on a 2016 Nissan Frontier on Interstate 215 during the evening of March 4, officials reported. Following

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an alert by a K-9 team, agents search the vehicle and found 27 bundles that tested positive for cocaine. The smugglers allegedly hid the drugs in the front and rear seats. The 27 packets weighed approximately 71 pounds and had an estimated street value of $786,450. "In the last 72 hours San Diego Sector has seized over 117 pounds of lethal narcotics worth more than $1,300,000," San Diego Sector Chief Patrol Agent Aaron Heitke said in a written statement. "Thankfully these dangerous drugs will not reach our local communities." The agents arrested the 32-year-old U.S. citizen driver and turned the drugs over to the DEA. [TX] More Kids Are Making The Dangerous Trip Across Texas-Mexico Border (NPR) NPR [3/6/2020 4:13 PM, John Burnett, 4112K] Audio: HERE In a refugee camp just across the Texas-Mexico border, more and more parents are sending their children across the international bridge, alone, to get them away from squalid, dangerous conditions. [AZ] Arizona DPS Do 24-Hour Patrols Again in Some Border Areas (AP) AP [3/8/2020 11:20 AM, Staff, 3020K] The Arizona Department of Public Safety has returned round-the-clock patrols to Nogales with plans to have 24-hour patrols to a second area later this year. The moves come nearly four years after Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey and DPS Director Frank Milstead said restoring such patrols in the border region was a top priority. In a 2016 interview with The Associated Press, Milstead said he and Ducey were surprised 105 upon taking office in 2015 that the highways along the U.S.-Mexico border were not patrolled at all hours. Ducey soon created the Border Strike Force to bring together local, state, tribal and federal authorities to target border-related crimes. "The four border counties get 24-hour service first out of this Strike Force plan," Milstead said then. Ducey's office, in a 2018 budget proposal, said the lack of 24-hour coverage in the border region raised "public safety concerns, with the potential for criminals to shift illegal activities into the evening hours when law enforcement presence is diminished." The Arizona Republic reports that although the Strike Force has spent an estimated $90 million since its inception, it fulfilled the promise of 24-hour patrols in one area of the border only five months ago, and much of the border area still goes unpatrolled overnight. DPS spokesman Bart Graves said 24-hour patrols were restored in the Nogales area in October, and similar patrols in the Yuma area were expected to be restored by June. Those patrols would include the border city of San Luis, according to Graves. Also in June, 24-hour patrols would be restored to the Willcox area, but those patrols would not include Douglas, about 70 miles (113 kilometers) away, the Republic said. Graves said some areas of the border region are so remote that they would likely never receive 24-hour coverage. Graves said it was not certain whether those highways ever had round-the-clock patrols. In a 2019 budget proposal, the governor's office said the DPS had added 24 troopers to boost overnight patrols in the border area since 2017. The slow addition of the patrols was not due to a lack of will, but a lack of available highway troopers as the DPS still was recovering from a years-long hiring freeze implemented after the 2008 recession, Graves said. Added to that were competing priorities on the state's highways. The DPS also wanted to beef up patrols in the Phoenix and Tucson areas to combat a slew of incidents that involved wrong-way drivers, Graves said. The lack of coverage has been a source of frustration for two of the four sheriffs who oversee counties that share a border with Mexico. Yuma County Sheriff Leon Wilmot said he has seen more troopers in his region, but his office still helps cover incidents on the highways as they have for years. Santa Cruz County Sheriff Tony Estrada, whose region includes Nogales, had also previously expressed frustration at the lack of 24-hour patrols on the highways that run through his counties. Estrada said smugglers had taken notice and were adjusting their tactics. 106 Federal Emergency Management Agency Trump's visits to natural disaster sites as president (FOX News) FOX News [3/6/2020 11:51 AM, Adam Shaw, 8943K] President Trump on Friday visited Tennessee after the state was hit by tornadoes earlier this week, leaving dozens dead and many more injured. It is one of a number of visits he has taken to natural disaster sites as president. Here's a look at previous visits: Texas Trump visited Texas in September 2017 after the state was hit by Hurricane Harvey and left dozens dead. He started in Houston, which had been devastated by flooding. The president, along with first lady Melania Trump and other officials, then traveled to Lake Charles, La., which was also hit by the storm. His visits included NRG Stadium, the home of the Houston Texans, which served as a recovery center for hurricane victims. Trump authorized a 90 percent federal cost share for debris removal and a 100 percent federal cost share for emergency protective measures. Before leaving Texas, the president stopped in a Houston neighborhood where debris were piled outside ranch-style homes. "These are people that have done a fantastic job holding it together," he said. Florida Trump visited Florida the same month after Hurricane Irma hit the state in 2017. He surveyed the damage by helicopter and served lunch to victims recovering from the storm. First lady Melania Trump, Vice President Pence, Florida Gov. Rick Scott, Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, Florida attorney general Pam Bondi and FEMA administrator Brock Long joined Trump for his tour. The president and vice president served lunch at Naples Estates, a mobile home park that was hit hard by the hurricane. Puerto Rico Trump visited Puerto Rico in October 2017 after it was hit by Hurricane Maria. Trump viewed the damage from a helicopter, participated in several briefings with officials, met storm victims and toured the USS Kearsarge. He also met with senior military personnel and government officials, including Gov. Rosselló and Kenneth Mapp, the governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands, which was also severely damaged by the storm. Maria was the most powerful hurricane to hit the island in nearly a

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century. It unleashed 107 floods and mudslides that knocked out the island's entire electrical grid and telecommunications, along with many roads. South Carolina and North Carolina Trump traveled to both states after they were hit by Hurricane Florence in September 2018. Trump participated in a briefing with South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster, Republican Sens. Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott, and other officials. He served meals in North Carolina at a Baptist Church and thanked volunteers, while also posing for photographs with volunteers. He later visited a South Carolina neighborhood and greeted people as he walked along the flooded streets. He told people things are "going to be OK," and others thanked him for coming. Georgia and Florida Trump visited Georgia and Florida in October 2018 after they were hit by Hurricane Michael. He visited farmers whose crops were wiped out. He spoke to one farmer who lost 100 percent of his cotton crop. Trump flew to Georgia from Florida, where he surveyed hurricane damage in several Panhandle communities by air, land and foot. During his helicopter tour of the storm-battered region, Trump saw uprooted trees and houses with blue tarps covering damaged roofs after his helicopter lifted from Eglin Air Force Base near Valparaiso. The severity of the damage worsened significantly as Trump approached Mexico Beach, a town of about 1,000 people that was nearly wiped off the map in a direct hit from the hurricane and its 155 mph winds. Alabama Trump visited Alabama in 2019 after it was hit by tornadoes that killed 23 people. The president touched down near where winds moved as quickly as 170 mph. Trump had signed a major disaster declaration for the county, freeing federal assistance to the region. The president viewed the damage caused by the storm aboard Marine One. He also met victims in Opelika, Alabama, and received a briefing from the Lee County Emergency Management Agency. As his motorcade wound through the county, Trump passed through entire neighborhoods that were destroyed, passing by empty lots with broken pieces of metal, wood and what appeared to be scattered clothing. [TN] Tennessee tornadoes' death toll was tied to a lack of warning, awareness and readiness (Washington Post) 108 Washington Post [3/6/2020 11:21 AM, Matthew Cappucci, 12625K] At least 24 are dead in the wake of Tuesday morning's terrible Tennessee tornadoes. They carved a long scar across Middle Tennessee in the dead of night, racking up a large death toll in the process. While downtown Nashville was hit hard, the town of Cookeville — about 80 miles east of the state capital — suffered the worst of the devastation. The staggeringly high casualty count and surprise violence of the tornado culminated into a potential worst case scenario amid an incredibly difficult forecast. Through the rubble, the question must be raised: What factors may have led to the disaster that ensued? Time and time again, meteorologists criticize headlines that use phrases like "it came without warning." Most of the time, adequate warning precedes a significant threat. But once in a while, that may not be the case. By no means did the Monday forecast have the "look" of destructive tornadoes. In fact, the tornado threat appeared to be "isolated" at best. Things changed in a hurry once the sun set. But did the messaging — and warning process — keep up? And were residents prepared for a violent tornado striking in the middle of the night? The answers are uncomfortable. Monday's forecast On Monday morning, the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center placed Nashville in its "slight" risk zone for severe weather overnight into early Tuesday. Cookeville appears to have been under a general thunderstorm category, where severe weather was not initially anticipated. Nashville was listed as having a 2 percent risk of a tornado within 25 miles of the city. That is the lowest tier of nonzero tornado risk the Storm Prediction Center can delineate. Cookeville was not initially in that risk area. The National Weather Service in Nashville tweeted that, on a 0 to 5 scale, the risk level associated with tornadoes in Middle Tennessee was a 1. As much as 24 hours before the tornadoes, the Storm Prediction Center keyed into one "make it or break it" feature — the cap. This layer of warm air a mile or so above the ground ordinarily squashes any attempts of surface air to rise, "capping" the atmosphere and preventing any storminess from blossoming. But meteorologists knew there was a very slight chance some of this capping could dissipate just enough to let an isolated storm develop. Nashville Weather Service forecasters sniffed this out in their Monday morning update, writing "the primary risk appears to be hail, but locally damaging winds and even a couple of tornadoes would be possible should capping erode." It was a very low-probability but highimpact potential. There's a question as to whether this extremely low-chance event was adequately communicated in traditional formats to the public. While many meteorologists, including those on television, mentioned the remote chance of an isolated spin-up tornado, there do 109 not appear to be any sources that advertised any possibility whatsoever for a higher-end EF-3 or EF-4 tornado — never mind the nation's most intense twister in nearly three years. A rapidly-evolving environment As many of the evening news programs wrapped up at 10:35 p.m., an isolated severe threat overnight appeared to remain. "Storm mode looks to become increasingly messy, with multi-cell clusters eventually forming into a broken line," the Nashville Weather Service had written in their meteorological forecast discussion at 10:14 p.m. "Damaging winds and hail continue to be the main concern, though an isolated tornado cannot be ruled out." They did note that storms would have the ability to maintain themselves overnight thanks to the wind dynamics at play in the atmosphere. But the Storm Prediction Center, responsible for monitoring environments primed for tornado activity, still only had a 2 percent tornado risk drawn in Middle Tennessee. Cookeville was on the edge of even that. At 11:20 p.m. Monday, the Storm Prediction Center issued a very small tornado watch for portions of

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western and central Tennessee. It included 13 counties, within which lay Nashville, but didn't extend farther east to Cookeville. The watch came late, when many were sleeping. The watch itself listed a 30 percent chance of 2 or more tornadoes touching down, which is comparatively low for a tornado watch; the risk of an EF-2 or stronger tornadoes occurring was described as "low." A small tornado watch was issued on Monday night at 11:20 p.m. after several tornadoes had touched down to the west in a previous severe weather watch. Cookeville was never placed under the watch. (NOAA/SPC) That watch came only after multiple tornadoes had already touched down, including an EF2 in Carroll County, Tenn., and a killer EF-2 in Benton County. Previous watches to the west had been in effect. Did it come without warning? Intermittent tornado warnings accompanied that same rotating supercell thunderstorm as it moved eastward, covering 275 miles. Baseball-sized hail fell in Dickson, about 40 miles west of Nashville, shortly before midnight. All tornado warnings for the cell were dropped at 12:15 a.m. despite pulses of strong rotation occasionally still detectable in the lower levels of the storm. At 12:11 a.m., a severe thunderstorm warning was issued for areas farther to the east, including Nashville, warning of possible 60 mph wind gusts and half-dollar-sized hail. In severe thunderstorm warnings, the National Weather Service has the option to include a "tornado possible" tag, noting the presence of some rotation that bears watching. This was not included in the severe thunderstorm warning. Ahead of the storm lay a sleepy city of 700,000. 110 Doppler radar indicated a possible tornadic debris signature between 12:24 and 12:28 a.m. over Pond Creek Road just a few miles west of Nashville. No tornado warning was in effect at the time. A probable tornadic debris signature was also visible at 12:30 a.m. about a mile west of the John C. Tune Airport. Data indicates debris was likely being lofted into the air at the time. A tornado warning had not been issued. The tornado warning wasn't issued until 12:35 a.m., at which point the tornado was in the process of heavily damaging the John C. Tune Airport. The damage is expected to cost the facility more than $90 million, not including more than 90 damaged aircraft. Within the next four minutes, debris from the airport would be carried to a height of 20,000 feet. So much debris was in the air that anomalously high values of the radar's signal were beamed back to the radar, producing an obvious "debris ball" at 12:36 a.m. Residents of downtown Nashville had about 5 to 6 minutes of warning before the destructive tornado was directly overhead. The airport and places to the west were hit without warning. Tornado warnings followed the storm until 1:30 a.m. At 1:37 a.m., a new tornado — with 75 mph winds — touched down east-southeast of Gordonsville, about 50 miles east of Nashville. Over the next 5 minutes, it danced along a 5.88-mile track. It was never under a warning. The rotation in the storm began strengthening once again; at 1:48 a.m., the National Weather Service issued a tornado warning for Cookeville, stating "a severe thunderstorm capable of producing a tornado was located over Baxter, or near Cookeville." Less than a minute later, the tornado touched down. A little under 3 minutes after that, regions along Route 70N near the Ashcroft Subdivision were slammed by the tornado, with debris visible on radar. Areas just west of Cookeville were ravaged between 1:54 a.m. and 1:57 a.m. Western areas only had a one-minute warning, while downtown had about 7 to 9 minutes. Warning vs. awareness Some argue that severe-weather awareness should have been high since Nashville was included in the 2 percent tornado-risk area from the Storm Prediction Center and because the storms had a history of damage. But 2 percent risks are issued all the time; with some areas under dozens of 2 percent risks every year, it makes sense that the level of concern associated with that bottom-end tier would be very low. And the storm had not begun to produce damage until late at night. For some, the Nashville tornado did legitimately come without warning — and was in the process of demolishing an airport before any warning was issued. Residents downtown were alerted only minutes before it struck. 111 Another tornado touched down and managed to caused damage for nearly 6 miles, with no warning whatsoever. And when the tornado first touched down west of Cookeville, there were only 60 seconds of warning in the middle of the night; farther downwind, folks had more lead time. Yet 18 fatalities resulted. Why? Even the best warnings are futile if people do not receive the warnings. For some in Middle Tennessee, warnings were not issued, while many others were likely sleeping and unaware of the threat. Several of the tornado warnings that were issued fell short of the national average for warning lead time of around 8 to 10 minutes before the twister first touches down. It's obvious that awareness was an issue Monday night. Even though the forecasts ramped up in tandem with the conditions, that change in messaging came after most had retired for the night. Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) via mobile phones can often disseminate a tornado warning (if one is issued), but if cell service is interrupted, there is a chance the network may fail. According to Walker Ashley, an atmospheric scientist at Northern Illinois University, having a weather radio is key. "The best option is to have a weather radio and program it for your specific locale. Have multiple methods of obtaining warning information," he wrote in an email to The Washington Post. NOAA Weather Alert Radios can be programmed to only awaken you for tornado warnings or specific alerts in your immediate area. This is particularly important at times when awareness of an impending severe weather threat is low, especially if the potential for a threat of such magnitude was not communicated long in advance. This can be the case at night. "People tend to be asleep or have a much greater tendency to be unaware of possible environmental cues, which in many cases are important for initiating sheltering," Ashley explained. Steven Strader

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researches severe weather vulnerability at Villanova University. He too emphasized the need to have multiple warnings. “Nocturnal events tend to overwhelm populations, largely because most people are asleep,” Strader said. “Your sort of senses aren’t ready to go, you’re not paying attention. How you receive tornado warnings are still incredibly important.” He emphasized that sirens are not meant to be heard indoors. “If you’re relying on sirens, you’re really behind the ball.” 112 Other systems of vulnerability Strader described the difficulty of understanding what went wrong from a messaging standpoint, as it’s impossible to interview victims who lost their lives in the tornado. Even communicating with those who survived can be challenging in the immediate aftermath. But he explained that vulnerability to storms is not a one-size-fits-all element that must be taken into consideration. “Vulnerability can be socioeconomic, ethnographic, demographic … race or ethnicity can play a role,” said Strader. “And it’s the housing structure you live in. Not all homes are built the same, and not all behave the same.” Strader said that mobile and manufactured homes are about 50 percent more likely to succumb to winds of a given magnitude than site-built, permanent homes. In the end, Tuesday morning’s tornadoes reaffirmed the need to have a severe weather plan that can be put into action at a moment’s notice. It’s also vital to have multiple ways to be notified — day or night — in case one method fails. And that will become increasingly important going forward as cities grow and targets continue to expand. “Our developed footprint is rising over time. These cities are sprawling. The odds of having another event like this are rapidly increasing,” Strader said. [TN] Trump promises to ‘take care’ of Tennessee tornado victims (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 7:38 PM, Staff, 1973K] President Donald Trump toured areas of tornado-ravaged Tennessee on Friday, where he promised to “take care” of those who were affected by two powerful twisters earlier this week. The president joined Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee and members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency as he visited Putnam County, one of the hardest-hit areas from Tuesday’s tornadoes — one of which touched down in Nashville and the other about 70 miles east of the city. Twenty-five people died in Nashville, Cookeville and the Cumberland Plateau. “They’re wiped out,” Trump said during his visit Friday. “We’re going to be with them all the way. “We’re going to take care of what they need.” Trump approved a major disaster declaration for Tennessee on Thursday, freeing up federal funds to assist people in Davidson, Putnam and Wilson counties. Lee told reporters the state will recover. “Tennesseans have shown up. We’re the volunteer state: We’ve shown up by the thousands,” he said. “We’re gonna overcome. This state knows how to do that.” Sports teams in the state, including the Tennessee Titans and the Nashville Predators, 113 offered assistance to the victims, along with celebrities such as Taylor Swift. The National Weather Service said Friday at least four tornadoes touched down in Tennessee late Monday and early Tuesday. The other two weren’t strong enough to be rated on the tornado scale. [TN] We Love Them’: Trump Tours And Consoles Tornado-Ravaged Tennessee (NPR) NPR [3/6/2020 12:48 PM, Colin Dwyer, 4112K] President Trump touched down Friday in Tennessee, where residents are still sorting through wreckage and seeking to rebuild after a series of deadly tornadoes blew through the state earlier this week. The president landed in Nashville and from there departed by helicopter for Cookeville, in Putnam County, where 18 residents died and dozens more were injured in the destruction Tuesday. All told across the state, authorities say at least 24 people died in the storms. "I have a message for the families of those that lost their lives: We love them. They’re special people. It’s an incredible place — incredible state, tremendous heart," Trump told a news conference Friday in Cookeville, in front of the wreckage of a home. "Already you see people rebuilding." He was accompanied on his trip to Tennessee by members of the state’s congressional delegation, including the state’s two Republican senators, Marsha Blackburn and Lamar Alexander. Gov. Bill Lee was there to greet him when he arrived. "It’s been a painful, tragic week for our state," Lee said during the joint news conference with Trump, "but Tennesseans are hopeful." Cookeville Mayor Ricky Shelton gave NPR’s Morning Edition a sense of the aftermath, describing the brutalized landscape that was to greet Trump on Friday. "You just see the trees are just laying down, houses gone, and all you see is concrete foundations," Shelton said. "Our road crews were having to take heavy equipment to bulldoze our way through these streets, because they were covered in trees and power lines and poles." As of Thursday, more than 23,000 people in three counties remained without power and Tennessee remained under a state of emergency. Trump freed up federal funds for Putnam, Davidson and Wilson counties by declaring a major disaster in the state. During the news conference Friday, the president tried to end on a hopeful note, recalling a story he had heard about a boy whom one tornado ripped from his home and deposited a couple of blocks away, relatively unharmed. "And how did his parents do?" Trump asked the officials standing beside him. "They were found deceased," came the reply. "He was the only surviving member of the household. Lost his sibling as well." 114 [TN] ‘We’re going to be with them all the way’: Trump tours Tennessee after deadly tornadoes (USA Today) USA Today [3/6/2020 3:06 PM, Courtney Subramanian and David Jackson, 5611K] Video: HERE President Donald Trump traveled to Tennessee on Friday to survey the wreckage left by a powerful and deadly storm system that ripped through the state Tuesday, leveling homes and killing at least 25 people. He stopped in Cookeville, Tenn., one of the hardest hit areas located east of Nashville, where he praised local officials including Gov. Bill Lee as well as the work of FEMA. In Putnam County, Trump’s motorcade arrived in a residential area,

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where he surveyed the wreckage alongside Lee, who said it had been a "tragic, painful week for our state." "They're wiped out. They have nothing," Trump said. "We're going to be with them all the way." The president was expected to visit with survivors before leaving Tennessee on Friday afternoon. He vowed to provide federal support for the state's recovery efforts, which was approved on Thursday after Lee declared a state of emergency in the wake of the deadly storms. The funds were made available to Davidson, Putnam and Wilson counties. Trump met emergency responders and survivors at the Church of Christ in Cookeville, where recovery efforts were underway. "We have done everything we need to do and our hearts go out to you," he told survivors. "When you have those who lost somebody that's a very tough situation ... We are with you all the way." He also met 61-year-Lamar Redmond, who told the president he lost his sister and brotherin-law in the tornado and doesn't want anyone in the community to get left behind. "He is a caring president," Redmond said. "I thought he was just going to do a flyby, but he was out here walking among us." Like presidents before him, Trump has often traveled to sites in the aftermath of natural disasters, playing the role of "comforter-in-chief." Trump has made at least a dozen trips to tour damage from tornadoes, hurricanes and wildfires since he took office in 2017. In the beginning of his term, those trips often made news, such as when he lobbed paper towels at residents in Puerto Rico in 2017 following hurricanes Irma and Maria. More recently his trips to weather-ravaged locales have come and gone with little controversy. The president traveled to Florida in May to meet with victims of Hurricane Michael, which struck the state's panhandle as a Category 5 storm. "You got hit with a little hurricane," Trump said of the city he visited less than a week after the storm hit. "Michael was not a nice hurricane, I can tell you that. But we're doing well." 115 The Trump administration was widely criticized early in his term for its response to the storms in Puerto Rico – criticism he continues to push back on – but since then has generally avoided high-profile skirmishes with local officials following catastrophes. The president has also sought to downplay panic over the coronavirus outbreak as health officials warn Americans to prepare for it to further spread. The U.S. has confirmed more than 200 cases of coronavirus across 19 states, according to Johns Hopkins University. Twelve people have died after contracting the virus. [TN] Trump visits tornado-ravaged town in Tennessee, promises help (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/6/2020 8:03 AM, Dave Boyer, 482K] President Trump on Friday visited a Tennessee town devastated by a tornado to console victims, and pledged "whatever they need" in federal aid. In Cookeville, Mr. Trump stood amid the rubble of homes and sheared-off trees on a street where eight people were killed. A total of 18 people were killed in the Putnam County community when an EF-4 tornado packing winds of nearly 200 mph struck, leaving a path of destruction 50 miles long. "I love them very much, that's why I'm here," Mr. Trump said. "I was going to [visit] yesterday, but they asked me for one more day because they were looking for bodies, believe it or not, up until now. It's tough. One family got entirely wiped out." He spoke of an 8-year-old boy who was sucked out of his home by the twister and landed, alive, more than two blocks away. The rest of his family died. "They found him walking on the street," the president said. "His parents were killed, and his sister." Later, Mr. Trump prayed at the Church of Christ Cookeville with family members and first responders. "We are with you all the way," the president said. "When you have those who lost somebody, that's a very tough situation." He said it was "inspiring" to see neighbors and others from around the state donating supplies and food for the victims. "It's a case study of what should be done and how it can be done," Mr. Trump said. "It's Tennessee. It is indeed the Volunteer State." Statewide, the storms killed 25 people and injured hundreds. Thousands lost their homes and businesses. Mr. Trump approved emergency federal disaster aid for the state; Gov. Bill Lee said the amount needed hasn't been determined yet. "We're very grateful that you're here," the governor told Mr. Trump. "Tennesseans are 116 grateful for your support. It's been a painful, tragic week for our state. Your presence here reminds us that people all across the country care about what's happening here. We're going to overcome." The president said his administration and FEMA are "working very hard." "We love them, they're special people," he said of Tennesseans. "Already you see people rebuilding. It's a great state." [TN] Black neighborhoods of North Nashville suffer heavy blow from tornadoes (San Francisco Chronicle) San Francisco Chronicle [3/8/2020 4:29 PM, Travis Loller, 1670K] On a frigid morning in North Nashville, Ishvicka Howell stood in her driveway and peered down the street at several utility trucks. "When I saw those blinking lights, it was like Christmas," she said. Howell has been without electricity since a tornado tore through her neighborhood shortly after midnight Tuesday. "No power. No heat. We pioneering it," Howell said. "Grilling it and boiling water on the grill. We're in survival mode." The tornado that struck Nashville last week wrecked several neighborhoods as it hopped across the city, smashing in trendy Germantown and Five Points, where two people died. In all, 24 people were killed by the storms in Tennessee. But North Nashville's historically African American neighborhoods were already suffering from decades of redlining and neglect, isolated from more affluent neighborhoods by the interstates that cut through the heart of the city. More recently, they have begun to feel the pressure of gentrification as new residents and short-term renters search out affordable areas near downtown. And now this. The killer storm devastated whole blocks, tearing off roofs, blowing down walls, uprooting trees and toppling electrical poles. Some wonder if North Nashville can recover from this

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latest hit or if its African American families will be permanently displaced. “We are worried because we know developers are going to come in,” said Cornelius Hill, pastor of Ephesian Primitive Baptist Church. But Hill said he was encouraged by the outpouring of aid. His church, too, is without power. But outside in the parking lot, donations of all sorts have been pouring in for grateful residents. It was a scene repeated on nearly every corner of the storm-damaged blocks. Volunteers manned folding tables with free water, batteries, diapers, trash bags, and hot food like barbecue, hot dogs and pizza. “This is a historic part of Nashville. Some of these homes have been here 40 or 50 years,” said Jonathan Williamson with the community group Friends and Fam. “It’s beautiful to see 117 everyone come out and work together to get things fixed.” North Nashville is home to several historically black colleges and universities. Fisk University and Meharry Medical College were largely unscathed from the storm. But Tennessee State University suffered the near total destruction of its agricultural research center. The loss is estimated at between $30 million and $50 million. College of Agriculture Dean Chandra Reddy said the school has never been funded on par with the University of Tennessee. It’s only in the past few years that the state government has started matching federal funding, and the school has been working hard to build up the program. “This tornado is a double whammy for us. We were barely putting something up there, and then this comes and wipes it out,” said Reddy, who is hoping the state government will come through to help the program quickly rebuild. [MN] High water closes highway in southern Minnesota (Minnesota Public Radio) Minnesota Public Radio [3/8/2020 8:35 PM, Staff, 2K] Snowmelt and ice jams have caused flooding along some rivers across southern Minnesota this weekend, forcing the closure of two state highways. The Minnesota Department of Transportation said early Sunday that State Highway 93 south of Henderson is closed near the Rush River due to water flowing over the roadway. That stretch of highway is frequently closed by flooding along the Rush and Minnesota rivers. Last spring, three of the four routes out of Henderson were closed by flooding. And on Sunday evening, MnDOT reported that an ice jam and rising water had forced the closure of State Highway 99 across the Minnesota River at St. Peter. Meanwhile, flooding along the Cottonwood River at New Ulm has receded after reaching major flood stage earlier in the weekend due to an ice jam. And minor flooding continues or is forecast along portions of the Minnesota, Redwood and West Fork Des Moines rivers in southwest Minnesota. [OK] At least 30 wildfires have burned more than 30,000 acres in Oklahoma (CNN) CNN [3/9/2020 3:37 AM, Theresa Waldrop and Hollie Silverman, 5551K] At least 30 wildfires have burned more than 30,000 acres in Oklahoma throughout the weekend. Officials were still trying to determine how many buildings were lost or damaged in the fire, Michelle Finch-Walker with the Oklahoma Forestry Services told CNN Sunday. The largest wildfire, dubbed the 412 Fire, has burned more than 29,000 acres in the state’s panhandle, according to the Southern Area Coordination Center. By Monday morning 50% of the 412 fire was contained, meaning half of the fire is surrounded by barriers that keep it from spreading at those points, the Oklahoma Forestry 118 Service reported. The 412 Fire started just before 1 p.m. Saturday, CNN affiliate KSNW reported, prompting officials to order evacuations in the towns of Beaver and Forgan in Beaver County. A tweet from the National Weather Service in Amarillo, Texas, about a 160 miles southwest of Beaver, warned residents that homes were being threatened by the quick moving blaze. There are about 5,000 residents in the county, according to the US Census Bureau. A burn scar more than 15 miles long is visible on satellite images, NWS Amarillo said in a tweet Saturday. Fires are not uncommon in the area during this month, CNN Meteorologist Michael Guy said. In Oklahoma, "March has the largest amount of acreage burned as well as comparable wildfires per month," Guy said. High wind and low humidity in the area made for high fire risk Sunday and the small amount of rain expected Monday likely won’t be enough to extinguish the flames, Guy explained. "That weather system that caused the wind is pushing through right now -- the rain is not substantial with less than an ½ inch falling over the western portions of the state." [CA] Large earthquake strikes off coast of Northern California (AP) AP [3/8/2020 11:43 PM, Staff, 337K] A magnitude 5.9 earthquake struck a spot off the coast of Northern California on Sunday, the U.S. Geological Survey said. The earthquake hit at 6:59 p.m. and was centered in a spot 55.5 miles (89.5 km) west of Ferndale, a town of about 1,300 people along the Pacific Coast. The earthquake had a depth of 1.2 miles (2 km.) There are no reports of damage so far. Secret Service Secret Service says no 2020 Democrats ‘have requested protection’ (Washington Examiner) Washington Examiner [3/6/2020 9:22 AM, Caitlin Yilek, 570K, Neutral, Secondary] Secret Service said it has not yet received any requests from Democrats running for president for protection. Typically, candidates submit a request for federal protection that must be approved by congressional leaders and the head of the Homeland Security Department. “At this time, no candidates have requested protection. The Department of Homeland Security in 2017 established a formal process for candidates to request U.S. Secret Service protection. The first step of the process is for a candidate to meet established criteria and formally request protection through the Department of Homeland Security,” spokeswoman 119 Cathy Milhoan said in a statement Thursday. The debate over whether candidates should receive protection earlier than is typical in the election process was spurred by dairy industry protesters rushing the stage while Democratic presidential front-runner Joe Biden gave remarks in Texas on Super Tuesday. Biden’s wife, Jill, and members of his campaign staff blocked the

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protesters from reaching the former vice president. Topless dairy industry protesters also interrupted a Bernie Sanders campaign event in Nevada last month. There have since been calls for Biden and his rival Sanders to receive protection. "I'm probably the only candidate running for president whose wife is my Secret Service. Whoa, you don't screw around with a Philly girl, I'll tell you what," Biden joked Wednesday at a fundraiser. [MA] Chicopee Police need help identifying counterfeit bills suspect (WWLP) WWLP [3/8/2020 10:38 PM, Kristina D'Amours, 28K, Neutral, Secondary] The Chicopee Police Department needs your help identifying a suspect who allegedly attempted to pass counterfeit bills at a Walgreens in February. According to police spokesperson Officer Wilk, on February 28th, the suspected man entered the Walgreens on St. James Avenue where he allegedly attempted to use fake bills. The suspect allegedly ran away in a silver car after the clerk recognized the fake bills before taking them. If you have any information on this person, contact Chicopee Police at 413-594-1740 and reference case 968. [MA] Nearly 5,700 stolen credit and debit card numbers discovered in card skimming investigation after devices found on gas pumps in Massachusetts (MassLive) MassLive [3/8/2020 10:19 AM, Scott J. Croteau, 149K, Neutral, Secondary] A federal investigation into the placement of card skimmers on gas pumps in Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut and New Hampshire led to the discovery of nearly 5,700 credit and debit card account numbers, according to paperwork filed in Boston federal court. The accounts were contained in text messages and equipment that authorities from the United States Secret Service discovered during the investigation into a card skimming ring. A criminal complaint accusing Luis Angel Naranjo Rodriguez of possessing 15 or more counterfeit or unauthorized access devices was filed in federal court Friday. Records show Naranjo Rodriguez is in state custody in Massachusetts already after he was arrested in November. Mark Comorosky, a Secret Service special agent, said a card skimming ring used Bluetooth 120 and SMS skimmers to steal credit and debit card account information. The Bluetooth skimmer stores data on a memory card that can be extracted by someone within wireless range or by removing the memory card. The SMS skimmer sends a text message to a phone number with the account information. In April 2019, a gas pump technician discovered skimmers on two gas pumps at the Gulf gas station on Commonwealth Avenue in Concord, Massachusetts. The two skimmers had 391 account numbers stored on them, authorities said. Secret Service agents were able to identify an SUV in early April 2019 and discovered the vehicle was rented out of Boston's Logan International Airport by a person who had been arrested in Florida on skimming fraud charges. An investigator from Broward County, Florida said the person who rented the SUV was involved in a card skimming ring with Naranjo Rodriguez and another person. The names of the two other people were not listed in the affidavit on file in Boston federal court. Roughly a month later, in May 2019, employees at a Gulf gas station on Route 9 in Framingham located two skimmers attached to gas pumps. The devices had 10 account numbers stored on memory cards. In November, Naranjo Rodriguez was spotted in an SUV parked at the same Concord gas station that had skimmers placed on gas pumps in April 2019, federal records said. The SUV was parked at the gas station at 1 a.m. even though the business closed at 11 p.m. One person was inside the SUV. Naranjo Rodriguez was standing next to a gas pump wearing black, latex gloves, according to the Secret Service. A Concord police officer approached Naranjo Rodriguez. "Naranjo Rodriguez indicated to the CPD officer that he was getting gas," authorities said. As other officers arrived at the scene, investigators noticed a set of keys on the gas pump lock. Naranjo Rodriguez was then arrested. Officers seized Naranjo Rodriguez's iPhone during his arrest. They also searched the SUV and located what appeared to be a credit card skimming device under a seat. The man inside the SUV was also arrested. "Officers searching the Ford Explorer also located four SMS skimming devices in the glovebox, black rubber gloves in a seat of the vehicle, additional gas pump keys, a black Samsung phone and a red iPhone," federal records said. Concord police also located seven bank cards in the SUV, records said. The man arrested with Naranjo Rodriguez told police they headed to Massachusetts from Miami. Authorities learned Naranjo Rodriguez had been staying in a Framingham hotel. It 121 appears, based on federal records, that Naranjo Rodriguez is from Florida. Investigators obtained a search warrant to check the hotel and discovered a laptop and $1,470 in cash, Comorosky wrote in the federal affidavit. Naranjo Rodriguez had stayed at the same hotel six times in 2019, records showed. A housekeeper at the hotel cleaned out a room used by Naranjo Rodriguez in September and found a sock with 11 different credit cards, records said. Naranjo Rodriguez's name was on nine of the cards. Secret Service investigators checked several cards seized by authorities. The cards were gift cards that had been manipulated to hold the information for credit and debit cards, authorities said. Naranjo Rodriguez used some of those cards at stores in Framingham. The laptop seized in the investigation had 386 account numbers stored in a file, Secret Service investigators said. Authorities then checked the Samsung phone seized in the investigation. "The exam resulted in the discovery of 4,878 account numbers reflected in what appear to be incoming messages," the federal affidavit said. Secret Service agents learned that 19 card skimmers were used in several locations at part of the scheme. Investigators believe card skimmers were placed on gas pumps in Willington, Connecticut; Lynnfield, Massachusetts; Concord, Massachusetts; Malden, Massachusetts; Taunton, Massachusetts; Randolph, Massachusetts; Raynham, Massachusetts, Portland, Maine and Nashua, New Hampshire.

