

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

April 20, 2023

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
Fifteenth Release

Dear Mr. Hart:

This letter is the fifteenth 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 330 pages were duplicative. The remaining 170 pages will be released in full. These responsive records are attached and have been marked 2021-ICLI-00064 2969 to 2021-ICLI-00064 3138.

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

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.

www.ice.gov

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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.

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: 2023.04.20
11:07:41 -04'00'

Meronica D. Stoney
(A) Deputy FOIA Officer

Enclosure(s): 170 pages

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

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Thu, 15 Aug 2019 18:07:32 +0000

To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

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

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

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @usdoj.gov (b)(6); @usdoj.gov; (b)(6);

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Wolf, Chad; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) SEGUIN, DEBBIE W; Kelly, Christopher S; Feere, Jon; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

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Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

Subject: Immigration Strategic Working Group

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- I. Removal Compression At Border
 - a. ER / VR / VD / MPP
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 - c. Other

Participants:

DHS

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****For this meeting we will have no substitutes or plus ones unless specifically approved.***

From: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Wed, 21 Aug 2019 19:31:48 +0000
To: (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) @usdoj.gov; (b)(6); h@usdoj.gov (b)(6);
(b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Wolf, Chad; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C)
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 - c. L-E-A
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- III. Juvenile Aliens
 - a. Update on Cross-Agency Efforts
 - i. w/HHS
 - ii. w/USCIS
 - iii. w/DOJ
 - b. Strategies
- IV. Interior Law Enforcement
 - a. Legal Guidance Consolidation & Review
 - b. Arrests & Removals
 - c. Update on Inter-Departmental Collaboration
 - d. Fines & Penalties
 - e. Force Multiplication
 - i. RFA
 - ii. State & Local
- V. DNA/Biometrics
 - a. DOJ/DHS Update
- VI. General Policy Update
 - a. USCIS
 - b. Forthcoming regulations (DHS, DOJ)
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(b)(6); Benner, Derek N; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) Feere, Jon; (b)(6); (b)(7)(C) C; Lucero, Enrique M
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- IV. Advancing Law Enforcement & Compliance In the Interior
 - a. Legal guidance review
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 - iii. 287(g)
 - f. Bonding form
- V. Policy Update
 - a. Forthcoming USCIS policy actions
 - b. General regulatory update (DHS, DOJ)
 - c. Other

Participants:

DHS

DOJ

OSAP

DCOS/P

WHCO

NSC

****For this meeting we will have no substitutes or plus ones unless specifically approved.***

From: DHS Daily
Sent: Wed, 14 Aug 2019 05:44:27 -0400
To: noreply@techmis.com
Subject: DHS Morning Briefing (8-14-19)
Attachments: DHS Morning Briefing (8-14-19).pdf



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: Wednesday, August 14, 2019 6:00 AM ET

Top News

[The Health 202: Illness is one of many new factors to count against immigrants seeking U.S. residency \(Washington Post\)](#)

[Rule Would Penalize Immigrants To U.S. For Needing Benefits \(NPR\)](#)

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[Ken Cuccinelli: Judges Attack Donald Trump with 'Open Lawfare' \(Breitbart\)](#)

[Trump immigration officials go on media offensive \(The Hill\)](#)

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[US homeland security chief: Racism is fueling some terrorism \(Washington Post\)](#)

[Schumer to ask Trump to divert \\$5 billion in border wall funding to fight gun violence, white-supremacy extremists \(FOX News\)](#)

Unified Dems press Trump, GOP on curbing guns (Washington Times)

Barr Promises Fast Track for Federal Death Penalty (Free Beacon)

[MA] Judge accused of aiding wanted immigrant gets pay restored (ABC News)

[MA] A judge accused of helping an undocumented immigrant evade ICE will be paid during her suspension (CNN)

[MA] Judge accused of helping shield illegal immigrant has pay restored as case proceeds (FOX News)

[MA] Massachusetts judge allowed to keep \$181K salary amid federal charges for obstructing ICE (USA Today)

[DC] D.C. mayor says she will not accept federal shelter for unaccompanied migrant children (Washington Post)

[AL] More than 30 members of clergy, religious activists sign letter declaring their churches immigrant 'sanctuaries': report (FOX News)

[TX] Commissioners vote 3-2 on El Paso solidarity resolution (Houston Chronicle)

[NM] In New Mexico, US defends authority over parole of migrants (San Francisco Chronicle)

[CA] California Counties Sue to Block Trump's New Green Card Test (New York Times)

[CA] Two California counties sue Trump administration over new green card rules (Los Angeles Times)

[CA] California counties file first lawsuit over Trump 'public charge' rule (The Hill)

[CA] California counties sue to block Trump's controversial "public charge" immigration rule (CBS News)

[CA] Rule targeting legal immigrants draws first lawsuit (CNN)

[CA] Two California counties sue Trump admin over green card rule change for immigrants on welfare (FOX News)

[CA] San Francisco sues Trump administration over rule to limit legal immigration (Reuters)

[CA] California counties sue to block new rule penalizing immigrants who use welfare (Washington Times)

[CA] SF, Santa Clara sue Trump administration over 'public charge' immigration policy (San Francisco Chronicle)

[\[Mexico\] Mexican State Cops Seize 100 Pounds of Meth near Texas Border \(Breitbart\)](#)

[\[Mexico\] Mexico, US to exchange information on El Paso shooting \(Breitbart\)](#)

[\[Mexico\] Mexican, US officials meet on probe into Walmart shootings \(ABC News\)](#)

[\[Mexico\] "I fear for our lives": Asylum seekers forced to wait in Mexico face danger and desperation \(CBS News\)](#)

[\[Guatemala\] President-elect says Guatemala can't do migrant deal with US \(Washington Post\)](#)

[\[Guatemala\] Guatemalan President-Elect Says Country Can't Uphold Migration Deal with U.S. \(US News & World Report\)](#)

[\[Guatemala\] President-elect says Guatemala can't do migrant deal with US \(San Francisco Chronicle\)](#)

[\[Guatemala\] New Guatemalan leader demands respect from Trump \(Breitbart\)](#)

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

[Undocumented immigrants on edge as new Trump immigration policy calls for more deportations \(USA Today\)](#)

[Congressional Hispanic Caucus Demands Answers On Record-Breaking ICE Raids \(Daily Caller\)](#)

[\[NH\] Court in New Hampshire Halts Deportation of Haitian Man \(US News & World Report\)](#)

[\[MS\] Some children still not reunited with parents after Mississippi ICE raids, agency says \(USA Today\)](#)

[\[MS\] ICE chief on Mississippi raids: Parents 'responsible for placing their children in this situation' \(Washington Examiner\)](#)

[\[FL\] Leftists Threaten Contractor in Fla; Day Before ICE Facility Shot at in Texas \(Breitbart\)](#)

[\[TX\] FBI investigating shooting at ICE office in San Antonio \(The Hill\)](#)

[\[TX\] FBI investigating after shots fired at ICE offices in San Antonio \(CBS News\)](#)

[\[TX\] FBI investigating shots fired at ICE offices in San Antonio \(CNN\)](#)

[\[TX\] FBI investigating shooting at ICE office in San Antonio as 'targeted attack' \(FOX News\)](#)

[TX] Gunman targets ICE offices in San Antonio; DHS blames politicians, media for stoking fear (Washington Times)

[TX] Shots fired into San Antonio ICE office in latest attack on the agency (Washington Examiner)

[TX] Police Arrest Man Who Shot Up San Antonio ICE Office (Daily Caller)

[OR] Complaint filed against ICE over man detained at courthouse (San Francisco Chronicle)

[OR] ACLU Files Complaint Against ICE, Demand \$100,000 For Man Detained Outside Courthouse In 2017 (Jefferson Public Radio)

[Iraq] Lawmakers urge Trump to stop deportations to Iraq after Michigan man's death (Politico)

[Iraq] House Democrats urge Trump to end deportations of Iraqis after diabetic man's death (The Hill)

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Big Tech, Big Banks Use Outsourcing Firms to Import Thousands of H-1B Foreign Workers (Breitbart)

Customs and Border Protection

[TX] Immigrants Citing 'Horrific Conditions' in Texas Sue for Release (Bloomberg)

[TX] US sued over legal access, better conditions for migrants (ABC News)

[TX] CBP: 3 migrants found dead in South Texas in past week (San Francisco Chronicle)

[AZ] Border patrol agent called migrants 'subhuman.' Then he hit one with his truck. (Washington Post)

[AZ] A Border Patrol agent accused of intentionally hitting a migrant with his work vehicle has taken a plea deal (CNN)

[CA] Border Patrol agents seized \$90K in heroin, arrested convicted sex offender over weekend (San Diego Union Tribune)

[CA] Young Tijuana man accused of running cross-border teen drug mules (San Diego Union Tribune)

Federal Emergency Management Agency

[CA] California officials warn of 'unsustainable' taxpayer costs in disaster bill (San Francisco Chronicle)

Secret Service

[NC] Edenton cops nab 2 with fake money (Daily Advance)

[NC] Two men arrested, \$8K in counterfeit money seized in Edenton (WTKR)

[SC] 'We've got monsters:' 28 arrested, wanted by South Carolina in sex crimes operation (10connects)

[TN] Training by Secret Service on how to spot counterfeit cash offered Thursday (WSMV)

[AR] Jonesboro police issues warning over counterfeit money (Kait 8)

[LA] Credit Card Skimmers Found At Louisiana Gas Stations (973 The Dawg)

[LA] Tri-parish sweep of more than 500 gas stations found single credit card skimmer in St. Tammany Parish (Times Picayune / NOLA)

[IN] Fake bills, puppies found after police chase (Elkhart Truth)

[WI] Counterfeit bills making rounds in Green Bay area, police say (NBC26)

[MN] 'Trying To Be Very Aware': Twin Cities Retailers On Lookout For Counterfeit Cash (CBS Minnesota)

[TX] New Braunfels Police warning people of fake money used for 'motion picture use only' (Fox San Antonio)

[TX] Fake money is spreading through New Braunfels, police warn (KVUE News)

[CO] Police: Colorado Springs ID theft case has 123 victims (Colorado Springs Gazette)

[CO] Springs suspects accused of obtaining personal info belonging to 100+ nationwide (KKTV)

Coast Guard

Coast guard investigates death of woman who plunged from cruise ship (CNN)

CISA/Cybersecurity

Coming together to protect Americans from foreign cyberattacks (Washington Examiner)

[WI] Wisconsin Elections Officials Scale Back Security Proposal (US News & World Report)

[CA] Facial recognition software mistook 1 in 5 California lawmakers for criminals, says ACLU (Los Angeles Times)

[CA] Facial-recognition technology flagged 26 California lawmakers as criminals. This bill to ban the tech is headed to the Senate (CNN)

Terrorism Investigations

[OH] Dayton Gunman Was Obsessed With Mass Shootings, Police Say (New York Times)

[OH] 26 shot in 32 seconds: New details, videos released in Dayton mass shooting (ABC News)

[OH] Dayton gunman shot 26 people in 32 seconds before police killed him, officials say (FOX News)

[OH] Police split on whether Dayton, Ohio, gunman targeted sister (CBS News)

[OH] Dayton police chief says shooter's motive may never be known (CNN)

[OH] Dayton gunman was very familiar with the mass shooting site and visited the night before (CNN)

[OH] Dayton shooter spent two hours in area before attack, likely acted alone: police (Reuters)

[OH] Ohio man arrested for threatening law enforcement allegedly posted about support for Planned Parenthood attacks, mass shootings (The Hill)

[OH] Ohio Man Threatened to Shoot Federal Agents, Authorities Say (New York Times)

[OH] Ohio teen threatens to shoot federal agents, Planned Parenthood; had about 10,000 rounds of ammunition, 25 guns: Police (ABC News)

[OH] Ohio teen arrested for threats against federal agents had 10,000 rounds of ammo in his house, FBI affidavit says (USA Today)

[TX] Texas teen arrested after posting threat to blow up plane on Snapchat (ABC News)

National Security News

Pentagon says US can defend against Russian and Chinese missile threats — if it's willing to invest (Washington Examiner)

[FL] After odd hearing, trial date moved for alleged Mar-a-Lago trespasser Yujing Zhang (ABC News)

[Brazil] FBI looking for suspected al Qaeda operative in Brazil (Washington Examiner)

[United Kingdom] John Bolton promises Britain will be 'front of the trade queue' after Brexit, says E.U. treats citizens like 'peasants' (Washington Post)

[\[Czech Republic\] Czechs Blame Foreign State for Foreign Ministry Cyberattack \(US News & World Report\)](#)

[\[Czech Republic\] Foreign power was behind cyber attack on Czech ministry: Senate \(Reuters\)](#)

[\[Iran\] Iran Says It Expects Tanker Held by U.K. to Be Released Soon \(Bloomberg\)](#)

[\[Russia\] Russia Says Radiation Levels Reached 16 Times Normal in Blast \(Bloomberg\)](#)

[\[Russia\] Evacuation reports spark confusion after Russia nuclear accident \(CBS News\)](#)

[\[Russia\] Radiation levels at Russian test site spiked up to 16 times above normal after explosion \(FOX News\)](#)

[\[Russia\] Town told to evacuate, then stay, after Russian rocket explosion: Here's what we know now \(USA Today\)](#)

[\[China\] Trump Bows to Economic Fears in Move to Delay China Tariffs \(Bloomberg\)](#)

[\[China\] Trump delays tariffs on key Chinese goods \(The Hill\)](#)

[\[China\] US delays tariffs on cellphones, laptops and toys from China \(ABC News\)](#)

[\[China\] U.S. blinks in trade fight with China, delaying tariffs on some imports \(CBS News\)](#)

[\[China\] US will delay tariff hike on Chinese-made cell phones, toys \(CNN\)](#)

[\[China\] Trump's tariff delay on China eases Christmas worries, sends markets higher \(Washington Times\)](#)

[\[China\] Trump delays tariffs on some Chinese goods until December \(San Francisco Chronicle\)](#)

[\[China\] Huawei Covertly to Sell Smartphones in U.S. \(Free Beacon\)](#)

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

The Health 202: Illness is one of many new factors to count against immigrants seeking U.S. residency (Washington Post)

Washington Post [8/13/2019 7:46 AM, Paige Winfield Cunningham, 9425K]

Immigrants with an illness or insufficient savings to cover unforeseen medical costs could soon find it harder to gain admittance to the United States or stay here permanently.

Those circumstances are among a slew of new and tightened criteria immigration officials will soon start considering when they review applications for green cards or U.S. citizenship, under the Trump administration's latest effort to limit immigration and discourage reliance on safety-net programs.

It's no secret that cracking down on legal and illegal immigration through a variety of measures has become one of the administration's hallmarks. It's just the latest in a string of efforts to put more bureaucratic barriers in place, as my Washington Post colleagues Abigail Hauslohner, Nick Miroff, Maria Sacchetti and Tracy Jan report.

"The move is part of the Trump administration's systematic effort to add new bureaucratic obstacles to the U.S. immigration system at the same time the president wants to put physical barriers along the Mexico border," they write. "The administration has slashed the number of refugees admitted to the United States, tightened access to the asylum system and expanded the power of the government to detain and deport immigrants who lack legal status."

But this new rule, which changes how an immigrant's likelihood of becoming reliant on government benefits is evaluated, could have the most consequential and longest-term impacts, immigrant advocates charged yesterday.

"The Trump administration is enacting a hateful, invisible wall to keep immigrants out and public charge is the foundation of this," Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center, told reporters. "It would have the deepest, widest and most long-term impact on our country and our democracy."

This all has to do with the idea of "public charge," defined as someone who is judged likely to need public assistance for things like food, housing or health care. The concept has been around ever since the Immigration Act of 1882, which allowed federal officials to discriminate against people seeking to enter the United States if they were suspected of being likely to depend upon the government.

So, immigrants judged likely to become a public charge are already less likely to gain permanent status. But until now, officials could only use a very limited set of criteria in making the determination, including age, health, family status, finances and education or skills. They could also consider whether an individual had received cash benefits through the federal welfare program Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

That list of criteria is about to grow much longer and much more specific, under the final rule announced yesterday by Ken Cuccinelli, acting director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

"Through the public charge rule, President Trump's administration is reinforcing the ideals of self-sufficiency and personal responsibility, ensuring that immigrants are able to support themselves and become successful here in America," Cuccinelli said.

The rule defines the criteria more specifically than before, adds new criteria and weights such factors positively or negatively. Applicants will be especially in danger of being denied access to temporary or permanent citizenship if they're judged to have no reasonable prospect of future employment, have received public benefits in the prior three years and lack health insurance or have medical need.