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"Skimming equipment was recovered from some, but not all, of these gas stations," Secret Service agents said. Naranjo Rodriguez's cell phone pinged towers near several locations where the card skimmers were found, records said. The scheme netted at least 5,659 account numbers, Comorosky wrote in the federal affidavit. "It appears likely that Naranjo Rodriguez and his co-conspirators compromised the account data belonging to thousands of victims," the special agent wrote. [MD] CPAC attendee tests positive for coronavirus (Politico) Politico [3/7/2020 6:42 PM, Evan Semones, 2003K, Neutral, Secondary] An attendee at last week's Conservative Political Action Conference has tested positive for the coronavirus, the American Conservative Union confirmed Saturday. The exposure occurred previously to the conference held at Maryland's National Harbor, the 122 ACU said in a statement. "A New Jersey hospital tested the person, and CDC confirmed the positive result," the ACU said. "The individual is under the care of medical professionals in the state of New Jersey, and has been quarantined." President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence spoke at the gathering. Numerous administration and cabinet officials also attended, including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, HHS Secretary Alex Azar, newly minted White House chief of staff Mark Meadows and two of the president's children, Ivanka Trump and Donald Trump, Jr. White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham said the White House is aware of the attendee testing positive for the virus. "At this time there is no indication that either President Trump or Vice President Pence met with or were in close proximity to the attendee," Grisham said in a statement. "The President's physician and United States Secret Service have been working closely with White House Staff and various agencies to ensure every precaution is taken to keep the First Family and the entire White House Complex safe and healthy." Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan said those who attended or worked at the conference may be at risk of contracting the virus and urged any of this year's attendees experiencing symptoms to reach out to their health-care provider. "Immediately after learning of this individual's interactions in our state, we began coordinating with the White House, the CDC and federal officials, the New Jersey Department of Health, Prince George's County officials, and conference organizers," Hogan said. The first case of coronavirus was confirmed in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, according to Mayor Muriel Bowser. POLITICO has confirmed that person is not the CPAC attendee. The U.S. death toll from the virus rose to 19 on Saturday, and the number of U.S. cases climbed over 300. In his speech at CPAC, Trump defended his administration's handling of the outbreak, which was then in its early stages. "My administration has taken the most aggressive action in modern history to control our borders and protect Americans from the coronavirus that came from China," he said. "Everything is really under control, but when they put a mic in front of a Democrat and the Democrats say, doesn't even know what's going on, how is Trump doing, he's doing a terrible job. Well, sadly I'd probably say the same about them," he said. "You know. I guess it's a natural reflex." [SC] Two Men Arrested on Child Pornography Charges (South Carolina Attorney General) South Carolina Attorney General [3/6/2020 4:22 PM, Staff, 2K, Positive, Secondary] March 6, 2020 – South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson announced the arrest of 123 Matthew Christian Pendergast, age 47, of Cameron, and Xavier John Fulwood, age 27, of Manning, SC, on 25 total charges connected to the sexual exploitation of minors. Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force investigators with the Attorney General's Office made the arrests. Investigators with the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office, also a member of the state's ICAC Task Force, assisted with the Pendergast investigation and arrest. Investigators with the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Secret Service and Homeland Security Investigations, all also members of the state's ICAC Task Force, assisted with the Fulwood investigation and arrest. Investigators received a CyberTipline report from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) which led them to Fulwood. Investigators state both men distributed multiple files of child pornography. Pendergast also possessed child pornography. Both men were arrested on March 5, 2020. Pendergast is charged with two counts of sexual exploitation of a minor, third degree (§16-15-410), a felony offense punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment. Both men are charged with sexual exploitation of a minor, second degree (§16-15-405), a felony offense punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment on each count. Pendergast is charged with eight counts and Fulwood is charged with 15. These cases will be prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office. Attorney General Wilson stressed all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until they are proven guilty in a court of law. [FL] Cloned credit card numbers, hidden gas tanks, and fuel theft (FOX 13 News) FOX 13 News [3/6/2020 2:58 PM, Catherine Hawley, 53K, Neutral, Secondary] Over the last three weeks, more than 900-gallons of gas has been stolen in Hillsborough County. Detectives are pushing back with covert surveillance and an up-tick of arrests. It is a dangerous crime; thieves stealing gas using hidden bladders inside vehicles and lugging hundreds of gallons of gas in the homemade containers. "They're basically driving a bomb on the interstate," said Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Ken Watson. Over the last two months, 14 people have been locked up for the crime in our region. 10 of those arrests were in the last three weeks in Hillsborough County alone. "It's not just a local problem, it's not just a Florida problem, it's a problem nationwide," said HCSO Captain Geoffrey Harris. Harris is leading an investigation in the county trying to put the brakes on the lucrative crime. Since Feb. 10, the crooks have hit at least 20 local gas stations, siphoning more than 900-gallons of gas worth nearly $1,800.00. "It's not uncommon for one

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of these diesel thieves to make approximately $1,000.00 a day," Harris said. The U.S. Secret Service investigates financial crimes and tells FOX 13 News these fuel 124 fraud criminals operate in loosely organized rings. "If they know another group that's looking to get into the same criminal enterprise they'll share their trade secrets and tell them how it's done, so it's not really structured," explained Assistant to the Special Agent in Charge for the U.S. Secret Service Tampa Field Office, Rick Dean. It all starts at the gas pump, where skimmer devices copy payment card numbers and zip codes. That data is then cloned onto gift cards. The 14 criminals we know have been locked up were busted with swiped credit card information from nearly 500 people. "Every single skimmer can be responsible for up to $1-million of fraud," Mary Barzee Flores, Florida Department of Agriculture Deputy Commissioner of Consumer Affairs said. With those bogus cards in hand, the crooks hit gas stations, pumping massive amounts of diesel into concealed tanks. The cars, trucks and SUVs are usually modified to hide the bladders in plain sight. "Some of these guys that we're seeing they're at a gas pump for 45-50 minutes using multiple credit cards," said Harris. All that fuel is stored at dump sites, then sold on the black market for a quick, illegal profit. Right now, officials say credit card companies are being hit hard by this crime, but in October, gas stations will start being liable for fuel purchased with fraudulent cards if equipment is not upgraded to accept secure chip card payments at the pump. [Editorial note: consult video at source link] [FL] Trio tries duping Jacksonville stores with funny money (News4 JAX) News4 JAX [3/6/2020 6:27 PM, Jenese Harris, Neutral, Secondary] Three men who tried to go on a shopping spree with counterfeit bills at several Jacksonville businesses succeeded at one store before getting turned away by another, according to police. Police reports suggest the trio stopped at the Publix on Roosevelt Boulevard shortly before 8 p.m. Wednesday with one of them trying to buy gift cards with seven counterfeit bills. A store clerk denied the transaction multiple times until a manager walked over and the customer left the store. About 20 minutes later, the group had slightly better luck at the nearby Winn-Dixie. One of the men bought toilet paper and a gift card using four counterfeit $100 bills, according to one of the police incident reports. The other two men were denied when they tried making purchases using similar bills at neighboring registers. A store manager for Winn-Dixie told police that she had received a phone call from a Publix manager warning her about customers trying to use the bogus cash, the report said. She 125 said the other store's manager had told her that something similar happened at a Target nearby, but those efforts were unsuccessful. It's unclear how many times the group succeeded. But it appears the fake bills passed the marker test, which made them even more difficult to detect than other counterfeit cash. Businesses wondering what to look out for should consult the U.S. Department of Treasury, which has a list of tips showing how people can protect themselves from these scams. [IL] Fake money passed in Milan (Quad-Cities) Quad-Cities [3/6/2020 10:22 AM, Staff, 15K, Neutral, Secondary] Crime Stoppers of the Quad-Cities is asking for the public's help in identifying a suspect who passed counterfeit money in Milan. She is pictured in the attached images. According to Crime Stoppers, "On February 21, this female entered Walgreens in Milan and bought Visa gift cards valued at $440 with counterfeit twenty dollar bills. She also passed $280 in fake bills at Dollar General. "She is described as being in her twenties, with tattoos all over her neck. She was wearing black pants, gray coat, black hat and red shoes. She has long braided hair that was pulled back into a pony tail." Anyone with any information about this suspect is asked to call the Crime Stoppers tip line 309-762-9500 or submit your tip using the app P3 Tips. All tips are anonymous and you could earn a cash reward. [MN] Girl shot in Oak Lawn Township after juveniles buy marijuana with counterfeit bills (KSTP) KSTP [3/6/2020 8:36 PM, Staff, 44K, Neutral, Secondary] A juvenile girl was shot Thursday after a group of juveniles bought marijuana using counterfeit bills and was caught by the people they were buying from. According to a release from the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office, the sheriff's office received a report at 10:36 p.m. Thursday about a juvenile girl who had been shot. The shooting took place at a residence in the 15000 block of Irondale Lane in Oak Lawn Township. Investigators believe that a group of juveniles bought marijuana from a residence on Ironwood Lane using counterfeit bills. When the suspects discovered the bills were counterfeit they fired multiple times at the juveniles' vehicle as it fled the property. The vehicle was hit twice, striking the juvenile girl once. Sheriff's deputies responded to the residence in question and attempted to make contact with the suspects. The Crow Wing County Tactical Response Team assisted in the 126 apprehension of one of the suspects, identified as 18-year-old Jordan Raymond Parks. The other suspect, a juvenile from Baxter, had already left the residence. The juvenile suspect is still being sought by investigators for questioning. A search of Parks' residence was conducted. The sheriff's office said investigators found two pounds of marijuana, a large quantity of marijuana wax, multiple firearms and a large amount of money. "This incident is very troubling due to the use of firearms during a drug transaction. I'm thankful that the victim only received minor injuries but this could have been so much worse," said Sheriff Scott Goddard. "My investigators have done a great job tracking down those responsible for this senseless act and are actively working on locating the other suspect. This incident reinforces the fact that we need a bolstered response to drug distribution in this county and I am committed to increasing our already successful presence in this county." [IA] Counterfeiting suspect captured by multiple law enforcement agencies (Estherville Daily News) Estherville Daily

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News [3/6/2020 5:36 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] The Estherville Police Department received a report of a suspect that had passed a counterfeit $100 bill at a local hardware store. The owner of the store reported that while he was running the cash register, he noticed there was a bill that was counterfeit. The store owner asked a nearby cashier about the bill at the same time the suspect returned to the store to use another bill. The suspect became nervous and ran out of the store. The store owner followed the suspect out of the store in an attempt to gather the suspect's vehicle information. The suspect entered his vehicle and fled the area. The store owner gave chase and called the police. The suspect fled at a high rate of speed and was last seen near Dolliver. Emmet County Sheriff's deputies were dispatched to the area in an attempt to locate the suspect. Estherville Police officers responded to the store and were able to view video of the suspect and vehicle. Officers forwarded photos of the suspect and vehicle to officer that were out looking for the suspect. Deputies in Martin Co., Minnesota were also advised that the suspect may be coming into their county. A Martin County deputy was able to positively identify the suspect from the vehicle description and photos obtained from the store. The suspect was identified as Erik. V. Godwin, age 39, of Dunnell, Minnesota. Estherville officers also forwarded information to the Fairmont Police Department and the Martin County Sheriff's office of an address that the suspect may be located in the city of Fairmont. Warrants from a previous case filed by the Estherville Police Department for Godwin were also issued. Officers from the Fairmont Police Department and Martin County Sheriff's Department went to the residents in Fairmont and captured the suspect fleeing from an apartment building. The Martin County Sheriff's Office arrested Godwin and the Fairmont Police Department transported him to the Martin County Jail. Officers found additional counterfeit $100 bills during his arrest. 127 Godwin faces a long list of charges in Minnesota and Iowa as a result of his one-day crime spree. In Minnesota, he was charged with possession of counterfeit currency, possession of marijuana, driving while suspended, fleeing a police officer and possession of drug paraphernalia. In Iowa, Godwin faces: five outstanding Emmet County arrest warrants, two counts of forgery, four counts of failure to obey traffic control device, driving while suspended, excessive speed, reckless driving, unsafe passing and ongoing criminal conduct. Godwin remains at the Martin County Jail and will later face extradition to Emmet County to face his Iowa charges. The Estherville Police sent its thanks to the store management and employees for their assistance in solving the case, as well as the Emmet County Sheriff's Office, the Martin County Sheriff's Office and the Fairmont Police Department. [TX] Police Searching For Persons Of Interest In Hurst ATM Skimmer Thefts (CBS Dallas Fort Worth) CBS Dallas Fort Worth [3/6/2020 11:33 AM, Staff, 68K, Neutral, Secondary] Police in one North Texas city are looking for two men who they are calling 'persons of interest' in hundreds of credit union ATM debit/credit card skimmer thefts. Police say the skimmer was found at the Educational Employees Credit Union (EECU) in the 1600 block of Campus Drive in Hurst. Investigators with the Hurst Police Department are now circulating photos of two men — one taken by a surveillance camera on February 8, the other on February 22. Police need help identifying and locating the men who they say used a credit card skimmer to capture several hundred credit card and pin numbers. As it stands, several customers have reported fraudulent activity on their accounts. The suspects were seen driving a silver-colored Honda minivan. When the vehicle was at the credit union it did not have a front license plate. Anyone who can identify either of the men or who has any information about the crimes is asked to call Hurst police at 817-788-7171 or send an email to Detective Hobbs. [TX] Houston Man Sentenced in Beaumont Gas Pump Skimming Scheme (Gilmer Mirror) Gilmer Mirror [3/6/2020 7:59 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] A 36-year-old Houston man has been sentenced to prison for federal violations in the Eastern District of Texas, announced U.S. Attorney Joseph D. Brown today. Carlos Garcia pleaded guilty on July 11, 2019, to conspiracy to commit access device (credit card) fraud and was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Thad Heartfield on March 5, 2020. 128 According to information presented in court, on Nov. 10, 2017, law enforcement officers responded to a suspicious activity call at the Gator's convenience store located at 2890 Dowlen Road in Beaumont, Texas. Upon arrival, the officers located Garcia and Alfredo Angel Almaguer-Almira, along with a red Dodge truck next to a gas pump at the store. The door of the truck was open revealing a credit card skimming device consisting of a computer chip and two connector wires. There was wet caulk around the door frame and on the floorboard of the truck was a caulk gun and a screwdriver. A search of Garcia revealed he had a set of universal gas pump keys in his pocket. Forensic analysis of the skimming device found 258 credit card account numbers had been recorded without authorization, many of the numbers identified as belonging to Beaumont residents and businesses who frequently used the gasoline pumps. Bank records showed that the available credit on the 258 accounts totaled approximately $1.2 million. Garcia and Almaguer-Almira were indicted by a federal grand jury on Oct. 3, 2019. Almaguer-Almira pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 10 months in federal prison on Jan. 9, 2020. This case was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service and the Beaumont Police Department and prosecuted by the Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert L. Rawls. [OK] Credit card skimmers found at Ninnekah truck stop, police say (KFOR) KFOR [3/6/2020 8:35 AM, K. Butcher, Neutral, Secondary] An Oklahoma police department is warning the public of a fraud alert after skimmers were found at a gas station. On Feb. 29, the Ninnekah Police Department found several credit card

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skimmers that had been found inside the pumps at the Ninnekah Valero Truck Stop. If you swiped your credit or debit card at the gas station, located near US 81 and US 277, police say you need to check your transactions. The department says it has started to receive reports of fraudulent card transactions in the area. If you believe your account was compromised, call your financial institution immediately. [WY] Casper Pd Warns Of Coronavirus Scams (Oil City News) Oil City News [3/6/2020 11:00 AM, Trevor T. Trujillo, Neutral, Secondary] The Casper Police Department is echoing sentiment from the U.S. Secret Service warning residents of scammers taking advantage of the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. "Criminals are opportunists, and as seen in the past, any major news event becomes an opportunity for groups or individuals with malicious intentions," the U.S. Secret Service said in a statement distributed by the Casper PD. "The Coronavirus is no different. In fact, the Coronavirus is a much more potent opportunity for enterprising criminals because it plays on one of the basest human conditions…fear. Fear can cause normally scrupulous individuals to let their guard down and fall victim to social engineering scams, phishing scams, non-delivery scams, auction fraud scams, etc." 129 According to the Secret Service, numerous international sources from Asia, Africa, Australia, and Europe are reporting a rise in Coronavirus scams, and a rise in the number of incidents in the United States is expected. Brief details of the associated Coronavirus scams being encountered are below: Phishing Scams Social Engineering Scams Non-delivery Scams The statements describe phishing scams as becoming ubiquitous through email communication and commerce. "Cyber criminals are exploiting the Coronavirus through the wide distribution of mass emails posing as legitimate organizations such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) or World Health Organization (WHO)," the Secret Service warns. In one particular instance, victims reportedly received an email purporting to be from the WHO with an attachment supposedly containing pertinent information regarding the Coronavirus. This leads to either unsuspecting victims opening the attachment causing various types of malware to infect their system, or prompting the victim to enter their email login credentials to access the information resulting in harvested login credentials. These incidents enable further instances of cyber-enabled financial crime such as Business Email Compromise (BEC), PII theft, ransomware, account takeovers, etc. Another side effect of the Coronavirus is increased teleworking, which furthers the reliance on email for communication adding yet another multiplier to these email fraud schemes. More of these incidents are expected, and increased vigilance regarding email communication is highly encouraged. "Another emerging fraud scheme exploiting the Coronavirus is using social engineering tactics through legitimate social media websites seeking donations for charitable causes related to the virus," the statement continues. "Criminals are exploiting the charitable spirit of individuals, seeking donations to fraudulent causes surrounding the Coronavirus. Increased caution should be exercised when donating to causes tied to Coronavirus relief." Officials say that a third fraud scheme surrounds non-delivery scams. Criminal actors are allegedly advertising in-demand medical supplies for sale to be used to prevent/protect against the Coronavirus, i.e. medical masks, gloves, disinfectant, etc. The criminal enterprise will demand upfront payments or initial deposits, then abscond with the funds and never complete delivery of the ordered product. Increased caution and vigilance while purchasing these supplies should be exercised. [AZ] Counterfeit currency discovered in Safford (Eastern Arizona Courier) Eastern Arizona Courier [3/8/2020 4:00 PM, Brooke Curley, 1K, Neutral, Secondary] Counterfeit currency is circulating in the Safford area.. On Thursday morning, local business owner Torey Cranford brought a stack of bills to her 130 bank to deposit. Cranford said she was in the midst of depositing a collection of bills from a Safford volleyball team fundraising cupcake sale. "The machine just spat this one $5 dollar bill and the teller told me that it was fake," said Cranford. "And when I looked at it, the ink was darker print and the paper was heavier. Once he brought it to my attention and I felt it, it did feel different. I didn't really count all the money that was in there, the kids gave it to me and I deposited it." Cranford said it seemed unusual that the counterfeit bill was so small. However, the bank took the bill and Cranford took a photo of it due to the fact that it was such an odd situation. Later on Thursday, Walmart reported counterfeit bills in the store and the Safford Police Department responded to the scene. "We had one today at Walmart," Safford Police said regarding counterfeit bills on Thursday. Police said counterfeit bills in Graham County are usually the larger bills such as $20 or $100. Also, they said counterfeit money usually floods into the area over a short period of time. By Monday afternoon, the Safford Police Department should be able to discern if there is indeed a small bills counterfeit operation going on in the area. This is because community members will be attempting to deposit cash into local banks that had been obtained over the weekend, and any counterfeit bills will be recognized by the banks. [CA] Calaveras County man facing multiple drug possession, firearm charges (Recordnet) Recordnet [3/6/2020 1:35 PM, Cassie Dickman, 11K, Positive, Secondary] A Calaveras County man is facing more than half a dozen charges after authorities discovered multiple stolen vehicles, firearms and nearly 80 pounds of marijuana in Paloma last month. Deputies were serving a search warrant in the 6000 block of Messinger Flat Road on Feb. 26 when they located two stolen off-highway vehicles, two stolen equipment trailers and a reportedly stolen large gasoline powered compressor, according to a Calaveras County Sheriff's Office Facebook post. Also seized from the scene were four firearms, one of which was a reportedly stolen

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handgun, 79 pounds of processed marijuana, counterfeit money, ammunition, burglary tools, prescription pills without a valid prescription, and evidence of controlled substance use and sales, sheriff's officials said. Eric Gabriel Sosa, 41, of Paloma was arrested on suspicion of multiple possession felonies and misdemeanors, sheriff's officials said, including possession of stolen property, a firearm and ammunition, marijuana for sale, shuriken and sap, controlled substance paraphernalia, counterfeit money and a controlled substance without a prescription. Sosa was booked into the Calaveras County Jail and held on $100,000 bail, sheriff's officials said. 131 [CA] San Bruno police arrest three on attempted fraud, explosives charges (The Mercury News) The Mercury News [3/8/2020 4:47 PM, Staff, 434K, Positive, Secondary] An attempted fraudulent purchase Sunday morning led to the arrest of three men and the seizure of counterfeit money and identification cards, and a large cache of fireworks and explosive materials, San Bruno police said. The fraud attempt, reported about 11:20 a.m. at a business in the 200 block of El Camino Real, was in progress when officers arrived. Police detained a 29-year-old San Francisco resident, a 41-year-old San Francisco resident, and a 50-year-old San Bruno resident and determined that they possessed fraudulent identification cards, a large amount of counterfeit U.S. currency, and fraudulent checks, the department said in a news release. Police then obtained a warrant and searched a residence in the 3800 block of Colby Way in San Bruno. The search turned up more than 25 pounds of illegal fireworks and explosive materials, more fraudulent currency, false identifications and Social Security cards, along with equipment used to manufacture personal identifying information, police said. The men were booked into the San Mateo County Jail for chargers related to burglary, forgery, identity theft, and possession of explosive materials. Anyone with any information about the case is urged to contact the San Bruno Police Department at (650) 616-7100 or sbpdtipline@sanbruno.ca.gov. Information can be left anonymously. Coast Guard [CA] Coast Guard Delivers Coronavirus Test Kits to Cruise Ship Off California (Bloomberg) Bloomberg [3/6/2020 12:35 PM, Staff, 6400K] Video: HERE A cruise ship was ordered to stay away from the California coast until passengers and crew can be tested for the coronavirus. A traveler from the ships previous voyage died of the disease and at least two others became infected. A Coast Guard helicopter lowered test kits onto the 951-foot Grand Princess by rope. CISA/Cybersecurity [KY] Kentucky university system network reboots after cyberattack (San Francisco Chronicle) San Francisco Chronicle [3/8/2020 4:44 PM, Staff, 1670K] A monthlong attack on the computer networks at Kentucky's largest university system prompted officials to conduct a major reboot of the networks Sunday, officials said. Officials believe the prolonged cyberattack was resolved by a campus-wide network outage at the University of Kentucky and UK HealthCare, university executive vice president for finance and administration Eric Monday told the Lexington Herald-Leader. 132 The attack started in early February from outside of the United States, Monday said. University spokesman Jay Blanton said the attack from unidentified sources has caused computer systems used by students and employees to slow down or temporarily fail. Blanton said patient safety and access to care "was never compromised" and there is no evidence personal information or other sensitive data was accessed or downloaded. UK HealthCare has nearly 2 million registered patients. The attack did not involve a demand for ransom by cyberattackers. Ransomware is malicious software that encrypts a system, effectively locking out its users. The attackers promise to decrypt the information with a decryption key if they are paid. However, Blanton said investigation efforts, including beefing up the network's security software, has cost up to $1.5 million. University of Kentucky President Eli Capilouto said in an email Sunday to students, faculty and staff that limiting the release of information about the network outage was necessary until it was clear that the system reboot was finished. The university and its cybersecurity partners are "confident in our response," Capilouto said. "As always, the security of our community will remain our top priority." Terrorism Investigations U.S. Creates New Envoy Position to Counter Rising Terrorism in Sahel (New York Times) New York Times [3/6/2020 10:51 PM, Humeyra Pamuk, Reuters, 23673K] The United States has created a special envoy for Africa's Sahel region, a State Department spokesman said on Friday, to counter rising violence from groups linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State which are expanding their foothold. Envoy Peter Pham, started his new role earlier this week, the spokesman said. He has been serving as U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa since November 2018. "Sahel is one of the places where the situation is getting worse in the continent," the spokesman said. Security has progressively worsened in the Sahel, an arid region of West Africa, just below the Sahara desert, with militants linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State strengthening their foothold across the region, making large swathes of territory ungovernable and stoking ethnic violence. Former colonial power France intervened in 2013 to drive back militants who had seized northern Mali the previous year. Fighters have since regrouped and spread. Over the past 133 year, militants have stepped up attacks in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. Particularly worrying for Europeans has been possible U.S. troop cuts. The Pentagon is considering withdrawing the personnel as part of a global troop review meant to free up more resources to address challenges from China's military, after nearly two decades of prioritizing counter-terrorism operations around the world. Such a potential move has alarmed France, which relies on U.S. intelligence and logistics for its 4,500-strong mission in the Sahel. The deaths of 13 French soldiers in a helicopter crash during a combat mission in Mali in November