Here are specific factors that can now be counted against a green card applicant, according to the final rule:

Having a household income of less than 125 percent of the federal poverty level.

Having "a medical condition" that will interfere with work or school.

Lacking enough money to cover any "reasonably foreseeable medical costs" related to the condition.

Having "financial liabilities."

Having a low credit score.

Lacking a college degree.

Lacking English language skills "sufficient to enter the job market."

Having a sponsor "unlikely" to provide financial support.

And these are some factors that will be weighted positively for the applicant:

Having private, unsubsidized health insurance.

Having income at least 250 percent of the federal poverty level.

Until the rule goes into effect two months from now, it's unclear precisely how heavily immigration officials will weight these various criteria. But the rule holds major ramifications for the more than 1 million immigrants granted green cards every year. The new criteria make it likely that far fewer immigrants could receive approvals, experts say.

"It's a wealth test," said Elizabeth Lower-Basch, director of income and work supports at the Center for Law and Social Policy. "It creates space for them to apply it in a racially discriminatory fashion."

Denials of immigrant visa applications could skyrocket back to highs of the late 1990s, when 13 percent of applicants were denied on public charge grounds, the libertarian Cato Institute wrote in an analysis of the final rule. That would have equated to just 115,000 green cards in 2018, wrote David Bier.

Several states and immigration groups said they plan to sue the administration over the new rule.

Zoe Tillman, a courts and justice reporter for BuzzFeed News:

There's another potential effect here — and it's one that some immigrant advocates are even more worried about. In making their public charge determination, officials may also start taking into consideration whether an immigrant has availed themselves of Medicaid or other safety-net programs, including food stamps and housing subsidies.

These programs already have strict restrictions on enrollment by immigrants. In most cases, an immigrant would need to have gained permanent status and lived in the United States for a minimum of five years before they could enroll. So technically speaking, these new criteria don't signal a huge shift.

But there could be a widespread chilling effect, given President Trump's broad anti-immigration rhetoric. Advocates fear that immigrants will choose not to enroll in such programs even when they're eligible, for fear it could jeopardize their prospects or those of a family member.

"Our concern is people are going to be leery of reading the fine print and are just going to stay out of it," said Eliot Fishman, senior director of health policy for Families USA.

Democrats in Congress also lambasted the rule, calling it xenophobic. "The Trump administration's callous crusade to demonize immigrant families continues," Sen. Ron Wyden (Ore.), the ranking Democrat on the Finance Committee, said in a statement.

The Department of Homeland Security acknowledged it received mostly negative comments about the rule it initially proposed last year. Commenters worried the new, specific criteria would lead to a merit-based system allowing the agency to discriminate against the poor, less-educated and less-healthy.

DHS did exclude several programs, such as the "WIC" nutrition program for women, infants and children and the Children's Health Insurance Program, from the public charge consideration. The agency also stressed that it won't consider the participation of children or pregnant women in any safety-net programs.

"DHS notes that it did not codify this final rule to discriminate against aliens based on age, race, gender, income, health, and social status, or to create an 'ageist' system that selectively favors wealthy, healthy, and highly educated individuals," the rule says. "Rather, this rule is intended to better ensure that aliens subject to this rule are self-sufficient."

Rule Would Penalize Immigrants To U.S. For Needing Benefits (NPR)

NPR [8/13/2019 7:23 AM, Staff, 5041K] Audio [HERE](#)

NPR's Rachel Martin talks to Ken Cuccinelli, acting head of Citizenship and Immigration Services, about a rule that could force immigrants to choose between accepting public benefits and a green card.

What to know about the rule that could reshape legal immigration (CNN)

CNN [8/12/2019 6:00 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 6094K]

On Monday, the Trump administration released a regulation that could reshape the legal immigrant population in the US.

The long-anticipated public charge rule makes it more difficult for immigrants who rely on government assistance like Medicaid, subsidized housing and food stamps to obtain legal status.

Monday's announcement falls in line with the administration's attempts to curb legal immigration, and favor wealthier and more educated immigrants.

Here's what to know:

The rule applies to people who are seeking to come to or trying to remain in the United States. Notably, it'll affect people who are trying to obtain lawful permanent status, otherwise known as a green card.

The "public charge" provision dates back at least to the Immigration Act of 1882. Federal lawmakers at the time wanted to make sure that immigrants would be able to take care of themselves and not end up a public burden.

Under current regulations put in place in 1996, the term is defined as someone who is "primarily dependent" on government assistance, meaning it supplies more than half their income.

But it only counted cash benefits, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Supplemental Security Income from Social Security. The administration's new rule widens the definition of who is expected to be dependent on the government by including more benefit programs.

Immigration officials can take into account an applicant's financial resources, health, education, skills, family status and age. But few people are rejected on these relatively narrow grounds, experts said.

"It's totally changing the conception of what it means to be a public charge," said David Bier, immigration policy analyst at the libertarian CATO Institute.

The rule will effect people who receive most forms of Medicaid, food stamps and housing vouchers.

It doesn't include benefits such as emergency medical assistance, disaster relief, national school lunch programs, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and food pantries and homeless shelters.

The rule includes immigrants who use one or more designated public benefits for 12 months within a 36-month period. Each benefit is counted separately, meaning if two benefits are used in a month, it'll count as two months.

It's hard to know exactly how many people will be affected because it's largely subject to the

discretion of the officer who will take into account whether someone is likely to become a public charge.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, however, the rule is expected to impact roughly 382,000 people seeking to adjust their immigration status. Immigration advocates, however, say millions of people could be affected by the regulation.

Immigration advocates have also argued that the rule goes beyond what Congress intended and would discriminate against those from poorer countries, keep families apart and prompt legal residents to forgo needed public aid, which could also impact their US citizen children.

"The rule reflects a dark vision of the United States -- as an unwelcoming nation that wants to keep out people who seek to join their family, work hard, and climb the economic ladder - - based on the erroneous assumption that they won't contribute to our communities, our economy, and our nation," said Robert Greenstein, president of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Undocumented immigrants are largely ineligible for public assistance so they generally would not be affected, unless an avenue opens up for them to apply for green cards or visas.

The regulation doesn't apply to benefits used by US citizen children, according to a US Citizenship and Immigration Services official.

There are exceptions to the rule, such as benefits received by active duty member of the military and their spouses and children; Medicaid for pregnant women and people under 21 years old; and emergency medical care.

The rule also doesn't impact refugees or asylum seekers, as well as certain trafficking victims, victims of domestic violence, among others.

The CATO Institute released a study last year reviewing the use rates of some benefit programs by immigrants and native-born Americans. The group found that "immigrants are less likely to consume welfare benefits and, when they do, they generally consume a lower dollar value of benefits than native-born Americans."

The rule will take effect October 15. Until then, US Citizenship and Immigration Services is "continuing to work towards finalizing the processes and procedures that will be required to implement the final public charge rule," according to a USCIS official.

The rule will only apply to applications and petition on or after the effective date, according to the agency.

Ken Cuccinelli: Judges Attack Donald Trump with 'Open Lawfare' (Breitbart)

Breitbart [8/13/2019 3:51 PM, Neil Munro, 2034K] Audio: [HERE](#)

Ken Cuccinelli, the top appointee in the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services agency, says progressive judges are waging "open lawfare" against President Donald Trump's campaign promises on immigration policy.

"No president has ever suffered so many national injunctions as President Trump," Ken

Cuccinelli said in an August 13 interview (starting 20:00) on SiriusXM's Breitbart News Daily with host Alex Marlow.

Cuccinelli continued:

What we have seen is open lawfare by a select number of judges ... I think, as an idealistic lawyer, they are embarrassing the court system. They are embarrassing the court system in how they ignore the law completely in making so many of these decisions.

The federal injunctions have been used by progressives to stall or even block many of the administration's priorities.

These priorities include the justice department's closure of President Barack Obama's DACA amnesty, Homeland Security's regulation requiring migrants to ask for asylum at the legal ports of entry on the border, and the curbs on the entry of migrants from several unstable Muslim-majority countries. The tactic is also now being used to block the oversight and reform of the H-1B and OPT guest-worker programs.

Cuccinelli continued:

We had just a couple of weeks ago a situation where a California judge — Judge Tigar, who has been involved in multiple national injunctions— effectively overrode a judge in D.C. who had ruled that an injunction was not appropriate on a new asylum rule that my agency had promulgated ... So you get one judge in a district court — a trial judge in San Francisco — who imposes a national injunction and effectively [nullifies] a Washington judge's ruling that an injunction was not appropriate.

So what is OK about that ... overreach by the courts? We usually think of the separation of powers between the executive and the legislative branches, [but] we have a separation of powers [dispute] here with the courts reaching into the executive branch's area of responsibility, and this keeps happening.

It is a very important basis for concern. It comes into play in numerous aspects of the immigration system right now whether it is TPS [Temporary Protected Status] – which the courts are not supposed to be able to review, and yet they are holding up our ability to end Temporary Protected Status. That is supposed to be purely discretionary to the executive branch.

I could go on with example after example, but what is important to keep in mind is that there has never been example after example [of injunctions] until President Trump started to actually push hard on the immigration agenda that he had promised when he campaigned.

Trump immigration officials go on media offensive (The Hill)

The Hill [8/13/2019 6:15 PM, Rafael Bernal, 2806K]

The country's top immigration officials are on a media blitz this week, hitting back at critics of President Trump's policies.

From announcing the new "public charge" rule to defending Immigration and Customs

Enforcement (ICE) raids, administration officials have put themselves in front of TV cameras in the White House briefing room, on the Sunday talk shows and on prime-time news programs.

Acting ICE Director Matthew Albence on Tuesday became the latest Trump official to publicly defend the administration's policies, telling "NBC Nightly News" in an interview that parents are to blame when their children are stranded during immigration raids.

"The parents or the individuals that are breaking the law are ultimately the ones that are responsible for placing their children in this situation," Albence said in an interview slated to air Tuesday evening.

Albence was interviewed by NBC's Gabe Gutierrez about the massive ICE raids at poultry plants in Mississippi last week, when more than 680 people were taken into custody. Around 300 detainees were released Thursday, and officials said detainees with no criminal record and dependent care needs were prioritized for release.

But children of detainees were stranded at schools and day care facilities, or came home to empty houses on the day of the raids, according to multiple reports.

Gutierrez asked Albence what he would say to the little girl who was seen on video crying for her father after the raids.

"I don't think I would speak to the little girl," said Albence. "I would speak to the parents and I would speak to the community at large. Look, I'm a parent, most of our officers and agents are parents — some of the most difficult things that we have to do in our jobs to enforce the laws involve the separation of parents from children."

Acting Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Mark Morgan said Sunday on CNN's "State of the Union" that the girl in the video was "upset and I get that. But her father committed a crime."

The raids in Mississippi came less than a week after 22 people died in a mass shooting in El Paso, Texas, where the gunman was allegedly targeting "Mexicans."

Acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press" that the timing of the raids was "unfortunate," as the country mourned the dead in El Paso and a second mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio.

But McAleenan said the raids were scheduled long before the shootings.

"Something like this has been planned for over a year. This is a criminal investigation with 14 federal warrants issued by a judge and ICE had to follow through on that. It was already planned and in motion," said McAleenan.

A day after the remarks by Morgan and McAleenan, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services acting Director Ken Cuccinelli announced from the White House briefing room another Trump administration immigration initiative, known as the "public charge" rule.

The change, slated to take effect in two months, would dramatically increase the government's ability to reject green cards for people who are deemed likely to depend on government aid such as food stamps, housing assistance and Medicaid.

Cuccinelli later proposed a rewording of the inscription under the Statue of Liberty in defense of the new rule.

"Give me your tired and your poor who can stand on their own two feet and who will not become a public charge," Cuccinelli said in an NPR interview, in reference to the Emma Lazarus poem on the statue that does not include a reference to "public charge."

Justice Department Moves To Decertify Union That Represents U.S. Immigration Judges (NPR)

NPR [8/13/2019 4:17 PM, Staff, 5041K] Audio: [HERE](#)

NPR's Ailsa Chang speaks with Judge Ashley Tabaddor, president of the National Association of Immigration Judges, about the Justice Department's movement to decertify the union.

US homeland security chief: Racism is fueling some terrorism (Washington Post)

Washington Post [8/13/2019 4:41 PM, Emily Wagster Pettus, AP, 9425K]

The Homeland Security head says white supremacist ideology is fueling some domestic terrorism.

Acting Secretary Kevin K. McAleenan appeared Tuesday in Jackson, Mississippi, for a forum about preventing violence against religious groups.

He said the recent mass shooting that killed 22 people in El Paso was inspired by "violent white supremacist ideology" that "offends us all."

Others at the forum described the threat in similar terms. Democratic Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas is a member of the House Homeland Security Committee. She called racism a "national security threat."

Critics of President Donald Trump contend his language has stoked racial and ethnic divisions.

Democratic Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi did not name names but said "the racist, xenophobic language that we hear coming from high places" empowers people "to do crazy things."

Schumer to ask Trump to divert \$5 billion in border wall funding to fight gun violence, white-supremacy extremists (FOX News)

FOX News [8/13/2019 5:51 PM, Louis Casiano, 10258K]

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., on Tuesday said he'll ask President Trump to withdraw his request for \$5 billion in border wall construction funds, and to instead use that money to battle gun violence and white-supremacist extremism following two deadly mass shootings this month.

Schumer's office said he will formally petition the president to put the funding toward gun violence research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Homeland Security counterviolent extremism programs, FBI domestic-terrorism investigations and other programs.

"The dual scourges of gun violence and violent white supremacist extremism in this country are a national security threat, plain and simple, and it's time the Trump administration and Republicans in Congress starting treating them as such," Schumer said in a statement.

"Now Republicans and this administration need to put their money where their mouth is when it comes to addressing gun violence and stopping the rise of domestic terrorism, especially stemming from white supremacy," the statement continued.

In February, Trump used a national emergency declaration to divert funding from the Pentagon for his long-promised border wall. He took that tack after Congressional Democrats refused to fund the project.

Schumer's request came after CQ Roll Call reported that Senate Republicans were looking to divert about \$5 billion from a domestic spending bill to fund the wall. The shootings in Texas and Ohio earlier this month have intensified the pressure on lawmakers to address gun violence and white nationalism,

The gunman in El Paso, Texas, who killed 22 people inside a Walmart targeted Hispanic immigrants.

Unified Dems press Trump, GOP on curbing guns (Washington Times)

Washington Times [8/13/2019 11:12 AM, Alan Fram, 452K]

Democrats pressed Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Tuesday to approve House-passed legislation expanding background checks and to take other steps curbing guns, in an offensive fueled by public outrage over this month's mass killings in Texas and Ohio.

It seemed unlikely that Democrats' moves would have much impact on top Republicans. While President Donald Trump and McConnell have expressed a new openness to unspecified gun curbs following the back-to-back mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, their decisions will reflect the sentiment of fellow Republicans, not predictable pressure tactics by Democrats.

Still, Democrats' moves underscore their focus on an issue that largely unites them - responding to the massacres that killed 31 people - and away from the party's hand-wringing over whether to impeach Trump, a question that deeply divides Democrats.

McConnell, R-Ky., came under the sharpest attacks at a news conference held by No. 2 House Democratic leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., five other House Democrats and gun activists and survivors of shootings.

Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va., said McConnell hadn't moved gun curb legislation because "he's waiting for the outrage to die down, the headlines to change, the people to turn the page

and think about something else.” Congress is out of town on recess until a week after Labor Day.

Hoyer resorted to reading lyrics from “Blowin’ in the Wind,” Bob Dylan’s 1962 song. “How many deaths will it take till he knows that too many people have died,” Hoyer said, pausing for effect.

Rep. Anthony Brown, D-Md., cited statistics on the thousands of gun fatalities annually and said, “In the face of this epidemic, Mitch McConnell is doing nothing.”

Democrats focused on McConnell’s failure to let the Senate consider a measure the House approved in February. It would require background checks for most private sales, including online and gun show purchases of firearms, not just for transactions involving registered gun dealers.

The White House has threatened that Trump would veto that bill, which the Democratic-led House approved largely along party lines. In an interview last week with Louisville, Kentucky, radio station WHAS-AM, McConnell pointedly noted that for a proposal to become law, it must pass the House and Senate “and it has to be signed by President Trump.”

Trump told reporters in New Jersey on Tuesday that he’s “convinced that Mitch wants to do something” on guns. He added, “He wants to do background checks and I do too.”

Trump also said he’d had “a very good conversation” with Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., a strong gun control advocate.

Trump provided no specifics and it was unclear how tough a background check measure Republicans might consider. McConnell said earlier this month that background checks and “red flags” - bills helping authorities remove guns from unstable people - would “probably lead the discussion.”

“What we can’t do is fail to pass something,” McConnell said. “What I want to see here is an outcome.”

Hoyer said the Democratic-run House Judiciary Committee will consider gun control legislation, though he stopped short of saying they would hold votes. He said the panel could discuss measures banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines and making it easier for authorities to confiscate guns from unstable people.

The committee could return from recess in early September to consider gun measures, according people familiar with the panel’s plans who weren’t authorized to speak on the record.

Separately, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer called on Trump to divert \$5 billion he’s wanted to build his wall along the southern border to investigating domestic terrorism and conducting research on gun violence.

“The dual scourges of gun violence and violent white supremacist extremism in this country

are a national security threat plain and simple, and it's time the Trump administration and Republicans in Congress starting treating them as such," Schumer, D-N.Y., said in a statement.

Patrick Crusius, 21, accused of the El Paso shootings, has told authorities he was targeting Mexicans.

Schumer's plea appeared to largely be an attempt to frame the issue politically, and it seemed highly unlikely Trump will heed it.

Barr Promises Fast Track for Federal Death Penalty (Free Beacon)

Free Beacon [8/13/2019 3:45 PM, Charles Fain Lehman, 127K]

The Trump administration is pushing for legislation that would accelerate certain federal death penalty cases.

The new legislation is expected around Labor Day, according to Attorney General William P. Barr, and will specifically expedite the use of the death penalty for offenders who murder police officers or commit mass murders.

Speaking before the Fraternal Order of Police's biennial conference on Monday, Barr told the assembled officers that his office was well aware of a recent increase in assaults on police officers, and emphasized that the administration "will not tolerate violence against police."

"We were all nauseated by the spectacle of prancing punks pelting New York police officers with water and plastic buckets," Barr said, according to his released remarks.

"Unfortunately, these were not isolated events. From 2014 through 2017, there has been a 20 percent increase in assaults against police, up to about 60,000 per year."

This is why, according to Barr, the White House expects to roll out its new proposal for an expedited death penalty for cop killers.

"We will be proposing legislation providing that in cases of mass murder, or in cases of murder of a law enforcement officer, there will be a timetable for judicial proceedings that will allow imposition of any death sentence without undue delay," the attorney general said. "Punishment must be swift and certain."

Barr's announcement follows his official reinstatement of the federal death penalty in July, following nearly two decades of a de facto pause. The first of the five executions initially ordered by Barr are expected to take place later this year, reflecting President Donald Trump's staunch support for the death penalty.

In addition to expedited executions for mass murderers and cop killers, Trump has also called for death eligibility for federal hate crime offenders—presumably only those who commit homicide, as the death penalty is generally not applicable to non-homicide offenders. It is unclear if the hate crime provision—widely perceived as a response to the recent racially-motivated shooting at an El Paso Walmart—will be part of the administration's new legislation.

At the same time, the proposal to implement a fast-track for certain death-eligible offenders is likely to attract both attention and court challenges. The details of what, exactly, Barr means by a "timetable of judicial proceedings" remains unclear, but expedited proceedings tend to draw criticism from opponents of the death penalty, who see them as a threat to due process. At the same time, the length of post-conviction appeals in death penalty cases have ballooned. The individuals executed in 2017 had spent an average of more than 20 years on death row prior to their executions, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

[MA] Judge accused of aiding wanted immigrant gets pay restored (ABC News)

ABC News [8/13/2019 2:34 PM, William J. Kole, AP, 2702K]

A Massachusetts judge charged with helping an immigrant escape a federal agent waiting to arrest him will be paid while her legal battle plays out, the state's highest court ruled Tuesday.

Reversing course in a closely watched case that has showcased official resistance to the Trump administration's tough immigration policy, the Supreme Judicial Court said Newton District Court Judge Shelley Joseph would resume collecting her annual salary of \$181,000.

In a 5-1 decision, it also ordered that she receive back pay dating to late April, when the high court ruled she should be suspended without pay.

Joseph is fighting federal criminal charges for allegedly helping a man from the Dominican Republic slip out a back door of her courthouse while a federal immigration officer was waiting for him. She has pleaded not guilty to obstruction of justice, and court records indicate she rejected a plea deal offered by federal prosecutors last month. A former court officer also was charged.

The case has drawn national attention, with Joseph's lawyer denouncing her indictment as "absolutely political."

"The federal and state governments have staked out different and sometimes conflicting positions on what can or cannot be done with respect to immigrants who are subject only to ... civil warrants in state courthouses," Justice Scott Kafker noted in an opinion attached to the decision made public Tuesday.

Joseph had argued in an affidavit filed last spring that her family faced mounting legal bills, had to borrow money from friends and family and was at risk of having to sell their home.

Lawyers' groups and a collection of retired judges backed Joseph, calling it "unprecedented" to take away the pay of a judge who hasn't been found guilty of wrongdoing.

The Massachusetts Bar Association, Women's Bar Association of Massachusetts and Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys said in court documents that judges "must be able to act without fearing for their livelihood or the well-being of their family if a powerful litigant, the public, or other judges disagree with their actions."

Chief Justice Ralph Gants said Tuesday he came around to that view.

"In turbulent times, the risk of being stripped of a paycheck may have a chilling effect on a judge's willingness to challenge the conduct of a prosecutor and thereby diminish the overall independence of the judiciary," he wrote.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Frank Gaziano said the decision "smacks of preferential treatment, and thereby erodes public confidence in the judiciary."

[MA] A judge accused of helping an undocumented immigrant evade ICE will be paid during her suspension (CNN)

CNN [8/13/2019 6:32 PM, Carma Hassan and Holly Yan, 6094K]

In an about-face, the Massachusetts Supreme Court said a judge accused of helping a twice-deported undocumented immigrant evade an immigration officer will be paid while she's suspended.

Newton District Court Judge Shelley Richmond Joseph was indicted in April on obstruction of justice and other federal charges. The judge had ordered the immigrant, who was charged with drug possession and being a fugitive from justice, to be released.

Joseph was initially suspended without pay as she faced federal charges.

But on Tuesday, the majority of Massachusetts Supreme Court judges signed a court order saying Joseph will be suspended with pay. However, the court denied her request to be reassigned to administrative duties.

Joseph makes about \$180,000 per year, according to the state legislature's website.

The judge allegedly conspired with a court officer

Joseph is accused of conspiring with a former trial court officer, Wesley MacGregor, to help the defendant escape.

Authorities say MacGregor used his security access card to let the defendant out a back door of the courthouse while an ICE officer waited outside the courtroom.

Both Joseph and MacGregor face counts of conspiracy to obstruct justice, obstruction of justice, obstruction of a federal proceeding and aiding and abetting, according to a federal indictment.

MacGregor was also charged with one count of perjury.

Joseph and MacGregor were released without bond after pleading not guilty, CNN affiliate WCVB reported.

"This case is about the rule of law," US Attorney Andrew Lelling said after the indictments in April. "We cannot pick and choose the federal laws we follow, or use our personal views to justify violating the law."

But Joseph's attorney, Thomas Hoopes, said "this prosecution is totally political, and Shelley Joseph is absolutely innocent."

Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey said in April that the indictment was "a radical and politically motivated attack on our state and the independence of our courts."

Healey said the matter could have been handled by the state Commission on Judicial Conduct and the Trial Court.

"It is a bedrock principle of our constitutional system that federal prosecutors should not recklessly interfere with the operation of state courts and their administration of justice," she said in a statement.

A defendant was led out a back door, away from an ICE officer

The charges stemmed from an April 2018 incident in which Richmond and MacGregor allegedly allowed an undocumented immigrant at a criminal court hearing to escape detention by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer.

Newton Police had arrested and charged the undocumented immigrant days earlier with being a fugitive from justice and drug possession.

Authorities later learned he had been deported from the US in 2003 and 2007 and was prohibited from re-entering the country until 2027. ICE issued an immigration detainer and warrant of removal.

A plainclothes ICE officer went to the Newton courthouse to execute the warrant.

At one point, the judge -- Joseph -- directed the court clerk to ask the ICE officer to wait in the lobby, according to court documents.

When the case was called, a court audio recording captured Joseph, the defense attorney and the prosecutor speaking at sidebar about the ICE detainer.

The defendant's attorney told Joseph he believed his client was not the same person named in the fugitive warrant.

"My client denies that it's him," the attorney said. "ICE is going to pick him up if he walks out the front door. But I think the best thing for us to do is to clear the fugitive issue, release him on a personal, and hope that he can avoid ICE. ... That's the best I can do."

Joseph responded. "ICE is gonna get him? ... What if we detain him?"

The judge then allegedly ordered the courtroom clerk to "go off the record for a moment." The audio recorder was turned off for 52 seconds, the indictment said.

When the recorder was turned on again, Joseph said she intended to release the defendant, court documents state.

The prosecutor said, "Your Honor, with the information that I have, I don't think that there is enough tying him to the Pennsylvania warrant."

The defense attorney asked to speak with the defendant downstairs.

"I believe he has some property downstairs," the attorney said. "I'd like to speak with him downstairs with the interpreter if I may."

Joseph responded, "That's fine. Of course," according to prosecutors.

When reminded by the clerk that an ICE officer was in the courthouse, Joseph said, "That's fine. I'm not gonna allow them to come in here. But he's been released on this."

MacGregor then allegedly escorted the defendant, his attorney and an interpreter downstairs to the lockup and used his security access card to open the rear exit and release the defendant, the indictment said.

The ICE officer, meanwhile, was waiting for the defendant in the lobby outside the courtroom -- where the clerk told him the man would be released.

[Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[MA] Judge accused of helping shield illegal immigrant has pay restored as case proceeds (FOX News)

FOX News [8/13/2019 8:34 PM, Louis Casiano, 10258K] Video: [HERE](#)

A Massachusetts judge accused of helping an undocumented immigrant evade federal agents waiting to arrest him will be paid while she fights criminal charges against her, a judicial panel ruled Tuesday.

In a 5-1 decision, the state Supreme Judicial Court ruled that Newton District Court Judge Shelley Joseph can resume collecting her annual \$181,000 salary. The panel also ruled that Joseph will receive back pay retroactive to April, a reversal of an earlier ruling that said she should be suspended without pay.

"In turbulent times, the risk of being stripped of a paycheck may have a chilling effect on a judge's willingness to challenge the conduct of a prosecutor and thereby diminish the overall independence of the judiciary," Chief Justice Ralph Gants wrote.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Frank Gaziano said the decision "smacks of preferential treatment and thereby erodes public confidence in the judiciary."

Along with a court officer, Joseph is charged with obstruction of justice, aiding and abetting; obstruction of a federal proceeding, and conspiracy to obstruct justice.

She has pleaded not guilty.

Prosecutors allege Joseph and Court Officer Wesley MacGregor, 56, helped Jose Medina-

Perez, a twice-deported immigrant from the Dominican Republic, slip out of a courthouse through a back door in April 2018 and elude Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents.

Media-Perez was wanted on a fugitive warrant for drunken driving in Pennsylvania. He had appeared in the Massachusetts court in April 2018 to be arraigned on drug charges.

He was caught a month after the hearing and is barred from entering the United States until 2027.

Lawyers and judges have rallied behind Joseph, calling it "unprecedented" to take away her pay while she has yet to be convicted.

She faces up to 20 years in prison.

[MA] Massachusetts judge allowed to keep \$181K salary amid federal charges for obstructing ICE (USA Today)

USA Today [8/13/2019 4:34 PM, Joey Garrison, 6620K]

In a reversal, a Massachusetts judge indicted for allowing an undocumented immigrant to evade ICE by slipping out the backdoor of a courthouse will be able to keep her \$181,328 annual salary and get back pay during her ongoing suspension.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, in a 5-1 decision Tuesday, ruled to reinstate the salary and benefits of District Judge Shelley Joseph and to pay her compensation that was withheld since April 25, when federal obstruction charges were filed against her. Joseph has pleaded not guilty.

The court had initially suspended Joseph without pay, pointing to procedures for trial courts in Massachusetts for employees who is indicted for misconduct while in office. But in the new order, a majority of justices agreed that "suspension with pay is more appropriate under these circumstances."

The court did not reach a full consensus, however. One justice, Frank Gaziano, in a stinging dissenting opinion, said the decision to reverse court "smacks of preferential treatment, and thereby erodes public confidence in the judiciary."

"A few months ago, when we suspended her, we recognized that the suspension

without pay would have serious financial consequences for the judge, but that we had no other option if we were to maintain public confidence in the judiciary. Nothing has changed."

Joseph, a state judge in Newton, outside Boston, was indicted April 25 by the Justice Department for allegedly preventing federal immigration agents last year from arresting an undocumented immigrant. A court officer, Wesley MacGregor, was also charged. He's pleaded not guilty as well.

Prosecutors say that Joseph and MacGregor allowed Jose Medina-Perez, a Dominican national detained on drug and outstanding warrant charges, to leave the courthouse from a downstairs back door after the judge instructed an immigration agent to wait in the hallway

outside her courtroom. Medina-Perez has been deported twice before in 2007 and 2003 and had been barred from reentering the country until 2027.

The high-profile indictment of Joseph came amid a standoff between President Donald Trump, who has overseen a strict enforcement of immigrant policy, and U.S. communities that have objected to providing the federal government information on residents' immigration status.

The five Supreme Court justices in the majority, including Chief Justice Ralph Gants, wrote their reasons in two separate concurrences. They noted that in previous instances when Massachusetts judges had been suspended without pay it came after investigations from the Commission on Judicial Conduct. But such an investigation has not concluded with Joseph's matter.

They also acknowledged the court is "left with two poor alternatives" – either use public funds to pay a judge who is not working or create a financial burden for the judge that hurts her ability to return to the bench.

But the justices wrote that suspending Joseph without pay "may do more than burden an individual judge" by making it difficult to put up a legal defense and therefore hurting the power of the courts.

"In turbulent times, the risk of being stripped of a paycheck may have a chilling effect on a judge's willingness to challenge the conduct of a prosecutor and thereby diminish the overall independence of the judiciary ... " the order reads.

The justices also questioned taking away Joseph's pay for an indictment, which is based only on probable cause, as opposed to a guilty verdict that has a higher bar.

In addition they said the "practical consequence" of a suspension without pay is "more severe" with a judge who is inhibited from making money in other ways during a suspension than other court employees.

The Justice Department's case against Joseph is being tried separately in Boston federal court. The next pre-trial hearing is set for Sept. 10.

Joseph appealed her initial suspension without pay in May, calling it "without precedent" to impose the penalty before the court or another administrative body has determined a wrongful act. Her attorneys argued that the suspended pay presented a "financial dilemma," forcing Joseph to borrow "significant sums of money from family and friends to meet her expenses."

"She may soon be forced to choose between keeping her family home and mounting a robust defense to the criminal indictment," they said.

Although the Supreme Court sided with Joseph on the salary question, the justices unanimously rejected her request that she be reassigned to administrative duties during the suspension.

The U.S. Attorney in Boston prosecuting the obstruction case against Joseph, Andrew Lelling, a Trump appointee, has said the case is "about the rule of law," not immigration. Joseph's defense team has objected, calling the indictment "absolutely political."

[DC] D.C. mayor says she will not accept federal shelter for unaccompanied migrant children (Washington Post)

Washington Post [8/13/2019 5:11 PM, Fenit Nirappil, 9425K]

D.C. officials and immigration advocates on Tuesday criticized plans by the federal government to house unaccompanied migrant children in Washington.

Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D) said the city has "no intention" of accepting such a facility, echoing opposition from elected officials in Northern Virginia, who are protesting a proposal by the Trump administration to build a permanent shelter there for unaccompanied minors.

Bowser was reacting to an application from Dynamic Service Solutions, a federal contractor, to open a temporary shelter for children in the District. The company has been advertising job listings for educators, caseworkers and medical staff members to work with "unaccompanied alien" children in the nation's capital.

A woman who answered the phone at the contractor's office referred questions to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees the placement of migrant children. The department did not respond to requests for comment Tuesday.

The proposed facility would house as many as 242 children, according to a person familiar with the contractor's application to the city. Some members of the D.C. Council said they were under the impression that the shelter would be located on private property in Takoma, a Northwest D.C. neighborhood near the Maryland border.

Democrats and some Republicans have objected to the Trump administration's handling of immigration at the southern border, including separating children from their families and holding immigrants in crowded facilities and squalid conditions.

"Washington, D.C. will not be complicit in the inhumane practice of detaining migrant children in warehouses," Bowser said in a statement. "We have no intention of accepting a new federal facility, least of all one that detains and dehumanizes migrant children."

The U.S. Border Patrol has reported apprehending more than 69,000 unaccompanied minors at the southwestern border from October 2018 through July. That's an increase from 50,000 minors apprehended in the previous year.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement, an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services, is responsible for placing the children with relatives or in shelters and funds about 170 facilities in 23 states.