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increased France's determination to secure more support in the zone. The U.S. currently has around 6,000 military personnel in Africa. Although some experts say a repositioning of forces is overdue, many U.S. officials share French concerns about relieving pressure on militants in Africa. State Department's latest counter terrorism report, which was published in November 2019, said attacks by militant groups in the region have been on the rise. "In the Sahel, terrorist groups – including affiliates and adherents of al-Qaeda and ISIS as well as non-aligned groups – have expanded their operations in north and central Mali and the Tri-Border Region of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger," the report said. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in November warned that there was growing concern over Islamic State in West Africa and called on the global coalition against Islamic State to focus on Sahel. DOJ IG: FBI Missed Opportunities to Avert Terror Attacks Under Obama-Comey (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 7:07 PM, Edwin Mora, 1973K] The FBI missed opportunities to stop homegrown jihadis from killing and injuring Americans between November 2009 and January 2017,under the Obama administration and the leadership of the agency's former director James Comey, an audit released this week by the inspector general (IG) at the Department of Justice (DOJ) revealed. On Wednesday, Michael Horowitz, the DOJ IG who serves as the department's internal government watchdog, reported: The FBI has acknowledged that various weaknesses related to its assessment process may have impacted its ability to fully investigate certain counterterrorism assessment subjects who later committed terrorist attacks in the United States. Following these attacks, the FBI made various efforts to evaluate and improve its assessment process. However, it has not ensured that identified areas for improvement were formalized and implemented into enhanced policies and procedures. During our audit, we found at least six attacks committed in the United States by individuals who the FBI had previously assessed or investigated and who were subsequently categorized as HVEs [homegrown violent extremists]. The FBI reportedly defines "HVEs as global jihad-inspired individuals who are in the United 134 States, have been radicalized primarily in the United States, and are not receiving individualized direction from a foreign terrorist organization (FTO)." Horowitz identified the six attacks by individuals who were under the FBI's radar as: The Fort Hood, Texas by Nidal Hassan on November 5, 2009, that left 13 people dead and wounded more than 30 others. The Boston Marathon attack by Tamerlan & Dzhokhar Tsarnaev on April 15, 2013, that killed three people and wounded more than 260 others. The thwarted Garland, Texas attack by Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi on May 30, 2015, that left the two shooters dead and wounded at least one person. The Orlando Pulse Nightclub attack by Omar Mateen on June 12, 2016, that left 49 people dead and injured more than 50 others. The New York / New Jersey bombing attacks by Ahmad Rahami between September 15 and 17, 2016 that injured about 30 people, but no fatalities. The Ft. Lauderdale Airport attack by Esteban Santiago on January 6, 2017, that killed five people and injured more than 40 others, including six gunshot victims. The cited terrorists killed a total of 70 people and injured scores of others. Horowitz highlighted the "lapses" in how the FBI handled some of the cases, noting: Following the 2009 attack at a military facility in Fort Hood, Texas, the FBI requested an independent review of its actions associated with its assessment of Nidal Hasan, the individual who conducted the attack. This review determined that shortcomings in the FBI's policies and procedures related to counterterrorism assessments contributed to delays and potential missed opportunities to mitigate Hasan's actions. Similar lapses in acting on subsequent threat information regarding a previous FBI subject were also noted … following a terrorist attack in Garland, Texas. … Threat information related to Elton Simpson was conveyed … but not acted upon because field office agents did not interpret the information as portraying a significant threat, which resulted in a missed opportunity to avert the attack. … Although the field office subsequently received additional information regarding Simpson and opened an investigation on him, the field office did not open an assessment on Simpson's roommate, who also had indications of radical behavior and participated in the Garland terrorist attack. The audit also found shortcomings in how the FBI handled the 2013 Boston Marathon attack. Horowitz reported: In April 2014, a multi-agency Inspector General review of the FBI's actions in assessing Tamerlan Tsarnaev, one of the HVEs who carried out the terrorist attack, found that the FBI counterterrorism agent assigned to the [case] … did not take certain available steps to 135 evaluate the subject. Although the DOJ [IG] could not definitively determine if these steps would have revealed any additional information, the DOJ [IG] concluded that certain available investigative steps, including conducting additional database searches, asking questions of Tsarnaev and his parents to elicit information about any plans Tsarnaev may have had to travel to Russia, and interviewing Tsarnaev's former girlfriend and wife, would have resulted in a more thorough assessment [of the threat]. Horowitz suggested that FBI agents were too quick to close some terrorism cases, which resulted in a failure to assess the potential threat adequately. He wrote: Since September 11, 2001, HVEs have carried out over 20 attacks in the United States, some of which occurred after the FBI closed a counterterrorism investigation or assessment on the individual. Following these attacks, the FBI conducted reviews and determined there were weaknesses in its HVE assessment processes. However, we found that the FBI has not taken sufficient action to address these weaknesses. Additionally, in 2017, the FBI conducted an enterprise-wide review and identified potential terrorist threats that may not have been adequately assessed during calendar years

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(CY) 2014 through 2016, which amounted to 6 percent of the total assessments reviewed. We found that the FBI did not take adequate action on nearly 40 percent of these assessments for 18 months. After we inquired about the lack of action, the FBI reexamined these assessments and, in some instances, the reexamination resulted in the opening of an investigation. Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) acknowledged via Twitter on Thursday that many of the missed opportunities occurred under the leadership of Comey, who served as FBI director between July 2013 and May 2017. Philip Haney, an Obama-era U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) whistleblower who was recently found dead with a wound to his chest, warned that the previous administration could have prevented some radical Islamic terrorist attacks, including the Pulse nightclub incident. One more black eye for the FBI: Agents missed chances to stop U.S. terrorists (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/7/2020 6:13 AM, Jeff Mordock, 482K] The FBI missed opportunities to stop domestic terrorists from killing Americans because they failed to conduct follow-up investigations of people identified as violent extremists, the Justice Department watchdog said in a scathing report released Wednesday. At least six terrorists who carried out separate attacks killing 70 people had been on the FBI's radar, but agents quickly closed the cases after concluding they were not national security threats, Justice Department Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz said in the report. 136 The lapses in the bureau's assessments allowed perpetrators of some of the most deadly attacks in recent history to fall through the cracks. Among them were: Omar Mateen, who killed 49 people at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, in 2016. Tamerlan Tsarnaev, who killed three people at the Boston Marathon in 2013. Nidal Hasan, who massacred 13 people at Fort Hood, Texas, in 2009. Esteban Santiago, who killed five people in a 2017 attack at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport. "The FBI has acknowledged that various weaknesses related to its assessment process may have impacted its ability to fully investigate certain counterterrorism assessment subjects, who later committed terrorist acts in the United States," Mr. Horowitz wrote. The inspector general's report is the latest black eye for the bureau, which has been besieged by allegations of political taint and questions of competence. "Anytime there is criticism, of course, it undermines the public faith in the bureau, and that can never be good because the FBI depends on the public trust," said Lewis Schiliro, a former head of the FBI's New York field office. Still, Mr. Schiliro said, the blame goes to the FBI bureaucracy, not the agents, who are hamstrung with limited resources and 90-day time constraints on preliminary investigations if no immediate threat is found. "It's going to be a judgment call," he said about closing cases early. "Agents get hundreds of cases a day, and you are limited where you can apply your resources." Even after the FBI discovered lapses in its assessments of potential terrorist threats, field office managers failed to properly implement changes or conduct consistent oversight of counterterrorism investigations, the report said. Roughly 40% of the FBI's counterterrorism assessments went unaddressed for 18 months, even after bureau officials discovered investigative lapses, Mr. Horowitz wrote. An FBI spokeswoman did not respond to requests for comment. The FBI first investigated Mateen in 2013, three years before he carried out the deadly Pulse shooting. Agents closed the case months later and did not properly address Mateen's history of mental illness, the report said. Agents investigated Tsarnaev ahead of the Boston Marathon bombing. Even after an internal bureau database flagged Tsarnaev, agents closed the probe after concluding he had "no nexus to terrorism." The inspector general said the bureau bungled the case of Elton Simpson, who tried to ambush a Garland, Texas, art exhibit featuring cartoon images of the Prophet Muhammad, 137 the central figure of Islam. Although agents received information related to Simpson, they determined he was not a significant threat. Mr. Horowitz said that even after the FBI sought to address the problem, it failed to conduct the necessary oversight to implement recommended changes. Roughly one year after procedures were implemented, two field offices were not using them. "As a result, potential terrorist threats were not mitigated for more than one year," Mr. Horowitz wrote. The inspector general offered seven recommendations for the FBI to develop a "comprehensive strategy" for investigating terrorist suspects and keeping agents up to date on those techniques. Recommendations include implementing guidelines from a 2017 internal bureau review of its Guardian threat assessment system, providing clear guidance to field offices on investigative steps, and establishing a plan to assess threats with mental health concerns. In a response included in the report, an FBI official said the bureau agrees with the recommendations. "We agree it is important to continue to improve the assessment process, provide adequate guidance, training and program management for all Guardians and those specifically addressing homegrown violent extremists," wrote Suzanne Turner, an FBI section chief in the inspection division. National Security News [Cuba] Judge Orders Medical Panel to Evaluate Tortured Guantánamo Prisoner (New York Times) New York Times [3/8/2020 4:54 PM, Carol Rosenberg, 23673K] A federal judge has ordered the United States military to have a panel of American and foreign doctors examine a Saudi man who was tortured at Guantánamo Bay to determine whether he should be released from the prison there and sent home for psychiatric care. The 25-page opinion issued Friday by U.S. District Judge Rosemary M. Collyer is a departure from the court's usual deference to the military on medicine at the wartime prison at the U.S. Navy base in Cuba. It also gives foreign doctors a decisive say in determining, for the first time, whether to release a detainee from Guantánamo Bay. Judge Collyer wrote that she was granting a request

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by lawyers for the prisoner, Mohammed al-Qahtani, to compel the United States to apply an Army regulation designed to protect prisoners of war and to create “a mixed medical commission” made up of a medical officer from the U.S. Army and two doctors from a neutral country chosen by the International Committee of the Red Cross and approved by the United States and Saudi 138 Arabia. Mr. Qahtani, who is in his 40s, had a history of profound mental illness and psychiatric hospitalization in Saudi Arabia before he left in 2000 or 2001. He was captured along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and subjected to two months of continuous, brutal interrogation by the U.S. military inside a wooden hut at Camp X-Ray at Guantánamo in late 2002 and early 2003, after the military closed that particular detention facility. For a time, prosecutors sought to include Mr. Qahtani in the Sept. 11 death penalty trial as a would-be 20th hijacker. He was denied entry into the United States in the summer of 2001 by a border agent at Orlando International Airport in Florida. But he was disqualified from the trial by a senior Pentagon official who concluded that the U.S. military tortured him at Guantánamo. A U.S. board with representatives from six national security agencies concluded in 2016 and 2018 that it would be too dangerous to release Mr. Qahtani. He was designated an indefinite detainee who could be held for the duration of the war on terror. In response, Mr. Qahtani’s lawyers petitioned the court to order the Pentagon to treat him like a prisoner of war with Geneva Convention protections, as defined by a U.S. Army regulation, to evaluate whether he was too ill to be held at Guantánamo. Department of Justice lawyers opposed the request, saying that Guantánamo detainees were not covered by the Army regulation. In ordering the evaluation, Judge Collyer relied on a report from Dr. Emily A. Keram, an American psychiatrist who treats U.S. veterans and who examined Mr. Qahtani at Guantánamo and some of his medical records in Saudi Arabia. The report said that Mr. Qahtani spent four or five days in the psychiatric unit of a hospital in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, after an “acute psychotic break” and a suicide attempt in May 2000. Dr. Keram also wrote that Mr. Qahtani suffered a head injury in a car accident when he was a child and was subsequently diagnosed with schizophrenia. One symptom included hallucinations; he spoke to nonexistent people before he left Saudi Arabia and after his arrival at Guantánamo. Central to Judge Collyer’s order was the contention by Mr. Qahtani’s lawyers that Guantánamo was not equipped to handle his psychiatric illnesses, and that he was entitled to repatriation to culturally appropriate mental health care under the prisoner-of-war provisions in the Army regulations. The provisions give the board members access to both Mr. Qahtani and his clinical records. Recommendations are made by a majority vote, and if repatriation is warranted, it must be done within three months of the decision. Judge Collyer wrote that she agreed with the Justice Department that the use of the mixed medical commission was entering “uncharted territory” and “likely burdensome.” Justice Department and Guantánamo officials did not reply to requests for comment on 139 whether they would appeal or accept the order. The United States could also send Mr. Qahtani to Saudi Arabia for care in lieu of allowing the first-ever mixed medical commission to evaluate him. The need for Mr. Qahtani’s repatriation was “a matter of life and death,” said Ramzi Kassem, one of his lawyers. “We hope he can return to Saudi Arabia, where he will be given the psychiatric care and treatment he needs.” [Italy] Coronavirus: Italy Orders Massive Shutdown; Cruise Ship Gets OK To Dock In California (NPR) NPR [3/8/2020 6:06 PM, Amy Held, 4112K] As the novel coronavirus reached a global milestone, topping 100,000 cases across more than 100 countries over the weekend, Italy is imposing an extraordinary lockdown on about a quarter of its population and restricting public activities throughout the entire country. The quarantine includes the cities of Milan and Venice, as well as the entire northern region of Lombardy, Italy’s financial heart. It affects more than 16 million people in coronavirus hotbed areas and is scheduled to remain in effect until at least April 3. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte announced the move after confirmed cases in Italy spiked over the weekend. By Sunday, more than 7,300 people had been sickened and 366 had died — an uptick of 133 dead from the day before. "There will be a ban for everybody to move in and out of these territories and also within the same territory," Conte said. "Exceptions will be allowed only for proven professional needs, exceptional cases and health issues." In addition to the lockdown, Italy’s cordon sanitaire effort to tamp down on transmission includes temporarily shutting down all movie theaters, museums and other cultural sites throughout the country. Sporting events are closed to the public. People may dine out at restaurants, drink in bars, exercise in gyms and shop in stores, but only if managers guarantee that patrons remain just over 3 feet apart. "In case of violation, the activity will be suspended," the government said in a statement. Pope Francis on Sunday delivered his weekly Angelus blessing via video screen, while the faithful in St. Peter’s Square stood several feet apart. Italy, home of the highest number of cases outside of China, South Korea and Iran, is taking its lead from China, where the virus emerged late last year in the provincial capital of Wuhan. Beijing has placed tens of millions of people under lockdown in what it called an allout "people’s war" against the spread of the disease that has already infected more than 80,000, the vast majority of the global total. In the U.S., officials in Washington state, where one of the largest domestic outbreaks has occurred, are considering measures to limit the spread of the virus. "We are looking to determine whether mandatory measures are required," Washington Gov. Jay Inslee told Face the Nation. Those requirements would include social distancing and "reducing the number of social activities that are going on,"

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Inslee said. 140 At least 136 cases have been diagnosed in Washington with 18 people dead. Most fatalities are connected to Life Care Center, a nursing home in the Seattle suburb of Kirkland. Inslee said the next steps are "particularly to protect our vulnerable populations, and our nursing homes and the like." Nationwide, infections have steadily ticked up, with reports of cases reaching 400 across at least 19 states, but widespread problems in testing have hindered effective diagnosis. Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and a member of the Trump administration's coronavirus task force, says he is not encouraged as he learns more about the outbreak's scope in the U.S. "Unfortunately, that better sense is not encouraging because we're seeing community spread," Fauci told Meet the Press. He admitted to delays in coronavirus testing, adding there were "some missteps with regard to the test and some technical aspects to it." But he said the process is accelerating, with 1.1 million coronavirus tests already sent out, with an additional 400,000 planned by Monday and about 4 million by the end of next week. Even though Fauci maintains "the overall risk in the country of getting infected is low," vulnerable people can act now to protect themselves. "If you're a person with an underlying condition and you are particularly an elderly person with an underlying condition, you need to think twice about getting on a plane, on a long trip, and not only think twice, just don't get on a cruise ship," Fauci said. In California, a cruise ship, which has lingered in limbo for days off the coast after a former passenger who died of the virus is believed to have spread infections on board, is finally being allowed to dock. "Grand Princess will proceed to the Port of Oakland on Sunday to begin disembarking guests who require acute medical treatment and hospitalization," the cruise line tweeted. Among the 3,000 people on board, others will be allowed to disembark on Monday. They face testing and quarantine at military bases in California, Texas and Georgia. At a news conference Sunday, California Gov. Gavin Newsom said authorities identified 12 people on board as positive for COVID-19, but said that number remains fluid. He said 114 people have tested positive across California. But that number could rise with more than 10,000 people across the state being monitored. On Saturday, Mayor Muriel Bowser of Washington, D.C., announced the first presumptive positive coronavirus case in the nation's capital. Another person tested positive who attended the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) conference in suburban Maryland late last month. 141 But President Trump is remaining upbeat in his coronavirus messaging. Asked if he was concerned about the encroaching virus, Trump said Saturday from Palm Beach, Fla., "No, I'm not concerned at all. No, I'm not. We've done a great job." As more cases crop up in the U.S. military, the Army is restricting travel for soldiers and their families to and from South Korea, where cases have topped 7,000, the highest number outside of mainland China. The Army is also restricting movements for employees in hotspots in Italy, after a U.S. Navy sailor there tested positive on Friday. And a Pentagon spokesman announced Saturday a Marine assigned to Fort Belvoir, Va., tested positive for COVID-19, after returning from overseas. [Egypt] On Nile Cruiser, 12 Crew Test Positive for Virus, and Egypt Fears Broader Outbreak (New York Times) New York Times [3/6/2020 7:57 PM, Declan Walsh and Nada Rashwan, 23673K] Twelve crew members aboard a cruise ship on the Nile were placed in isolation on Friday after testing positive for the coronavirus, Egypt's health ministry said. The crew members were asymptomatic, meaning they had no signs of illness, and the ship was moved to a remote stretch of river, 15 miles from the tourist hub of Luxor, to be disinfected. Yet this sudden surge of cases, the largest cluster yet in Egypt, stoked growing fears among a nervous Egyptian public of a much larger number of infections in their country than the government has either detected or declared. Until Friday, Egypt, which relies heavily on tourism and has a weak health care system, said it had discovered just three coronavirus cases in the country, and only one was an Egyptian. But in the past week, at least 26 tourists have tested positive for the virus after returning from vacation in Egypt, including 11 Greeks, seven Americans and six French. At least three of those tourists traveled on the Nile cruise ship, named in the local media as the A Sara. Egyptian health officials said the infection started with a Taiwanese-American woman who traveled on the cruise ship in late January and left Egypt on Feb. 1. The 12 crew members became infected as did a husband and wife from California who traveled on the same ship in mid-February and have since been hospitalized. Egyptian officials said the crew members tested positive on Thursday, at the end of a 14day period of observation. The ship continued to operate during that period. It docked in Luxor on Thursday at the end of a two-day cruise. It was unclear if the 12 affected crew members had continued to work on the boat through the month of February. If they did, it opened the possibility that they had spread the virus to other tourists or Egyptians working along the Nile. In Texas, seven Houston-area residents who tested positive were part of a tour group that 142 had traveled to Egypt in February. It is not known if they traveled on the Nile. In the past week, the coronavirus has emptied many of Egypt's most famous tourist sites including the pyramids and the ancient temples that line the Nile. Egyptian officials insist they have been transparent in their efforts to stem the spread of the virus in a country where the majority of its 100 million people live along the Nile. The government has tested about 2,000 people including, it said, many of those who came into contact with the affected tourists. But officials are also battling fierce skepticism among ordinary Egyptians about their efforts. With much of the news media under the government's thumb, many Egyptians are turning to social media, which has been awash with jokes about the

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coronavirus in recent days. Many jokes center on the idea that officials are either hiding the truth about the extent of the virus in Egypt or are too incompetent to find it. One Twitter post, featuring an image from the TV series "Chernobyl," shows a Soviet official inside the ill-fated nuclear plant, saying: "I am telling you there is no coronavirus here." Egyptian officials have themselves to blame. Under President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, the government has repeatedly tried to obfuscate the truth about events that might reflect badly on it, even in the face of evidence to the contrary. In 2015, the government initially denied that a terrorist bomb brought down an airliner over Sinai, even though Russia and Britain said the Islamic State was responsible. After an EgyptAir passenger jet plunged into the Mediterranean in 2016, killing all 66 people on board, Egypt blamed a bomb, then slowed the official investigation of the crash. A French investigation recently concluded it was caused by a technical fault exacerbated by safety lapses at the airline. In August, the authorities tried to claim that a car crash was responsible for an enormous explosion outside a Cairo hospital that killed 20 people, only to admit a day later that terrorism was the cause. This time, though, Egyptian officials have stressed the integrity of their approach. The government has set up a website to document its efforts against the coronavirus, which the World Health Organization in Egypt has publicly praised. Some opposition groups have claimed, without much evidence, that the government is hiding coronavirus infections or even secretly treating patients at military hospitals. A W.H.O. spokeswoman in Cairo declined to answer any questions, and referred them to Egypt's health ministry. Even with an honest effort, though, Egypt's campaign to contain the spread of the virus may be compromised by its own health system. While Mr. el-Sisi has poured billions of dollars into ambitious projects like the sprawling new 143 capital under construction outside Cairo, or a sleek national museum that is scheduled to open later this year, his government has been criticized for the underfunding of crumbling public services, including health care and education. Many public hospitals are in a poor state, raising questions about whether doctors have the means to detect the virus in a timely manner — or to treat it in the event of a large number of infections. Regional rivalries have also become a factor in Egypt's coronavirus fight. This week, the government barred all citizens of its Gulf rival, Qatar, from entering the country, days after Qatar, which has 11 declared cases, imposed a similar ban on Egyptians. But the outbreak has given Egypt a chance to hone its ties with China, which is building part of the new administrative capital. Last week Mr. el-Sisi dispatched his health minister, Hala Zayed, to Beijing to liaise with Chinese officials. On her return to Egypt, Ms. Zayed praised China's efforts to contain the virus. That same evening, in a sign of solidarity, Egypt projected China's flag onto historical monuments including the temples of Karnak and Philae in the south, and the Citadel of Salah al-Din in Cairo. As has now become clear, though, some tourists visiting those temples in recent weeks were themselves stricken with the virus. [Egypt] Egypt Says Cruise Ship Quarantined Over New Virus Cluster (Bloomberg) Bloomberg [3/7/2020 4:21 PM, Maggie Michael and Samy Magdy, AP, 6400K] A cruise ship on Egypt's Nile River with over 150 tourists and local crew was in quarantine Saturday in the southern city of Luxor, as 45 people on board tested positive for the new coronavirus, authorities said. A Taiwanese-American tourist who had previously been on the same ship tested positive when she returned to Taiwan, the World Health Organization informed Egyptian authorities, who then tested everyone on the ship. Health authorities first found that a dozen of the ship's Egyptian crew members had contracted the fast-spreading virus, and said they did not show symptoms, according to a joint statement from Egypt's Health Ministry and the WHO on Friday. At a news conference in Cairo later Saturday, Health Minister Hala Zayed said 33 others tested positive for the virus. Of the total 45 infected passengers and crew, 19 were foreigners, officials said. Zayed did not elaborate on the nationalities of the non-Egyptians. Officials said the 45 would be transferred to isolation in a hospital on Egypt's north coast. The passengers — who include Americans, French and other nationalities — and the remaining crew remained quarantined on the ship awaiting further test results. The U.S. Embassy in Cairo said in a tweet it was working to provide consular services and assistance to the U.S. citizens affected. The new cases brought to 48 the number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Egypt, 144 including 21 foreign nationals and 27 Egyptians. Amonios Salah, who works as a chef on the ship, told The Associated Press that the crew received an inquiry from the Health Ministry about crew members showing flu-like symptoms. "Some of us were sick. Some with fever," he said. The 12 infected crew were isolated on the 3rd floor of the vessel away from the tourists, including two children, the 30 -year-old chef said. The tourists then waited for test results. The cruise started in Luxor, about 655 kilometers (405 miles) south of Cairo, on Sunday. The vessel, which includes 60 rooms, made three stops before reaching its destination at Aswan. On the return trip there were three more stops, Salah said, potentially expanding the number of people exposed to the virus. "It's still unclear how many people came in contact with the group in the infected ship," said a senior police officer in Luxor. Cruise ships on the Nile often dock side by side, with passengers getting on and off by walking through several other vessels. The officer spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to talk to reporters. Egyptian authorities have been tight-lipped about the virus outbreak, previously reporting only three confirmed cases even as the wider Mideast now has over 6,000 confirmed cases. In hard-hit Iran, meanwhile, the Health Ministry said Saturday that 21 more people had died from the virus, bringing the death

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toll to 145. More than 1,000 new infections were also confirmed overnight, bringing the total to 5,823 cases nationwide. Among the dead was Fatemeh Rahabar, a 55-year-old newly elected lawmaker who passed away in Tehran, the state-run IRNA news agency reported Saturday. She'd been elected to the next parliament that begins work in May. Earlier this week, Iranian lawmaker Abdolreza Mesri told state television that 23 members in the current parliament had the coronavirus, and urged all lawmakers to avoid the public. Tehran's mosques authority banned any collective prayer and religious ceremonies in Tehran's mosques starting Saturday. They'll still remain open individual prayers. The new cases in Egypt came just days after three people were diagnosed with coronavirus in the U.S. state of Texas. Officials in the city of Houston said Thursday that they believe the three were exposed to the virus while on a trip to Egypt in late February. On Saturday, officials in the U.S. state of Maryland said three people — a married couple in their 70s, and a female in her 50s — tested positive in Montgomery County and had contracted the virus while on an Egyptian cruise of the Nile River. It wasn't immediately clear if the Maryland and Texan tourists were on the same boat where the cluster occurred, how long the passengers on the ship had been quarantined, nor where exactly the initial Taiwanese tourist had contracted the virus. The new and fast-spreading coronavirus could deliver a major blow to Egypt's tourism 145 industry. The government has been struggling for years to revive the vital sector following the country's 2011 Arab Spring uprising. Other countries around the world have closed schools and universities, while also cancelling major art, sporting and business events. Egypt does not appear to have taken any of these types of measures, and the discovery of the 45 cases coincided with the opening day of the Luxor African Film Festival. The country's national air carrier, Egypt Air, has suspended direct flights to China since late January. The virus, which originated in China, has infected more than 100,000 people globally. Elsewhere in the region, the United Arab Emirates reported 15 additional coronavirus cases Saturday, bringing the total number of infections in the country to 45. To stymie the spread of the virus, the UAE has suspended schools, nurseries and universities for a month. It has also stopped flights to Iran and limited flights to China. Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, announced there would be no spectators for sports competitions and games starting Saturday to combat the spread of the virus. The kingdom has five confirmed cases, but has taken unprecedented measures against the virus' spread, including halting all pilgrimage in Mecca, Islam's holiest site. [Turkey] Erdogan Risks Sanctions With April Date for Activating Russian S-400s (Bloomberg) Bloomberg [3/6/2020 6:02 AM, Selcan Hacaoglu and Firat Kozok, 6400K] Turkey will activate its Russian-made S-400 missile-defense systems in April, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, possibly setting his country on a collision course with its NATO allies. "The S-400s are our property now. We've taken delivery of all of it. They will be made operational in April," Erdogan said on his return to Istanbul from talks with Russian leader Vladimir Putin in Moscow, according to Turkish media. Washington has threatened Turkey with sanctions over its decision to press ahead with deploying the S-400s, and has warned the country against activating them if it wants to buy rival American Patriot batteries and return to joint production of the F-35 stealth warplane. The U.S. fears that the Russian missiles could compromise NATO technology. Erdogan said on Thursday that Turkey remains open to buying Patriots, the reports said. "I have told their officials, the Americans, yesterday and I will repeat it, 'If you give Patriots, we would buy Patriots from you," he said. Turkey, which has NATO's second-largest military, denies it is walking away from the alliance. But its row with the U.S. over the missile defense is escalating. Congress is pushing for sanctions against Ankara over the objection of President Donald Trump, who says such a move could drive Turkey closer to Moscow. Trump has so far refrained from using a piece of legislation that allows the U.S. president to slap sanctions on any country that makes a sizable arms purchase from Russia. But a 146 Senate committee recently approved a bill that would enforce the legislation, which could freeze Turkish assets in the U.S., restrict visas and limit access to credit. The last time the U.S. sanctioned Turkey, to pressure it to release a detained U.S. pastor, the lira crashed and sent the Turkish economy into a recession from which it is still recovering. [Afghanistan] Chaotic week after US-Taliban deal leaves Afghans' fate unclear (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/7/2020 9:19 PM, AFP, 1973K] A US-Taliban deal that was supposed to kickstart peace talks between the insurgents and the Kabul government is looking flimsier by the day, with fighting raging across Afghanistan and no one sure about what comes next. The loosely worded, four-page agreement signed February 29 in Doha was meant to set the conditions for a complete withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan within just 14 months — and end the longest war in US history. But within days of the ink drying on the deal, blood again was flowing across Afghanistan, with the Taliban striking scores of Afghan military targets and jihadist gunmen killing dozens in a Kabul attack. US President Donald Trump on Friday even acknowledged that the Taliban could seize power after foreign forces leave — a far cry from the reassuring messaging American officials pushed in the months leading up to the accord. The biggest sticking point so far seems to be the deal itself, which is vaguely worded and open to different interpretations. For instance, the agreement states the Afghan government "will" release up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners before Tuesday, when peace talks between Kabul and the insurgents are supposed to start in Oslo. Trouble is, the Afghan government is not a signatory to the deal, and a joint declaration between President Ashraf Ghani's administration and the US calls only on Kabul to determine the "feasibility" of a

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mass prisoner release. Ghani said Saturday his government was willing to free the Taliban prisoners — but only if they do not return to violence. He did not say if a release was possible before March 10, essentially throwing the talks into limbo. International Crisis Group analyst Andrew Watkins said the "ambiguous language and at some points outright contradictory language" between the US-Taliban deal and the USAfghan joint statements has led to confusion. "The reason we see ambiguity is because it would have been very difficult if not impossible to reach agreement up front," Watkins said. 147 – Political chaos- It is clear Washington's patience with Ghani's government is waning. The US did not congratulate him on securing a second term last month, amid widespread allegations of voter fraud. Ghani is due to be sworn in on Monday, but so too is his bitter rival Abdullah Abdullah who wants to form a rival government. And in a scenario that would have been unthinkable after the September 11, 2001 attacks that triggered the US invasion of Afghanistan, Washington seems determined to downplay acts of Taliban violence and lend credence to its longtime foe's motives. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo last week said the senior Taliban leadership was "working diligently to reduce violence", while also appearing to take a veiled swipe at the Ghani government for representing only "narrow interests". Trump even boasted about a "very good" phone call with top Taliban leader Mullah Baradar, while his daughter Ivanka took to social media to post a few lines by the Sufi poet Rumi about the serenity of reconciliation. The US president also signalled that America's commitment to Afghanistan's security came with an expiry date. "Countries have to take care of themselves," Trump said Friday. "You can only hold someone's hand for so long." Scott Smith, expert on Afghanistan at the US Institute of Peace, said the US is fully aware that Ghani believes it is legitimising the Taliban. "The message is that (the US) priority is the deal, and we are willing to pay the cost of this difference in legitimacy in order to try to convince you that we're serious about it," Smith told AFP. – Taliban violence – Since the deal signing, the Taliban have launched dozens of operations across Afghanistan. The Pentagon was quick to play down the widespread fighting, with General Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, classifying the violence as "small, low level attacks, out on checkpoints". Although Afghanistan enjoyed a partial truce in the week leading up to the deal, hopes it would continue as Kabul and the Taliban prepared for peace talks have been dashed. And the agreement stipulates only that a ceasefire will be an "item" on the agenda of future talks, highlighting Washington's failure to extract any promise from the Taliban to reduce violence during the interim. On Saturday, the Taliban released a statement saying their "armed jihad" could continue 148 "until the occupation is completely severed from its roots and an Islamic government formed". "Unfortunately the renewed fighting against the government signals that the Taliban are not interested in a negotiated settlement," said professor Michael Semple at the Mitchell Institute at Queen's University Belfast. Worsening the chaos, the Islamic State group claimed a mass shooting at a political rally in Kabul on Friday that killed 32 people. [Russia] Russia Closes Border With Iran as Coronavirus Spread Worsens (US News & World Report) US News & World Report [3/6/2020 3:24 PM, Paul D. Shinkman, 3020K] Russia will close its border with Iran in an attempt to stem the spread of the coronavirus, its Cabinet of Ministers announced Friday amid a troubling spike in the number of cases and deaths within the Islamic Republic and a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin blasted as "fake" reports of the virus circulating in his country. The temporary border closure will begin on March 7, according to state news outlet Tass. The announcement did not include any other details as of Friday afternoon. Russia similarly closed crossings along its border with China last month as the virus spread there. However, it comes as Iran struggles to mitigate the fallout from the spread of the virus, which causes a disease known as COVID-19. Its state news service announced Friday that 17 people had died from the virus, including an influential former adviser to Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, raising the total death toll there to 124. Prior reports indicated as many as 10 percent of Iran's parliament has become infected with the disease. More than 4,700 Iranians have confirmed cases of the disease as of Friday, days after Tehran activated its Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps as well as a volunteer militia known as the Basij to distribute medical supplies and limit travel to and from areas with high numbers of infected people. Friday's announcement in Russia comes a day after a senior State Department official accused online actors affiliated with Moscow of proliferating a "swarm of online" disinformation regarding the coronavirus. The disinformation appears to further Russian interests of undermining Westerners' faith in their government and civil institutions, Lea Gabrielle, the coordinator of the government's Global Engagement Center, told a congressional committee on Thursday. Conspiracy theories include claims that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation created the virus. Compared to other countries fighting the spread of the virus – particularly China, South Korea and Italy – the Russian government has been relatively quiet about the spread of the virus within its borders and its plans to tame the epidemic. Putin on Thursday blasted what he considered false rumors that the coronavirus is running rampant across Russia in an attempt "to spread panic among the public." Russia as of Friday afternoon reportedly had four confirmed cases of the coronavirus, according to an online tracker maintained by Johns Hopkins University's Center for Systems 149 Science and Engineering. But the country has reportedly quarantined hundreds of people, employing raids and facial recognition software to find cases of potential infection. [China] China: Wuhan Could See No More Fresh Coronavirus Infections by End of