Opponents of a D.C. shelter say they don't object to the arrival of immigrant children in their communities but to the method of housing under the Trump administration.

"We are going to bring 200 migrant children to a sheltered facility? That's absurd, it really is."

I wouldn't support it even if it was 10 children," said council member Brandon T. Todd (D-Ward 4), whose district includes the possible location for a shelter. "This isn't how you treat humans."

The D.C. Child and Family Services Agency, which oversees foster care and child welfare services and must license such a facility, received an application from Dynamic Service Solutions but found it "inadequate," according to a D.C. official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing matter. The application was not rejected outright and is still pending, the person said.

The facility must also receive approval from the D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, which certifies buildings for occupancy.

Advocates are pressing city officials to do whatever they can to stop the shelter.

"So many of us in the Latino community are opposed to this happening anywhere in the United States, but certainly not when it's in our backyard," said Maria Gomez, president and chief executive of Mary's Center, a community health center with multiple locations.

District officials recently closed a megashelter for homeless families at the former D.C. General hospital campus, arguing that children should not be housed in crowded institutions.

Council member Brianne K. Nadeau (D-Ward 1) is considering legislation that would cap the number of youths who can be placed in a facility as a way of blocking the shelter for unaccompanied minors. Currently, the largest youth shelter in the city houses 14 people between the ages of 18 and 24.

"I oppose the licensing of a large shelter for unaccompanied children, which does not meet the standard of care that we have upheld for many years here in the District," Nadeau said in a statement. "If we need to change the law in order to prevent the private operation of a large shelter for children, I will gladly introduce emergency legislation."

The skirmish over the shelter is the latest example of the District's Democratic mayor tangling with President Trump.

Last year, Bowser opposed Trump's plans for a grand military parade on Veterans Day — an idea that was never realized, in part because Bowser indicated that the local costs of the parade would have been \$21.6 million.

"The local politicians who run Washington, D.C. (poorly) know a windfall when they see it," Trump wrote on Twitter. "When asked to give us a price for holding a great celebratory military parade, they wanted a number so ridiculously high that I cancelled it."

The mayor fired back on Twitter.

"Yup, I'm Muriel Bowser, mayor of Washington DC, the local politician who finally got thru to the reality star in the White House with the realities (\$21.6M) of parades/events/demonstrations in Trump America (sad)," she tweeted.

This year, Bowser opposed Trump's efforts to redesign the annual Fourth of July celebration to include a nationally televised address from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. She said his participation posed logistical challenges and threatened to turn the festivities into a political event. She made a point of saying she would not attend.

Despite her efforts to stand up to the president, the mayor has faced heat from immigration activists for what they consider an insufficient response to the Trump administration's deportation of local residents.

The Bowser administration has made millions available for local nonprofits providing legal services to immigrants, but that funding is not available for adult immigrants once they are detained.

[AL] More than 30 members of clergy, religious activists sign letter declaring their churches immigrant 'sanctuaries': report (FOX News)

FOX News [8/13/2019 6:02 PM, Bradford Betz, 10258K]

A group of more than 30 clergy members and religious activists in Birmingham, Ala., have signed a letter promising sanctuary to immigrants facing mass deportations in their state, according to a Tuesday report.

The Rev. Paul Ecknes-Tucker of Birmingham's Pilgrim United Church of Christ told al.com that the move came in response to last week's raid in Mississippi, in which Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents detained 680 "removable aliens" at seven food processing plants.

A federal prosecutor described the raid as "the largest single-state immigration enforcement operation in our nation's history."

"The raid over in Mississippi last week was a pivotal moment for us to begin talking about what we would do here if faced with similar things," Ecknes-Tucker said. "We talked about helping with kids, giving them a safe place to be."

Declaring churches a sanctuary, Ecknes-Tucker said, will protect immigrants from deportation and allow them time to recuperate.

"Our houses of worship will be sanctuary for those seeking refuge," read the letter. "We will not allow immigration authorities to enter into our houses of worship without a warrant signed by a judge."

Ecknes-Tucker acknowledged the likelihood of legal challenges but said he and his congregation "are willing to make that stand."

The letter, which was issued Tuesday, affirmed that "ethical and theological commitments require us to take a stand against policies and language that dehumanize our immigrant siblings."

It then admonished "racist, xenophobic, and violent rhetoric from our national leaders" used

to “vilify both documented and undocumented immigrants.”

Though the signatories “love and support” police and law enforcement who want to better their community, they decried the supposed weaponization of law enforcement policies “as part of an agenda to promote ethnic nationalism.”

The letter ends with a comparison of “saints and holy ancestors” who have fought on behalf of marginalized groups.

[TX] Commissioners vote 3-2 on El Paso solidarity resolution (Houston Chronicle)

Houston Chronicle [8/13/2019 8:02 PM, Zach Despart, 245K]

The members of Harris County Commissioners Court were unable to agree Tuesday on a resolution expressing solidarity for the victims of the Aug. 3 mass shooting in El Paso and calling on policy makers to address gun violence.

On a 3-2 vote, the trio of Democrats supported the item by Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis, which urged the county to examine ways to help prevent violence and hate-motivated crimes.

The party line vote was typical of this often-divided group which has seldom found itself acting in unison since Democrats took control in January. A settlement proposal in the county’s landmark bail lawsuit and a resolution urging federal immigration reform passed by an identical tally.

Each court member expressed sadness over the shooting, in which a 21-year-old Dallas-area man is accused of killing 22 people at an El Paso Walmart, later telling police he targeted Mexicans. Yet the Harris County officials could not find common ground on a resolution supporting the West Texas city.

Republican Precinct 4 Commissioner Jack Cagle proposed his own version of the resolution, framed as a broader condemnation of violence. It included a reference to the mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio, on Aug. 4 and a stabbing spree in Southern California Aug. 7 that left four dead.

Each was an act of terrorism, Cagle said, which should be the focus of condemnation rather than the weapon used. He cited the biblical story of Cain and Abel, in which a man kills his brother.

“In these issues, in this instance, these problems are a moral issue of our society today,” he said. “What we need to do is address the moral issue — because we should be loving our brothers and not hating our brothers.”

Cagle’s version omitted any specific reference to gun violence and removed Ellis’ sentence noting the FBI has reported hate crimes are increasing in the United States. Ellis countered, arguing a call to action on hate crimes was essential to the resolution.

“The FBI stats show there is a serious problem, and that does not just apply to people who are Hispanic, or people who are African-American,” Ellis said. “It could be a hate crime

against whites.”

The Democrats voted down Cagle’s proposed changes. Cagle and Precinct 3’s Steve Radack, the other Republican, then voted against the resolution.

In remarks during a recess, County Judge Lina Hidalgo said the disagreement is emblematic of a national divide over what policies, if any, should be pursued to curb shooting spree that are a uniquely American experience.

“That’s why I continue to call on unity... (and) the recognition that a strong Second Amendment doesn’t mean we have to have these kinds of senseless deaths,” Hidalgo said. “We should stand with our brothers and sisters in El Paso and communities affected by gun violence.”

Harris County, unlike the city of Houston, lacks ordinance-making power and thus has little formal influence over issues such as immigration and gun control. Hidalgo and her Democratic colleagues, however, have said they believe it is important to use the pulpit of Commissioners Court to take a public position on important topics.

Public speakers at Tuesday’s Commissioners Court meeting offered a variety of opinions on gun control and spoke for and against Ellis’ resolution.

Hidalgo said Commissioners Court could reconsider whether to continue renting county facilities, such as NRG Arena to gun shows.

[NM] In New Mexico, US defends authority over parole of migrants (San Francisco Chronicle)

San Francisco Chronicle [8/13/2019 12:49 PM, Staff, 2613K]

The Department of Justice is urging a federal judge to dismiss a lawsuit by the state of New Mexico that seeks to halt the quick release of asylum seeking migrants into local communities without economic assistance.

In a motion filed Monday, Albuquerque-based U.S. Attorney James Anderson says that the Department of Homeland Security has discretion over the parole of migrants and agency resources.

The lawsuit by New Mexico and Albuquerque seeks reimbursement for humanitarian efforts to shelter migrants and challenges the cancellation of an immigration program that helped migrants with phone calls and other travel logistics as they sought out final destinations throughout the United States.

Anderson says there is no federal statute or regulation requiring assistance for asylum seekers when they are paroled into the U.S.

[CA] California Counties Sue to Block Trump’s New Green Card Test (New York Times)

New York Times [8/13/2019 11:39 PM, Mihir Zaveri and Mariel Padilla, 22840K]

San Francisco and Santa Clara County in California filed a lawsuit Tuesday to block the

Trump administration from implementing a new rule that would deny permanent residency to legal immigrants if they are judged likely to use government benefit programs.

President Trump issued the regulation, called the public charge rule, on Monday. Starting in October, the federal government plans to base decisions about permanent legal status on a wealth test: Poor immigrants would be denied if they are deemed likely to use programs like food stamps or subsidized housing, while wealthier immigrants designated as less likely to require public assistance would be approved.

In the lawsuit, filed in United States District Court in San Francisco, the counties say the rule would have a “chilling effect.” It would push many away from needed federal health care programs that also guard communities against disease, like the Zika virus. Local governments would have to provide similar services and pick up the costs, the lawsuit says.

“This illegal rule is yet another attempt to vilify immigrants,” Dennis Herrera, San Francisco’s city attorney, said in a statement Tuesday. “It makes it easier to unfairly target hard-working, lawful immigrants while sowing fear and confusion in our communities.

The rule’s announcement Monday prompted a swift backlash, and Tuesday’s lawsuit was not unexpected. Several advocacy groups called the policy cruel and several vowed to sue the federal government.

The Department of Justice declined to comment on the lawsuit Tuesday night.

The new rule is the Trump administration’s latest move to significantly overhaul the immigration system.

Under the rule, poor immigrants would be denied green cards if they are deemed likely to use government benefit programs like food stamps and subsidized housing. Officials would also consider an immigrant’s age, health, family status, assets, resources, financial status and education.

Officials would be given broad leeway to determine whether an immigrant is likely to use public benefits, to deny them a green card and to order them deported.

The rule would not apply to people who already have green cards, to certain members of the military, to refugees and asylum-seekers, or to pregnant women and children.

An applicant who speaks English, shows formal letters of support and has private health insurance would be more likely to be approved than someone whose financial situation suggests they would probably need housing vouchers or enroll in Medicaid in the future if they were given a green card.

In the Federal Register, officials with the Department of Homeland Security estimated that more than 382,000 immigrants seek an adjustment to their immigration status each year and would be subject to the public charge review. It is estimated by the government that more than 324,000 people in households with noncitizens would drop out of or not enroll in public benefit programs if the new rule went into effect.

Advocacy organizations, however, estimate that 26 million immigrants living in the United States legally would reconsider their use of government benefits because they might fear that accepting assistance could affect their ability to remain in the United States.

On Monday, when Kenneth T. Cuccinelli II, the acting director of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, announced the regulation, he said: “The benefit to taxpayers is a long-term benefit of seeking to ensure that our immigration system is bringing people to join us as American citizens, as legal permanent residents first, who can stand on their own two feet, who will not be reliant on the welfare system, especially in the age of the modern welfare state which is so expansive and expensive.”

When the regulation was published in the Federal Register on Monday morning, it contained an acknowledgment of how contentious the debate over it has been. “While some commenters provided support for the rule,” it said, “the vast majority of commenters opposed the rule.”

[CA] Two California counties sue Trump administration over new green card rules (Los Angeles Times)

Los Angeles Times [8/13/2019 4:19 PM, Associated Press, 3575K]

San Francisco and Santa Clara counties filed a lawsuit Tuesday challenging the Trump administration’s new “public charge” rules to restrict legal immigration.

The lawsuit is the first after the Department of Homeland Security’s announcement Monday that it would deny green cards to migrants who use Medicaid, food stamps, housing vouchers or other forms of public assistance.

In their filing, the two counties argued that the rules will worsen the health and well-being of their residents, increase public health risks and financially harm the counties. The rules, they argued, would result in a “chilling effect” in which migrants forgo or disenroll from federal public assistance programs to reduce the risk of green card denial. This would mean that the cost of services would shift from federal to state governments.

The counties also argued that the rules undermine Congress’ broader system of immigration laws that prioritizes family unification and that the federal government did not sufficiently offer rationale to explain the alleged benefits of the rules or justify its costs.

This rule “makes it easier to unfairly target hard-working, lawful immigrants while sowing fear and confusion in our communities,” San Francisco City Atty. Dennis Herrera said in a statement. “This rule forces people to make an impossible choice: their health or a better future for their family. We will all bear the cost of this misguided policy.”

Federal law currently requires those seeking to become permanent residents or gain legal status to prove they will not be a burden to the U.S. — a “public charge,” in government speak — but the new rules detail a broader range of programs that could disqualify them.

Under the new rules, the Department of Homeland Security has redefined a public charge as someone who is “more likely than not” to receive public benefits for more than 12 months within a 36-month period. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will now weigh whether

applicants have received public assistance along with other factors such as education, income and health to determine whether to grant legal status.

Multiple lawsuits were expected. Hours after the rule was published Monday, the Los Angeles-based National Immigration Law Center vowed to sue over what it called an attempt to redefine the legal immigration system to “disenfranchise communities of color and favor the wealthy.” Attorneys general in California and New York said they were also prepared to take legal action.

Without legal challenges, the rules would take effect in mid-October.

[CA] California counties file first lawsuit over Trump ‘public charge’ rule (The Hill)

The Hill [8/13/2019 3:29 PM, Chris Mills Rodrigo, 2806K]

Two California counties on Tuesday filed the first lawsuit against the Trump administration’s new “public charge” rule that allows the government to deny entry or green cards to immigrants based on their use of public programs like food stamps and Medicaid.

Representatives for Santa Clara County and San Francisco filed the suit seeking a temporary injunction in the District Court for the Northern District of California.

The counties allege the rule change hurts “critical public health and safety-net systems, is arbitrary and capricious, flouts federal law, and seeks to usurp Congress’ authority by administratively repealing its longstanding family-based immigration system.”

The plaintiffs allege that the projected drop in noncitizens using public services as a result of the new rule will “increase risks to the public health.”

They also argued that the rule is unlawful because it conflicts with “the broader congressional framework of U.S. immigration law.”

San Francisco and Santa Clara County successfully sued the administration over a rule that would have taken federal funding from “sanctuary cities” that refuse to enforce federal immigration laws.

The Trump administration released the final version of the “public charge” rule on Monday. It is set to go into effect Oct. 15. The two California counties are pushing for the implementation date to be postponed.

Under the new definition of “public charge,” participation in federal programs like food stamps, housing assistance and Medicaid will be a negative factor when determining if an immigrant can be granted a green card or visas.

Previously, only receipt of significant direct cash subsidies was considered a strike against an applicant.

Along with factors like age and health, the new definition will also consider family size and credit score when evaluating candidates for visas and green cards.

The change was initially previewed in September and received more than 200,000 public comments online, many of which were critical of the policy.

Tuesday's lawsuit is likely the first of several legal challenges to the rule.

The National Immigration Law Center said it will sue the administration.

The group's executive director Marielena Hincapié said in a statement that the rule "will have a dire humanitarian impact, forcing some families to forego critical life-saving health care and nutrition."

"The damage will be felt for decades to come," she added.

New York Attorney General Letitia James (D) announced Monday that she would sue over the rule, while California Attorney General Xavier Becerra (D) vowed to fight the rule.

The Trump administration has defended the rule change as a way to promote "the ideals of self-sufficiency and personal responsibility."

Trump has pursued multiple avenues to reduce illegal and legal immigration during his presidency. The majority of those efforts have been met with legal challenges.

[CA] California counties sue to block Trump's controversial "public charge" immigration rule (CBS News)

CBS News [8/13/2019 2:01 PM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 3332K]

Two of the most populous counties in California sued the Trump administration on Tuesday over its newly unveiled sweeping regulation that would make it easier for the government to deny green cards and temporary visas for legal immigrants who use public benefits like food stamps and government-subsidized housing.

The lawsuit, filed by Santa Clara and San Francisco Counties in U.S. District Court, is the first of numerous court challenges advocacy groups and Democratic-led jurisdictions have vowed to mount against the so-called "public charge" regulation, which they believe will penalize low-income immigrants and their U.S. citizen children. The final version of the regulation — a key item on the administration's hard-line immigration agenda — was revealed on Monday and is slated to go into effect in mid October.

"This is just a new front in the Trump administration's aggressive, foolish, misguided attacks on immigrant families," James Williams, counsel for Santa Clara County, told CBS News on Tuesday.