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March (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/6/2020 2:41 PM, John Hayward, 1973K] Chinese state media on Friday quoted "central government experts" who predicted the city of Wuhan, ground zero for the worldwide coronavirus epidemic, could have zero new infections by the end of March, while other cities in Hubei province will reach zero infections even sooner. The state-run Global Times quoted Chinese health experts telling those living outside Hubei that they will be able to "take off their masks and resume normal life by the end of April," while Hubei residents will have to wait another month after that. According to Chinese officials, every city in Hubei except for Wuhan reported zero new infections on Thursday, while Wuhan reported only 126. "Zero reported new cases is not absolute. Sporadic new cases will emerge," qualified government disease expert Zhang Boli of the Chinese Academy of Engineering. He did not offer a firm answer about whether new coronavirus infections would chronically appear for the indefinite future. Other officials said the special hospitals built in Wuhan to deal with the outbreak will probably be treating recovered patients for the next two years. Wuhan residents do not appear much impressed with these rosy predictions. Chinese Vice Premier Sun Chunlan visited Wuhan on Thursday and was openly heckled by residents who chanted, "Fake, fake, everything is fake." Among other complaints, the locals complained their government is only pretending to supply cities under coronavirus lockdown with fresh food. Chinese clinics are reporting more repeat infections and relapses, including a 36-year-old man who died of respiratory failure in Wuhan on Monday, five days after he was discharged from a coronavirus hospital. The report of his death, which included a photo of his death certificate listing the coronavirus as cause of death, was quickly removed from Chinese media. Before it disappeared, the report also quoted an emergency notice issued by Wuhan hospital officials warning about a surge of discharged patients returning with new coronavirus symptoms. [China] Shanghai tightens airport checks as imported virus infections in China jump (Reuters) Reuters [3/7/2020 9:15 AM, Gabriel Crossley, Lusha Zhang, and Samuel Shen, 5304K] Shanghai increased airport screening on Saturday as imported coronavirus infections from countries such as Italy and Iran emerge as the biggest source of new cases in China outside Hubei, the province where the outbreak originated. Mainland China had 99 new confirmed cases on Friday, according to official data. Of the 25 150 that were outside Hubei, 24 came from outside China. Shanghai, which had three new cases that originated from abroad on Friday, said it would step up control measures at the border, which had become "the main battlefield". At a news conference, Shanghai Customs officials said they city would check all passengers from seriously affected countries for the virus, among other airport measures. Shanghai already requires passengers flying in from such countries, regardless of nationality, to be quarantined for 14 days. They will now be escorted home in vehicles provided by the government. Tighter screening has greatly lengthened waiting times at Shanghai's Pudong International Airport - some passengers say they have had to wait as long as seven hours. The Shanghai government vowed on Saturday to severely punish passengers who concealed infections. Beijing police said on Saturday they would work with other departments to prevent imported infections. They said some members of a Chinese family flying in from Italy on March 4 had failed to fill in health declarations accurately, and later tested positive for the virus. MIGRANT WORKERS In addition to the growing risk of imported infections, China faces a challenge in trying to get migrant workers back to work by early April. So far, 78 million migrant workers, or 60% of those who left for the Lunar New Year holiday in January, have returned to work. Yang Wenzhuang of the National Health Commission (NHC) said that the "risk of contagion from increased population flows and gathering is increasing ... We must not relax or lower the bar for virus control". But new cases in mainland China continued to decline, with just 99 new cases on Friday, the lowest number the NHC started publishing nationwide figures on Jan. 20, against 143 on Thursday. Most of these cases, which include infections of Chinese nationals who caught the virus abroad, were in the northwesterly Gansu province, among quarantined passengers who flew into the provincial capital Lanzhou from Iran between March 2 and 5. For the second day in a row, there were no new infections in Hubei outside the provincial capital Wuhan, where new cases fell to the lowest level since Jan. 25. The total number of confirmed cases in mainland China so far is 80,651, with 3,070 deaths, up by 28 from Thursday. Hubei reported 28 deaths, 21 of them in Wuhan. 151 [China] Trump Administration Blocks Chinese Acquisition of Hotel Software Company (New York Times) New York Times [3/6/2020 3:36 PM, Ana Swanson, 23673K] The Trump administration ordered a Chinese company on Friday to separate itself from an American maker of cloud-based hotel management software over national security concerns, the latest example of the more stringent approach American officials have taken to policing Chinese investment in the United States. In a statement Friday, the Trump administration said there was "credible evidence" that Beijing Shiji Information Technology and its Hong Kong subsidiary might "take action that threatens to impair the national security of the United States." It ordered the Chinese company to divest itself of StayNTouch, an American company that makes cloud-based hotel management software, and its assets, including customer data, within 120 days. The decision is the latest example of a broad shift in how Washington treats Chinese acquisitions of American assets. Trump administration officials and lawmakers of both parties have grown increasingly concerned that China's investments in the United States are targeted at acquiring technologies and data that could put American national security at risk.

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Legislation passed by Congress in 2018 expanded the government's powers to block transactions on national security grounds. It also required the Trump administration to revamp its process for reviewing Chinese deals through an interagency panel called the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States. Those new rules took effect on Feb. 13. The administration did not specify what national security threat Shiji's ownership of StayNTouch might pose. StayNTouch develops technology platforms used by hotels including MGM Resorts International, Yotel and the Fontainebleau. The platforms allow guests to check themselves in and out of hotels on their smartphones, for example, or housekeepers and other hotel employees to track their work on tablets as they move around the hotel. But the Trump administration has taken a more critical view of Chinese companies acquiring American companies that collect various kinds of data on American citizens, including their social media activity, health information and financial transactions. In January 2018, Ant Financial, an affiliate of the Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba, called off plans to acquire the money transfer company MoneyGram amid concerns of a U.S. regulatory review. In early 2019, American officials moved to block the acquisition of the gay dating app Grindr by a Chinese company, Beijing Kunlun Tech. Beijing Kunlun has reached an agreement to sell Grindr to a group of investors for more than $600 million, according to a person with knowledge of the details of the transaction. It has yet to receive needed regulatory approval, the person said. The issue, some in the private sector say, is that almost every American company collects data on its users — raising fears that no transaction in any sector is safe. That has put a deep chill on collaboration between Chinese and American companies, with potential 152 implications for economic growth. Chinese investment in the United States has plummeted since reaching a high of $53 billion in 2016, totaling a mere $3.2 billion in 2019, according to tracking by the American Enterprise Institute. In addition to greater scrutiny from the U.S. government, a credit slowdown and tighter scrutiny in China toward outbound investments have also played a role. Shiji Group specializes in software for hotels, restaurants, retail stores and other businesses, including payment gateways and online distribution. Shiji announced that it had acquired StayNTouch in 2018, a move that it said would help both companies' customers to move among multiple hotels and travel technology systems. In a statement, Shiji said that it was "disappointed" in the decision and that the American government had not adequately explained its rationale. "We believe President Trump's decision was incorrect. Shiji is not a threat to U.S. security in any way," the company said. It added that the company does not have access to StayNTouch's guest data and that it had offered "a range of significant proposals" to mitigate the government's concerns, but those offers were rebuffed. [China] Trump orders Chinese company to divest ownership of U.S. firm, citing national security concerns (Washington Post) Washington Post [3/6/2020 6:33 PM, Jeanne Whalen, 12625K] President Trump on Friday ordered a Chinese company to divest all ownership of a U.S. hotel-software company, saying the Beijing investor could harm U.S. national security. A written order from the president's office suggested the administration is concerned about Chinese access to StayNTouch's hotel-guest data. The order gave Beijing Shiji Information Technology 120 days to divest all interest in the company. The rare order is another sign of the Trump administration's increasing scrutiny of Chinese influence on the U.S. economy. Congress also has taken a tougher stance, including through 2018 legislation that gave the executive branch new powers to reject foreign investments in American companies if they are deemed to affect national security. In Friday's order, Trump said there was "credible evidence" that the Chinese company "might take action that threatens to impair the national security of the United States." The document ordered the Chinese company immediately to refrain from accessing any of StayNTouch's hotel-guest data. "The purchaser shall ensure that controls are in place to prevent any such data access until such time as the divestment has been completed and verified," the order says. Beijing Shiji is part of the Shiji Group, which sells software for the hotel, food service, retail and entertainment industries. The Chinese company acquired StayNTouch in 2018, saying the U.S. company's software allowed hotel employees to "exceed guest expectations." It said the software was used in connection with 90,000 hotel rooms globally. 153 Beijing Shiji said it was "disappointed" by the White House order. "We believe President Trump's decision was incorrect. Shiji is not a threat to U.S. security in any way. The U.S. government did not adequately explain the basis of its decision to us. In fact, Shiji does not access the guest data of StayNTouch Inc.'s customers," the company said by email. "We offered a range of significant proposals to mitigate any concerns the U.S. government might have, including further restricting access to guest data and appointing an independent monitor to ensure these protections. Unfortunately, those offers were rebuffed," the email said. Trump's order follows a review by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, or CFIUS, an interagency body whose powers were strengthened by the 2018 legislation. CFIUS recommends to the president whether certain proposed takeovers should be rejected, and whether completed takeovers should be reversed, on national security grounds. In 2018, after a CFIUS review, Trump ordered Singapore-based Broadcom to abandon its $117 billion bid for the U.S. semiconductor company Qualcomm, blocking what would have been one of the biggest technology deals in history. In October, Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) asked CFIUS to open a probe into a merger that led a Chinese investor to own TikTok, the popular social media app. Rubio said he was concerned that the Chinese

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investor, ByteDance, was "censoring content" around the world to satisfy Beijing's leaders. CFIUS opened a probe in November. [China] Trump Blocks Chinese Deal for U.S. Hotel Software Firm StayNTouch Over Security (Bloomberg) Bloomberg [3/6/2020 12:48 PM, David McLaughlin, 6400K] President Donald Trump ordered the Chinese acquisition of a hotel property management software company reversed on national security grounds. Trump ordered Beijing Shiji Information Technology Co. to unwind its 2018 acquisition of StayNTouch Inc., the White House said in a statement on Friday. Trump said there was "credible evidence" the Chinese company "might take action that threatens to impair the national security of the United States." The order marked the third time Trump has blocked a foreign takeover of a U.S. company on national security grounds, and just the sixth time a U.S. president has done so in three decades. The Trump administration has ramped up scrutiny of Chinese acquisitions of American businesses over risks to national security. The panel that reviews foreign investments in U.S. firms, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S., has thwarted a number of Chinese deals, especially for technology companies. 154 CFIUS has raised security concerns about Infineon Technologies AG's proposed acquisition of Cypress Semiconductor Corp., and has recommended the Trump block it, Bloomberg News reported on Thursday. The Trump administration previously blocked a Chinese deal for Lattice Semiconductor Corp. and Broadcom Inc.'s hostile bid for Qualcomm Inc. Although Broadcom was based in Singapore at the time, the administration cited fears that the deal would harm innovation by Qualcomm and give China an edge in developing wireless technology. Beijing Shiji provides software for the hospitality, food service, retail and entertainment industries. The White House order doesn't specify the national security risks at issue, but said Beijing Shiji is prohibited from accessing hotel guest data through StayNTouch, which is based in Bethesda, Maryland. [China] CIA funnels cash to private company aimed at defeating Huawei (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/8/2020 2:24 PM, Ryan Lovelace, 482K] The CIA isn't waiting while the White House, Congress, the Justice Department and the Pentagon squabble over the best approach to combating Huawei's domination of the future 5G wireless network. The agency has been funneling taxpayer dollars to venture capitalists investing in a private company set up to compete with and hopefully defeat Huawei. Huawei has gained an advantage in the battle for global control over the fifth generation of wireless technology. In-Q-Tel, the CIA-contracted venture capital fund, is urging Congress to spend more to thwart Huawei's dominance. Christopher Darby, the president and CEO of In-Q-Tel, told the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence last month that the venture capital fund began investing in 5G technology seven years ago. He said in a hearing that his fund has identified Parallel Wireless, a telecommunications service provider based in New Hampshire, as part of a government solution to concerns about Huawei's threats to national security. Parallel Wireless uses a software-centered approach for building radio access network (RAN) capability that would "eliminate the need to spend millions of dollars on new equipment and infrastructure upgrades," according to a document on the company's website. Parallel Wireless says its "Open RAN," which requires minimum maintenance, is ready for deployment immediately. Steve Papa, co-founder, chairman and CEO, said Parallel Wireless is fortunate that In-QTel is proactively fighting Chinese domination of telecommunications. "Parallel Wireless is committed to destroying the threat Huawei poses to the free world," Mr. Papa said in an email. "We are actively working to ensure America and the world are free from the constraints of Huawei. Parallel works with many companies, many governments and many government agencies including In-Q-Tel." Mr. Darby told the intelligence committee that Parallel Wireless will not resolve cybersecurity vulnerabilities overnight, but the government should pursue its technology 155 anyway because the 5G fight will be a long one. "I think we've got time to play the game the way we play it best, which is disrupt," Mr. Darby said. "Titans can fall, and Huawei is a titan right now, and we can take them down if we want to double down on our investments." In-Q-Tel is organized as a nonprofit that does not disclose its full list of investments, though it relies on government funds to promote Silicon Valley solutions to the intelligence community's problems. In-Q-Tel received nearly $490 million in taxpayer funding during a five-year period ending in 2017, representing more than 98% of its revenue, according to paperwork filed with the IRS. Not everyone in government shares In-Q-Tel's vision. At the Justice Department's China Initiative Conference last month, Attorney General William Barr said the only two companies capable of competing with Huawei are Nokia and Ericsson. Mr. Barr, a former Verizon executive, attributed an Open RAN approach to a "pie in the sky" mentality that "would take many years to get off the ground and would not be ready for prime time for a decade, if ever." The immediate need is a "concerted national 5G policy," said former Rep. Mike Rogers, who now leads the advocacy group 5G Action Now. He said a "piecemeal" or "uncoordinated" approach to fighting Huawei will not work. "The intelligence community is best placed to spot, identify and interdict threats to our communications networks — threats like those posed by Huawei, ZTE and China. A part of this effort is making smart investments in emerging technologies, providing seed capital through In-Q-Tel, IARPA and others," said Mr. Rogers, who served on the House intelligence committee. "But that isn't their primary mission and nor should it be. What they can do, and are doing, is informing policymakers about the threats and challenges our country faces, enabling smarter decisions and, where appropriate, help spur private-sector innovation." IARPA is the Intelligence

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Advanced Research Projects Activity, an organization within the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. In-Q-Tel is in the fight for the long haul. The venture capital fund formed in 1999 as an investment vehicle for the intelligence community that might never work but now has about 500 portfolio companies and offices in Arlington, Virginia; Silicon Valley; Boston; London; and Sydney. Mr. Darby told Congress that 78% of In-Q-Tel's portfolio companies have successfully piloted technology tried by the intelligence community and 57% have been adopted. The company did not respond to requests for comment. In-Q-Tel has faced criticism for profiting from investments made with taxpayer dollars. The company's top-earning employees have annual salaries of more than $500,000, and IRS filings show Mr. Darby making more than $1.6 million in 2017. A portion of In-Q-Tel's proceeds appear to go to charity. The fund has granted $1 million to the CIA Officers Memorial Foundation, which helps families of fallen CIA officers. The fund points to Google Earth and Palantir as examples of technology projects made 156 possible by its bets. It funded Keyhole Corp., which was later acquired by Google and made commercially available as Google Earth. Palantir is a data analysis company for the national security industry that has a $20 billion private valuation, according to CNBC. [China] 'Global espionage operation': US wages all-out campaign to convince UK to reject Huawei (Washington Examiner) Washington Examiner [3/6/2020 3:10 PM, Jerry Dunleavy, 570K] The United States is engaged in an all-out effort to convince the United Kingdom to reject Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei from the country's fifth-generation wireless infrastructure, warning of the national security risks posed by potential backdoor access by the Chinese Communist Party. Both the Trump administration and the Senate have sent warnings to the U.K.'s leaders this week. The U.S. has long sought to convince allies not to use Huawei, threatening to stop sharing intelligence with countries that don't ban the company in their high-speed wireless networks. The Justice Department charged the Chinese telecom company in a global racketeering scheme linked to Iran and North Korea last month. U.S. officials said intelligence shows Huawei has been able to access mobile phone networks secretly through "back doors" designed for use by law enforcement for more than a decade, the Wall Street Journal reported. The British government defied the U.S. in late January when Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that the U.K. would allow Huawei to supply equipment in some parts of the network. But several Tories in the House of Commons are trying to ban Huawei from the U.K.'s mobile networks entirely by the end of 2022. Earlier this week, Defense Secretary Mark Esper told the Senate Armed Services Committee that "if our NATO allies incorporate Huawei technology, it may very well have a severe impact on our ability to share information, to share intelligence, to share operational plans, and for the alliance to conduct itself as an alliance." "I think we also need to work together, some countries, on alternatives to Huawei because otherwise, we will find the alliance compromised in due course," Esper warned. This echoed comments Esper made last month when he said, "Reliance on Chinese 5G vendors, for example, could render our partners' critical systems vulnerable to disruption, manipulation, and espionage. It could also jeopardize our communication and intelligence sharing capabilities and, by extension, our alliances." U.S. officials told Bloomberg that the National Security Council began an interagency review this week to determine what military and intelligence assets should be removed from the U.K. if Huawei participates in building the country's 5G network. One U.S. official said one of the purposes of the U.K. review was to assess the effects of "putting smart antennas and computers run by the Chinese Communist Party all over our closest ally." Attorney General William Barr said last month that U.S. national security is dependent on pushing back against China's dominance in 5G technology. He noted China "can monitor 157 and surveil" countries and companies that use 5G equipment from Chinese-backed companies. The company has denied cooperating with Chinese intelligence. Huawei was designated a "high-risk vendor" by the U.K.'s National Cyber Security Centre, and the U.K. government said in January that it would ban "high-risk vendors" such as Huawei from "core" 5G infrastructure but would allow Huawei to build the network and would allow its equipment to handle up to 35% of the nation's 5G "periphery" system. The U.K. considers the core separate from the peripheral network, which uses base stations and antennae to link mobile devices to the core, but the U.S. doesn't believe such a distinction is possible. China's 2017 National Intelligence Law "requires Chinese companies, such as Huawei and ZTE, to support, provide assistance, and cooperate in China's national intelligence work, wherever they operate." On Tuesday, a bipartisan group of 20 senators, 13 Republicans led by Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska and seven Democrats led by Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York, sent a letter to U.K.'s parliament. "We express our significant concern with the Government of the United Kingdom's recent decision to allow Huawei Technologies in its 5G infrastructure," the senators wrote. "Given the significant security, privacy, and economic threats posed by Huawei, we strongly urge the United Kingdom to revisit its recent decision." The senators asked for "commitments" to "work together to advance a comprehensive strategy to secure our 5G systems, which includes devising a comprehensive phase-out strategy to remove Huawei and other high-risk vendors that pose national security threats from our network infrastructure." On Wednesday, four Republican senators proposed a bill that would require the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. to review the U.K.'s place on the foreign investment "whitelist" if it allows Huawei to build portions of its 5G infrastructure. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas said,

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"Huawei is a global espionage operation masquerading as a telecom company," and Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas warned that "allowing Huawei into Britain's 5G infrastructure will have consequences." Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida said the U.K.'s "misguided decision" means "the U.S. must now reevaluate how we engage with our important ally." And Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri said, "Huawei's presence in the U.K.'s 5G infrastructure threatens the security of both our countries." The crackdown on Huawei is part of the Justice Department's larger effort to stem China's activities. The number of arrests related to Chinese economic espionage cases and cracking down on China-based hacking schemes has risen in recent years. Last month, FBI Director Christopher Wray said the bureau has about 1,000 investigations open into Chinese technology theft that involve "just about every industry sector." 158 Despite the company's denials to the U.K.'s House of Commons in July about working with the Chinese Communist Party directly in its anti-Muslim crackdowns, a lengthy report from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute in November revealed Huawei's involvement in the mass surveillance of millions of Uighurs and other Muslim minorities in China's Xinjiang region, where over 1 million Muslims have been placed in reeducation camps. Hundreds of internal documents from the Chinese Communist Party leaked to the New York Times in November show the nation's rulers were deeply involved in the planning and execution of the oppression in Xinjiang. [China] Grindr sold by Chinese owner after national security concerns (Los Angeles Times) Los Angeles Times [3/6/2020 2:43 PM, Yuan Yang and James Fontanella-Khan, 1907K] The Chinese owner of Grindr, the world's most popular gay dating app, has reached a deal to sell the platform a year after U.S. regulators forced the company into a disposal because of national security concerns. Beijing Kunlun Tech, a gaming company, announced on Friday in a stock exchange filing that it had agreed to sell Grindr to San Vicente Acquisition for about $608.5 million. The sale brings to an end a year of uncertainty over the ownership of Grindr and highlights the depth of U.S. concern over the threat of Beijing using sensitive data harvested by its tech companies against U.S. citizens. U.S. regulators are still investigating TikTok, the Chinese short-video app, on similar grounds. After acquiring the platform in a series of purchases starting in 2016, Kunlun announced a plan to list the unit in 2018. But that was scuppered by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), the government's investment watchdog, which last year forced Kunlun to sell Grindr. Kunlun said it signed a "National Security Agreement" with CFIUS to dispose of the unit by the end of June 2020. CFIUS had feared that the Chinese government could use personal data given to the app by its 3.3 million users to blackmail U.S. citizens — for example, over their sexual orientation, or HIV status. Grindr's users may include U.S. officials and military personnel. In response, Kunlun had promised it would not transfer any sensitive data from Grindr to China and that it would stop its operations there, keeping its headquarters in the U.S. Last year, Kunlun looked set to revisit its old plans to list the company after CFIUS dropped its opposition. CFIUS's intervention in 2019 was a rare instance of a retrospective veto of a deal that had already been completed, coming three years after Kunlun had first acquired its majority stake in Grindr. The valuation of the dating app has quadrupled in the past four years, from the $151 million implied by Kunlun's first purchase of a 61.53% stake in the unit in 2016. The sale of Grindr had the blessing of CFIUS, according to two people briefed about the 159 matter, and should be considered a done deal, although it will still need to be technically assessed by the committee. It took several months to get the U.S. government agencies that compose CFIUS, which include the Treasury and the departments of defense, state, commerce and homeland security, to agree to the terms of the deal. Several members of Congress, from both the Republican and Democratic sides, also put pressure on the foreign investment committee to make sure that adequate guarantees had been made as part of the sale. Details of the discussions and negotiations with CFIUS remain highly classified. However, Kunlun was not under threat of having its agreement blocked again by CFIUS, said the people with those with direct information about the matter said. Grindr made a net loss in 2018 of Rmb28.7 million, and a profit of Rmb160 million ($23 million) in the first three quarters of 2019, the stock exchange filing revealed. Its total revenues in the first three quarters of 2019 were Rmb553 million. Grindr's senior management and core employees will continue to hold 1.41% of the shares in their company after the transaction. [China] Grindr's China Owner Sells Gay App for $600 Million (Bloomberg) Bloomberg [3/7/2020 12:05 PM, Zheping Huang, 6400K] The Chinese owner of gay dating app Grindr has reached a deal to offload one of the world's largest LGBT social platforms, a year after U.S. regulators pressed for disposal over national security concerns. Beijing Kunlun Tech Co. said in a Friday filing to the Shenzhen Stock Exchange that it has agreed to sell its 99% stake in Grindr LLC to San Vicente Acquisition LLC for about $608.5 million. The deal needs the approval of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S., better known as CFIUS, which required the Chinese firm to unwind its purchase of Grindr, according to the filing. The sale underscores a growing concern in the U.S. that Beijing could use Chinese tech companies as a tool to amass sensitive data on millions of American citizens. The U.S. watchdog has also begun a review of ByteDance Inc.'s 2017 purchase of the business that became TikTok, a viral mini-video app. Kunlun bought a majority stake in Grindr for just $93 million in 2016, and acquired the remaining shares two years later. Prior to the CFIUS inquiry, the Chinese firm was planning an initial public offering for the app overseas. [China] Mark Esper

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presses Chinese general on 'unsafe' use of laser against U.S. warplane (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/6/2020 4:11 PM, Bill Gertz, 482K] Defense Secretary Mark Esper this week confronted China's defense minister over the Chinese military's use of a high-powered laser to illuminate a Navy patrol aircraft near Guam last month. 160 On Tuesday, Mr. Esper called Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe to discuss several issues, including the Feb. 17 laser incident some 380 miles west of Guam. "During the call, Secretary Esper raised concern over an incident on Feb. 17 in which a U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft was lased by PRC navy destroyer 161 while flying in airspace above international waters," the Pentagon said in a statement issued Friday. The new statement revised guidance published earlier in the week that said the laser incident was not discussed between Mr. Esper and Gen. Wei. China's government made no mention of the laser incident in the official government readout of the Esper-Wei call, and the Chinese government's spokesmen have been silent on the provocative action. "Secretary Esper called on the People's Liberation Army to conduct itself safely and professionally in accordance with bilateral agreements and international standards of safety at sea," the statement said. "The incident underscores the need for the two militaries to enhance bilateral crisis communication mechanisms to ensure incidents like this do not escalate or lead to miscalculation." The P-8A is armed with torpedoes and Harpoon anti-ship missiles. Firing a laser can be considered a hostile action in some circumstances — for example, if the laser were part of an anti-aircraft defense system. U.S. military forces operate under rules of engagement that allow ships and aircraft to defend themselves during such encounters. China has deployed several types of laser weapons, including laser dazzlers designed to disrupt optics or electronics, and laser guns designed to damage the eyes of enemy forces. The Pacific Fleet said in a statement issued 10 days after the encounter that a Chinese guided-missile destroyer fired a high-powered laser against the P-8A, a maritime patrol aircraft. It was the second time the Chinese military engaged in the provocative practice of aiming lasers at U.S. aircraft. An earlier incident involving ground-based laser firings from a Chinese military base in Djibouti, on the Horn of Africa, injured the eyes of C-130 aircrews. No pilots or crew were injured in the P-8A laser illumination that was detected by onboard sensors. The last major U.S.-China military standoff took place in the South China Sea in September 2018, when a Chinese warship nearly collided with the USS Decatur, a Navy guided-missile destroyer. 161 The Pentagon response to the laser incident contrasts sharply with that of the State Department, which sought to downplay the incident. The U.S. Embassy in Beijing lodged a formal diplomatic protest with the Chinese government on Feb. 18, but State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus declined to comment on the formal protest or the provocative Chinese action. "We have nothing for you," she told The Washington Times. The Pacific Fleet statement noted that the action by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy vessel violated at least two agreements with the Chinese military designed to prevent such encounters from leading to a military confrontation or conflict. "The PRC navy destroyer's actions were unsafe and unprofessional," the Pacific Fleet said. "Additionally, these acts violate the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES), a multilateral agreement reached at the 2014 Western Pacific Naval Symposium to reduce the chance of an incident at sea. CUES specifically addresses the use of lasers that could cause harm to personnel or damage to equipment." The lasering also was inconsistent with a U.S.-China memorandum of understanding regarding the rules designed for safe air and maritime encounters. "The laser, which was not visible to the naked eye, was captured by a sensor onboard the P-8A," the statement said. "Weapons-grade lasers could potentially cause serious harm to aircrew and mariners, as well as ship and aircraft systems." The patrol aircraft was part of a Navy unit from Jacksonville, Florida, based at Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, Japan. The aircraft was conducting routine maritime and reconnaissance flights in the Philippine Sea. "U.S. Navy aircraft and ships will continue to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows," the statement said. Critics have faulted the Navy and Pentagon for not pushing back vigorously against the laser illuminations, warning that unless the U.S. aggressively confronts China over the incidents, they will continue. Chinese state-run media said Gen. Wei told Mr. Esper that U.S. and Chinese military forces should "adhere to the general tone of coordination, cooperation, and stability, resolve differences through dialogue and consultation in the spirit of equality and mutual respect, and promote the development of China-U.S. relations along the right track." The Chinese report also said Mr. Esper expressed a willingness to enhance dialogue and consultation between the two militaries and bolster exchanges and cooperation. [North Korea] N. Korea fires weapons after threatening 'momentous' action (Los Angeles Times) 162 Los Angeles Times [3/9/2020 2:30 AM, Hyung-Jin Kim, 1907K] North Korea fired three short-range projectiles off its east coast on Monday, South Korea's military said, two days after the North threatened to take "momentous" action to protest outside condemnation over its earlier live-fire exercises. Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the multiple kinds of projectiles fired from the eastern coastal town of Sondok flew as far as 200 kilometers (125 miles) at a maximum altitude of 50 kilometers (30 miles) before landing in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. A JCS statement said South Korea expressed "strong regret" over the launches that it said violate a past inter-Korean agreement aimed at lowering military animosities. South Korea's national security director, defense minister and spy chief held an emergency video conference and agreed the North Korean action were not helpful to