In the suit, the affluent and diverse counties contend that the rule conflicts with the statutory definition of the "public charge" term — first codified in U.S. immigration law in the 1880s — by expanding the type and amount of benefits used by immigrants that will count against them as they seek to stay or move to the U.S.

The plaintiffs also believe the proposal violates the Administrative Procedure Act because they believe the government has not sufficiently justified the seismic change to the legal immigration system.

Immigration authorities currently ask green card applicants to prove they won't be a burden on the country, but the new regulation would require caseworkers to consider the use of government housing, food and medical assistance such as the widely used Section 8 housing vouchers and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The rule would subject immigrant households who fall below certain income thresholds to the "public charge" test — which would also consider how well applicants speak, read and write English. Under the proposed rule, any diagnosed medical condition that requires extensive medical treatment would also "weigh heavily" in evaluations by caseworkers.

Asylum seekers and refugees would be exempt from this "public charge" test, which administration officials said would affect about 382,000 people every year.

To defend the regulation, administration officials, including acting U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) director Ken Cuccinelli, have maintained that it's designed to promote "self sufficiency" and "success" in immigrant communities.

In an interview on Tuesday morning, Cuccinelli offered an alternative line to "The New Colossus" poem inside the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. "Give me your tired your poor who can stand on their own two feet and who will not become a public charge," he told NPR to defend the rule. The original sonnet reads, "Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

Although the rule would affect immigrants in the U.S. who are not citizens or permanent residents — as well as people seeking to immigrate to the country from abroad — researchers have already detailed a "spillover effect" in which both green card holders and U.S. citizens reported avoiding public benefits because of the proposal's expected implementation.

USCIS officials on Monday conceded that they expect the rule to have this so-called "chilling effect" on people who should not be affected by it, but they maintained that they have not quantified the potential disenrollment.

Pressed by CBS News on whether the agency would mount a public information campaign to mitigate the "chilling effect" being reported by researchers and advocates, officials said they will conduct some public engagement.

But one official said it is "incumbent upon outside organizations, including people in the media, to make sure they responsibly educate the public" about the rule.

[CA] Rule targeting legal immigrants draws first lawsuit (CNN)

CNN [8/13/2019 4:26 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 6094K]

San Francisco and the county of Santa Clara, California, on Tuesday filed a joint lawsuit against the Trump administration's regulation that makes it harder for immigrants to obtain green cards if they've received or are likely to receive government benefits.

Since it was announced Monday, the "public charge" rule has been met with fierce backlash

from Democrats, immigration advocates and others who argue it will discourage legal immigrants from receiving benefits they're eligible for.

"By design, it will also coerce thousands of immigrants and their family members to forgo or disenroll from critical federally funded, county-administered programs -- even benefits not technically covered by the Final Rule -- to reduce the risk that they or their family members will be denied admission or permanent residency," the complaint filed by Santa Clara County and San Francisco reads, adding that some people have already disenrolled from benefits "out of fear."

The 837-page rule applies to those seeking to come to or remain in the United States via legal channels and is expected to impact roughly 382,000 people seeking to adjust their immigration, according to the Department of Homeland Security. However, immigration advocates say millions of people could be affected by the regulation.

The lawsuit seeks to block the rule, alleging that counties will incur additional costs due, in part, to residents moving toward services paid for and administered by counties,

"Not only will the counties have to provide support previously furnished by the federal government, without any corresponding allocation of federal funds, they will face the new, increased costs of dealing with harms to public health," they wrote in their complaint.

Acting US Citizenship and Immigration Services Director Ken Cuccinelli has insisted that the rule will encourage self-sufficiency, and drew criticism Tuesday when he revised the iconic poem on the Statue of Liberty's pedestal to suggest that only immigrants who can "stand on their own two feet" are welcome in the United States.

The regulation will likely continue to meet legal challenges. New York state Attorney General Letitia James announced Monday evening that she plans to sue to block the rule, saying that under the rule, "children will go hungry; families will go without medical care."

[CA] Two California counties sue Trump admin over green card rule change for immigrants on welfare (FOX News)

FOX News [8/13/2019 4:27 PM, Adam Shaw, 10258K] Video: [HERE](#)

San Francisco and Santa Clara Counties announced Tuesday that they had sued the Trump administration over a new regulation that would give federal officials more power to deny green cards to immigrants deemed likely to rely on welfare, calling it an unlawful attack on immigrant communities.

"This illegal rule is just another attempt to vilify immigrants," San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera said in a statement announcing the suit. "It makes it easier to unfairly target hard-working, lawful immigrants while sowing fear and confusion in our communities."

"The Trump administration's new rule is an unlawful, foolish attack on immigrant communities," Santa Clara County Counsel James R. Williams said. "It will hurt all members of our communities by reducing access to critical health and safety-net services that create healthier communities for all of our residents."

The California jurisdictions claim the rule attempts to abolish decades of legal precedent and “coerces individuals to forgo or withdraw from critical benefits or care.”

The administration announced the so-called “public charge” rule on Monday. White House officials say the change will better define and expand the factors that can be considered to deny attempts by immigrants to adjust their status. It defines a “public charge” as an immigrant who receives one or more designated public benefits for more than 12 months within a 36-month period.

Those benefits include Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), most forms of Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), widely known as food stamps. The rule expands the number of benefits that can be considered from interim guidance issued in 1999.

In an interview with Fox News, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Acting Director Ken Cuccinelli said the change was based on “an old American value, and that’s self-sufficiency.”

“It will also have the long-term benefit of protecting taxpayers by ensuring people who are immigrating to this country don’t become public burdens, that they can stand on their own two feet, as immigrants in years past have done,” he said. “It’s not only a recipe for their success, but for America’s success growing out of our immigration system.”

But Democrats and migrant groups immediately blasted the rule as cruel and warned it could prevent migrants from receiving the benefits they need. Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., called it “indefensible.”

“No family should live in fear of feeding, housing, or caring for their kids,” she said.

While the Trump administration has said the change will give taxpayers better value for money for taxpayers, the California counties claim that it would actually cost taxpayers more.

“This rule forces people to make an impossible choice: their health or a better future for their family. We will all bear the cost of this misguided policy, which will shift millions of dollars in health care costs onto the taxpayers of San Francisco and Santa Clara Counties,” Herrera said. “At the same time, it will siphon millions from our local economies and drive more people toward homelessness.

“This rule is rubbish. We’re determined to see that it ends up in the legal garbage bin with the rest of this administration’s unlawful policies,” he said.

A legal fight was widely expected and could potentially delay the rule’s planned implementation on Oct. 15. On Tuesday, Trump shrugged off the criticism and said his administration was doing the right thing.

“I am tired of seeing our taxpayers paying for people to come into our country and immediately go on welfare and other things, so I think we’re doing it right,” he said.

[CA] San Francisco sues Trump administration over rule to limit legal immigration (Reuters)

Reuters [8/13/2019 4:44 PM, Daniel Trotta, 5436K]

The city of San Francisco and nearby Santa Clara County sued President Donald Trump's administration on Tuesday, seeking to block a new rule that would drastically reduce legal immigration by denying visas to poor migrants.

Some experts say the new rule could cut legal immigration in half by denying visas and permanent residency to hundreds of thousands of people if they fail to meet high enough income standards or if they receive public assistance such as welfare, food stamps, public housing or Medicaid.

"This illegal rule is just another attempt to vilify immigrants," San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera said in a statement. Trump has made efforts to curb both legal and illegal immigration, an issue he has made a cornerstone of his presidency and one that he has stressed again as the campaign for the 2020 presidential election heats up.

The rule, unveiled on Monday and to take effect Oct. 15, expands the definition of a public charge, allowing denials to visa applicants who fail to meet income requirements or who receive public assistance.

"The final rule rejects the longstanding, existing definition of public charge, and attempts to redefine it to include even minimal use of a much wider range of non-cash benefits," said the lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in San Francisco.

"The final rule will worsen the health and well-being of the counties' residents, increase risks to the public health, undermine the counties' health and safety-net systems, and inflict significant financial harm," the suit said.

San Francisco is both a city and a county. Santa Clara County includes the city of San Jose and various other parts of Silicon Valley.

The suit names U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Department of Homeland Security and their directors as defendants. The former agency declined to comment and the latter did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The suit claims the new rule violates the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 by contradicting the longstanding definition of public charge as a person "primarily" dependent on public assistance for survival.

The suit also claims the new rule would split families, undermining immigration laws to prioritize family unification; misapplies the intent of Congress on the description of self-sufficiency of immigrants; and runs contrary to the statutes governing SNAP, also known as food stamps.

The National Immigration Law Center said it also will file a lawsuit to stop the rule from taking effect. The attorneys general of California and New York have also threatened to sue.

[CA] California counties sue to block new rule penalizing immigrants who use welfare (Washington Times)

Washington Times [8/13/2019 3:58 PM, Stephen Dinan, 452K]

San Francisco and Santa Clara counties filed a lawsuit Tuesday challenging the Trump administration's new rule discouraging immigrants from using welfare, saying it contradicts decades of past practice.

The California counties said their own social safety-net systems will be affected, which gives them standing to sue.

And they argued that though federal law has long envisioned new immigrants not becoming a public burden, President Trump's new policy carrying out that law is the wrong way to go about it.

The counties asked a federal judge to step in and halt the policy,

"For over half a century, the nation has had an immigration system that prioritizes family unification. However, the Final Rule attempts to undercut this system by dramatically restricting the ability of noncitizens to reunite with their families by gaining admission or [legal permanent residency] status," the counties said in their lawsuit.

The federal law says immigrants are not to become a "public charge." The law doesn't define what that means, but the Clinton administration issued guidance in 1999 saying it meant immigrants were discouraged from using a limited set of benefit programs.

The Trump administration moved to officially define "public charge" more expansively in its new rule, including a number of welfare programs.

Under the rule, immigrants who use those programs — or newcomers who are deemed likely to use them — can be penalized on their applications for legal status in the U.S.

Homeland Security had anticipated lawsuits when it finalized the policy on Monday.

The agency spent months rigorously processing some 266,000 comments submitted on the original proposal and did make adjustments in the final rule issued this week, which acting U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Director Ken Cuccinelli said is evidence they followed procedural laws.

He told The Washington Times he's confident of prevailing.

[CA] SF, Santa Clara sue Trump administration over 'public charge' immigration policy (San Francisco Chronicle)

San Francisco Chronicle [8/13/2019 3:12 PM, Tatiana Sanchez, 337K]

Officials in San Francisco and Santa Clara County on Tuesday sued the Trump administration over a new rule that will give the federal government authority to deny entry or green cards to legal immigrants who use — or are likely to use — public assistance programs.

Under the Department of Homeland Security's "Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds," or "public charge" rule, use of certain government benefits, such as Medicaid, federal housing assistance or food stamps are grounds to deny an immigrant permanent legal residency or entry to the United States.

It's the latest attempt by the Trump administration to curb legal immigration by targeting low-income immigrants with limited resources deemed likely to pose a financial burden on American tax-payers.

The policy, announced Monday, goes into effect in about two months. Santa Clara County Counsel James R. Williams and San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera filed a joint lawsuit in U.S. District court Tuesday, asking a judge to block the policy.

"It makes it easier to unfairly target hard-working, lawful immigrants while sowing fear and confusion in our communities," said San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera in a statement. "This rule forces people to make an impossible choice: their health or a better future for their family."

Santa Clara County counsel James Williams called the rule a "foolish attack on immigrant communities."

"It will hurt all members of our communities by reducing access to critical health and safety-net services that create healthier communities for all of our residents," Williams said in a statement.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which is part of the Department of Homeland Security, said it does not comment on pending litigation.

[Mexico] Mexican State Cops Seize 100 Pounds of Meth near Texas Border (Breitbart)

Breitbart [8/13/2019 3:51 PM, Ildefonso Ortiz and Brandon Darby, 2034K]

Mexican authorities are looking into the seizure of more than 100 pounds of crystal meth and two pounds of heroin in the border city of Matamoros, just south of Brownsville, Texas. The shipment was originally intended for several U.S. distribution routes, all part of a network controlled by the Gulf Cartel.

The seizure occurred Monday night when agents with the Tamaulipas State Police raided an undisclosed location, where they arrested a man and woman linked to Gulf Cartel leadership. Authorities seized two vehicles and the drugs. The meth has an approximate weight of 110 pounds, while the heroin was described as 2.2 pounds.

The unit of state police behind the raid is the same that carried out a kidnapping investigation in Reynosa, which ended in a shootout that ultimately killed four cartel gunmen linked to more than 30 cases in the last two years.

[Mexico] Mexico, US to exchange information on El Paso shooting (Breitbart)

Breitbart [8/13/2019 5:17 PM, AFP, 2034K]

Mexico said on Tuesday it had agreed with the United States to exchange information

regarding the deadly shooting in El Paso, Texas, which killed 22 people.

Eight Mexican citizens were among those gunned down in the racially charged rampage in the majority-Hispanic border city.

“Both governments agreed to exchange information on their respective investigations, in strict accordance with each country’s regulatory frameworks,” the Mexican Foreign Ministry said in a statement, following a meeting in Mexico City between representatives of both nations.

The ministry said it informed the US officials of its concern about the shooting and the perpetrator’s ties to white supremacy.

Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard condemned the shooting as an “act of terrorism” against his country’s nationals on August 5.

A representative from the Mexican government is scheduled to meet Wednesday in El Paso with prosecutors investigating the attack.

On Thursday, the Mexican government delivered a diplomatic note to the United States, rejecting hate speech and white supremacy, and demanding that Washington provide information on whether there are other perpetrators or potential organizations seeking to endanger Mexicans.

The 21-year-old Texan who carried out the August 3 shooting spree at a Walmart shopping center had published a racist manifesto online expressing fears of a “Hispanic invasion” of the state.

He admitted to police he had been targeting Mexicans, according to an arrest warrant affidavit.

Critics of US President Donald Trump have denounced his anti-immigrant rhetoric as fuel for the violence.

El Paso, which borders Mexico’s Ciudad Juarez, has a population of 680,000 people, some 83 percent of whom are Hispanic.

[Mexico] Mexican, US officials meet on probe into Walmart shootings (ABC News)

ABC News [8/13/2019 9:03 PM, Associated Press, 2702K]

Mexican prosecutors have met with U.S. diplomats and representatives of the FBI to share information on investigations into the Aug. 3 mass shooting at a Walmart in the Texas border city of El Paso.

The shooting killed 22 people, including eight Mexican nationals, and police have said the 21-year-old alleged shooter told them he was targeting Mexicans.

Mexico’s Foreign Relations Department said Tuesday that its officials at the meeting expressed their concerns about the crime’s links to the white supremacy movement.

It said both sides agreed to share information and collaborate, "without interfering in each other's jurisdictions."

Mexico also said one of its prosecutors would travel to Texas on Wednesday to meet with state and federal prosecutors investigating the case.

[Mexico] "I fear for our lives": Asylum seekers forced to wait in Mexico face danger and desperation (CBS News)

CBS News [8/13/2019 5:55 AM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 3332K]

One afternoon in late March, as Ricci walked through the markets in Ciudad Juárez looking for somewhere to buy lunch for her 4-year-old son, a man approached the boy and tried to snatch him away.

"Because there were a lot people, I pleaded for help," Ricci said of the brazen kidnapping attempt. She spoke in Spanish with CBS News in the federal building in El Paso, minutes before her hearing in immigration court. "People helped me, and the man was not able to take my son."

Living in Ciudad Juárez, one of the most dangerous cities in the world, was harrowing for Ricci, a 25-year-old single mother from an indigenous community in Honduras. It wasn't her choice to be in Mexico.

Like tens of thousands of other migrants, mostly from Central America, she was placed in the "Remain in Mexico" program when she arrived at the border earlier this year. The controversial program, which the Trump administration is expanding despite a court challenge, requires asylum seekers to wait in Mexico for months while their claims are reviewed in the U.S.

Ciudad Juárez is the destination for migrants like Ricci who seek asylum at a port of entry or another part of the border in the El Paso sector. Beyond the obvious hazards of living in the crime-ridden city, migrants struggle to find shelter, employment and, perhaps most importantly, lawyers who are key to helping them navigate the byzantine U.S. immigration system.

Ricci was more fortunate than others. Unlike most of the migrants subject to this policy, the Honduran mother, helped by her family in the U.S., was able to find legal representation and housing in a motel in Ciudad Juárez.

In late July, Ricci was temporarily allowed back into the U.S. to attend a hearing, where she and her lawyer, Danielle Escontrias of the Catholic Charities of Southern New Mexico, formally filed her asylum petition. Ricci was also there to tell the judge she feared being sent back to Mexico — a sentiment echoed by most families and individuals in the program over the course of hours of court hearings.