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efforts to establish a peace on the Korean Peninsula, according to South Korea's presidential Blue House. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said North Korea fired suspected ballistic missiles. He said the multiple North Korean projectiles traveled 100 to 200 kilometers (62 to 125 miles) but none landed inside Japan's exclusive economic zone. "North Korea's latest action, on top of its repeated firings of ballistic missiles, is a serious threat to the peace and safety of Japan and ... a grave problem for the entire international society," Suga said. In the past 10 days, North Korea has said leader Kim Jong Un supervised two rounds of live-fire artillery exercises in its first weapons tests since late November. Kim had entered the new year with a vow to bolster his nuclear deterrent and not to be bound by a major weapons test moratorium amid a deadlock in a U.S.-led diplomacy aimed at convincing Kim to abandon his nuclear program in return for economic and political benefits. South Korea and some European countries protested against the second North Korea drills on March 2, which they believe involved ballistic missile launches in a violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. North Korea insists it has the right to conduct military drills in the face of U.S. and South Korean forces on its doorstep. The U.N. Security Council didn't issue any statement after discussing North Korea's March 2 drills, but five European members condemned what they called "provocative actions." Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany and the United Kingdom said afterward that the tests undermine regional and international peace, security and stability. The North's Foreign Ministry on Saturday accused the five European countries of "repeating an absurd argument of condemnation and violation resolutions of the U.N. whenever we conducted military drills." "The reckless behavior of these countries instigated by the U.S. will become a fuse that will trigger our yet another momentous reaction," a ministry statement said. Last week, Kim Jong Un's younger sister leveled diatribes and crude insults against South 163 Korea for criticizing its earlier live-fire exercises, but her statement was followed by Kim sending a letter to South Korean President Moon Jae-in expressing condolences over its coronavirus outbreak. Some experts say North Korea may intend to catch South Korea off balance before seeking help in reviving its dilapidated economy, since the U.S. has said sanctions on North Korea will stay in place unless it takes significant steps toward denuclearization. "The coronavirus is likely exceeding North Korea's public health capacity, so Kim Jong Un is playing a two-level game. At the domestic level, his regime claims to protect the people with drastic quarantine measures and military exercises against external threats," said Leif-Eric Easley, associate professor at Seoul's Ewha Womans University. "Pyongyang may be seeking international assistance, but remains obsessed with not appearing in an inferior position to Seoul." Nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington remain stalled since the breakdown of a second summit between Kim and President Donald Trump in Vietnam in early 2019. Subsequent talks between the two countries failed to produce much progress amid disputes over how much sanctions relief should be given in return for a limited step to move away from nuclear weapons by North Korea. [North Korea] North Korea fires three projectiles in into sea, South Korea says (Reuters) Reuters [3/8/2020 10:42 PM, Hyonhee Shin, Sangmi Cha, 5304K] North Korea launched multiple short-range projectiles into the sea on Monday as part of ongoing firing drills, a week after it resumed missile tests following a three-month break, South Korea's military said. The projectiles included artillery fired from a multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) and flew up to 200 kms (124 miles) and reached 50 km in altitude, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). They were launched from the eastern coastal town of Sondok, home to a military airfield where nuclear-armed North Korea fired missiles last year, the JCS said in a statement. The JCS said the latest test appeared to be part of firing drills that have been under way since late last month and personally overseen by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. After a three-month halt in missile testing, North Korea tested an MLRS on March 2, which Seoul officials said was part of the same exercises. The JCS expressed "strong regret" over the launch and said it was watching for additional tests. South Korean national security advisor Chung Eui-yong held a video meeting with the defense minister and intelligence chief to analyze the North's latest test and intent, the presidential Blue House said. "The ministers once again pointed out that the continued firing drills are unhelpful for efforts 164 to build lasting peace on the Korean peninsula," the Blue House said in a statement. Japanese Defence Minister Taro Kono said the projectiles appeared to be ballistic missiles and did not fall into Japan's exclusive economic zone, though the government was examining details about the launch. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the subject, said North Korea had fired at least three projectiles towards the eastern sea and a detailed analysis was being conducted. Britain, Germany, France, Estonia and Belgium raised North Korea's recent missile firings at the U.N. Security Council on Thursday, calling them a provocative action that violated U.N. resolutions. Pyongyang's foreign ministry slammed the European action as "U.S.-instigated reckless behaviour", and the sister of Kim Jong Un said the drills were not meant to threaten anyone. [South Korea] South Korea's coronavirus cases climb above 7,000, most cases traced to church (Reuters) Reuters [3/7/2020 1:41 AM, Jane Chung, 5304K] South Korea's coronavirus cases jumped above 7,000 on Saturday, up by 448 from the previous day, with more than half of the total number linked to a secretive church at the center of the country's outbreak, health authorities said. The death toll rose by two to 46, according to the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC). Since mid-February when a woman tested positive

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after attending services at a branch of the Shincheonji Church of Jesus in the southeastern city of Daegu, the number of infections has exploded in South Korea, giving it the most cases outside China. There are 7,041 cases in total including a new small cluster of cases reported on Saturday at an apartment complex in Daegu, where some members of the church live, the KCDC said. While 448 new cases remains a sizeable jump, it marked a third straight day of declines in the number of new cases for South Korea. "There is a possibility that new cases increase as tests are still underway," Kwon Jun-wook, deputy director at the KCDC told a briefing. Lee Man-hee, the founder of the church, apologized on Monday calling the epidemic a "great calamity". The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has voiced concerns over members of the Shincheonji Church being blamed for the spread of the coronavirus. "We urge the South Korean government to condemn scapegoating and to respect religious freedom as it responds to the outbreak," it said on Twitter on Friday. 165 The large amount of infections in the country has prompted nearly 100 nations to impose curbs on travelers from South Korea. On Friday, South Korea said it would suspend visas and visa waivers for Japan in response to Tokyo's travel restrictions on Koreans, as fears over the coronavirus reignited a feud between the neighbors dating back to before World War Two. Dr. Mike Ryan, top emergencies expert at the World Health Organization, told a briefing in Geneva on Friday that Japan and South Korea should focus on managing the epidemic and saving lives and not on "a political spat over travel restrictions." The coronavirus, which emerged in China, has spread to more than 90 countries, infecting more than 100,000 people and killing over 3,400 people globally. Presidential Tweets Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet1 [3/6/2020 9:21 AM] JOBS, JOBS, JOBS!!! [Editorial note: consult article at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet2 [3/6/2020 10:08 AM] I will protect your Social Security and Medicare, just as I have for the past 3 years. Sleepy Joe Biden will destroy both in very short order, and he won't even know he's doing it! Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet3 [3/6/2020 10:38 AM] It is FAKE NEWS that @HHSGov @SecAzar is "sidelined" from the great job he is doing on the CoronaVirus Task Force. He has the total confidence of the @VP and myself, and is doing a fantastic job, as the numbers would indicate! Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet4 [3/6/2020 10:47 AM] Spoke to Governor @GavinNewsom early this morning about the cruise ship quarantined off the California Coast. CoronaVirus test kits have been delivered, testing is taking place now. [Editorial note: consult video at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet5 [3/6/2020 3:59 PM] My Administration is with you all of the way, Tennessee. We love you! [Editorial note: consult article at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet6 [3/6/2020 4:18 PM] Thank you @GovBillLee. We are a phone call away, and here for you! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet7 [3/6/2020 7:19 PM] Congratulations to @FoxNews! [Editorial note: consult article at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump 166 Tweet8 [3/6/2020 8:08 PM] I am pleased to announce that Congressman Mark Meadows will become White House Chief of Staff. I have long known and worked with Mark, and the relationship is a very good one.....I want to thank Acting Chief Mick Mulvaney for having served the Administration so well. He will become the United States Special Envoy for Northern Ireland. Thank you! Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet9 [3/6/2020 10:45 PM] Thank you @GovBillLee and @MariaLeeTN. My Administration will always be there for the Great People of Tennessee. Together, we will prevail! [Editorial note: consult video and retweet at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet10 [3/7/2020 10:47 PM] Thank you to the Great State of Tennessee. We are with you all the way! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet11 [3/7/2020 10:56 PM] I agree with Joe! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet12 [3/7/2020 11:42 PM] We have now learned for sure that the Democrats don't want anything to do with Crazy Bernie. Rigged? First @amyklobuchar & @PeteButtigieg quit the race & come out for Sleepy Joe BEFORE Super Tuesday. Pocahontas says NO & quits race AFTER ELECTION, thereby depriving Bernie of at.....least 5 States & the Nomination. Did the DNC & Dems tell Elizabeth Warren to wait? If so, they were deadly, the race would have been over, & Bernie would have won. Dirty double dealing? Nobody knows for sure, & history will be the judge. But I say, here we go AGAIN, Bernie! Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet13 [3/8/2020 12:24 AM] Thank you @SenatorTimScott! [Editorial note: consult video at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet14 [3/8/2020 8:45 AM] We have a perfectly coordinated and fine tuned plan at the White House for our attack on CoronaVirus. We moved VERY early to close borders to certain areas, which was a Godsend. V.P. is doing a great job. The Fake News Media is doing everything possible to make us look bad. Sad! Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet15 [3/8/2020 12:23 PM] The New York Times is an embarrassment to journalism. They were a dead paper before I went into politics, and they will be a dead paper after I leave, which will be in 5 years. Fake News is the Enemy of the people! Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet16 [3/8/2020 6:18 PM] Who knows what this means, but it sounds good to me! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link] Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump Tweet17 [3/9/2020 1:25 AM] There are no mixed messages, only political weaponization by people like you and your brother, Fredo! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link] 167 {End of Report} RETURN TO TOP

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Sent: Tue, 3 Mar 2020 10:31:25 +0000
Subject: DHS Morning Briefing (3-3-20)

1 DHS MORNING BRIEFING Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) U.S. Department of Homeland Security By TechMIS www.TechMIS.com Mobile User Copy TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff DATE: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 6:00 AM ET Top News Supreme Court Weighs Whether Rejected Asylum Seekers Can Sue (New York Times) ..... 4 Supreme Court split over judicial review for asylum seekers facing quick removal (Washington Post) ..... 6 Justices divided over Trump push to speed up deportations (The Hill) ..... 7 Supreme Court to consider rights of some asylum seekers (CNN) ..... 8 Supreme Court skeptical of granting new hearings to asylum seekers (USA Today) ..... 10 U.S. Supreme Court conservatives lean toward Trump over rapid deportation (Reuters) ..... 11 Ken Cuccinelli Was Illegally Appointed To Top Immigration Post, Judge Rules (Daily Caller) ..... 13 Ken Cuccinelli appointment to citizenship office was illegal, judge rules (Washington Times) ..... 14 'Expect an appeal': Cuccinelli rejects judge's ruling against his appointment (Politico) ..... 15 Cuccinelli refuses to leave DHS after judge finds he was illegally appointed to his prior role there (Washington Examiner) ..... 15 Ken Cuccinelli to appeal judge's ruling his immigration post appointment is unlawful (Breitbart) ..... 16 Lawyers struggle to remotely represent asylum-seekers in 'Remain in Mexico' program (Public Radio International) . 16 Shelters told to report any coronavirus cases among migrant children (CNN) 19 Lawmakers Propose Making ECommerce Companies Liable for Counterfeits (New York Times) ..... 20 [AZ] U.S. Supreme Court Blocks Another Cross-Border Shooting Claim (Reuters) ..... 22 [AZ] Supreme Court sends Arizona cross-border shooting case of José Antonio Elena Rodriguez back to appeals court (USA Today) ..... 22 2 [WA] Washington county declares state of emergency as coronavirus death toll rises (ABC News) ..... 24 [Mexico] Mexico speeds up extraditions of cartel bosses to U.S (Reuters) ..... 27 Immigration and Customs Enforcement Serious health care lapses found in U.S. detention center housing transgender migrants (Reuters) ..... 28 [NY] Lawsuit charges ICE is illegally detaining immigrants before hearings (Politico) ..... 30 [NY] De Blasio ignoring ICE pleas for cooperation on illegal immigrant criminals, official says (FOX News) ... 32 [NY] Illegal immigrant tried to head-butt ICE agent after being tasered, federal prosecutors say (Washington Examiner) ..... 34 [IL] Sanctuary Illinois: Illegal Alien Felon Allegedly Sexually Assaulted 3-YearOld Girl in McDonald's Bathroom (Breitbart) ..... 34 Citizenship and Immigration Services [FL] E-Verify proposals advance to Florida House, Senate floors (San Francisco Chronicle) ..... 35 [China] U.S. Limits Chinese Staff at News Agencies Controlled by Beijing (New York Times) ..... 36 [China] U.S. Orders Chinese State Media to Cut Staff in the U.S. by 40% (Bloomberg) ..... 39 [China] Beijing ordered to slash Chinese staff in state media in US (Breitbart) ..... 40 [China] Trump administration announces new restrictions on Chinese journalists (The Hill) ..... 41 [China] Trump administration to cap number of employees at Chinese media outlets in U.S (Reuters) ..... 42 [China] China's U.N. ambassador: inappropriate for U.S. to interfere with Chinese journalists (Reuters) ..... 43 Transportation Security Administration Hiring Freeze At TSA Raises Risk Of Long Airport Delays During Spring Break (NPR) ..... 44 Federal Emergency Management Agency FEMA preparing for Trump emergency declaration on coronavirus: report (The Hill) ..... 44 [TN] Tornado directly hits Nashville, extensive damage reported (ABC News) ..... 45 [TN] Nashville residents capture tornado damage from overnight: report (FOX News) ..... 46 [CA] Dry California winter prompts wildfire and drought concerns (Washington Post) ..... 46 [PR] Thousands still sheltering in Puerto Rico months after earthquake (San Francisco Chronicle) ..... 49 Secret Service [NY] Police: Duo Nabbed Following Chase After Teen Tried Using Counterfeit Cash At Westchester Store (Daily Voice) ..... 50 [PA] Police seek suspect who allegedly used counterfeit cash at Dollar General (Wilkes-Barre Times Leader) ..... 51 [PA] Police looking for person who used counterfeit money (WYOU) ..... 51 [KY] Counterfeit money reported in parts of eastern Ky. (WSAZ) ..... 51 [GA] Suspect uses fake bill to pay at pharmacy (North Fulton) ..... 52 [FL] Search leads to evidence of apparent counterfeiting (Jackson County Floridan) ..... 52 3 [LA] 4 Texans facing drug charges after bust at Monroe hotel (Monroe News Star) ..... 53 [IN] Murder suspect faces other charges (Journal-Gazette) ..... 54 [IN] 3 people arrested on high-level drug charges in separate weekend incidents (Palladium Item) ..... 54 [IA] Man charged with possession of fake cash pleads not guilty to drug, gun charges (Sioux City Journal) ..... 55 [SD] Counterfeit money used at

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Sturgis gas station (KEVN Black Hills Fox).... 56 [OR] Police say man used fake $20s in stores across Oregon (KOIN) ..... 57 [OR] Arrest Made In Counterfeiting Operation (1190 Kex) ..... 57 [OR] Man accused of spending $5K in fake money at retail stores across Oregon (KPTV)..... 58 Coast Guard [MS] Coast Guard christens cutter USCGC Stone (Breitbart) ..... 58 [CA] Top Marine, Navy and Coast Guard officers talk coronavirus at San Diego conference (San Diego Union Tribune) ..... 59 CISA/Cybersecurity Super Tuesday brings a supersized election security challenge (Politico).. 60 Senior administration officials warn of foreign influence campaigns ahead of Super Tuesday (The Hill)..... 63 US warns foreign actors: Stay out of Super Tuesday or 'face sharp consequences' (ABC News) ..... 64 Feds warn of foreign meddling ahead of Super Tuesday primaries (Washington Times) ..... 66 Despite Cybersecurity Risks And LastMinute Changes, The 2020 Census Goes Online (NPR) ..... 67 Two Chinese nationals indicted in cryptocurrency laundering scheme linked to North Korea (Washington Post) ..... 70 US sanctions, charges two Chinese linked to N. Korean hack (Breitbart) ... 73 Treasury sanctions Chinese hackers for laundering previously stolen cryptocurrency (The Hill)..... 74 U.S. charges two Chinese nationals with helping N.Korea steal millions in cryptocurrency (Reuters) ..... 75 [WV] After damaging report, W.Va. moves away from voting app (San Diego Union Tribune) ..... 76 [GA] Georgia AG's office closes probe of alleged attempted hack of voter registration system (CNN) ..... 77 [CO] SpaceX, Tesla contractor hit by ransomware attack (Breitbart) ..... 78 National Security News Lawmakers wrangle over FBI's surveillance tools (San Francisco Chronicle) ..... 79 This week: House eyes vote on emergency coronavirus funding (The Hill) ..... 80 [OR] Indian Casino Closes After Employee Gets Coronavirus (US News & World Report) ..... 83 [Venezuela] Venezuela arrests officials for giving US oil data (Breitbart) ..... 84 [Turkey] Rocket attack hits Turkish customs vehicle near Iran border: minister (Reuters) ..... 85 [Syria] Russia, Turkey May Have Committed War Crimes in Syria, U.N. Says (Reuters)..... 85 [Iran] Senior Iranian Official Dies as Death Toll Surges (US News & World Report) ..... 86 4 [Iran] Iran Islamic regime hiding exploding coronavirus count: resistance group (Washington Times) ..... 87 [Afghanistan] Pentagon Tempers Afghan Peace Expectations (US News & World Report)..... 88 [Afghanistan] Signs of trouble mar Trump deal with Taliban (The Hill) ..... 90 [Afghanistan] Taliban resumes violence in Afghanistan as peace deal faces major obstacle (Washington Examiner) ..... 93 [Afghanistan] China pledges support for US-Taliban peace agreement (Houston Chronicle) ..... 93 [China] China's president says research centers to be set up to help contain coronavirus (Reuters) ..... 94 [North Korea] North Korea tests again, fires two projectiles (Breitbart) ..... 95 [North Korea] North Korea launches two short-range missiles into sea (The Hill) ..... 95 [North Korea] North Korea fired two projectiles, ending self-imposed moratorium on weapons testing: Seoul (FOX News) ..... 96 [North Korea] North Korea fires unidentified projectiles into the sea (AP) ..... 96 Presidential Tweets

Editorial Note: The DHS Daily Briefing is a collection of news articles related to Department's mission. The inclusion of particular stories is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse the political viewpoints or affiliations included in news coverage. Top News Supreme Court Weighs Whether Rejected Asylum Seekers Can Sue (New York Times) New York Times [3/2/2020 3:19 PM, Adam Liptak, 23673K] In an argument that alternated between constitutional principles and practical considerations, the Supreme Court considered on Monday whether immigrants seeking asylum may sue in federal court after the authorities deny their requests in summary proceedings. The case, which concerns the fundamental question of who is entitled to seek habeas corpus, will affect thousands of asylum seekers. "This court has never before allowed the elimination of judicial review over the legality of deportations," said Lee Gelernt, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union, which represents a Sri Lankan man who was denied asylum. Several of the court's more conservative members said there was a poor fit between habeas corpus, which they said was meant to secure release from illegal detentions, and requests to bar the United States from sending immigrants back to their home countries. "Your client really doesn't want to be released," Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. told Mr. Gelernt. "The government could take him to the airport, give him a ticket and say, 'You are released,' and he could leave. That's not what he wants." 5 Justice Elena Kagan said asylum applicants should be entitled to at least modest judicial review. "If he shows certain things," she said of the immigrant, Vijayakumar Thuraissigiam, "he has a right to asylum. And what he's trying to get is a hearing that adequately determines whether he can show those things." Mr. Thuraissigiam, a member of Sri Lanka's Tamil ethnic minority, was apprehended about 25 yards north of the Mexican border near San Ysidro, Calif. He sought asylum, saying he would face a credible fear of persecution if he were returned to Sri Lanka. His request was considered under "expedited removal" procedures called for by a 1996 law that streamlined asylum applications from people caught near the border and barred courts from reviewing most aspects of the determinations made under the procedures. Mr. Thuraissigiam, a farmer, told an asylum officer that he had been savagely beaten in Sri Lanka

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by men who had blindfolded and abducted him. He said he had spent 11 days in a hospital recovering from his injuries. Though their communication was imperfect, an asylum officer believed Mr. Thuraissigiam. But the officer rejected his request because Mr. Thuraissigiam could not identify the assailants or definitively establish their motives. Justice Alito said there was no reason for the official to determine that Mr. Thuraissigiam faced a credible fear of persecution. "All he said was that people drove up and they beat me," Justice Alito said. "And that's it." Mr. Gelernt said his client's account was consistent with documented instances of abuses directed against Tamils in Sri Lanka. "There is an exact M.O. on how Tamil people are persecuted in Sri Lanka," Mr. Gelernt said. "Men arrive in a white van. They abduct the person. They blindfold the person. They beat and torture him." Mr. Thuraissigiam filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus in federal court. A trial judge rejected it, saying it was barred by the 1996 law. But a three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruled the law unconstitutional, saying that it violated the Constitution's Suspension Clause. The clause says that "the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it." At Monday's argument in the case, Department of Homeland Security v. Thuraissigiam, No. 19-161, the two sides disagreed about the effect of a ruling allowing judicial review. Mr. Gelernt said habeas petitions from asylum seekers would be rare. In the year since the Ninth Circuit has allowed them, he said, only about 30 of more 9,000 immigrants denied asylum have filed such petitions. Edwin S. Kneedler, a lawyer for the federal government, said he was aware of about 100 petitions. "The potential for a flood would be, of course, far greater if this court holds that there is a right to file," he said. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg asked whether it was significant that Mr. Thuraissigiam was 6 apprehended inside the United States. Mr. Gelernt said that people denied asylum at ports of entry should also be allowed to go to court. That position seemed to surprise Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh. "You are saying a noncitizen who arrives at a port of entry, has never been in the United States, not lawfully admitted to the United States, nonetheless has a right under the U.S. Constitution to judicial review of the executive's decision to say they're not admissible?" he asked. Mr. Gelernt said yes, at least where the legality of the rejection of the asylum application is at issue. Supreme Court split over judicial review for asylum seekers facing quick removal (Washington Post) Washington Post [3/2/2020 5:34 PM, Robert Barnes, 12625K] The Supreme Court appeared divided along predictable ideological lines Monday when considering whether an asylum-seeker who failed his initial screening has a constitutional right to judicial review. During the argument, conservative justices seemed to fear what a government lawyer said would be a "flood" of such requests, frustrating Congress's intention of subjecting those found quickly after crossing the border to expedited removal if their claims were unwarranted. The court's liberals worried about giving such power to administration officials without some check on whether they are following the rules. A person seeking asylum is advancing "the best kind of claim you can make to stay in this country, which is that if we turn you back, you'll be subject to torture or persecution," said Justice Elena Kagan. Why should he not be able to have a court review "a pretty basic question: Did the executive officer follow the rules that he was supposed to follow?" But Deputy Solicitor General Edwin S. Kneedler said it is for Congress to determine the rules in the "limited and focused context" of a person who has entered the country illegally and, "nonetheless, is asking for basically mercy." The case involves Vijayakumar Thuraissigiam, who fled Sri Lanka in 2016 and was arrested in 2017 just about 25 yards north of the Mexican border in San Ysidro, Calif. He was placed on track for expedited removal. That system, which dates to 1996, allows U.S. officials quickly to remove those who have just crossed the border illegally. But it has an exception for those seeking asylum. Thuraissigiam, a farmer and member of the country's Tamil minority, described being beaten by strangers in his home country. But an official said that did not establish a credible case that he was persecuted. Thuraissigiam went to federal court, where a district judge said the law did not entitle him to review. But the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit disagreed. 7 Because Thuraissigiam had made it to the U.S., American Civil Liberties Union lawyer Lee Gelernt told the justices that his client had the constitutional right to challenge his detainment by the government. "This court has never before allowed the elimination of judicial review over the legality of deportations," Gelernt told the justices. He added: "The political branches undoubtedly have enormous power in the immigration area, but the one thing it cannot do, and this court has never allowed them to do, is remove a check on themselves." But Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. said the traditional habeas corpus right — the right to challenge government detention — doesn't exist in this case. "Your client really doesn't want to be released," Alito said. "The government could take him to the airport, give him a ticket and say, you are released, and he could leave. That's not what he wants. And the fundamental point of habeas is to secure release from what's claimed to be unlawful executive custody." Gelernt replied: "He would be thrilled to just be outright released and have the order vacate. . . . Then he would be in this country, and he would apply for asylum affirmatively." Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh suggested Gelernt had gone too far when he said judicial review could be required for those who had only made it to ports of entry to the U.S. "You are saying a non-citizen who arrives at a port of entry, has never been in the United States, not lawfully admitted to the United States, nonetheless has a right under the U.S. Constitution to judicial review of the executive's decision

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to say they're not admissible?" Kavanaugh asked. Gelernt said yes, but that it would be more limited than what Kavanaugh seemed to fear. "I think the people who come here and don't have asylum claims or those type of claims that are clearly inadmissible are not going to file habeas petitions," he said. "No one's going to file them because there's not going to be a ground to stay here." The case is Department of Homeland Security v. Thuraissigiam. Justices divided over Trump push to speed up deportations (The Hill) The Hill [3/2/2020 1:12 PM, Harper Neidig, 1762K] The Supreme Court on Monday appeared divided over the question of whether undocumented immigrants who are caught at the border and marked for expedited deportation have due process rights to challenge their removal from the country in court. The justices heard oral arguments Monday in a case over a Sri Lankan native who has challenged his own deportation proceedings as violating his constitutional rights. There appeared to be a divide among the justices along ideological lines during the hearing, with those on the liberal side of the spectrum aggressively challenging the government's lawyer and the conservative justices expressing skepticism towards the claims of the migrant's attorney. 8 Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who belongs to the liberal side, said that it's hard for her to see how the courts have no authority to review the government's "expedited removal" decisions, as the Department of Justice is arguing. "What's left if you have those laws but you don't have judicial review to determine if those laws are being followed?" Sotomayor said. The case before the justices involves Vijayakumar Thuraissigiam, who was arrested in 2017 almost immediately after crossing over the border into the U.S. from Mexico. He was marked for expedited removal despite telling immigration officials that he had been abducted and beaten by a gang of men in Sri Lanka because he belongs to the oppressed Tamil ethnic group. But an immigration officer decided that he had demonstrated a showing of "credible fear" of persecution at the prospect of being returned to his country that is required to gain asylum. A federal judge ruled that the courts have no role in reviewing such immigration proceedings, but last year the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals reversed that decision. The Department of Justice appealed to the Supreme Court, saying that the circuit decision risks "undermining the government's ability to control the border." Edwin Kneedler, an attorney representing the Trump administration, argued before the court that Congress created an expedited removal procedure in order to streamline the process for undocumented immigrants who have just entered the country. "If judicial review is added on top of this it would really bog down the system," Kneedler said. But Lee Gelernt, a lawyer with the ACLU representing Thuraissigiam, argued that the proceedings threaten to trample on migrants' rights to raise legal claims and challenge their deportations. "People are being removed so quickly at the border that they can't find a lawyer," Gelernt said. The administration's efforts to crack down on immigration have prompted a surge in highprofile court cases. On Friday, an appeals court temporarily blocked a new policy of forcing asylum-seekers to remain in Mexico while they apply for protection. The Supreme Court will soon decide the fate of the Obama administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which President Trump moved to repeal in 2017. The court heard oral arguments late last year over whether the president acted legally in killing the program. Supreme Court to consider rights of some asylum seekers (CNN) CNN [3/2/2020 7:15 AM, Ariane de Vogue, 5551K] The Supreme Court will consider a major case Monday concerning the rights of some asylum seekers to challenge their expedited removal. The Trump administration is asking the Supreme Court to reverse an opinion of the 9th 9 Circuit Court of Appeals that would allow some individuals who have been denied asylum the opportunity to make a claim in federal court. If the opinion stands, it could open the courthouse doors to more asylum seekers. The dispute comes as President Donald Trump has made immigration enforcement and restrictions on asylum claims a centerpiece of his agenda. Just last week, the same federal appeals court ruled against Trump's so called "remain in Mexico" policy, which required non-Mexican asylum seekers to wait in Mexico while their asylum cases were being considered. The court's opinion is currently on hold. At the center of the case is Vijayakumar Thuraissigiam, a native citizen of Sri Lanka and a member of an ethnic minority group. Upon illegally entering the United States, he was arrested 25 yards north of the Mexican border and placed in expedited removal proceedings. He applied for asylum out of fear of persecution in Sri Lanka. An asylum officer determined he had not established a credible fear of persecution. A supervising officer and an immigration judge affirmed the decision. Under the law, after the denial, Thuraissigiam was ineligible to challenge the finding in federal court. He was placed in expedited removal -- a proceeding that allows the government to deport an individual deemed inadmissible with no further review. Thuraissigiam's lawyers at the ACLU went to federal district court arguing that the expedited removal violated his constitutional rights. A district court said that the law did not authorize the court to hear his claims. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals agreed, but said that the law violates a part of the Constitution, the Suspension Clause, which would allow Thuraissigiam, even as a noncitizen, to have a "meaningful opportunity" to demonstrate that he is being held against the law. Stephen Yale-Loehr, an immigration professor at Cornell Law School, says the case is important because it "squarely raises constitutional issues." "Here the Court must decide whether newly arrived immigrants have the same right to challenge their detention in federal court as U.S. citizens," he said. Yale-Loehr noted that nearly half of all removals from the United States occur through expedited removal. "If the Court holds that the Constitution applies to arriving

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immigrants, the number of such deportations will surely decrease," he said. The Trump administration argues in briefs that the law, which sharply limits judicial review to final orders of removal, was passed so that the asylum system would not be abused. Solicitor General Noel Francisco argued in court briefs that there is a difference between someone who entered the country lawfully "and became part of the population" and someone who entered "clandestinely" who has "been here for too brief a period to have become, in any real sense, a part of our population." He said Congress designed the expedited removal system "as a critical tool for protecting the nation's borders and enforcing its immigration laws." Thuraissigiam's lawyers at the ACLU argued in court briefs that the lower court got it right, telling the justices, "Mr. Thuraissigiam has procedural due process rights as a 'person' who entered the country." 10 They noted that he fled his home in Sri Lanka to escape torture and likely death and that his claim for asylum was denied after a "cursory and inadequate review. Supreme Court skeptical of granting new hearings to asylum seekers (USA Today) USA Today [3/2/2020 9:36 PM, Richard Wolf, 5611K] The Supreme Court's conservative majority appeared unlikely Monday to give asylum seekers claiming fear of persecution abroad a federal court hearing to avoid quick removal from the United States. While the court's conservatives and liberals seemed divided on the question, a turning point came near the end of the one-hour oral argument when Chief Justice John Roberts said the case could lead to a "significant expansion" of new claims. "Anybody can get to a point of entry," Roberts said, prompting the lawyer representing Sri Lanka native Vijayakumar Thuraissigiam to acknowledge that about 9,500 asylum seekers fit the same category. Only 30 petitions for federal court hearings have been filed so far, American Civil Liberties Union attorney Lee Gelernt said. But Justice Department Deputy Solicitor General Edwin Kneedler said the figure is closer to 100 and warned of "the potential for a flood" of cases if the Supreme Court rules for Thuraissigiam. The case represents a crucial test of the Trump administration's effort to speed the removal of thousands of migrants without granting federal court hearings. The process is allowed under a law passed by Congress in 1996. The California-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit, which has drawn Trump's ire for its decisions on immigration, ruled last year that efforts to remove asylum seekers under such "expedited removal" procedures violated their constitutional rights. The Justice Department argues that extending the streamlined process could add years of court wrangling. After losing the case, the administration in July expanded the expedited removal system to incorporate asylum seekers apprehended anywhere in the country who have not been continuously present in the USA for two years. The case is one of several challenging the Trump administration's efforts to crack down on migrants seeking asylum after crossing the Mexican border. Just last Friday, a federal appeals court blocked the administration's policy of returning asylum seekers to Mexico to await court hearings, a practice immigrant rights advocates have denounced as inhumane and deadly. Last September, the justices temporarily upheld a different policy denying asylum to those who do not seek protection first from a country they pass through, such as Mexico. But in 2018, the Supreme Court temporarily blocked a policy aimed at denying asylum to migrants crossing the border illegally rather than at designated crossings. Plus, make sure you're registered to vote. 11 Trump's three-year crackdown on immigration has led to a surge in lawsuits reaching the Supreme Court, where a rebuilt conservative majority increasingly is paying dividends for him. In the past year, the justices also let the administration deter poor immigrants and redirect military funds to build a wall along the southern border. Federal officials' efforts to force cooperation from states and cities could be next. The high court has heard arguments in eight immigration cases since its term began in October, including a challenge to Trump's plan to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that has helped nearly 700,000 undocumented immigrants work without fear of deportation. The program was created by President Barack Obama in 2012 to help young, undocumented immigrants brought to the country as children. During oral argument in November, the court's conservative justices said the administration had ample policy reasons to end it. A ruling is expected by June, in the midst of the presidential election campaign. In Monday's case, Thuraissigiam was arrested 25 yards north of the Mexican border and immediately placed in expedited removal proceedings. Immigration officials determined that he did not have a credible fear of persecution, even though he is a member of Sri Lanka's Tamil ethnic minority that faces beatings and torture at the hands of the government. Gelernt told the justices that such asylum seekers "are removed too quickly. They're at the border (and) they can't find lawyers." Associate Justice Elena Kagan said Thuraissigiam had "the best kind of claim you can make" for a new hearing, and her liberal colleagues seemed to agree. But Associate Justice Samuel Alito said a ruling in his favor would be "far-reaching." U.S. Supreme Court conservatives lean toward Trump over rapid deportation (Reuters) Reuters [3/2/2020 12:53 PM, Andrew Chung, 5304K] Conservative U.S. Supreme Court justices appeared sympathetic on Monday toward a bid by President Donald Trump's administration to buttress its power to quickly deport illegal immigrants without court interference in a politically charged election-year case concerning one of Trump's signature issues. The justices heard arguments in the administration's appeal of a lower court ruling that a Sri Lankan asylum seeker - a farmer named Vijayakumar Thuraissigiam - had a right under the U.S. Constitution to have his case reviewed by a federal court. Conservative justices signaled support for the administration. Liberal justices appeared to back

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Thuraissigiam. The court has a 5-4 conservative majority including two justices appointed by Trump. The San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals last year concluded that in Thuraissigiam's case a federal law that largely stripped the power of courts to review quick 12 deportations - known as expedited removal - violated a provision of the Constitution called the suspension clause. Trump's administration contended the lower court's ruling would defeat the purpose of quick deportation and "impose a severe burden on the immigration system." Trump's hardline policies on immigration and deportation have been a centerpiece of his presidency and his bid for re-election on Nov. 3. The American Civil Liberties Union, representing Thuraissigiam, said the administration's arguments, if accepted by the court, could be used to deport millions of other illegal immigrants without meaningful judicial review. Thuraissigiam has said that as a member of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority he was tortured over his political ties and subjected to beatings and simulated drowning. 'CREDIBLE FEAR' He fled Sri Lanka in 2016 and was arrested in 2017 just north of the U.S. border between San Diego, California, and Tijuana, Mexico. He was placed on track for expedited removal, a system dating back to 1996 that makes an exception for immigrants who can establish a "credible fear" of persecution or torture in their home country. Officials rejected Thuraissigiam's claim of credible fear, short-circuiting the asylum process. He sought a federal court's review of what he contended were procedural errors and an incorrect legal standard used to assess his asylum bid. A judge threw out his case. Under immigration law, courts have jurisdiction only to ensure that the government is not deporting the wrong person. However, the 9th Circuit ruled that under the Constitution's suspension clause - relating to a person's ability to challenge confinement by the government - courts must have the power to review Thuraissigiam's claims. Conservative justices suggested that judicial review did not apply to Thuraissigiam's circumstances. Chief Justice John Roberts said that "humanitarian release" is not the same as what the Constitution protects. Justice Samuel Alito called Thuraissigiam's demands "far reaching." Liberal Justice Stephen Breyer said the purpose of judicial review has always been to ensure that a government officer has acted lawfully. The administration has said immigrants seeking admission do not have any constitutional rights and that the Constitution has historically never required access to the type of court review Thuraissigiam seeks. Since 2004, the federal government has applied expedited removal to illegal immigrants encountered within 100 miles (160 km) of the border and who had been in the country two weeks or less. Trump's administration has sought to greatly expand the program but has been blocked by a federal judge. The justices also heard a separate case challenging similar restrictions on federal appeals 13 courts to review deportations of non-citizens who have committed criminal offenses, if their claims that they would be tortured if returned to their home countries have been rejected. Ken Cuccinelli Was Illegally Appointed To Top Immigration Post, Judge Rules (Daily Caller) Daily Caller [3/2/2020 10:46 AM, Jason Hopkins, 566K] A federal judge ruled that Ken Cuccinelli was illegally appointed to lead a top immigration post last year, and invalidated some of his directives. Cuccinelli was illegally appointed by the Trump administration to head U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), according to a 55-page ruling issued Sunday by Judge Randolph Moss of the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. Moss, an Obama-appointed judge, also found that a directive launched under Cuccinelli, which hastens screening time for asylum seekers, should also be voided. President Donald Trump tapped Cuccinelli to lead USCIS — the agency under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that manages the country's legal immigration system — in June 2019. Cuccinelli, a former Virginia attorney general, was later named as acting DHS deputy secretary, making in the second most senior appointed official in the department. During his time at USCIS, Cuccinelli aggressively pushed the president's immigration agenda. While he no longer leads the day-to-day operations at the agency, he is still listed as the "Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; Director," on the USCIS website. Moss on Sunday ruled that Cuccinelli's appointment violated the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, finding that he was not actually eligible to become USCIS director because the position he initially assumed — the principal deputy — was not a "first assistant" job under the auspices of the 1998 law. "On the merits, the Court concludes that Cuccinelli was not lawfully appointed to serve as acting Director and that, as a result, he lacked authority to issue the reduced-time-to-consult and prohibition-on-extensions directives," Moss concluded in his ruling. Cuccinelli issued a directive in July that sped up the time the time asylum officers can interview and hear an individual case once they are detained — from 48 hours to one calendar day. Moss found that this order should be "set aside." During a Monday morning appearing on Fox News, Cuccinelli told the public to "expect an appeal" to the judge's ruling. "The only issue in the case is related to being the acting director at USCIS, and this ruling is really something of an outlier. This is a methodology that's been used in the past that's thought of as as legal on, you know, pretty broadly," Cuccinelli said on "Fox & Friends." "So you can expect an appeal, and we'll take intermediate steps to avoid any challenges, but it doesn't affect anything we're doing going forward and Joe Edlow [Cuccinelli's 14 successor] is there at the helm today." Cuccinelli added that, for the directives that have been invalidated, they will simply be reissued as a precautionary measure as the court case moves forward. Ken Cuccinelli appointment to citizenship office was illegal, judge rules (Washington Times) Washington Times [3/2/2020 10:40 AM, Stephen Dinan, 482K] The Trump

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administration illegally appointed Ken Cuccinelli to be head of the government's top citizenship agency, a federal judge ruled over the weekend, in a case that could undo some of the get-tough policies he helped put into place. Judge Randolph A. Moss, an Obama appointee to the district court in Washington, D.C., said the law lays out how the duties of the director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services are to be performed when the post is vacant — and installing someone from outside the agency isn't one of them. And since Mr. Cuccinelli was not legitimately able to serve as acting director, his moves to constrain the time for someone to pursue an asylum claim are now invalid, the judge ruled in a decision Sunday. Activists cheered the ruling, and said it calls into question everything Mr. Cuccinelli did since his June 2019 installment. "This ruling is a big win that confirms Ken Cuccinelli's installation and service as acting director of USCIS was unlawful," said Anne Harkavy, executive director of Democracy Forward. "This is both a victory for the rule of law and a significant blow to the Trump administration's xenophobic agenda." The immediate effect was to invalidate USCIS decisions against asylum claims from the plaintiffs in the case. Judge Moss ruled that since those decisions were made under rules issued by Mr. Cuccinelli, they couldn't stand. He ordered a redo at USCIS. The Trump administration had tried to install Mr. Cuccinelli in a new principal assistant post to the director, and then changed the succession rules to make that person the one that took over in time of a vacancy in the director's office. Just Moss said that was unprecedented. "There is no evidence that at any time prior to Cuccinelli's appointment did Congress or the Executive Branch imagine that an agency could create a new position after a vacancy arose; could then alter the agency's order of succession to treat that new position as the 'first assistant' to the vacant office; and could further specify that all would return to its original state once the … vacancy was filled," Judge Moss wrote. Mr. Cuccinelli now serves as acting deputy secretary at Homeland Security. The department said it disagreed with the judge's ruling. 15 'Expect an appeal': Cuccinelli rejects judge's ruling against his appointment (Politico) Politico [3/2/2020 1:03 PM, Quint Forgey, 2003K] Ken Cuccinelli, the acting director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, said Monday the administration would appeal a judge's ruling that his appointment by President Donald Trump violated federal law. "You can expect an appeal, and we'll take intermediate steps to avoid any challenges. But it doesn't affect anything we're doing going forward," Cuccinelli told Fox News. U.S. District Judge Randolph Moss decided Sunday that Trump's move to tap Cuccinelli as acting USCIS director last June under the title of "principal deputy director" constituted a breach of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, and therefore nullified the policies Cuccinelli implemented while leading the agency. Cuccinelli, who also was named the acting deputy secretary of the Department of Homeland Security in November, dismissed Moss' ruling Monday as "really something of an outlier" and defended his roles in the administration. "Ironically — because the succession for the deputy secretary of Homeland Security ties back to my official position as the principal deputy at USCIS — there's not a problem with me in my current position. The only issue in the case is related to being the acting director at USCIS," Cuccinelli said. "This is a methodology that's been used in the past," he continued, describing the statutory basis for his installation. "It's been thought of as legal on a — you know, pretty broadly." Cuccinelli also said his previous orders at USCIS would be "effectively reissued and validated" to ensure their authority in the wake of Moss' ruling. "That's just as a precautionary measure while an appeal goes forward. So it's — it'll be business as usual until this is played all the way out," he said. Cuccinelli refuses to leave DHS after judge finds he was illegally appointed to his prior role there (Washington Examiner) Washington Examiner [3/2/2020 1:04 PM, Anna Giaritelli, 570K] Ken Cuccinelli said he will not leave his post as acting deputy secretary at the Department of Homeland Security following a federal judge's ruling that he was illegally appointed to lead a department agency, a position that helped qualify him for his current role. "The succession for the deputy secretary of homeland security ties back to my official position as the principal deputy at USCIS [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services], there's not a problem with me at my current position," Cuccinelli said on Fox and Friends Monday after initially laughing at the news. "The only issue in the case is related to being the acting director at USCIS. And this ruling is really something of an outlier. This is a methodology that has been used in the past. It's been thought of as legal as — pretty broadly." A federal district court judge in Washington, D.C., ruled that Cuccinelli, who was acting director of the 19,000-person USCIS from last June until January, did not meet the 16 requirements in the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998 to have the job. The judge's decision deemed Cuccinelli's policy changes invalid, teeing up new legal troubles for the Trump administration. "You can expect to see those efficiently reissued ... and that's just as a precautionary measure as an appeal goes forward. It'll be business as usual until it's played all out," Cuccinelli said. Cuccinelli, a 51-year-old former attorney general from Virginia, said the legal order cannot prevent him from amending, creating, or ending immigration-related policies in his role. The Democracy Forward Foundation, a Washington-based legal services organization, created during Trump's first year in office, sued with other groups in September over Cuccinelli-pushed policies the group argued made it more difficult or impossible for some asylum seekers to have claims heard at the southwest border. Federal law experts told the Washington Examiner in October that they believed Cuccinelli's appointment to USCIS was illegitimate and, if successfully challenged, would mean

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the immigration policy changes he put into place would become defunct, including the public charge rule that barred immigrants who have used government financial assistance. Ken Cuccinelli to appeal judge's ruling his immigration post appointment is unlawful (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/2/2020 4:50 PM, UPI, 1973K] Ken Cuccinelli, who leads a top agency responsible for U.S. immigration requests, said Monday he would appeal a federal judge's ruling that he was unlawfully appointed to the post. U.S. District Judge Randolph Moss ruled Sunday that Cuccinelli was not lawfully appointed in June as acting director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Moss said the principal deputy role he assumed before taking the role was not the "first assistant" role listed under the Federal Vacancies Reform Act. "This ruling is really something of an outlier," Cuccinelli said Monday. "You can expect an appeal, and we'll take intermediate steps to avoid any challenges, but it doesn't affect anything we're doing going forward." Cuccinelli had issued directives under his tenure to reduce the time asylum-seekers in "credible fear" proceedings have to access legal counsel, and Moss said in his ruling those directives should also be nullified. Cuccinelli also told Fox News those policies would be "effectively reissued and validated" as a "precautionary measure" while the appeal goes forward. "It'll be business as usual until this is played all the way out," he said. Lawyers struggle to remotely represent asylum-seekers in 'Remain in Mexico' program (Public Radio International) 17 Public Radio International [3/2/2020 12:00 PM, Jack Herrera, 105K] The first time immigration attorney Christina Brown saw her client's face was the first time they appeared in court together in January — and even then, the two women weren't in the same room. Brown's client, Alicia, an asylum-seeker from Honduras, stood in a converted shipping container on the Mexican border. After being forced to wait for her US court date in northern Mexico, Alicia had come back to the border crossing, where US officials ushered her into a makeshift "tent court" connected to the US point of entry in Laredo, Texas. From there, a camera broadcast Alicia's fuzzy image onto a video-conferencing screen 150 miles away in San Antonio's immigration court, where Brown stood before a judge who would decide Alicia's fate. When Alicia spoke, Brown recognized her shaky voice: The two had spent months building Alicia's asylum case over the phone. "She had to tell me about terrible domestic violence, and terrible sexual assaults, and rape, and beatings, all over the phone," said Brown, who directs her own immigration law office in Denver, Colorado. "Can you imagine how hard it is to ask someone to talk about the worst details of their lives if you've never been able to look into their eyes, never been able shake their hand?" Alicia, who requested The World use a pseudonym to protect her identity, is caught in the Trump administration's unprecedented efforts to dismantle the United States' asylum system. Like some 60,000 other asylum-seekers, Alicia was forced back into Mexico after legally crossing the US border to request asylum. Under the year-old Migration Protection Protocols (MPP) program (better known as "Remain in Mexico") she now has to wait on the Mexican side of the border until her case gets resolved in the US court system. While the MPP was briefly blocked by a court injunction on Feb. 28, as of press time it was still in place, and Alicia was still in Mexico. Because of the MPP, many US immigration attorneys — most of them pro bono — have found themselves remotely representing asylum-seekers stuck hundreds of miles away in Mexican border towns. The attorneys say being unable to meet their clients in person introduces unprecedented difficulty to their jobs — and could violate clients' rights to due process under US law. They have difficulty staying in contact with clients. Some lawyers have even had to buy phones for their clients. And when clients do make it to court in the US, the newly instituted "video teleconference" courts on the border add new hurdles to an already tense situation. Attorneys told The World they are sometimes unable to hear their clients over the link. At least once, one attorney said, a judge requested a background fan be turned off on the asylum-seeker's side; the sound improved, but the heat was sweltering. Attorneys also worry about their clients' physical security. Under MPP, asylum-seekers are being sent back to some of the most dangerous cities in the hemisphere. In the last year, there have been hundreds of documented cases of returned asylum-seekers being kidnapped, raped, robbed, extorted or even murdered in northern Mexico. Pushing asylum-seekers across the border to Mexico has also meant pushing them away from US lawyers who could have otherwise represented them in US court. Representation rates have plummeted. Even before MPP, it was difficult for asylum-seekers to connect with a lawyer: In recent years, around 30% of asylum-seekers found representation. However, among asylum-seekers forced to wait in Mexico in the last year, less than 5% have found attorneys, according to research out of Syracuse University. Whether or not asylum-seekers find representation is often the difference between winning or losing their asylum cases. 18 Studies show that one's chances of gaining asylum go up by as much as 500% when they have a lawyer. Alicia only managed to call Brown because of a family connection: Brown had successfully represented Alicia's sister in her own asylum case years before. Most other asylum-seekers stuck in Mexico have not been as lucky. US Customs and Border Protection has given some asylum-seekers it returns to Mexico a slip of paper listing various US nonprofit legal aid hotlines. But many people don't have a phone or minutes to make the long-distance call. And among asylum-seekers who do manage to call, many report that the numbers they dial don't even ring. Because almost no US legal aid organizations have the resources or certification to operate in Mexico, most asylum seekers stuck south of the border have few ways to find lawyers. Brown said on their first call, Alicia sounded desperate. The Honduran mother did

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not fully understand what was happening: Why was she back in Mexico? Alicia and her daughter were sleeping on the floor of a church basement, alongside dozens of other asylum-seekers who were also stuck, homeless, in Nuevo Laredo, a notoriously dangerous border town. Alicia couldn't find a private place to talk when she called Brown. So, in a hoarse whisper, she unloaded her story over the phone, sometimes breaking into deep sobs as she told Brown about surviving rapes and severe beatings in Honduras. These were stories Alicia had never told anyone — not her sisters, not her own mother — and she had to recount them in a room full of strangers. Asylum attorneys say this is a common story: Their clients, even if they have access to a phone, often can't find a private place to speak. Prior to the MPP, Brown had always met with her clients in person, normally in the privacy of her office. In person, asylum attorneys can read their clients' body language. They can slow down when they notice a client shaking or crying. Many attorneys also keep coloring books or toys for client's children to play with to help distract them. On her phone calls with Alicia, Brown couldn't do any of that. Before MPP went into effect, it was rare for lawyers to represent clients entirely remotely. Today, even asylum attorneys who are used to the challenge of representing clients in US immigrant detention centers say that remotely representing clients in Mexico is unprecedented in its difficulty. "Listen, I don't want to minimize how difficult it is to represent someone in detention," said Rebecca Press, the legal director for UnLocal, a nonprofit legal aid organization for immigrants based in New York City. "But I can visit a client at a detention center in the morning and be back in my office by afternoon … I can also meet with them over a secure, private video conferencing link." That all changed when Press began representing a client forced to remain in Tijuana, Mexico, due to MPP. "It was drastically different," Press said. Even though she managed to visit Tijuana to meet with her client in person for their first meeting, she said, their meetup only lasted an hour or so. They had to build the rest of the case by phone. Press said the remote work made her anxious. Whenever her client didn't reply, she would stare at the messages marked "unread" and imagine the worst: Had her client been kidnapped, or killed? 19 Even when attorneys do manage to meet with clients in person in Mexico, difficulties persist. When Brown went to Ciudad Juárez to meet with prospective clients, she had to meet them in crowded shelters. Sometimes the power would go out, and Brown would sit in the dark on the floor, trying to find a way to help people feel comfortable enough to share their stories of violence and oppression. Attorneys have struggled to do the most basic parts of their jobs in foreign cities — for instance, finding places to securely print confidential documents. Most pro bono asylum attorneys don't have the funding or time to travel back and forth from Mexico to meet clients. There's also the issue of safety. When Brown took Alicia's case, she agonized over whether or not to visit her in Nuevo Laredo in Mexico. On the news, she saw footage of massive shootouts between the police and cartels. She said she felt guilty for feeling nervous: After all, her clients had to live in places like Nuevo Laredo — shouldn't she at least visit? But after more research, Brown made the difficult decision to represent Alicia remotely. While building the case, Alicia has endured significant threats of violence. On her bus ride to the border for her court date, Brown said, Alicia and her daughter narrowly escaped an attempted kidnapping. The dangers asylum seekers face in Mexico — and the difficulties attorneys face representing them there — form the basis of the major lawsuit against the MPP currently pending in federal court. In the lawsuit, Innovation Law Lab v. McAleenan, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Southern Poverty Law Center represent 11 asylum seekers, as well as six legal aid nonprofits who claim their "missions to provide representation to … asylum seekers" have been jeopardized by the MPP. According to the lawsuit, the asylumseekers have been placed in "danger ... and conditions that make it difficult if not impossible for them to prepare their cases." Less than a week after the MPP went into effect, Matthew Weisner — senior staff attorney for CARECEN, a San Francisco-based immigrant advocacy organization — became one of the first lawyers to try to represent a client remotely in Mexico. In late January 2019, Weisner was in Tijuana meeting with a new client: a Honduran asylum seeker who appears in the ACLU lawsuit under the pseudonym "Gregory Doe." Weisner said that in Tijuana, it quickly became clear that the new policy made it intolerably difficult for CARECEN to carry out its mission to represent Gregory. The attorney team had to buy him everything from lunch to a cell phone, and struggled to find places to meet in private. Lacking the funds to manage constant travel to Mexico, CARECEN joined the ACLU lawsuit to oppose the MPP. A year later, Gregory is still in Tijuana. However, Weisner still hopes they'll manage to get his client to safety in the US — either because of the success of his personal case, or because of the success of the ACLU lawsuit, currently in front of the Ninth Circuit. "I'm an optimist, and I'm hopeful things will work out for him one way or another," Weisner says. "You have to be willing to put forward the best effort." Shelters told to report any coronavirus cases among migrant children (CNN) 20 CNN [3/2/2020 3:27 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 5551K] The federal agency tasked with caring for unaccompanied migrant children told staff at shelters Monday that children who may have been exposed to or at risk from coronavirus must be flagged to the health division within four hours, according to an email obtained by CNN. Children found to be exposed to coronavirus and with symptoms of respiratory disease should also be isolated, the agency told shelters. Care providers are generally expected to have "an identified space within the shelter facility that may be used for quarantine or isolation" in that a

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child needs to be separated for a medical reason, according to the agency's website. The guidance sent out by the US Department of Health and Human Services's Office of Refugee Resettlement is indicative of the increased vigilance across the government amid concerns over coronavirus. The dispatch lists symptoms of coronavirus, the agency's response, and specific guidance to ORR care providers. The Office of Refugee Resettlement is responsible for migrant children who come to the United States without a parent or guardian. While in government custody, the children stay at shelters across the country. The Office of Refugee Resettlement told CNN in a statement last week that as of February 27, there have not been any suspected or confirmed COVID-19 (the novel coronavirus) disease cases among unaccompanied children in ORR care. There are around 3,600 children in care. An email went out to staff at those shelters Monday. "This guidance is based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations and is adapted for the [unaccompanied children] Program," the email says. "This is a rapidly evolving situation, and updated guidance may be released in the future, as necessary." An attached document says ORR's Division of Health for Unaccompanied Children is working with the Department of Homeland Security and Customs and Border Protection, among others, to monitor when an unaccompanied child "from a high-risk location as designated by CDC ... is initially referred to ORR care." Unaccompanied children apprehended at the southern border are taken into custody by the Department of Homeland Security and referred to Health and Human Services. The document also provides a breakdown of identification of risk and response, adding that "any child found to be at possible risk for COVID-19 based on travel history or contact with a known case must be flagged to [Division of Health for Unaccompanied Children] via email within 4 hours." Care providers are expected to observe children for signs or symptoms of communicable diseases, according to ORR's website. Facilities must also alert the agency about suspected or confirmed cases of such diseases. Lawmakers Propose Making E-Commerce Companies Liable for Counterfeits (New York Times) 21 New York Times [3/2/2020 6:21 PM, Alan Rappeport, 23673K] A group of bipartisan House lawmakers on Monday outlined a plan to stem the flow of counterfeit products from China and other countries into the United States by making ecommerce companies such as Amazon legally liable for fake goods sold on their websites. The proposed legislation was a rare show of bipartisanship in the House of Representatives, which has been sharply divided after the impeachment of President Trump. But frustration that large corporations are not doing enough to protect American consumers from the dangers of illicit products coming from China is an issue that has galvanized Republicans and Democrats alike. The bill, called the Shop Safe Act, would create trademark liability for companies selling counterfeit goods that pose risks to consumer health and safety, like drugs and medical products. It would also force companies to more rigorously vet sellers who operate on their platforms and to remove counterfeit listings and those who repeatedly sell knockoffs. "Consumer lives are at risk because of dangerous counterfeit products that are flooding the online marketplace," Representative Doug Collins, Republican of Georgia, said in a statement. "Congress must create accountability to prevent these hazardous items from infiltrating the homes of millions of Americans." Mr. Collins is co-sponsoring the bill with Representative Jerrold Nadler, the Democratic chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, along with Representative Martha Roby, an Alabama Republican, and Representative Hank Johnson, a Georgia Democrat. "Consumers should be able to trust that what they see and purchase online is what they will get, but counterfeiters continue to join platforms with ease and masquerade as reliable sellers in order to infect American households with dangerous and unsafe counterfeit products," Mr. Nadler said. He added that the legislation would "tackle the gaps" in the current vetting systems that e-commerce companies use. As part of the trade agreement between the United States and China this year, China said it would work to combat copyright infringement and counterfeiting on e-commerce websites by penalizing local merchants that repeatedly sell fake goods. Companies like Amazon have generally been exempt from legal liability for products sold by other merchants using their online platforms. However, Amazon acknowledged last year that "civil or criminal liability" for unlawful activities by its sellers was a risk. A report released this year by the Department of Homeland Security recommended placing a higher burden on e-commerce portals such as Amazon and Walmart.com by holding them liable for fake or illicit products sold by third-party sellers on their websites. Peter Navarro, the director of the White House Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy, who helped oversee the recommendations, has been critical of Amazon for profiting from counterfeits. He said in January that "under current lax interpretations of the law, ecommerce platforms face virtually no liability for their counterfeit trafficking." Mr. Navarro has been working, unsuccessfully, to set up meeting with Jeff Bezos, the chief executive of Amazon, to discuss counterfeit sales. 22 Amazon said at the time that its efforts to combat sales of counterfeits were "best in class," but it acknowledged that there was more work to be done. Mr. Collins said the proposed legislation would help Mr. Trump and Mr. Navarro achieve their goal of curbing counterfeits. The White House is expected to support the legislation, but its pathway in the Senate is unclear. In unveiling the bill, the lawmakers noted that the Government Accountability Office recently found that 20 of 47 items purchased from third-party sellers on popular consumer websites were counterfeit. Many of those products, which include car seats, airbags and baby formula, pose life-threatening risks. [AZ] U.S. Supreme Court

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Blocks Another Cross-Border Shooting Claim (Reuters) Reuters [3/2/2020 10:46 AM, Lawrence Hurley, 3020K] The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday threw out a lower court's ruling that had let the family of a slain 16-year-old Mexican boy pursue a civil rights lawsuit against a U.S. Border Patrol agent who shot the teenager from across the border in Arizona. The justices took the action in light of their ruling last Tuesday in a similar case in which they decided on a 5-4 vote to bar a lawsuit against another Border Patrol agent for fatally shooting a 15-year-old Mexican boy from across the border in Texas. Last week's ruling prevents civil rights lawsuits by foreign nationals in U.S. federal courts involving such cross-border incidents when the person who is injured or killed was not on American soil. The Supreme Court, with its conservative justices in the majority and its liberals in dissent, backed the position taken by President Donald Trump's administration in the case. In the Arizona case, Border Patrol Agent Lonnie Swartz killed Mexican citizen Jose Antonio Elena Rodriguez in 2012. Swartz was prosecuted criminally for the shooting but a jury acquitted him on one count and deadlocked on another in 2018. He faced a second trial later that year on a separate charge and was acquitted. Rodriguez had been walking down a street in Nogales, Mexico when Swartz, standing on an embankment on U.S. soil, fired through a border fence, striking the teenager about 10 times. Swartz said he acted in self-defense in response to a group of rock throwers, while Rodriguez's family said the teenager was walking peacefully. The San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals had ruled in 2018 that the lawsuit seeking damages for the killing could proceed. [AZ] Supreme Court sends Arizona cross-border shooting case of José Antonio Elena Rodriguez back to appeals court (USA Today) USA Today [3/2/2020 8:05 PM, Rafael Carranza, 5611K] The Supreme Court on Monday returned an Arizona cross-border shooting case to an appellate court in California to reconsider, a consequence of the high court's decision to dismiss charges in a similar case out of El Paso, Texas. The Supreme Court granted the petition in the lawsuit filed by Araceli Rodriguez, the mother 23 of slain teenager José Antonio Elena Rodriguez, against Border Patrol agent Lonnie Swartz. In doing so, the court's decision vacated the previous ruling in the case and remanded it to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco. The appellate court will now reconsider the lawsuit, based on the new legal precedent set by the Supreme Court. In a 5-4 decision, the high court on Feb. 25 tossed out a lawsuit against Texas border agent Jesus Mesa Jr. for shooting and killing 15-year-old Sergio Hernández Güereca across the U.S.-Mexico border fence from El Paso. Cross-border shooting:Supreme Court denies Mexican family's damages claim The conservative majority ruled that constitutional protections did not extend to the teen because he was in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, at the time of the shooting, even though Mesa shot him from the U.S. side. Elena Rodriguez, 16, was slain in a 2012 shooting in Ambos Nogales. Luis Parra, the attorney for Elena Rodriguez's family, said Monday's decision to remand the Arizona case was expected after last week's ruling. He will meet later this week with the family, as well as other members of the legal team, including the American Civil Liberties Union. "We're still fully analyzing the decision for purposes of determining whether ... it closes the case entirely," he said. "But yeah, it does have a huge impact for us, and it does close one avenue of seeking a remedy on behalf of the Elena Rodriguez family." Attorneys for Hernández Güereca's family argued in court that a 1971 Supreme Court decision allowed them to sue Mesa for unreasonable use of force under the Fourth Amendment and for violating the teenager's due process rights under the Fifth Amendment. Rodriguez's lawsuit made similar arguments in the Nogales shooting. But because the Supreme Court dismissed those arguments, Parra said they will no longer be able to rely on those, when the 9th Circuit reconsiders the case. Two separate juries in Tucson acquitted the border agent of murder and manslaughter charges in two separate trials in 2018, six years after the Oct. 10, 2012, deadly shooting. Confusion on the border:Court halts Trump's 'Remain in Mexico' rule then reverses itself The ACLU filed a civil lawsuit on behalf of Araceli Rodriguez in 2014. In between the two criminal trials, a panel of judges from the 9th Circuit in San Francisco ruled that Swartz didn't have immunity from prosecution and allowed the family's suit to proceed. That decision, which the Supreme Court vacated on Monday, was at odds with a ruling from the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that twice had dismissed the Hernandez Güereca case. In ruling that Hernández Güereca's family couldn't seek damages against Mesa for the 24 2010 shooting in El Paso, the Supreme Court majority found the family's claim had "foreign relations and national security implications." The court also pointed out that Congress hasn't authorized any legislative avenues for claims over the cross-border conduct of federal agents. That could be a potential avenue for the family to move forward, Parra said. "The family intends to continue seeking justice, whatever means possible," he said. "And if that includes ... seeking a legislative means of pursuing civil liability in this cross-border extraterritorial contact, then they will do it." [WA] Washington county declares state of emergency as coronavirus death toll rises (ABC News) ABC News [3/2/2020 11:06 PM, Morgan Winsor andIvan Pereira, 2182K] A viral outbreak that began in China has since spread to every continent across the globe except Antarctica, infecting nearly 90,000 people. Although the spread of the novel coronavirus appeared to be slowing down in China, it has picked up speed elsewhere in the world, including in the United States. Here's the breakdown on this developing situation. All times are Eastern. 11 p.m. State officials announce first two cases in Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp and officials with the Georgia Department of Public Health announced Monday night that two Fulton County