"I feel a lot of fear. I can't go out," Ricci said inside a small room where the security guards allow the small number of represented migrants to talk to their lawyers for a few minutes before the judge hears their cases.

"I fear losing my life or my son losing his, or something that can happen to both of us. I fear for our lives," she added, turning to 4-year-old Binsel, who wore a plaid shirt and jeans and wobbled on a chair almost twice his size.

Life in her native Honduras was also very difficult for Ricci. She is shy and mild-mannered, and talks with remarkable stoicism about her husband's gruesome murder late last year.

She and her husband made ends meet by raising corn in Pisijire, a remote village in eastern Honduras, nestled between the Agalta mountain range and La Mosquitia rainforest, the largest swath of wilderness in the region. But like many members of the large indigenous communities in Central America, the couple faced ethnic persecution.

Ricci's home village is plagued by poverty and violent crime carried out with impunity. Horrific homicides headline local newspapers, including the story of a young mother murdered while she was breastfeeding her 11-month-old child and the apparent murder of an 8-year-old boy.

Ricci's 25-year-old husband, Arlynton, was shot and killed last December in a crime deemed a homicide, according to a local police report. Forensic photos seen by CBS News showed his body with gunshot wounds in his torso.

Soon after his murder, Ricci said she began to receive death threats. A letter left on her doorstep read, "I want blood to continue running. After your husband, you are next, Ricci, and your son. And then your family."

That prompted the young widow to take her son on the perilous, weeks-long journey to the U.S.-Mexico border, where she sought asylum at a port of entry in El Paso in March — the same month that the "Remain in Mexico" program was implemented in that sector.

Ricci claimed asylum based on her husband's assassination and the threats she faced in Honduras. But the U.S. government does not take those circumstances into consideration when determining whether to return her to Mexico.

After her first two hearings in El Paso, Ricci was referred to asylum officers for so-called "non-refoulement" interviews, offered when asylum seekers express fear about returning to the country to which the government seeks to send them.

On both occasions, she said she told the officers about her husband's murder in Honduras and the attempted kidnapping of her son in Mexico. And yet, after both interviews, she was still sent back to Mexico.

"She's in a very difficult situation because she is having a hard time in Mexico but she's also really afraid of going back to her own country," Escontrias said, noting her client's growing desperation. "She's very fearful and stuck between very, very difficult choices."

Minutes before Ricci went in to see the judge for a third time, Binsel was growing impatient. "Mama, where are we going?" he murmured.

Asked if she believed she could survive more months waiting in Mexico, Ricci paused and began rubbing her legs with her hands in agitation. "I don't know," she said, breaking down into tears.

Escontrias, her lawyer, said Ricci was referred to a third non-refoulement interview during her hearing, which CBS News was barred from observing. But she did not hear from her client for a week.

Escontrias is only one of a handful of attorneys in the El Paso area representing a few of the thousands of migrants sent to Ciudad Juárez under the "Remain in Mexico" policy.

Along with Ricci, she had also been representing another asylum seeker, a 21-year-old woman from El Salvador named Cindis, whom she began representing in April, the same month Cindis was placed in the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) program, the Trump administration's official name for Remain in Mexico.

In early August — a week after Ricci's third hearing — Escontrias went to the El Paso immigration court on behalf of Cindis, who was to have her second asylum hearing. She knew that it was unlikely Cindis would show up.

Cindis had already told one of Escontrias' colleagues at Catholic Charities that she had received death threats in El Salvador from a gang, which she said tried to coerce her into prostitution. While she waited in Ciudad Juárez, Cindis said she was robbed, assaulted and targeted with anti-immigrant slurs.

Cindis had only met Escontrias once, during her first court hearing in El Paso. Because Cindis didn't have a cell phone, their communication was very limited. She was also staying in a shelter and had no access to a phone. Over the past weeks, Escontrias had tried unsuccessfully to reach Cindis.

"It's extremely frustrating," Escontrias said. "And it's the reason why people don't want to take these cases, because it's a pretty terrible way to represent someone. You're putting your name on all these documents and you can't really communicate with them. You don't know where they are."

On that August day, the judge order Cindis deported "in absentia," effectively nullifying her asylum claim and barring her from entering the U.S. for 10 years.

Escontrias was livid about the judge's ruling, telling him that the U.S. government's implementation of the program hinders her ability to represent migrants like Cindis. "I had a lot to say on the record about how unfairly we're sending people to third countries that are unsafe and then giving them in absentia orders. It just seems really cruel."

"That's not justice," she added.

A few days later, a friend of Cindis told Escontrias that Cindis had — out of desperation — decided to return to El Salvador. For Escontrias, the outcome of Cindis' case is a clear illustration of the way the MPP program is designed to deter asylum seekers and those who try to help them.

"This is a very effective program," she said. "There's no doubt that they are succeeding, because they're burning out the judges. They are burning out the attorneys. They're making representation so hard. And then the people themselves are being burned out."

After seven days, Escontrias finally received a WhatsApp message from Ricci. The U.S. government had removed her from the MPP program and granted her release into the U.S.

Escontrias was happy for Ricci but confused. After her two previous interviews, she had still been sent back to Mexico. Even some of the asylum officers conducting the non-refoulement interviews have acknowledged it is almost impossible for migrants to satisfy the burden of proof.

"It was her third shot at it and facts had not changed. So, it could've been luck of the draw. It could've been that she just got an asylum officer who felt bad for her," Escontrias said. "Or they could've gotten wind that she talked to a reporter. It's very unusual."

Ricci, too, was surprised she was allowed to say in the U.S. But she also said there was something different about her third plea.

"I say it was because the one who interviewed me was a woman. Previously, it had been men," Ricci told CBS News in a phone call from Austin. "She also interviewed my son and he started crying. He told her he did not want to go back to Juárez, that he was really scared and wanted to be with his grandfather."

After her third interview, the young Honduran mother said she was detained for three days in the U.S. before being fitted with an ankle bracelet and released. She spent a few days in an El Paso shelter, where volunteers helped her board a bus to Dallas and then to Austin, where her father lives.

Unlike her interview in that small room outside the El Paso courthouse, Ricci sounded relieved and calm during the phone call last week. She admitted she had been growing desperate in Ciudad Juárez. Now, she said she was "happy, mostly because of him," referring to Binsel, her son.

"He feels very good. He's very happy to be here," Ricci added, referring to her father's home in Texas. "He says it is very pretty here. He really likes going to the park. And he says he's not scared here."

Ricci is scheduled to have a fourth and definitive hearing on her asylum case in early October. It's scheduled in El Paso but Escontrias is working to move it to the immigration court in San Antonio, closer to Ricci's new home.

Asked about her plans now that she's finally in America, Ricci said, "work, fight to provide for him," referring to her son, who, imitating her, could be heard yelling "work!" in the background.

[Guatemala] President-elect says Guatemala can't do migrant deal with US (Washington Post)

Washington Post [8/13/2019 8:38 PM, Sonia Perez D., AP, 9425K]

President-elect Alejandro Giammattei said Tuesday that Guatemala will not be able to hold up its side of an immigration agreement with the United States by serving as a "safe third country" for asylum seekers.

Giammattei told The Associated Press his country cannot tend to its own people, let alone those from other countries. The agreement signed with the United States in July by Guatemala's current administration would require asylum seekers from other countries transiting Guatemala to seek asylum here rather than in the U.S.

"In order to be a safe country, one has to be certified as such by an international body, and I do not think Guatemala fulfills the requirements to be a third safe country. That definition doesn't fit us," said Giammattei, a conservative who won Sunday's presidential runoff election.

"If we do not have the capacity for our own people, just imagine other people," Giammattei said.

Guatemalans make up one of the largest groups emigrating from Central America because of poverty, unemployment and crime. Critics say it is hard to see how the country could offer a safe haven to migrants from other nations.

The agreement, signed by the government of outgoing President Jimmy Morales, is aimed at reducing the number of asylum seekers arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border. U.S. President Donald Trump's administration pressured Guatemala to sign the deal by threatening to punish Guatemala with taxes.

Giammattei, who takes office Jan. 14, said that annexes to the agreement are still being negotiated with the United States and that he would ask Morales to include members of his transition team in those talks.

The president-elect also noted that the agreement would have to be ratified by the congresses of both nations to go into force. There has been widespread criticism of the deal in Guatemala.

Giammattei pledged to recognize the importance of Guatemalan migrants living in the United States by creating a Washington-based Cabinet-level position to attend to migrant affairs.

"It is about time we had a government that cared for the people," he said. "It is these people (migrants) who are supporting us" with the remittance money they send back to relatives in Guatemala, he added.

"I do not think physical walls, or walls of weapons, can stop migration," Giammattei said. "I think what can stop migration are walls of opportunities."

On another matter, the incoming leader distanced himself from Morales' unpopular decision

to not renew the mandate of the U.N.-sponsored anti-corruption commission that has played a key role in sending high-ranking politicians, including ex-presidents, to jail. But Giammattei also indicated he wouldn't work to bring back the commission, known as CICIG.

"The mandate has been terminated; the United Nations accepted that," he said.

He said he has no legal capacity or any other authority to ask Morales to renew the commission. "The CICIG is disappearing and history will judge whether Morales' decision was right or not," he said.

[Guatemala] Guatemalan President-Elect Says Country Can't Uphold Migration Deal with U.S. (US News & World Report)

US News & World Report [8/13/2019 3:03 PM, Claire Hansen, 3196K]

Guatemala's President-elect Alejandro Giammattei said Tuesday his country is not able to honor its side of an immigration deal with the U.S. as it is currently written.

Outgoing Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales inked a so-called safe third country agreement with the Trump administration in July, despite Guatemala's highest court blocking Morales from signing the pact without the consent of lawmakers.

The agreement would require some asylum-seekers to seek asylum in Guatemala before applying for protections in the U.S. It's part of an attempt by the Trump administration to curb the number of asylum-seekers appearing at the southern U.S. border.

But Giammattei told a Mexican television network Tuesday he needs to analyze the agreement, according to the Associated Press. He has previously said that he hopes to modify the deal.

Critics of the deal say Guatemala – which struggles with poverty and violence – is woefully unequipped to handle the tens of thousands of migrants the policy would redirect to the country. Large numbers of Guatemalan migrants have appeared at the U.S. border to seek asylum.

Giammattei has said his country is not in a position to take in migrants. The situation, however, may be drastically different by the time Giammattei takes power in January. President Donald Trump has threatened Guatemala with tariffs and other consequences if it does not do more to stop the flow of migrants transiting from and through it to the U.S. border.

[Guatemala] President-elect says Guatemala can't do migrant deal with US (San Francisco Chronicle)

San Francisco Chronicle [8/13/2019 12:04 PM, Sonia Perez D., AP, 2613K]

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[Guatemala] New Guatemalan leader demands respect from Trump (Breitbart)

Breitbart [8/13/2019 7:37 AM, AFP, 2034K]

Guatemala's president-elect Alejandro Giammattei said in an interview with AFP he would not seek confrontation with President Donald Trump over Central America's migration crisis but would demand respect from his US counterpart.

"All diplomacy comes down to reciprocity," said Giammattei, a 63-year-old conservative who defeated former first lady Sandra Torres in Sunday's run-off vote.

"If he respects me, I respect him, if he treats me well, I treat him well, if he treats me badly, I treat him badly," said Giammattei in the interview late Monday.

Giammattei said he views "with concern" a controversial migration pact agreed by his predecessor Jimmy Morales, that would allow Washington to send most Honduran and Salvadoran asylum seekers who passed through Guatemala back to the poor, crime-ridden country.

The deal has been strongly criticized in Guatemala, not least by NGOs who say the country does not even have the resources to look after its own population.

But the president-elect has so far avoided taking a strong position on the US deal, which he said would have to be submitted to Guatemalan lawmakers for approval.

Central America's migration problem is not new, he said, but "it was magnified because it's become a theme of the political campaign in the United States."

"I understand President Trump's position," in the perspective of the campaign, said Giammattei.

"He wants to assert his image as the man who keeps his promises. That's good. I understand him. I understand President Trump."

Giammattei, a doctor, takes over from the corruption-tainted Morales in January at the start of a four-year term.

He has pledged to attack the grinding poverty that affects some 60 percent of Guatemala's 17.7 population, as well as a murder rate of 4,500 per year, key drivers of illegal migration to the United States.

"People leave because they don't have housing, because of the low levels of health and education," he said.

As part of his plan to keep would-be migrants at home, Giammattei proposes massive investment to promote rural development and agribusiness, and improve infrastructure on both sides of the border with Mexico, by creating an "investment bank" under the aegis of the Organization of American States (OAS).

"We could create a gigantic pole of development that could benefit both countries," he said, adding that he would plead his case in Mexico City as well as in Washington during the

transition period.

Also on his agenda is a visit to El Salvador next week for talks with President Nayib Bukele on combating organized criminal gangs and developing a massive Caribbean-Pacific railroad project.

“This is an incredible investment and we can count on more than one million jobs created in four years,” he said.

The fight against the region’s criminal gangs “must be multinational, must be done at the regional level. Organized crime does not respect borders,” said Giammattei, who has pledged to reintroduce the death penalty, suspended since 2000 in Guatemala.

He also promised “a fierce fight against drugs, and cartels — of which many are Mexican and operate in Guatemala.”

On the fight against corruption, Giammattei ruled out any possibility of restoring the mandate of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), the United Nations mission that charged former president Otto Perez with graft and ran afoul of Morales because it investigated him.

“The Cicig is finished,” he said, adding that “President Morales has decided not to renew its mandate,” which ends in September — three months before Giammattei assumes power.

He acknowledged that the mission “was effective in some cases,” but regretted that it limited itself to “the criminal prosecution of the corrupt” and did not attack the causes of corruption.

“There will be no more Cicig,” he said emphatically.

He pledged to confront “de facto powers” who profit from corruption at all levels of Guatemalan society, including within his own political party.

“The de facto powers don’t scare me. I fear only God.”

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Undocumented immigrants on edge as new Trump immigration policy calls for more deportations (USA Today)

USA Today [8/13/2019 4:44 PM, Alan Gomez, 6620K]

Aaron Hall, an immigration attorney in Aurora, Colorado, is still trying to figure out what exactly to tell his clients about a new Trump administration policy that allows federal immigration agents to quickly deport undocumented immigrants they encounter anywhere in the U.S.

For the past 15 years, the fast-track deportation process, known as expedited removal, has been used mostly by Border Patrol agents near the border. But now, for the first time, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents can unilaterally question, arrest, detain

and deport undocumented immigrants who have been here for less than two years that they encounter anywhere in the country.

Does that mean immigrants should carry all their papers proving their legal status every time they leave the house? Should undocumented immigrants carry paperwork showing they've been in the country longer than two years? Should all Hispanics approached by ICE remain silent and demand to speak with an attorney?

"It's really tricky," Hall said. The only certainty is that "people who have legal immigration status, or have pending applications, or even U.S. citizens, will be put into expedited removal proceedings, and some will be deported before they're able to make their case."

The nationwide expansion of expedited removal, which took effect July 23, may be one of the most consequential changes to immigration enforcement under Donald Trump's presidency.

To combat illegal immigration, the White House has focused mostly on the southern border, deploying National Guard and active-duty military troops to stem what they describe as a national security crisis. But expanding expedited removal moves immigration enforcement far from the border and into every community in the U.S.

That dramatic expansion, which has been considered since the early days of the Trump administration, has opened a wide range of questions about the way federal immigration agents will use their new powers, how to limit cases of racial profiling and how many legal residents and U.S. citizens will be caught up in the process.

"It means that the only limit on (the administration's) ability to deport brown-skinned people is going to be the number of detention beds they have," said Simon Sandoval-Moshenberg, legal director of the immigrant advocacy program at the Legal Aid Justice Center based in Charlottesville, Virginia.

ICE, which is primarily responsible for arresting undocumented immigrants in the interior of the country, said its agents do not, and will not, conduct "random or indiscriminate" raids as it expands its use of expedited removal. Instead, the agency said, it will continue using "targeted enforcement operations" to identify and arrest specific undocumented immigrants. ICE vowed to use the new powers responsibly.

"ICE's routine targeted enforcement model remains the same," spokesman Richard Rocha said. The only change is "how ICE is able to remove aliens."

Expedited removal was created by Congress in 1996. It allows federal immigration agents to bypass the regular deportation system, which includes court hearings, appeals and a final deportation order signed by a judge. The immigration agent needs only approval from a supervisor in the field, and the decision cannot be appealed in any court.

The main exception provided in the law is for undocumented immigrants who request asylum. Once the undocumented immigrant claims a fear of returning to his or her home country, the immigration agent is supposed to pause the deportation process until an asylum officer can hear the person's claim.

At first, the program was used sparingly. President Bill Clinton allowed it to be used only against people who entered U.S. ports of entry without a visa or valid travel documents.

In 2004, President George W. Bush expanded its use to include people caught within 100 miles of the nation's land border with Canada and Mexico and people who had illegally entered the country within the previous two weeks. President Barack Obama maintained that structure.

From the first days of Trump's presidency, the administration saw expedited removal as a way to get around the historic backlog in immigration court and more quickly deport more undocumented immigrants.

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan made it official when his agency published a rule expanding expedited removal to the fullest extent allowable under law. Federal immigration agents can use expedited removal against people caught anywhere in the country who arrived within the previous two years.

McAleenan said the expansion is "one more tool" his agents could use to confront the "security and humanitarian crisis on the Southwest border."

Immigration attorneys, and even some government reports, raise serious questions about granting ICE agents powers to unilaterally deport people from the country.

One major concern is that people legally residing in the U.S. – citizens, permanent residents or visa holders – will be erroneously scooped up by federal agents.

That's what happened in June when Francisco Erwin Galicia, 17, who was born in Dallas, was arrested by Border Patrol agents. Even though his attorney said Galicia was carrying his Texas state ID and a wallet-sized copy of his birth certificate, the government held him for 26 days. It wasn't until The Dallas Morning News ran a story about his case that Galicia was released.

Such cases have been on the rise since Trump took office.

In the final year of Obama's presidency, ICE agents questioned 5,940 U.S. citizens, according to government data obtained by the American Immigration Council. In the first year of the Trump presidency, following orders that freed ICE agents to target a broader group of people, ICE agents questioned 27,540 U.S. citizens, a nearly fivefold increase.

"With this expansion of authority, we can expect that that would grow exponentially," said Royce Murray, managing director of programs at the council. "And it's unclear what if any checks and balances there will be to make sure we are not putting U.S. citizens and others at real risk."

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, a body created by Congress, has studied expedited removal for more than a decade. In its first study published in 2005, it found that an "alarming" number of Border Patrol agents violated the rules of implementing expedited removal.

In some cases, agents didn't ask if people feared returning to their home country, a legally required step. In other cases, commission observers heard undocumented immigrants request asylum, but Border Patrol agents wrote down that they had not.

In all, 15% of the undocumented immigrants who requested asylum were deported before getting an asylum hearing, the report found. The commission reviewed the program again in 2016, and even though it was given far less access to expedited removal interviews, it concluded that problems remained rampant.

There are also questions about whether the use of expedited removal in places away from the border are legal. Congress allowed that to happen, but because the Trump administration is the first to try it out, the legality of the process has never been tested.

The Congressional Research Service, a nonpartisan group that conducts research for members of Congress, found that courts have generally allowed people to be deported through expedited removal near the border. But courts raised questions about eliminating due process rights for immigrants the longer they've been in the country and the farther they are captured from the border.

That's why the nationwide use of expedited removal "remains an unresolved question," the service concluded in a report in 2018.

U.S. law makes clear that people who are deported through expedited removal cannot challenge their deportation. Even challenging their initial arrest on constitutional grounds may be impossible, as evidenced by a case filed last year.

In February 2017, ICE agents arrested nine undocumented immigrants in two separate locations in Northern Virginia, even though they were searching for different people. A group of the immigrants sued, claiming they were racially profiled and wrongly detained in violation of their Fourth and Fifth Amendment rights. A federal judge allowed the case to proceed, ruling that the undocumented immigrants raised "clear violations of a known constitutional right."

In April, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit – one nominated by Trump, all three nominated by Republican presidents – struck down the lawsuit, ruling that Congress had not created any mechanism for ICE agents to be sued in federal court, meaning the case couldn't proceed.

Sandoval-Moshenberg, who represents the undocumented immigrants and appealed the court of appeals decision, said the ruling shows how helpless immigrants will be as ICE agents use their expanded powers.

"It's a shocking ruling," he said. "It drastically expands the number of people who will never even go before a judge, so they have no one."

In a statement, ICE said it does not usually approach people on the street and question them about their immigration status. But the statement points out that Congress gave ICE agents the power to do just that, quoting a section of U.S. law that allows agents to

interrogate any "person believed to be an alien as to his or her right to be or remain in the United States."

The American Civil Liberties Union and the American Immigration Council filed a lawsuit challenging the nationwide expansion of expedited removal last week.

Immigrants remain in a state of apprehension, knowing that any encounter with ICE may lead to their quick removal from the country. Megan Lantz, a lawyer who represents immigrants who work in meatpacking plants and farms around Ames, Iowa, simply hopes she'll be able to talk to immigrants before they're on a plane back home.

"Immigration officers have total authority here," she said. "So there's no chance for me as a lawyer to fight for that person. That is really concerning."

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Demands Answers On Record-Breaking ICE Raids (Daily Caller)

Daily Caller [8/13/2019 12:08 PM, Jason Hopkins, 785K]

Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus asked two top immigration officials for details about the illegal immigration raids that led to the arrest of 680 people.

"This raid, which is the largest [Immigration and Customs and Enforcement] raid in our nation's history, is a continuation of the Trump Administration's politically driven immigration agenda and efforts to target Latino families," read a portion of a letter they sent Monday to Acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan and Acting Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Mark Morgan.

"ICE raids of this scale are not conducted for the purpose of immigration enforcement; instead, their purpose is to instill fear in Latino and immigrant communities at a time when Latinos are already living in terror," the Hispanic lawmakers continued. "These workplace raids decimate communities and target law-abiding immigrants who are just trying to earn an honest living."

Democratic Reps. Joaquin Castro and Veronica Escobar of Texas, Ruben Gallego of Arizona, Nanette Diaz Barragan of California and Adriano Espaillat of New York signed the message. Castro, the twin brother of Democratic presidential candidate Julian Castro, serves as the caucus chair.

The letter pertained to a massive operation ICE conducted on Aug. 7. ICE agents targeted seven food-processing plants across Mississippi believed to be employing hundreds of illegal aliens. Ultimately, authorities arrested 680 people on suspicion of being undocumented.

The operation marked ICE's largest single-state raid in U.S. history and attracted protests from opponents of the agency.

The lawmakers are asking McAleenan and Morgan to provide information about the costs and funding of the Mississippi operation, the personal information about the people taken into custody, list of children whose parents were detained, and various other questions

about the raid.

“Instead of targeting undocumented workers with long-standing ties to communities, the Department of Homeland Security should use its resources to target nefarious and serious national security and public safety threats,” the letter continued, which also criticized the agencies for executing the operation “just days” after a shooting in El Paso, Texas.

Both McAleenan and Morgan defended the raids on Sunday news shows and noted the operation was an enforcement of the rule of law.

“We still have to apply consequences, meaning enforce the rule of law, for those individuals that are here illegally against immigration law,” Morgan told CNN’s Jake Tapper Sunday.

McAleenan said the timing of the raid was “unfortunate” and also revealed that, of the 680 people, over 200 carried criminal records. Authorities released nearly half of the people apprehended on humanitarian grounds.

[NH] Court in New Hampshire Halts Deportation of Haitian Man (US News & World Report)

US News & World Report [8/13/2019 8:00 PM, Staff, 3196K]

A federal court judge in New Hampshire has ruled that a Haitian immigrant who claims he fled politically-motivated attacks in his home country can remain in the United States for now.

The American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit late Monday requesting that judge halt the transfer of Jeff Beaubrun from New Hampshire to Louisiana, where he was set to be deported to Haiti. The ACLU argued that Beaubrun still had a pending court hearing to reopen his immigration case. A judge agreed.

Beaubrun claims that he and his wife fled an attack by an opposition party in Haiti. After arriving in the United States in 2016, he fled to Canada where he was denied asylum. He returned to the United States this year and was arrested for missing a 2017 asylum hearing.

[MS] Some children still not reunited with parents after Mississippi ICE raids, agency says (USA Today)

USA Today [8/13/2019 3:41 PM, Alissa Zhu, 6620K]

Immigration officials raided seven food processing plants in Mississippi last week, arresting hundreds of suspected undocumented workers – including the parents of young children.

Five days later, a spokeswoman for the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services said the agency is receiving hotline reports that some children have not been reunited with either one of their parents.

The children the agency has been able to locate are being cared for by extended family members and neighbors, Lea Anne Brandon said in an email Monday, and none has been brought into the custody of CPS.

Brandon said workers have not been able to find some children believed to be without their

parents. They continued to search for them.

U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Mississippi Mike Hurst's office indicated it believed all children were reunited with at least one parent.

In a news release Thursday announcing the release of 300 of the approximately 680 detained immigrants on "humanitarian grounds," Hurst's office said that if immigration officials encountered two suspected undocumented immigrant parents with minor children at home, one was released and returned to the place he or she was arrested. The same thing was done for single parents with minor children, the release said.

"Based on these procedures, it is believed that all children were with at least one of their parents as of last night," the release said.

The office provided a hotline number, noting that people are required by state law to report any children without parents. The number to call is 1-800-222-8000.

Monday morning, Hurst said CPS Commissioner Jeff Dickinson informed him he had not received calls about children without their parents.

"No one contacted CPS about an unaccompanied child in response to this operation. Not a single person," Hurst said.

Brandon said CPS received "several" notifications through its hotline as of Monday.

Anonymous callers, family members and friends of people affected by the raids called CPS' hotline, asking for workers to check on kids who may have been left without a parent, she said.

CPS cannot confirm specific children because the agency does not have a list of names of children, detainees and people who have been released to their families after processing, Brandon said.

"Our staff are responding to those calls – and did, throughout the weekend," Brandon said. "To date, no children have been brought into our custody, and we have confirmed that children we have been able to locate are being cared for by neighbors or extended family members."

The safety checks are ongoing because Child Protection Services workers have not been able to find some of the children who were brought to their attention, Brandon said. CPS shared the safety checklist with county offices and volunteer groups in the impacted communities.

Brandon said that because of confidentiality requirements set by state law, the agency cannot release any case-specific or call-specific information. She could not specify how many hotline calls the agency received about children being separated from both their parents.

Children who are under the care of extended family and neighbors can remain where they are, Brandon said.

"Our primary focus at (Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services), in this situation, is keeping affected children with people they know and are familiar and comfortable with – and then supporting both the children and their families/caregivers," she said.

If the situation warrants, she said, the agency can provide temporary foster care for children who have no one to care for them while their parents are detained.

Most of the calls the agency received through the hotline were from people volunteering to help and donate to families, Brandon said. The agency is compiling those offers and passing the information on to groups such as Catholic Charities and legal assistance, she said.

Wednesday morning, immigration officials – including 650 brought in from out of state, Hurst said – raided seven food processing plants in six Mississippi communities: Morton, Canton, Bay Springs, Carthage, Pelahatchie and Sebastapol.

Hurst said his office planned the operation for months. Immigration and Customs Enforcement investigated for more than a year. Affidavits attached to search warrants reveal that detained undocumented immigrants told federal authorities for more than a decade that they worked at food processing plants in Mississippi.

Workers at Morton's Koch Foods plant said mostly Latino employees were rounded up for questioning and taken away by the busload.

Thirty-two people were released on site for humanitarian reasons, Hurst said. An additional 271 were processed at the National Guard base in Pearl before being released with ankle monitors.

ICE considered different factors, including whether the detainees had minor children at home or whether they were pregnant, in deciding whom to release. Hurst said anyone with a criminal history remained in custody.

The other 380 people are held in detention facilities in southwest Mississippi and Louisiana, Hurst said.

Homeland Security investigations agents will look at evidence and present it to Hurst's office for possible criminal prosecutions, he said.

Last week, videos of weeping children, crying out for their parents, were shown by national media.

Hurst agreed that they elicited sympathy.

"It's heartbreaking, it is, but what I would say to folks is, we indicted almost 500 individuals in the Southern District of Mississippi last year. And a lot of those had families. And a lot of those had children. And I want the same outrage and the same uprising for these families caught up in these parents' illegal activities, to make our citizens rise up and help other

children, other victims of crime. I hope this does that, but I guess we'll see," he said.

What's going to happen to the companies suspected of employing undocumented workers?

None of the people who may have been responsible for hiring has been charged, though officials said employers are part of their investigation.

About a decade ago, then-Assistant U.S. Attorney Hurst worked on prosecuting the Country Club of Jackson, where 18 undocumented workers were arrested, he said.

There was a deferred prosecution agreement for the business, he said. If the Country Club of Jackson complied with certain requirements – such as paying a \$200,000 fine, submitting to an ICE audit and teaching other employers in the state how to recognize fraudulent documents and use E-Verify – for two years, then charges against it would be dropped.

"That was just the beginning," he said.

In 2011, Howard Industries pleaded guilty to employing undocumented immigrants after a raid resulted in nearly 600 arrests in 2008. In that case, a human resources manager went to prison, Hurst said.

"At the end of the day, all that we can do in the U.S. Attorney's Office is prosecute when we have evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that federal crimes have been committed. But, I think, if you look at our history, if you look at the cases we've prosecuted ... we prosecute employers in this district who break our federal criminal immigration laws," Hurst said.

Hurst said he believes the ICE raids last week are having a deterring effect.

If companies "don't have access" to undocumented workers, they'll hire more documented residents, Hurst said.

"By doing these operations, I think it's good for American citizens. Even though I know a lot of people complain that people won't take these jobs. If employers pay them well, they'll take these jobs," he said.

[MS] ICE chief on Mississippi raids: Parents 'responsible for placing their children in this situation' (Washington Examiner)

Washington Examiner [8/13/2019 1:34 PM, Anna Giaritelli, 855K]

The top U.S. immigration official says federal law enforcement officers are not to blame for breaking up families following last week's arrests of hundreds of illegal immigrants working at food processing facilities in Mississippi.

"The parents or the individuals that are breaking the law are ultimately the ones that are responsible for placing their children in this situation," acting Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director Matt Albence told NBC Nightly News in a pre-taped interview that will air Tuesday evening.

The pushback comes days after a photo of children protesting and crying after their parents

were detained by federal Homeland Security Investigations agents. NBC reporter Gabe Gutierrez asked Albence what he would say a girl in one of the images, who was shown weeping after her father was arrested.

"I don't think I would speak to the little girl. I would speak to the parents and I would speak to the community at large. Look, I'm a parent, most of our officers and agents are parents — some of the most difficult things that we have to do in our jobs to enforce the laws involve the separation of parents from children," said Albence.

"Every law enforcement officer has to deal with that at some point in their career. Many officers, on a daily basis — when an officer goes in to arrest somebody for a crime of domestic violence, one of those children in there is going to be crying," he continued. "We conduct operations with professionalism, with compassion and with humanity. And we try our best to minimize the impact on the innocent people of the situation."

Immigrant advocacy groups and Democratic lawmakers compared the Trump administration's arrests to last year's family separations, when children and parents who illegally crossed were divided at the U.S.-Mexico border even if they were claiming asylum. The families were separated because the adults were referred for prosecution and could not be transferred into custody with the minor they arrived with.

Former acting ICE Director Mark Morgan, now Customs and Border Protection commissioner, said over the weekend the separations were inevitable.

"I understand that the girl is upset, and I get that. But her father committed a crime," Morgan told CNN's State of the Union.

Approximately half of the 680 people taken into custody around Jackson, Mississippi, were released.

[FL] Leftists Threaten Contractor in Fla; Day Before ICE Facility Shot at in Texas (Breitbart)

Breitbart [8/13/2019 7:36 PM, John Binder, 2034K]

A group of open borders activists threatened employees of a government contractor in Florida that provides facility space for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency to detain border crossers and illegal aliens the day before a shooting at the contractor's offices in Texas.

In exclusive footage captured by Matt Perdie of Breitbart News, protesters with Never Again Action, Miramar Circle of Protection Friends of Miami-Dade Detainees, Food Not Bombs Fort Lauderdale, Students Working for Equal Rights, and the Black Lives Matter Alliance of Broward County shouted threats at workers and former employees of the GEO Group, a private contractor used by ICE for facility and detention space.

One protester specifically threatened GEO Group's former general counsel John Bulfin, shouting the locations and addresses of where his children live in the United States.

"We know where all your children live throughout the country ... John Bulfin you have kids

in [bleeped out], you have kids in [bleeped out]," the protester shouted. "We know everything about you and you won't just be seeing us here."

"We know where you sleep at night," another protester shouted. "We know what kind of dog food you buy your dogs."

"We're not actually joking," the protester said before shouting the location of where Bulfin lives. "John Bulfin you go to [bleeped out], you go to church on [bleeped out], you live on [bleeped out the] road. We are not joking."