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residents are Georgia's first COVID-19 cases. The residents live in the same household, and one recently returned from Italy, one of a handful of countries where the epidemic is strongest. Both have mild symptoms and have been isolated at home with other relatives to keep the illness from spreading, officials said. 7 p.m. NY governor pushes insurers to waive coronavirus related fees Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced a new directive Monday night that requires New York state health insurers to waive the cost to their clients for any procedure related to testing for coronavirus, including emergency room, urgent care and office visits. The state's Medicaid recipients will not be expected to pay or co-pay for any COVID-19 related testing, under the directive. 6:45 p.m. Airlines to ask passengers about travel history Airlines are being instructed by the federal government to ask if their U.S.-bound passengers have visited China or Iran in the last two weeks, according to the Transportation Security Administration. Carriers are encouraged to look through reservations and passport stamps if necessary, agency officials said. 25 If a passenger traveled to one of those countries in the last 14 days, they will have to enter through one of the 11 airports designated by the Department of Homeland Security where they will be screened for the virus. 6:03 p.m. Pence provides updates from White House Vice President Mike Pence and members of the federal coronavirus task force updated the nation about ongoing efforts to contain the COVID-19 outbreak in the U.S. He reassured that Americans despite the rise in the number of cases and deaths over the last few days, the risk to Americans remains low. Pence said he is coordinating with local and state leaders to ensure they all have the best resources and tools. "We're ready for anything, but this is an all hands on deck effort," he said. There are currently no plans to restrict travel within the United States, but Pence said there will be 100% screening for people who travel to the U.S. from Italy and South Korea. 5: 50 p.m. Trump touts additional travel restrictions President Trump told reporters there would be additional travel restrictions to countries with ongoing outbreaks, but he didn't provide specifics. "We're doing that, we've already done it with three countries in addition to China," he said. 5: 31 p.m. U.S. State Department announces $37 million in aid U.S. officials announced Monday evening that the U.S. will provide $37 million to the World Health Organization and other health programs to deal with the coronavirus. This is the first batch of $100 million that the U.S.Department of State pledged last month. The funding will help efforts in several countries including Afghanistan, Nepal, Nigeria and Thailand, according to the Department of State. 4:33 p.m. Delta waives fees for flight bookings Delta Airlines announced it will waive change fees for all flights booked in March to any international destination. On Sunday, American Airlines announced it would waive change fees for flights booked between March 1 and March 16. JetBlue will waive change and cancellation fees for customers who book flights up until March 11. 4 p.m. Dow snaps losing streak with 1,200-point gain The U.S. stock market posted major gains Monday afternoon following the worst week of trading since the 2008 financial crisis. The Dow Jones Industrial Average surged more than 1,200 points, or 5%, for the biggest single-day percentage gain since March 2009. 26 Last week, the Dow lost more than 3,500 points, or roughly 12%, due to coronavirus concerns. The S&P 500 index rose 135 points, or 4.6%, to 3,089 on Monday and the Nasdaq added 384 points, or 4.5%, to 8,952. 3:30 p.m. Feds say no staffer sent to China has tested positive The U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services said none of its staffers who were involved with bringing back ex-pats from China were exposed to the virus, but that it is investigating claims made by a whistleblower that alleged they weren't properly trained and didn't wear any protection. "The 14-day window for the virus to manifest itself has long since passed and no [Administration for Children and Families] employee has become ill with COVID-19," an HHS spokesperson said. HHS said it wouldn't mandate testing for those employees, but that the agency would provide testing kits to any one of those staffers who request one. 3:15 p.m. Inside New York state's coronavirus testing facility New York State's Department of Health gave ABC News inside access into the Wadsworth Lab in Albany, where health officials are currently testing coronavirus cases. The facility confirmed the state's first positive case over the weekend, a medical professional who returned from a trip to Iran last week. 2:30 p.m. 4 deaths reported in Washington King County, Washington, declared a state of emergency after it revealed it had 14 confirmed cases of the virus, which resulted in five deaths in the county. Dr. Jeff Duchin, the health officer for the state's Department of Public Health, said among the newly reported deaths are a man and woman in their 70s who had underlying conditions. They were residents of LifeCare, a nursing facility that had several confirmed cases and one previous death, according to Duchin. The nursing facility's residents and staff are currently being tested for the virus. A woman in her 80s who was hospitalized Sunday night also succumbed to the virus, according to Duchin. Health officials in neighboring Snohomish County also announced they had a coronavirusrelated death. There are now six total deaths related to the coronavirus in the U.S., all in Washington state. 2:00 p.m. More confirmed cases in different states 27 Health officials in California, Florida and Oregon confirmed more cases in their states on Monday afternoon. The Santa Clara Public Health Department announced Monday that two men were diagnosed with the virus, the eighth and ninth cases recorded in that area. One of the men had no relevant travel history while the second patient did travel to another affected nation, the health department said. Both men are currently under home isolation. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and Dr. Scott Rivkees, the state's surgeon General, provided more information about the two positive cases

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in their state. One of the patients was a 60year-old Manatee County resident who had no recent travel history to affected countries. The man is currently hospitalized in stable condition, Rivkees said. The second patient is a woman in her 20s from Hillsborough County who recently returned from a trip to Italy, the state surgeon general said. She is currently isolated in her home. So far, 23 Florida residents have been tested for the virus and the state is monitoring 184 people who may have symptoms, the governor said. [Editorial note: consult source link for extended commentary] [Mexico] Mexico speeds up extraditions of cartel bosses to U.S (Reuters) Reuters [3/2/2020 3:38 PM, Diego Ore, 5304K] The government of Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has stepped up extraditions of suspected drug cartel leaders to the United States, official data shows, as Washington presses for increased bilateral cooperation on security. Last year, Mexico's government extradited 58 people wanted in the United States, according to figures from the attorney general's office seen by Reuters. By Feb. 21, Mexico had already sent 30 people across the border in 2020, the figures showed. "Mexico has reiterated the need to implement a new approach to reduce the access to weapons and the financing capabilities of criminal organizations that operate in our country as a result of the exorbitant profits resulting from drug trafficking into a restricted market, and with very large arsenals that are mostly, around 70% trafficked from the U.S.," Mexico's foreign ministry told Reuters. "The Mexican government has expressed its willingness to cooperate with the United States under the aforementioned understanding that the security of the region is a shared responsibility," the ministry said, adding the extraditions comply with Mexico's legal framework and respond to the national interest. The latest extraditee was Ramon Villarreal, aka "El Mon", a senior figure in the Beltran Leyva Cartel, who was flown out at the weekend to be tried in Texas for the murder of a lawyer of incarcerated former Gulf Cartel boss Osiel Cardenas. Based in northwest Mexico, the Beltran Leyva Cartel was once allied to the Sinaloa Cartel 28 of kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, now in a U.S. prison. The two gangs later became bitter enemies. U.S. President Donald Trump has pushed Mexico to increase cooperation in the fight against drug gangs, especially since the massacre of nine U.S-Mexican women and children in northern Mexico by suspected cartel hitmen last November. Early this year, Mexico drafted a judicial reform including measures that would have made it harder for lawyers to delay extraditions of clients to the United States. That draft bill met with heavy criticism from the opposition and civil society groups, and a far less radical reform proposal was ultimately put forward. In 2017, Mexico extradited 57 people to the United States and 69 the following year, official data show. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Serious health care lapses found in U.S. detention center housing transgender migrants (Reuters) Reuters [3/2/2020 7:18 AM, Mica Rosenberg, Ted Hesson, 3020K] Federal inspections of the U.S. government's only dedicated detention unit for transgender immigrants last year found hundreds of unanswered requests for medical attention, poor quarantine procedures and deficient treatment for mental illnesses and other chronic diseases, Reuters has learned. Details of the inspections of the transgender unit at the Cibola County Correctional Center in New Mexico, which have not been reported previously, were contained in internal reports from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) health corps and a U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) civil rights office. The problems, which led to the transfer of all detainees to other facilities in January, were described to Reuters by congressional aides who were briefed on the documents and spoke on condition of anonymity. The reports come to light as Democrats in Congress accuse ICE of not living up to the agency's own standards for caring for detained transgender immigrants. April Grant, an ICE spokeswoman, did not comment directly on the specifics outlined by the congressional aides but confirmed that a December 2019 report by the ICE health corps found "several health care-related deficiencies" at the center, such as failing to complete laboratory orders or arrange for HIV patients to see infectious disease specialists within 30 days of arrival. Grant said many of those problems were addressed in December, for instance by speeding up backlogged lab orders and educating staff on detention standards and medication policies. However, the concerns led to the transfer of all of the approximately two dozen detainees in the transgender unit, as well as other chronically ill detainees in the general population. 29 About half were sent to a facility Aurora, Colorado, and the others to one in Tacoma, Washington, according to transgender detainees, former detainees and their advocates. At Cibola, some told Reuters, detainees had made desperate attempts to get adequate care. "Every time we felt sick the first step was to raise a request, but they never answered," said Kelly Aguilar, a 23-year-old transgender woman from Honduras who said she had been detained at Cibola for two years before being transferred to Aurora. "When people had fevers, headaches, stomach problems, we just tried to help each other by giving sips of water or buying pills in the commissary, but a lot of times we didn't have money." ICE was not able to immediately comment on individual cases described in this story. Amanda Gilchrist, a spokeswoman for CoreCivic Inc (CXW.N), the private prison company that operates Cibola and holds immigrant detainees under an ICE contract, said the company was "committed to providing a safe environment for transgender detainees" including training staff about preventing abuse and harassment. A DEBATE IN CONGRESS Revelations about the medical concerns at Cibola come as Democrats in Congress are scrutinizing care for the approximately 100 self-identified transgender detainees in U.S. facilities, a small portion of migrants in immigration custody. Many are

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awaiting resolution of asylum claims. Democratic lawmakers are pushing ICE to enforce the agency's existing detention standards for transgender immigrants laid out in a 2015 memo. The memo, signed by former ICE Director Thomas Homan during the Obama administration, offers such protections as allowing immigrants to be housed according to their gender identity (transgender women with other women, for instance), as well as to be given access to medically necessary hormone therapy and mental health care. Homan told Reuters it had proven difficult to find facilities willing to modify their contracts to adopt the transgender care standards. Currently none have done so. Some ICE facilities, like Cibola, are operated by private prison companies. Others are run by federal, state or local governments. In December, Democrats directed ICE, in legislative guidance that accompanied a spending package, to adhere to the memo - but ICE rebuffed the request at the end of January, according to a congressional aide. The legislative guidance from Democrats is "not legally binding upon the agency," according to an ICE statement that was provided to Congress and seen by Reuters. Legislative guidance accompanying spending bills is commonly followed by government agencies, former federal officials and legal experts say. Grant said several of the country's more than 200 immigration detention centers have "informally" implemented aspects of the 2015 memo. She said ICE is continuing to look for 30 facilities willing to run a dedicated transgender housing unit and "remains optimistic that some locations will sign the formal contract modification." Sharita Gruberg from the Washington D.C.-based liberal nonprofit Center for American Progress, one of the groups that filed complaints with ICE about the treatment of transgender detainees, said the transfers only shuffled the problems to other facilities. "Congress is asking ICE to adopt its own standards for care," she said. But "instead of complying with their own standards and complying with congressional direction, they went with secret option number three of just transferring (detainees) to other private prisons." Since taking office in 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump has rolled back protections for transgender people in the U.S. military, public schools and federal prisons. Trump also has made an immigration crackdown - including increased detention of unauthorized immigrants - an important part of his presidency and his 2020 re-election campaign. FROM HOPE TO DISAPPOINTMENT ICE opened the dedicated transgender unit at Cibola in 2017 after a similar facility in California ended its contract with the agency. Some detainees told Reuters that arriving at Cibola initially seemed a respite, allowing them to live among others like them, without the fear of abuse they had suffered in their home countries and other U.S. detention centers. Zsa Zsa, a 54-year-old Jamaican who asked that her last name be withheld, said that after stints at ICE facilities in the general population of male detainees in San Diego and El Paso, she felt safer at Cibola. But soon, she said, she came to believe that the medical care in Cibola was "very poor." She said she repeatedly tried and failed to get a specific medication to control her high blood pressure, becoming dizzy from lack of treatment. Honduran detainee Shantell Hernandez, 29, said she had asked repeatedly for hormones at Cibola, but to no avail. It took her transfer to detention in Washington to get the medication she said she needed. Before that, she said, "They never gave them to me." [NY] Lawsuit charges ICE is illegally detaining immigrants before hearings (Politico) Politico [3/2/2020 12:49 AM, Erin Durkin, 2003K] Immigration and Customs Enforcement has been illegally keeping virtually all the immigrants it arrests in the state locked up before they get a court hearing, according to a federal lawsuit filed by civil liberties groups. The New York Civil Liberties Union and Bronx Defenders brought the class-action suit against the immigration agency in federal court in Manhattan. They charge that under the Trump administration, ICE's New York field office has adopted a policy of jailing people while they await immigration hearings, rather than releasing them on bond or their own recognizance as was commonly done in the past. 31 "ICE has secretly decided to detain thousands of New Yorkers unlawfully, inflicting enormous and entirely unnecessary harms," said Amy Belsher, a staff attorney at the NYCLU. When someone is arrested on a civil immigration offense, the law requires ICE officers to make an individualized decision about whether they should be detained while waiting to go before a judge, based on whether they're a flight risk or threat to public safety. From 2013 until June 2017, 47 percent of immigrants deemed to be low-risk were released ahead of their court hearings, according to data obtained by the NYCLU after filing a separate lawsuit under the Freedom of Information Act to get the records. From June 2017 to September 2019, the number released plunged to 3 percent. "The federal government's sweeping detention dragnet means that people who pose no flight or safety risk are being jailed as a matter of course — in an unlawful trend that is getting worse," the lawsuit says. "Once denied release under the new policy, people remain unnecessarily incarcerated in local jails for weeks or even months before they have a meaningful opportunity to seek release in a hearing before an Immigration Judge," the lawsuit states. "While waiting for those hearings, those detained suffer under harsh conditions of confinement akin to criminal incarceration." The plaintiffs blame changes to a risk assessment algorithm in use since 2013, which considers factors like a person's family ties, how long they've been in the country and whether they have a criminal history before recommending that they be detained, released on bond or released on their own recognizance. But in 2017, the assessment was changed so that it cannot produce a recommendation for release, lawyers said. "ICE is legally required to make individual assessments and cannot outsource its statutory and constitutional duties to a rigged algorithm," said Belsher. The number of detainees has

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exploded as the Trump administration targets more immigrants for deportation, according to the suit. The number of people with no criminal convictions arrested in New York spiked 414 percent by the end of 2018, compared with 2016. Ahead of their hearings — where the average wait time ranges from several weeks to three months — immigrants arrested by the New York field office are incarcerated at one of three jails in New Jersey or at the Orange County Correctional Facility in New York. The lead plaintiff in the suit is Jose Velesaca, who was arrested in January after more than a decade in the United States. He's currently locked up at the Orange County Correctional Facility, where the suit says he is suffering from severe anxiety, as well as diabetes. "Being detained is almost unbearable for Mr. Velesaca. He feels sad, hopeless, and trapped. He is so desperate to get out that at times he has seriously considered giving up his immigration case and being deported just to get out of detention," the suit says. An estimated 1,800 people who would have been eligible for release were instead detained 32 in 2018, and another 760 were detained in the first nine months of 2019. The suit asks a judge to order ICE to do individualized custody decisions for each detainee and release those who are eligible because they aren't a flight risk or danger to the community. ICE declined to comment on pending litigation, but confirmed it changed its risk assessment tool in 2017 to remove the recommendation for release. The change was made in order to comply with an executive order demanding a crackdown on illegal immigration, officials said. [NY] De Blasio ignoring ICE pleas for cooperation on illegal immigrant criminals, official says (FOX News) FOX News [3/2/2020 3:22 PM, Adam Shaw, 8943K] New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio has ignored a plea by federal immigration authorities to cooperate with them on keeping criminal illegal immigrants off the streets, an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) official told Fox News on Monday -- part of a continued stalemate between the Trump administration and liberal cities on the matter. "It is disappointing that we have not heard from the mayor's office since the letter was delivered on February 13. In the last three weeks alone, ICE has arrested 112 criminal aliens and public safety threats released by the city under the Bail Reform Act," a senior ICE official said, referring to a controversial law enacted by New York State reducing bail use. "This is about public safety, not politics. For the safety of all New Yorkers, ICE implores the mayor's office to find a way to help us help them." In the letter, acting Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director Matt Albence wrote to the Democratic mayor, calling for greater cooperation between his city and ICE on crime. "Although immigration policy remains an issue that is subject to vigorous debate in our country, the need for federal and local enforcement to cooperate to ensure that criminals are kept off the streets should not be a polarizing subject," Albence said. "New York City officials and ICE still share a common mission: keeping the communities that depend on us safe." In the letter, Albence requests "that you reconsider the range of ordinances, orders, practices, and policies that New York City has put in place that make it harder for the law enforcement officers who serve both New York City and ICE to carry out its respective duties." He also requests that de Blasio contact him if he wishes to discuss the matter further. But ICE says that there has been silence from Hizzoner since that letter was sent. The letter was sent the same week de Blasio described ICE as an "illegitimate force" after an ICE officer was attacked while trying to serve a deportation order on an illegal immigrant in New York City. "This is about ICE acting as a wing of the Donald Trump campaign committee. This is about demonizing immigrants and people of color. That's what's really going on here," he said on a local radio show. 33 De Blasio has taken a far-left stance when it comes to immigration enforcement and stood firm on continuing New York City's "sanctuary" policies. Such policies limit local cooperation with immigration authorities and bars law enforcement from complying with ICE detainers -- requests that ICE be alerted when an illegal immigrant is being released from local custody. The dangers of such a policy were highlighted by the case of Maria Fuertes, a 92-year-old who was sexually assaulted and killed, allegedly by an illegal immigrant who had been released from custody in November despite an ICE detainer. "The tragedy in all of this is the fact that this could have been avoided, had there been no sanctuary law," her granddaughter Daria Ortiz said at an emotional speech last month. "The tragedy is my grandmother is not ever going to be here again." Proponents of sanctuary cities have argued that it makes communities safer by encouraging illegal immigrant victims of crime or witnesses to cooperate with law enforcement. "The Trump administration's scare tactics destroy trust in law enforcement. The day our police ask for immigration status is the day people stop reporting crimes & sharing information. It's the day we stop being the safest big city in America. We won't let that happen," de Blasio said in January. In his letter to de Blasio, Albence noted that ICE's New York City Enforcement and Removals Office issued detainers on 7,526 subjects who had criminal histories including 3,500 assaults, 1,500 DUIs, 1,000 sex crimes, 1,000 weapons offenses, 500 robberies and 200 homicides. "However, ICE's data show that during the same period, at least 4,000 detainers were declined, and our local leadership advises that New York City actually honored just 25 detainers," he wrote. He also called the claims that ICE would arrest crime victims who are cooperating with them "a blatant falsehood." "The individuals we seek your assistance in keeping off the streets are the perpetrators of crime in your city's custody, and not those who have been victimized by criminal aliens," he wrote. The ICE boss went on to take aim at de Blasio's angry rhetoric regarding federal law enforcement. "For the good of the communities we are sworn to serve, I implore you to cease the inflammatory

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rhetoric which does nothing to help the people of your city, and instead, work with us for the greater good of all," he said. "There should be nothing divisive about ICE exercising its federal law enforcement authority on the exact same individuals upon whom NYPD has exercised its own authority." The letter, and de Blasio's dismissal of it, come amid a sustained battle on immigration between New York as a whole and the Trump administration. The Department of Homeland Security ended New York's participation in Global Entry and 34 other such programs last month after New York's Green Light Law -- which grants illegal immigrants drivers' licenses -- went into effect, citing a measure that excludes state DMV agencies from sharing information with federal immigration authorities. [NY] Illegal immigrant tried to head-butt ICE agent after being tasered, federal prosecutors say (Washington Examiner) Washington Examiner [3/2/2020 11:45 AM, Emma Colton, 570K] Federal prosecutors in New York said an illegal immigrant from Mexico tried to head-butt an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer after being tasered during an arrest in New York. Luis Estrada-Alvarez, 31, has repeatedly entered the country illegally and been deported, according to authorities. He is now facing federal charges for forcibly assaulting and resisting ICE deportation officers. "Estrada-Alvarez caused bodily injury to two of the deportation officers," officer Martin Shaft Jr. wrote in a complaint. "One suffered injuries to his left arm and right knee and the other suffered injuries to his right shoulder, elbow and wrist." ICE officers were attempting to arrest the illegal immigrant in western New York on Feb. 19 when he tried running away. That's when authorities used a taser on his leg, according to a complaint filed in court with the charges. During the scuffle, Estrada-Alvarez attempted to head-butt one of the officers. He was eventually handcuffed and taken to the Buffalo Federal Detention Facility. Estrada-Alvarez told authorities he had a history of illegally entering the country and being deported. In 2008, he was deported after being arrested in Richmond, Virginia. He managed to get back into the country but was deported twice again in 2016. His charges could land him in prison for up to 20 years if convicted. [IL] Sanctuary Illinois: Illegal Alien Felon Allegedly Sexually Assaulted 3-Year-Old Girl in McDonald's Bathroom (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/2/2020 9:19 PM, John Binder, 1973K] An illegal alien felon was arrested after allegedly sexually assaulting a three-year-old girl in a McDonald's bathroom after being repeatedly freed into the public by the sanctuary state of Illinois. Christopher Puente, a 34-year-old illegal alien from Mexico, was charged in Chicago with one count of predatory criminal sexual assault after he allegedly locked himself in a McDonald's bathroom stall with a three-year-old girl and proceeded to sexually assault her, according to law enforcement. Puente allegedly admitted to Cook County prosecutors that on February 24, he lured the three-year-old girl into a men's bathroom stall in McDonald's before placing her on his lap, pulling off her pants, and covering her mouth as he sexually assaulted her. 35 At the time, the three-year-old girl's father was in the stall next door with the victim's brother. Police said the girl's father heard his daughter in the stall crying out "daddy daddy" before he began trying to unlock the stall door to rescue her. When the girl's father could not get the stall door open, he grabbed her legs from under the stall and pulled her away from Puente, police said, then brought the girl and her brother to their mother in their car outside. Two days after the alleged sexual assault, Puente was arrested by the Chicago Police Department thanks to surveillance footage at the McDonald's. Puente has a long criminal history in the U.S. after first illegally crossing the southern border sometime before 2011. Puente has two felony convictions for burglary in 2011 and 2017 and was convicted of forgery in 2012. While crossing the Texas-Mexico border in Brownsville in December 2014, Puente was confronted by U.S. Border Patrol agents and claimed to be an American citizen, giving them a fraudulent birth certificate. At the time, Puente was already a convicted felon in the U.S. In March 2017, Puente failed to show up to his court date for an immigration hearing. The judge subsequently ordered him deported from the U.S. though he had been freely living in the sanctuary state of Illinois. In June 2019, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency requested that Puente be turned over to them following his arrest for theft. Instead, the sanctuary state of Illinois released Puente back into the general public. Since Puente's arrest for child sexual assault, ICE officials have once again requested the illegal alien be turned over to their custody should he be released from Cook County Jail at any time. Citizenship and Immigration Services [FL] E-Verify proposals advance to Florida House, Senate floors (San Francisco Chronicle) San Francisco Chronicle [3/2/2020 5:10 PM, Bobby Caina Calvan, AP, 1670K] Florida lawmakers advanced dueling proposals to require employers to check the eligibility of their employers to work in the United States, a key policy priority being pushed by Gov. Ron DeSantis who wants all employers in his state to use a federal database known as EVerify. With immigration continuing to cleave the country, Republicans who take a hard line against illegal immigration, such as the governor, have clashed with some of their usual business allies — particularly the tourism, construction and agriculture industries — who have opposed E-Verify proposals as too onerous. Immigration has been a priority of the Republican governor, who is urging his fellow Republicans in the Legislature, who control both chambers both the House and Senate, to adopt a sweeping measure that would require all employers — both public and private — to use the E-Verify system to check on the legal status of workers. 36 "I know this is a difficult issue for the Senate. It conjures up issues that divide us on immigration, and I'm sorry for that," said the Sen. Tom Lee, a Republican who is sponsoring the Senate E-Verify proposal. "I don't think it's

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reasonable for Florida to sit on the sidelines to wait for the federal government to act," Lee said. While Republican lawmakers last year joined DeSantis in his freshman year as governor in advancing a ban against so-called sanctuary cities to prevent local governments from giving safe harbor to people who are in the country illegally. But the Legislature declined then to approve an E-Verify bill, partly because key lawmakers — including some top Republicans — expressed concern that the proposal would be a burden to business. Critics of E-Verify say the system remains riddled with outdated and inaccurate data. "E-Verify is not ready for prime time," said Sen. Jose Javier Rodriguez, a Democrat. The federal government has not made the matter a priority, he said, so "why would we in the state of Florida." The governor may be poised to score a victory if his allies in the Legislature can reach a consensus in the dwindling days of this year's legislative session, which is scheduled to end next week. As it stands, both chambers agree on requiring government agencies — including state, counties, cities and other public entities — to use the E-Verify system, an electronic portal operated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. That requirement would also apply to private contractors who do work for those public agencies. The Senate version would require private employers with at least 50 employers to require to use an online database to verify whether a new hire is eligible to work in the United States. Smaller companies would have an option to use an alternative method sanctioned by the state Department of Economic Opportunity. The House version would be less stringent on private employers in using E-Verify, allowing private companies to require new employees to show a list of federally acceptable documents to prove their eligibility to work in the country. [China] U.S. Limits Chinese Staff at News Agencies Controlled by Beijing (New York Times) New York Times [3/2/2020 4:49 PM, Lara Jakes and Marc Tracy, 23673K] The Trump administration on Monday limited to 100 the number of Chinese citizens who may work in the United States for five state-controlled Chinese news organizations. The decision is expected to escalate tensions between Washington and Beijing in a diplomatic feud that has caught journalists in the crossfire. The State Department insisted that it was not expelling Chinese journalists, a step that Beijing took last month against three Wall Street Journal reporters — the first time foreign correspondents had been ordered to leave China since 1998. But the new limits could, in effect, force Chinese citizens to leave if their visas allowing them 37 to work in the United States are tied to the news organizations that must now choose which employees will remain on assignment in the United States. In a statement, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the United States would not restrict the content of what the five organizations report — a contrast to what he described as increased surveillance, harassment and intimidation of foreign journalists in China. "Our goal is reciprocity," Mr. Pompeo said. "As we have done in other areas of the U.S.China relationship, we seek to establish a long-overdue level playing field. It is our hope that this action will spur Beijing to adopt a more fair and reciprocal approach to U.S. and other foreign press in China." It was the latest in the tit-for-tat statecraft that has become a hallmark of the strategic rivalry between the United States and China, encompassing trade, military and cybersecurity confrontations, tensions over human rights and the coronavirus epidemic. In an episode last fall, the Trump administration expelled two Chinese officials who trespassed on an important military base in Virginia, evading the authorities until fire trucks blocked their car. People close to China's embassy in Washington described it as an accident by officials who got lost while sightseeing. The restriction announced on Monday applies only to Chinese citizens working at five news organizations that the State Department deemed propaganda outlets controlled by the government in Beijing. It requires the five organizations — Xinhua, CGTN, China Radio, China Daily and People's Daily — to limit the number of Chinese employees in the United States to 100, collectively. More than half — 59 — have been allocated to Xinhua, China's official news agency. Currently, about 160 Chinese citizens work in the United States for those news outlets, meaning that 60 must either leave by the time the new policy takes effect on March 13 or ensure they have a visa that will allow them to stay. Senior State Department officials said the five organizations would have broad authority to decide who on staff — whether journalists, managers or other employees — would remain. The officials said the move was not a result of any specific information or content that the five organizations have published or broadcast. Instead, two senior State Department officials said, the new limits seek to punish Beijing for what they described as systematic stifling of press freedoms against foreign reporters in China. The two officials briefed reporters on condition of anonymity as required under State Department protocol. Separately, a senior official said the Trump administration might soon limit how long the media visas allow Chinese journalists to stay in the United States. The State Department officials would not discuss what steps China might take in retaliation. Beyond the expulsions of the Journal reporters, the Chinese government has repeatedly allowed the visas of foreign correspondents whose work is perceived as unfriendly to lapse, forcing them to leave the country. A report released Monday by the Foreign Correspondents' Club of China pointed to another 38 Wall Street Journal journalist who in the past year was in effect forced to leave. He had written about potential ties between organized crime and a cousin of President Xi Jinping of China. The report said that in at least five other cases, the Chinese government had similarly declined to renew resident journalists' long-term visas. Reporters formerly from Al Jazeera English and The Guardian confirmed to The New York Times that the government had declined to grant them new visas, without

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explanation, ending for all intents and purposes their careers as journalists in China. The journalists report, titled "Control, Halt, Delete: Reporting in China Under Threat of Expulsion," also focused on what it characterized as a ramped-up practice of issuing truncated long-term visas — ones that must be renewed after a short period in an onerous process that also implicates visa-holders' family members in the country. The report called this a means of harassing journalists and sending the not-so-subtle message that the Chinese government was displeased with their reporting, whether it concerned Mr. Xi, protests in Hong Kong or the treatment of ethnic minorities. In all, the report concluded, at least a dozen correspondents received visas for six months or less in 2019, compared with five the year before. The standard length for a long-term journalist visa in China, known as a J-1, is one year. "Chinese authorities are using visas as weapons against the foreign press like never before, expanding their deployment of a longtime intimidation tactic as working conditions for foreign journalists in China severely deteriorated in 2019," said the report, which was based on a survey of more than 100 journalists in China from 25 countries. Frédéric Lemaître, a China-based correspondent for the French newspaper Le Monde, said he was on his second consecutive three-month visa after he wrote a series about Mr. Xi. Mr. Lemaître said an official in the press office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had told him, "You are our guest, and in China, guests must respect the host." About 100 American journalists are currently working in China for U.S. and other foreign news organizations, State Department officials said. By comparison, the United States issued 425 media visas to Chinese journalists and their families in 2019 alone. While China's Foreign Ministry formally oversees foreign journalists, accreditation decisions appear to involve other arms of the government, including security and propaganda agencies. The decision to expel the Journal reporters was unlikely to have been made solely by the ministry. China expelled the Journal reporters the day after the State Department declared that it would officially treat the five Chinese news agencies as foreign government functionaries and therefore subject to similar rules and restrictions as diplomats stationed in the United States. In announcing the expulsions, a Foreign Ministry spokesman cited a controversial headline to an opinion article in the Journal from last month that had referred to China as the "Real Sick Man of Asia." The article criticized China's response to the coronavirus outbreak. 39 [China] U.S. Orders Chinese State Media to Cut Staff in the U.S. by 40% (Bloomberg) Bloomberg [3/2/2020 7:40 PM, Nick Wadhams, 6400K] The Trump administration ordered four Chinese state-owned news outlets to slash the number of staff they have working in the U.S., part of a broader response to Beijing's restrictions on American journalists including its expulsion of three Wall Street Journal reporters last month. The move risks further tit-for-tat measures from Beijing as the world's biggest economies continue a broader battle for global influence even after reaching a phase-one trade deal earlier this year. That wider strategic fight is affecting everything from manufacturing supply chains to 5G mobile-phone technology to the leadership of international organizations. Starting March 13, the four outlets will be allowed to employ a combined 100 Chinese citizens in the U.S., down about 40% from now, two State Department officials told reporters Monday on condition of anonymity. The officials insisted that the reductions weren't expulsions, though about 60 or so employees will almost certainly need to leave the country. "Unlike foreign media organizations in China, these entities are not independent news organizations," Secretary of State Michael Pompeo said in a statement after the officials briefed reporters. "As we have done in other areas of the U.S.-China relationship, we seek to establish a long-overdue level playing field." The outlets affected by the move are Xinhua News Agency, China Global Television Network, China Radio International and China Daily Distribution Corp. A fifth, Hai Tian Development USA, is also included under the cap but won't have to cut staff because it has only two Chinese employees on its payroll in the U.S. The restrictions stem from an effort by the Trump administration to restore what officials call reciprocity between the way China and the U.S. treat each other's journalists. China currently allows about 100 Americans in the country and has severely restricted the number of visas it issues to foreign reporters. More restrictions are likely to come soon. Another senior administration official, also briefing reporters ahead of Pompeo's statement Monday, said the U.S. plans to limit how long Chinese citizens are allowed to stay in the country on journalist visas. That would match a Chinese requirement restricting foreign reporters to as little as 30 days before they must seek an extension. The administration began mulling expulsions in earnest after China last month ordered the departure of the three Wall Street Journal reporters -- two Americans and an Australian -- after saying the outlet had refused to apologize for a "racially discriminatory" headline on an op-ed piece. U.S. officials have also said the reporters were expelled because of the Journal's coverage of a Chinese government crackdown on Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang province. The Journal has defended its reporters and, like most U.S. outlets, said it operates with a strict separation between its news and opinion staffs. The op-ed piece in question referred to China as "the real sick man of Asia." 40 Monday's move is a direct outgrowth of a State Department decision last month to designate Xinhua and the other four outlets as "foreign missions." That means their employees in the U.S. are treated as foreign government employees, not journalists. The five are "effectively controlled" by China's government, Pompeo said in the statement. The staffing reductions apply to any Chinese citizens working for the four news organizations in the U.S., whether they are reporters or managers or technicians. The outlets can still hire

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as many Americans as they like. Hai Tian wasn't included in the new cap because it currently has only two Chinese staff on its payroll in the U.S., the officials said. Asked about the expected State Department action last week, the Foreign Press Association, which represents foreign journalists working in the U.S., said in a statement that "any suggestion that the United States should emulate the Chinese government's decision to expel three WSJ reporters by deporting Chinese journalists would be counterproductive and ultimately damaging to First Amendment principles for the entire press community in the United States." [China] Beijing ordered to slash Chinese staff in state media in US (Breitbart) Breitbart [3/2/2020 1:37 PM, Staff, 1973K] The United States on Monday slashed by nearly half the number of Chinese nationals allowed to work for their state-run media in the United States, vowing reciprocity as Beijing restricts foreign press. The move comes two weeks after China expelled three Wall Street Journal reporters, although the United States said its decision was based on leveling numbers between the countries rather than retaliating over content. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that China has "imposed increasingly harsh surveillance, harassment and intimidation against American and other foreign journalists operating in China." "We urge the Chinese government to immediately uphold its international commitments to respect freedom of expression, including for members of the press," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement. A State Department official said that five media outlets, which last month were reclassified by the United States as foreign missions, would be allowed to employ a maximum 100 Chinese nationals as of March 13, down from around 160 now. The United States is not explicitly expelling the 60 staff members, who in theory can seek employment elsewhere, although most are expected to be obliged to leave the country. China on February 19 threw out three reporters from The Wall Street Journal — two US nationals and an Australian — over what it deemed a racist headline on an opinion piece in its harshest move against international media in years. Chinese citizens who work for other media outlets in the United States are not affected, the official said, and state-run media outlets will not be barred from hiring employees of other nationalities. 41 "The US government has long welcomed foreign journalists, including PRC journalists, to work freely and without threat of reprisal," Pompeo said. "Our goal is reciprocity. As we have done in other areas of the US-China relationship, we seek to establish a long-overdue level playing field," he said. Last year the United States issued 425 journalist visas to Chinese citizens, including family members, according to official data. The organization most affected by the order will be the state news agency Xinhua, which will be allowed to keep 59 Chinese staff in the United States, according to a State Department official The China Global Television Network will be permitted 30 nationals. The China Daily can have nine Chinese employees and China Radio International will be permitted two. The fifth organization is the US distributor of the official People's Daily which is not believed to employ Chinese nationals. In reclassifying the five outlets under foreign missions last month, the State Department required them to seek permission to buy property and also to provide lists of their staffs, including the growing number of Americans they employ. [China] Trump administration announces new restrictions on Chinese journalists (The Hill) The Hill [3/2/2020 1:50 PM, Justine Coleman, 1762K] President Trump's administration on Monday announced new restrictions against Chinese journalists working for state media, a reaction to how American and other foreign journalists are treated in China. The administration will implement a personnel cap on five Chinese state-controlled media entities operating in the U.S., Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement. This means the government will regulate the number of Chinese citizens allowed to work for these entities within the U.S. The State Department had identified the five media outlets as "foreign missions of the People's Republic of China" last month. "Unlike foreign media organizations in China, these entities are not independent news organizations," the statement from Pompeo read. "The decision to implement this personnel cap is not based on any content produced by these entities, nor does it place any restrictions on what the designated entities may publish in the United States," he continued. The secretary criticized China's "increasingly harsh surveillance, harassment, and intimidation against American and other foreign journalists" in their country, calling their restrictions "misguided." 42 Pompeo cited that the U.S. has allowed foreign journalists to "work freely and without the threat of reprisal." "Our goal is reciprocity," Pompeo said. "As we have done in other areas of the U.S.-China relationship, we seek to establish a long-overdue level playing field. It is our hope that this action will spur Beijing to adopt a more fair and reciprocal approach to U.S. and other foreign press in China." U.S. administration officials said the rules would also put a duration of stay on all Chinese nationals working in the U.S. on I visas for foreign media workers, according to Axios. One senior administration official told Axios that "The objective is to introduce a degree of fairness in our relationship with China." China had recently expelled three Wall Street Journal employees, after the foreign ministry said an op-ed headline in the newspaper was "racist." The expulsions came after the Trump administration designated the five media outlets as under control of the Chinese government. [China] Trump administration to cap number of employees at Chinese media outlets in U.S (Reuters) Reuters [3/2/2020 1:40 PM, Humeyra Pamuk and Steve Holland, 5304K] The United States on Monday said it was slashing the number of Chinese nationals permitted to work at the U.S. offices of major Chinese state-owned media outlets to retaliate against Beijing's "long-standing intimidation and harassment of journalists." Citing a "deepening

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crackdown" on all forms of independent reporting inside China, administration officials said Beijing's attacks on free speech were worse than they were a decade ago, comparing them to those of the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War. Effective March 13, Washington will cap the number of U.S.-based employees of Xinhua News Agency, China Global Television Network, China Radio International and China Daily Distribution Corp at 100 from 160 currently. Beijing's U.N. ambassador said the move was not "appropriate". China last month revoked the visas of three Wall Street Journal reporters in Beijing after the newspaper declined to apologize for a column with a headline calling China the "Real Sick Man of Asia". Another reporter with the paper had to leave last year after China declined to renew his visa. "For years, the government of the People's Republic of China has imposed increasingly harsh surveillance, harassment, and intimidation against American and other foreign journalists operating in China," U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement. Monday's decision was not particularly linked to the Wall Street Journal case nor the content the Chinese outlets in question produced, senior State Department officials told reporters, speaking on the condition of anonymity. "We've been imploring the Chinese for years and years now to improve their treatment of journalists in China. So, this is not linked to any one particular incident," one U.S. official 43 said, but added that the expulsion of Journal reporters was a "fairly egregious" example. While the U.S. officials said the move was not an expulsion of these Chinese nationals, they acknowledge that the people whose visas are contingent on their ability to work in the United States may be forced to leave the country. The four outlets were among five designated by the United States as foreign embassies earlier this month, as a first step of this move. FURTHER ACTION Tensions between the two superpowers have escalated since President Donald Trump came to office three years ago, with disputes over issues ranging from trade to accusations of Chinese spying in the United States and to U.S. support for Taiwan. "We have some differences but we do not think it is appropriate for the United States to take steps in interfering with the work of journalists coming from China," China's U.N. Ambassador Zhang Jun told a news conference. On Monday, the Foreign Correspondents Club of China said in a report that the Chinese government has "weaponised" visas as part of a stepped-up campaign of pressure on foreign journalists. "It is our hope that this action will spur Beijing to adopt a more fair and reciprocal approach to U.S. and other foreign press in China," Pompeo said, while State Department officials said Washington was ready to take further action if Beijing retaliated. "If in fact they decide to take this in a further negative direction however of course..all options would be on the table. I can't tell you what in particular we would do, but we'd sit down review the circumstances and then consider all of our options," the official said. The personnel caps would be placed on the entities as opposed to people hence it would be up to the media outlets to decide the necessary staffing cuts, the officials said. The United States would also announce in the near future limits on duration of stay for Chinese journalists, administration officials said. [China] China's U.N. ambassador: inappropriate for U.S. to interfere with Chinese journalists (Reuters) Reuters [3/2/2020 3:49 PM, Michelle Nichols, 5304K] The United States should not interfere with the work of Chinese journalists, the Chinese ambassador to the United Nations, Zhang Jun, said on Monday. "We have some differences but we do not think it is appropriate for the United States to take steps in interfering with the work of journalists coming from China," Zhang told a news conference to mark China's presidency of the U.N. Security Council in March. Washington said on Monday it was slashing the number of Chinese employees permitted to work in the U.S. offices of major Chinese state-owned media outlets after China revoked the 44 visas of three Wall Street Journal reporters over a column with a headline calling China the "real sick man of Asia". Transportation Security Administration Hiring Freeze At TSA Raises Risk Of Long Airport Delays During Spring Break (NPR) NPR [3/2/2020 4:18 PM, Andrew Becker, 4112K] Audio: HERE The Transportation Security Administration quietly announced a hiring and overtime freeze through late April. Agency watchdogs and travel businesses worry it will create long lines at airports. Federal Emergency Management Agency FEMA preparing for Trump emergency declaration on coronavirus: report (The Hill) The Hill [3/2/2020 3:07 PM, Justine Coleman, 1762K] The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is preparing for President Trump to potentially make an emergency declaration regarding the coronavirus outbreak, NBC News reported Monday. The agency is readying itself in case Trump makes an "infectious disease emergency declaration," which would allow states and local governments to receive disaster relief funding and federal assistance to combat the virus, according to internal planning documents obtained by NBC. The declaration would allow FEMA to distribute this funding under the 1988 Stafford Act, which is more often used to provide money for natural disaster relief but can also be used for diseases. The Stafford Act was also used to help fund the fight against the West Nile virus in New York and New Jersey in 2000. "To me this is another indication that the president and the White House are finally aware of the gravity of the situation," Michael Coen, who was FEMA chief of staff during the Obama administration, told NBC News. The funding would authorize FEMA to provide support such as disaster medical assistance teams, mobile hospitals and military transport. Currently, the agency's disaster relief fund has $34 billion, according to a Jan. 31 report, which a former FEMA official told NBC News is "sitting there and ready." But an emergency declaration would differ from a "major disaster" declaration, which is wider

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reaching and usually used for major natural disasters. A FEMA spokesperson said in a statement to The Hill that the agency is working on supporting the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which declared a separate “public health emergency” on Jan. 31. “At this time, FEMA is not preparing an emergency declaration in addition to the HHS public health emergency," the statement said. 45 "Consistent with its mission, FEMA has been promoting preparedness activities and is currently a supporting agency to HHS," the statement continued. Concern over the coronavirus is increasing as two deaths were reported in Washington state this weekend, the first two in the U.S. The U.S. has confirmed 86 cases, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. Researchers say the coronavirus could have been spreading undetected in the country for weeks. [TN] Tornado directly hits Nashville, extensive damage reported (ABC News) ABC News [3/3/2020 3:28 AM, Jon Haworth, 2182K] The National Weather Service has confirmed that a tornado has touched down very near downtown Nashville. Images on social media show extensive damage to multiple businesses and homes in the area. Mt. Juliet Police Department issued an update in the early morning hours Tuesday. "Our community has been greatly impacted by a tornado," said Captain Chandler of the Mt. Juliet Police Department. "There are multiple homes damaged and multiple people injured. Our officers are in the early stages of this response and we continue to assess what is happening ... there are multiple homes damaged, multiple people injured, multiple people still trapped. We need your help." "There are gas lines that are leaking, power lines that are on the ground, and multiple emergency responders are responding to those who are injured and trying to get them the help that they need," Chandler continued. "We appreciate your concern, your prayers. Continue to pray for our first responders and those that are injured and we will continue to keep you updated." The Nashville Fire Department said that they re currently responding to reports of approximately 40 structures that have collapsed in and around Nashville. The tornado reportedly stayed on the ground for about 10 miles into Hermitage, Tennessee. The National Weather Service in Nashville has urged people to get to safety as quickly as possible. Some of the hardest-hit areas in the storm include Centennial Boulevard and Briley Parkway in West Nashville where there were reports of heavy damage to planes as well as overturned tractor-trailers across the interstates, according to ABC News’ Nashville affiliate WKRN. WKRN also reports that the Five Points neighborhood in East Nashville is half-destroyed along with businesses being flattened in East Nashville and Germantown, Tennessee. Officials at John Tune Airport released a statement saying the facility had suffered heavy damage. 46 "John C. Tune Airport (JWN), BNA’s sister airport in West Nashville, sustained significant damage due to severe weather earlier this morning," the statement read. There were no reported injuries. Several hangars have been destroyed, and power lines are down. In the interest of safety, the public is advised to avoid John C. Tune until further notice. The Airport Authority has activated its Emergency Operations Center to coordinate the response." WKRN is also reporting that some Super Tuesday polling stations may also have been impacted by the tornado. “At this point, information about damage to polling locations is being collected. Any voter in Davidson County whose assigned precinct has been impacted may vote at the Election Commission Offices located at 1417 Murfreesboro Pk or 800 2nd Ave South," according to WKRN. [Editorial note: consult video at source link] [TN] Nashville residents capture tornado damage from overnight: report (FOX News) FOX News [3/3/2020 3:57 AM, David Aaro, 8943K] A powerful storm that produced a tornado struck Nashville early on Tuesday morning that reportedly caused significant damage to much of the city. Residents captured striking images of lightning strikes that turned the sky into purple and pink colors as the tornado barreled through the north of downtown around 1 a.m. It left a trail of damage along its path towards the city’s eastern section. "Overall, it’s a pretty messy looking night for all of Middle Tennessee," said Brittney Whitehead, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service (NWS) in Nashville, according to The Tennessean. Residents were advised to take cover. Emergency crews are assessing the damage of the tornado that struck around 12:39 a.m. It’s unknown yet if there are any casualties. Portions of some buildings collapsed, homes and cars were damaged and streets were covered with half-fallen trees and other debris, according to the paper. The Basement East, a live music venue, reportedly "sustained significant damage, but all those inside are OK," the venue’s Twitter account said. "At this time we have multiple power lines in both directions on Centennial Boulevard, which is causing the roads to be blocked," said Lt. John Wheeler, with the Metro Nashville Police Department. The NSW had declared the storm "a severe threat" yesterday morning, adding "a tornado can’t be ruled out." [CA] Dry California winter prompts wildfire and drought concerns (Washington Post) Washington Post [3/2/2020 3:24 AM, Diana Leonard, 12625K] There wasn’t a drop of rain in downtown San Francisco during the month of February, 47 something that hasn’t happened since 1864. Across Northern California, many sites also recorded zero precipitation for the first time on record during what is typically the wettest month of the year. Amid growing concerns about the fire danger and an early start to fire season, the missing precipitation in California has meteorologists watching weather models for any hints of a change in the weather pattern. The record-breaking month extends the very dry start to 2020, which falls on the heels of two very wet years — 2017 and 2019. Those years followed the historic drought of 20122016. Dan Cayan, a climate scientist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla who studies climate variability and change in California, said

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this year will almost certainly end up on the dry side of the coin. "It reinforces California's historical record of having year-to-year precipitation variation that is the most volatile in the nation," he said. As the planet warms, the state's precipitation patterns are expected to become even more capricious, with increasing temperatures making droughts more severe while simultaneously boosting the share of precipitation that falls as heavy downpours. Atmospheric rivers, narrow corridors of waterlogged air that deliver much of California's annual rainfall, are projected to become more intense as the atmosphere continues to warm. February records fall In addition to San Francisco, cities across Northern California broke records after they failed to receive a trace of rain during February. These locations include Santa Rosa, Oakland, San Jose, Sacramento, Redding and Ukiah. The northern Sierra, an important region for California's water supply, also recorded its lowest precipitation on record for the month. Storms largely missed Southern California as well, with only a trace of rain recorded at Los Angeles International Airport, tying its February record. "The combination of a very dry January and an even drier February made for one of the driest first two months of any calendar year on record across much of southwestern California," a statement from the Weather Service's Los Angeles forecast office read. The month was much warmer than normal, and this past week, many long-standing daily temperature records were broken from San Francisco to San Diego. "February was already exceedingly unusual," said Brian Garcia, the warning coordination meteorologist for the National Weather Service's Bay Area forecast office. "If we were to go through March with no rain, that would be very unusual. That'd be an outlier." At the same time, the dry stretch is eerily familiar, and so is the hint of substantial rain in next week's forecast. 48 Garcia combed through downtown San Francisco's weather records and noticed that, during dry years, there was often a rainfall spike in March, before it disappeared again for the rest of the season. "It puts that little bit of an uncomfortable feeling in the pit of your stomach," he said. "Is this a sign that we are sliding into another period of drought?" Expect bigger swings with climate change Long, dry summers are a hallmark of California's Mediterranean-like climate, which is governed by a nearby high-pressure center that forms from warm subsiding air in the subtropics. The precipitation window is therefore only open for a limited season, with most of the state's precipitation falling between October and April. "Because California lies on the edge of the north Pacific storm track, it makes variability here very acute," Cayan said. Depending on the year, the storm track shifts north and south, meaning that rainfall varies widely from year to year, and even within a single season. Those fluctuations become even more pronounced as greenhouse gases and temperatures rise, according to climate model projections. These have been detailed in recent studies and also in reports for California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, released in 2018. "One of the biggest future changes that climate models indicate is a shift in the way precipitation occurs," Cayan said. California can anticipate more dry days, relying instead on fewer but more intense storms to deliver its yearly water supply. Because the atmosphere is warmer and holds more moisture, precipitation will fall in bursts during richer atmospheric river storms, Cayan said. And while changes in total precipitation are expected to be modest, winters are projected to get wetter, while the "shoulder seasons," spring and fall, become drier. "As the planet warms, the subtropical dry zones are spreading poleward," Cayan said. That leaves fewer opportunities for storms to track south into California, particularly during the spring and fall. Climate models also show that the driest years will be associated with a persistent ridge of high pressure off the West Coast, similar to the pattern that has prevented storms from reaching California in January and February this year. "Since 1998, we've been flirting with 'on' more than 'off' in terms of dryness," Cayan said, referring to the Southwest. A warmer atmosphere has amplified that, stealing moisture from soils and plants. "It's a harbinger of what the region may expect in the next several decades." All hopes rest with spring The 2020 dry spell could break this month, though. Weather models are indicating a pattern shift in early to mid-March, when the Climate Prediction Center shows at least a 50 percent 49 chance of above-average precipitation across much of the state. However, the core of that moisture could again remain south of the Bay Area. "We still have the potential for a miracle March, amazing April, and marvelous May," Garcia said. "It could still happen." But, he added, "things don't look promising." With most reservoirs near or above their average historical capacity, the state needs rain and snow less for its water supply this year than to keep the looming fire season at bay. According to the latest wildfire outlook for Southern California, fire season could ramp up in March. On Friday, a small brushfire burned vigorously south of San Francisco. The record-dry month, combined with this week's record-high temperatures, has sent vegetation moisture plummeting. In the Bay Area and the Sacramento Valley, those values are at record-low levels for this time of year and comparable to dryness that would typically be seen in June or July. [PR] Thousands still sheltering in Puerto Rico months after earthquake (San Francisco Chronicle) San Francisco Chronicle [3/2/2020 6:46 PM, Frances Robles and Erika P. Rodriguez, 1670K] Nearly two months after an earthquake sent the population of southwest Puerto Rico rushing into the streets, thousands of people are still slumbering each night under camping tents, on cots, in their cars and in enormous open tents that serve as government shelters. Long after a 6.4 magnitude quake sent shock waves across the island on Jan. 7, the ground continues to shake. Over the past week, 43 earthquakes classified as "significant" have struck, according to the Puerto Rico Seismic Network, part of a prolonged and

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terrifying series of seismic events not seen on the island since 1918. A house in the town of Guánica recently collapsed after a fresh 3.8 magnitude temblor. And while most of the recent aftershocks have been relatively mild — only five over the past week exceeded 3.5 in magnitude — the cumulative damage and constant rattling have left many Puerto Ricans with their confidence deeply shaken. Hundreds of families are unable to pay for repairs to their ravaged homes. Others are unwilling to trust government inspectors' assurances that their houses are safe. "I expected to be relocated to a trailer or a hotel," said Pedro Ramírez, a 65-year-old war veteran who was still staying last week in a government shelter in Guánica with his wife, daughter and two grandchildren. "I am not expecting them to give me a house. But the only way to get assistance for food is by being here, so they force you to be here. It's a trap." The number of quake survivors still living outdoors has surfaced as a challenge for local and federal agencies that are struggling to find housing on an island where more than 8,000 homes are in need of an overhaul as a result of the temblors. More than two years after Hurricane Maria brought devastation that in some places has still 50 not been repaired, emergency management officials facing the latest natural disasters appear to lack cohesive strategies to keep survivors safe and are improvising as they go along, according to a number of local officials, legal advocates and academic analysts who are watching the response. "If they learned anything from Hurricane Maria, they are not making it apparent," said Yarimar Bonilla, an anthropologist at Hunter College who has spent extensive time in the camps. "Maybe they learned that they don't have to do anything and people will sort it out, because that's what they are doing." Shelters were located in flood-prone areas, causing some of the tents to be flooded with mud, and more than 150 schools have yet to reopen. Distrust of the government prompted many people to set up their own camps rather than use shelters managed by the authorities. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has so far allocated $20 million to about 8,500 applicants, most of that for home repairs and some to pay for rent. More than 30,000 people applied. But government officials insist that at least half the people sleeping under the stars are responding not to structural damage to their homes, but to the emotional strain of frequent tremors. Secret Service [NY] Police: Duo Nabbed Following Chase After Teen Tried Using Counterfeit Cash At Westchester Store (Daily Voice) Daily Voice [3/2/2020 10:00 AM, Joe Lombardi, 79K, Positive, Secondary] A 24-year-old driver and 19-year-old passenger were apprehended following a police chase after the teen allegedly attempted to use counterfeit currency at a store in Westchester. On Friday, Feb. 28, the Tarrytown Police Department received a call from a local business reporting that an unknown man had just attempted to pay for merchandise at the store with a counterfeit $50 bill. The caller described the suspect as a black male, approximately 16 years of age, with braided shoulder-length hair, wearing a black jacket and black pants. Tarrytown Police patrol units responded to the area and after a brief canvass located a suspect in the area of Walgreens at 134 Wildey St. fitting the description that the caller provided. As officers attempted to make contact with the suspect, he entered the passenger side door of a parked vehicle in the lot, police said. The vehicle then began to flee out of the parking lot, according to police. Officers, with their lights and sirens activated, attempted to stop the vehicle. 51 The vehicle continued to flee, driving recklessly until patrol units were able to stop it on North Broadway (Route 9) in Tarrytown. The vehicle's occupants were then secured and identified as Michael Anderson, 24, and De Vanir Wynn, 19. Anderson, of West Haven, Connecticut, was charged with: third-degree unlawful fleeing of a police officer in a motor vehicle, reckless driving and fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon. Wynn, of the Bronx, was charged with first-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument. They were both processed at the Tarrytown Police Department and held pending arraignment. If any businesses in the area have any information regarding this case, they are encouraged to contact the Tarrytown Police Detective Division at (914) 631-1514. [PA] Police seek suspect who allegedly used counterfeit cash at Dollar General (Wilkes-Barre Times Leader) Wilkes-Barre Times Leader [3/2/2020 2:31 PM, Kevin Carroll, 26K, Neutral, Secondary] Police are asking for information regarding a man who they say scammed the Dollar General store in Blackman Plaza last month. The suspect purchased $380 worth of merchandise from the store on Feb. 22, using all $20 bills. The bills were later determined to be counterfeit. Township police are asking that anyone with information, or who could possibly identify the suspect, message the Wilkes-Barre Township Police Facebook page. [PA] Police looking for person who used counterfeit money (WYOU) WYOU [3/2/2020 2:31 PM, Staff, 16K, Neutral, Secondary] Wilkes-Barre Township Police are looking for a person they say used counterfeit money to purchase items at the Dollar Tree last week. Township police released a surveillance image on their Facebook page Monday of the suspect. They claim the man entered the Dollar Tree in the Blackman Plaza around 10am on February 22nd. The release states he paid for merchandise totaling $380.00 and paid in $20 bills. Those bills were later determined to be counterfeit. Anyone who can identify the individual is asked to message The Wilkes-Barre Township Police on their Facebook page. [KY] Counterfeit money reported in parts of eastern Ky. (WSAZ) 52 WSAZ [3/2/2020 5:29 PM, Staff, Neutral, Secondary] Fake money is circulating through parts of Rowan County, the sheriff there said Monday. He said investigators have had reports of counterfeit $10 and $50 bills. The sheriff advises anyone who receives counterfeit bills to attempt to identify the person who handed over the bill, adding that someone may be unaware the bill is

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fake. Recipients of counterfeit money also can reach out to their local 911. [GA] Suspect uses fake bill to pay at pharmacy (North Fulton) North Fulton [3/2/2020 9:05 AM, Staff, 4K, Neutral, Secondary] Police are looking for a man suspected of passing a fake $100 bill on Feb. 16 at the Walgreens pharmacy on Old Alabama Road. Walgreens officials reported that a man came to the store and selected an ink cartridge, paying for it using the counterfeit bill. Employees later realized the bill was fake and was missing several security features. A manager provided footage of the incident. [FL] Search leads to evidence of apparent counterfeiting (Jackson County Floridan) Jackson County Floridan [3/2/2020 1:32 PM, Positive, 8K, Neutral, Secondary] A search warrant resulted in two arrests after heroin, methamphetamine and a large amount of counterfeit money was discovered in a Westville residence, according to the Holmes County Sheriff's Office. Agency investigators executed the search warrant Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 2529 Stewart Circle. As deputies made entry into the home, officials say, 28-year-old Kelvin N. Redmon retreated to a bathroom in the rear of the residence and unsuccessfully tried to flush a substance that later tested positive as heroin. "The heroin was collected, and the search of the home additionally resulted in the discovery of methamphetamine, new and used syringes, digital scales, a spoon containing methamphetamine residue, counterfeit bills that represented more than $800 of U.S. currency, as well as a printer and large sheets of paper, both of which were used to manufacture the counterfeit bills," officials said in a press release. A small child was also present in the home at the time the search warrant was executed, authorities added. Redmond was arrested and is charged with possession of heroin, possession of methamphetamine, tampering with evidence, child neglect without great harm, and possession of drug paraphernalia. Also arrested was 22-year-old Summer R. Taylor, who is charged with child neglect without great harm, possession of drug paraphernalia, and violation of state probation. More charges are pending in relation to money counterfeiting, authorities said. 53 [LA] 4 Texans facing drug charges after bust at Monroe hotel (Monroe News Star) Monroe News Star [3/2/2020 4:31 PM, Ashley Mott, 14K, Negative, Secondary] Four Texans are facing drug-related charges after a Friday investigation by Metro Narcotics. Arrest reports filed on Friday state the agency was investigating John H. Butler, 42, of Providence and his alleged involvement in the distribution of controlled dangerous substances in Ouachita Parish. Agents monitored Butler's activities and learned he was en route to a hotel in the 5600 block of Frontage Road in Monroe to obtain drugs from a Houston source. They then followed Butler to the hotel and watched him walk into a room and exit with Julius Preston, 39, of Richmond. Both suspects were taken into custody. According to a report, several Oxycodone pills and a large sum of currency were in Butler's possession when he was apprehended. Julius Bailey, 39, of Houston, and Arielle McDonald, 31, of Conroe, were also apprehended inside the room. McDonald was allegedly in the bathroom with wet hands and numerous empty zip-top bags next to her. On the bathroom floor, agents located numerous Ecstasy pills and an Oxycodone tablet. A subsequent search of the room yielded more drug paraphernalia, including marijuana. The four suspects were transported to Metro Narcotics, and agents later located more pills on Butler. Butler claimed ownership of the pills on his person, but denied knowledge of the drugs in the hotel room. When Preston was interviewed, he provided agents with a false identity. A subsequent search of his wallet provided his real name, and agents also located two counterfeit $20 bills and a blank prescription form. McDonald is accused of obstruction of justice, possession of a schedule II controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute and possession of a schedule I controlled dangerous substance. Preston is facing three counts of fugitive from justice, one count of attempt to obtain a controlled dangerous substance via fraud, resisting an officer, monetary instrument abuse, possession of a schedule I controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribution and possession of a schedule II controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute. Bail on new charges was set at $77,750. Bailey is accused of possession of a schedule I controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute and possession of a schedule II controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute. Bail was set at $70,000. Butler is accused of contraband prohibited in penal institutions, possession of a schedule II controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute and possession of a schedule I 54 controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute. Bail was set at $75,000, and the suspect has posted bond. [IN] Murder suspect faces other charges (Journal-Gazette) Journal-Gazette [3/2/2020 10:43 AM, Matthew Leblanc, 14K, Positive, Secondary] The Fort Wayne man charged with murder in the Feb. 19 shooting death of a 15-year-old boy is accused in a separate case of threatening and chasing a man with a gun last year. Cameron B. Hallett, 22, was charged last month in the slaying of Eric Ray McDonnell Jr. on Euclid Avenue. Police said surveillance video from the area shows Hallett and another man assaulting the boy before Hallett shoots him. In September, according to court documents filed today, Hallett arrived at the home of his ex-girlfriend and demanded to see her and his child. The man who answered the door said they were not there, and Hallett "pulled a small black handgun out of a pocket on the right side of his body, pulled the slide back to load a bullet in the chamber" and pointed it at the man, a probable cause affidavit alleges. Hallett chased the man through the house before leaving in a red Ford Mustang, the document says. The car was stopped Sept. 29 on Lower Huntington Road, and police said they found marijuana, $865, two counterfeit $100 bills and a stolen Ruger handgun. Hallett is charged with felony residential entry and misdemeanor carrying a handgun without a license

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