The threats came just a day before gunmen allegedly fired shots into local ICE offices and GEO Group offices in San Antonio, Texas in what the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is describing as a "targeted attack."

"These shootings were cowardly, brazen, violent acts, absolutely without justification and a threat to our entire community," San Antonio FBI Chief Christopher Combs told KSAT 12. "An attempt to attack federal employees is a federal crime with serious consequences ... I don't think there is a question that they knew which floor the ICE office is on," said Combs during a press conference Tuesday afternoon at the scene, adding that all the rounds that were recovered were found on the floor that ICE occupies."

"To fire indiscriminately into any building is not an act of a protest but an act of violence," Combs said.

In an interview with Breitbart News, GEO Group VP of Corporate Relations Pablo Paez said the protest threatening the contractor's employees is "incredibly reckless."

"The safety of our employees is our top priority and we will do whatever it takes to ensure that their safety and their security remains our top priority," Paez said. He went on:

These are politically motivated attacks. We have been a services provider to the federal government for over 30 years. The fact is that the services we provide in our facilities today are in no way different than the high quality, professional services under the same standards that we provided for eight years under President Obama's administration. So where was the outrage then?

Last year, "abolish ICE" protesters targeted agents in the city of Portland, Oregon, shouting racial slurs at Hispanic and black American ICE officers, Breitbart News reported. Those same abolish ICE activists also videotaped themselves beheading a doll of President Donald Trump. The images depicted Trump's head being chopped off with a guillotine.

[Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[TX] FBI investigating shooting at ICE office in San Antonio (The Hill)

The Hill [8/13/2019 1:26 PM, Rachel Frazin, 2806K]

The FBI is investigating after shots were fired into an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office in San Antonio, Texas, early Tuesday.

Shots were also fired at nearby buildings that house businesses unrelated to ICE operations, according to an FBI statement.

Previous reports including from local affiliate NBC 4 San Antonio had indicated a suspect had been taken into custody, but the FBI denied that was the case. The news report has been updated with the new information.

The FBI is processing the scenes and reviewing surveillance video.

"These shootings were cowardly, brazen, violent acts, absolutely without justification and a threat to our entire community," said FBI Special Agent in Charge Christopher Combs in the statement.

"An attempt to attack federal employees is a federal crime with serious consequences," he added. "The FBI will relentlessly pursue every lead in this case to find the individuals who are responsible."

The Hill has reached out to the San Antonio Police Department and ICE for comment.

[TX] FBI investigating after shots fired at ICE offices in San Antonio (CBS News)

CBS News [8/13/2019 10:48 PM, Staff, 3332K]

The FBI said Tuesday it is investigating after shots were fired in the early morning hours at a San Antonio office building that houses Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). No one was injured in the shooting, officials said.

Investigators say that around 3:00 a.m. Tuesday, shots were fired into a window of a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement office and Removal Operations Field Office, CBS San Antonio affiliate KENS reports.

The FBI said no one had been arrested in connection to the incident, despite earlier reports from San Antonio police that there was a suspect in custody.

The FBI special-agent-in-charge Christopher Combs called it a "targeted attack."

"To fire indiscriminately into any building especially a federal facility is not an act of protest-it's an act of violence," Combs said at a press conference. "And in this case it's an act of violence that could have resulted in the assassination of a federal employee. That cannot happen in San Antonio."

ICE San Antonio field office director Daniel Bible told KENS that he believed "political rhetoric and misinformation that various politicians, media outlets and activists" encouraged the incident.

[Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[TX] FBI investigating shots fired at ICE offices in San Antonio (CNN)

CNN [8/13/2019 7:20 PM, Geneva Sands, 6094K]

The FBI is investigating a shooting incident that took place early Tuesday morning at two

buildings associated with Immigration and Customs Enforcement in San Antonio.

Shots were fired round 3 a.m. local time into one of the buildings, which housed ICE offices, and around the same time at another building nearby, where an ICE contractor was located, according to the FBI.

No one was injured, though federal employees were inside at least one of the buildings.

"We had federal employees who were present, who although they were not hit by the rounds fired, by the grace of God. Had the bullets gone 2 inches in another direction, we could be here today talking about the murder of a federal official," said Christopher Combs, FBI special agent in charge for San Antonio, during a news conference.

Tuesday's shooting came days after immigration authorities arrested nearly 700 workers in a massive sweep at seven Mississippi food-processing plants, which left friends and family members desperately searching for answers as to what would happen to their loved ones.

Authorities have not linked the shooting to the arrests last week.

The FBI has opened an investigation as an "assault on a federal official case," said Combs. The crime scene is being processed and the FBI is reviewing the surveillance footage.

An unknown number of individuals and vehicles pulled up and "fired numerous rounds into the ICE facility," said Combs, adding that he doesn't "think there is a question that they knew which floors the ICE offices were on."

All of the shots discovered at this point were on the floors where ICE had offices, said Combs.

"To fire indiscriminately into any building, let alone a federal facility, is not an act of protest, it's an act of violence," he said. "We are concerned that there could be additional attacks."

Both FBI and ICE officials raised concerns that political discourse could lead to more violence.

"Political rhetoric and misinformation that various politicians, media outlets and activist groups recklessly disseminate to the American people regarding the ICE mission only serve to further encourage these violent acts," said ICE San Antonio Field Office Director Daniel Bible in a statement.

In July, an armed man was fatally shot during a confrontation with police after he hurled incendiary devices at a Washington state immigration detention center, Tacoma police said at the time.

That shooting occurred about 4 a.m. local time outside the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Northwest Detention Center, where the man attempted to set the building and parked cars on fire, according to police spokeswoman Loretta Cool.

The July incident occurred about six hours after a peaceful rally against a planned ICE operation at the Tacoma detention center.

[TX] FBI investigating shooting at ICE office in San Antonio as ‘targeted attack’ (FOX News)

FOX News [8/13/2019 10:36 PM, Louis Casiano, 10258K]

The FBI is investigating a "targeted attack" in which shots were fired into an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office and another facility associated with the agency in San Antonio, Texas early Tuesday.

The shooting occurred around 3 a.m. at an ICE building where two floors that housed administrative and executive offices were targeted, according to the San Antonio Express-News. The outlet reported another shooting occurred at a separate facility where an ICE contractor was located.

FBI Special Agent in Charge Chris Combs said those responsible knew what they were shooting at.

"All of the shots that we have found are on the floors where ICE had offices," Combs said. "This is no question a very targeted attack. It's not a secret facility, you can go online, it's [the address is] out there. So they did some research, they knew what floors ICE was on, they knew what buildings they were and they hit those."

A man was detained shortly after the shooting but was released after authorities determined he was not connected to the incident.

ICE did not respond to a Fox News request for comment Tuesday.

Daniel Bible, the field office director for the agency's enforcement and removal operations in San Antonio, blamed the shooting on elected officials, the media and activists for a breakdown in political discourse that has encouraged violent acts.

"Political rhetoric and misinformation that various politicians, media outlets and activist groups recklessly disseminate to the American people regarding the ICE mission only serve to further encourage these violent acts," Bible told Fox News affiliate, KABB-TV. "ICE officers put their lives on the line each and every day to keep our communities safe. This disturbing public discourse shrouds our critical law enforcement function and unnecessarily puts our officers' safety at risk."

The agency has been besieged by criticism from lawmakers and immigration activists as the Trump administration continues to target those living in the U.S. illegally.

Last month, a man was killed by Washington state authorities when he threw incendiary devices at both an immigration center and nearby propane tanks. In Colorado, protesters demonstrating outside an ICE facility replaced the American flag with the Mexican flag.

"We are concerned that there could be additional attacks, we have to stop that," Combs said. "We can not allow political discourse to lead us to the point of violence, where federal

employees, innocent people doing their jobs are put in harm's way."

[Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[TX] Gunman targets ICE offices in San Antonio; DHS blames politicians, media for stoking fear (Washington Times)

Washington Times [8/13/2019 4:51 PM, Stephen Dinan, 452K]

A gunman opened fire early Tuesday morning on San Antonio buildings where ICE and its contractors have offices, in the latest incident that appears to target the law enforcement agency that handles deportations.

Both U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and GEO Group, a major contractor for ICE, said they were targets of the attack, which left windows shattered at two buildings.

One of the buildings housed ICE's Enforcement and Removal operations office in the city, and house GEO Group's office. The other building housed another ICE contractor.

"These shootings were cowardly, brazen, violent acts, absolutely without justification and a threat to our entire community," said Christopher Combs, the FBI's Special Agent in Charge in San Antonio. "An attempt to attack federal employees is a federal crime with serious consequences. The FBI will relentlessly pursue every lead in this case to find the individuals who are responsible."

Daniel Bible, the field office director for ICE's deportation operations in San Antonio, blamed lawmakers and the press for recklessly stoking anti-ICE sentiments.

"This disturbing public discourse shrouds our critical law enforcement function and unnecessarily puts our officers' safety at risk," Mr. Bible said in a statement.

The shooting happened about 3 a.m.

While property was damaged, no injuries were reported.

The shooting comes amid increased to domestic terrorism — though the media's focus has largely been on alleged right-wing attacks.

Yet this week's shooting is part of a string of attacks involving ICE.

Last month a man armed with an AR-15-style rifle and homemade bombs attacked an ICE processing center in Tacoma, Washington. That facility was also associated with GEO Group.

Willem Van Spronsen attempted to use the bombs to light a propane tank, and police who responded shot and killed him.

On Monday, meanwhile, protesters rallied outside GEO Group's Florida headquarters, calling out employees by name in what the company said felt like an attempt at intimidation.

The Free Beacon reported that the protesters, associated with Never Again Action, also called out an employee's address and church, and "the fact they knew where their children lived."

ICE officials say they're victims of a misinformation campaign that has made their jobs — and the country — less safe.

"Political rhetoric and misinformation that various politicians, media outlets and activist groups recklessly disseminate to the American people regarding the ICE mission only serve to further encourage these violent acts," said Mr. Bible.

**[TX] Shots fired into San Antonio ICE office in latest attack on the agency
(Washington Examiner)**

Washington Examiner [8/13/2019 3:20 PM, Anna Giaritelli, 855K]

Police in San Antonio arrested a man early Tuesday morning in connection with gunshots fired through the windows of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in the city, according to the agency.

Local law enforcement responded around 3 a.m. CT Tuesday to shots fired at the ICE field office located north of Interstate 410 near Brookhaven Drive.

Police told News 4 the man is believed to have fired the shots from across the highway into the windows of the building. The building does not have bulletproof windows, and at least one shot penetrated a window.

"This attack at the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) Field Office in San Antonio is completely without justification," ICE Enforcement Removal Operations San Antonio Field Office Director Daniel Bible said in a statement.

Bible went on to blame "politicians, media outlets and activist groups" for "recklessly" sharing information and "misinformation" to the public.

"This disturbing public discourse shrouds our critical law enforcement function and unnecessarily puts our officers' safety at risk," said Bible.

"They have a 24/7 command center in there so there were people in the building," a former senior ICE official who spoke with an official based at the office told the Washington Examiner.

San Antonio police would not confirm the incident or arrest. However, San Antonio Police Department spokesman Officer Douglas Greene said the FBI's San Antonio office was handling the investigation.

The local FBI office did not respond to a request for comment.

The attack is the latest in a string of incidents targeting ICE facilities nationwide.

Last month, protesters with Never Again blocked the entrances to ICE's national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

In mid-July, police in Tacoma, Washington, fatally shot an armed man after they said he hurled Molotov cocktails at an ICE building.

On July 12, a group of protesters in Aurora, Colorado, took down an American flag and two other flags from outside an ICE facility and raised a Mexican flag and a defaced "thin blue line" flag, which commemorates law enforcement.

[TX] Police Arrest Man Who Shot Up San Antonio ICE Office (Daily Caller)

Daily Caller [8/13/2019 3:10 PM, Jason Hopkins, 785K]

Authorities took a man into custody for allegedly firing a gun at an Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in San Antonio, shattering several windows.

The San Antonio Police Department responded early Tuesday morning to a shooting that took place at a building that houses the Department of Homeland Security's ICE division and arrived at the scene at approximately 3 a.m. local time.

The alleged shooter is believed to have fired several rounds at the building from across the highway, according to local reports. No one was injured, however, several of the building's windows were broken.

Police officers apprehended the man — whose name has yet to be identified — not far from where the shooting occurred. The FBI is handling the case, a San Antonio Police Department spokeswoman told the Daily Caller News Foundation. The FBI's San Antonio division did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Law enforcement officials have yet to determine a motive for the shooting. Some in Homeland Security circles are pointing the finger at those who have vilified immigration officials in recent months.

"Democrats have been spewing this hatred that causes these incidents," a former immigration official said to the DCNF in reaction to the shooting. "It invokes violence," he said about Democrats who have called ICE agents Nazis and compared detention centers to concentration camps.

"More and more events like this are taking place, and it's starting to show a pattern," the official continued.

If the San Antonio shooter intended to target ICE, it would be the second time in two months that an individual has attempted violence against the agency.

Willem Van Spronsen, a 69-year-old with ties to Antifa, launched an attack in July against an ICE detention center in Tacoma, Washington. Armed with a rifle and flares, the man attempted to light the buildings on fire, but only managed to ignite a nearby vehicle before getting killed in a shootout with police.

Law enforcement discovered a manifesto Van Spronsen wrote. He called on his fellow “comrades” to arm themselves in the manifesto, and he referred to immigrant detention centers as “concentration camps,” a comparison New York Democratic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez popularized.

Ocasio-Cortez condemned the Washington state attack in July. Her office did not immediately respond to a request for comment about Tuesday morning’s shooting. Reps. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota and Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, two other Democrats who have been critical of the agency, also did not respond to requests for comments about the shooting.

[OR] Complaint filed against ICE over man detained at courthouse (San Francisco Chronicle)

San Francisco Chronicle [8/13/2019 10:32 PM, Staff, 2613K]

Attorneys working with the American Civil Liberties Union have filed a complaint against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, demanding the agency pay \$100,000 for briefly detaining a U.S. citizen outside the Washington County Courthouse.

Oregon Public Broadcasting reports Isidro Tafolla and his wife were leaving the courthouse Sept. 18, 2017, when six plainclothes ICE officers boxed in the couple’s truck and questioned him.

In the complaint filed Monday, ACLU attorneys say the officers used an “aggressive, demanding demeanor,” refusing to identify as ICE and showing the couple a mugshot that didn’t resemble Tafolla.

ICE spokeswoman Elizabeth Godfrey said afterward that the officers handled themselves with professionalism and treated Tafolla with respect.

The filmed incident provoked an outcry from members of Oregon’s congressional delegation, two of whom pushed for an investigation and asked that the agency apologize.

ICE declined to comment specifically on the filing.

[OR] ACLU Files Complaint Against ICE, Demand \$100,000 For Man Detained Outside Courthouse In 2017 (Jefferson Public Radio)

Jefferson Public Radio [8/13/2019 3:30 PM, Rebecca Ellis, 2K]

Attorneys working with the American Civil Liberties Union filed a complaint against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Monday, demanding the agency pay \$100,000 for briefly detaining a U.S. citizen outside the Washington County Courthouse in 2017.

On Sept. 18, 2017, Isidro Andrade Tafolla and his wife were leaving the county courthouse when six plainclothes ICE officers boxed in the couple’s pickup truck and started questioning Andrade Tafolla.

In the complaint filed Monday, attorneys with the ACLU alleged the officers behaved in an “aggressive, demanding demeanor” refusing to identify themselves as ICE and showing the couple a mugshot that “did not resemble Mr. Andrade Tafolla, except that he, like Mr.

Andrade Tafolla, had brown skin.”

Andrade Tafolla emigrated from Mexico more than three decades ago. He is now a U.S. citizen.

According to a letter written after the incident by Elizabeth Godfrey, the agency’s deputy field office director in Portland, the officers had been searching the courthouse for an undocumented man recently charged with driving under the influence. In the note, Godfrey defended the officers, saying they “handled themselves with professionalism and treated Mr. Andrade Tafolla with respect.”

But others viewed the incident, which was filmed by a volunteer from the American Civil Liberties Union, differently. It provoked an immediate outcry from members of Oregon’s congressional delegation, two of whom pushed for an investigation and asked that the agency apologize.

Andrade Tafolla said that apology never came.

“Two years ago, I asked for an apology from ICE. I didn’t get anything,” he said Monday outside the courthouse, where a large crowd that had gathered to cheer on his legal action and protest what they believe is an amped up presence of immigration officers in Oregon courthouses.

“Today, I get to fight back through the legal system.”

Andrade Tafolla said he felt humiliated by the incident, certain that the harassment stemmed from the color of his skin.

“There’s no words to describe it. Being a U.S. citizen, I thought I would never have to face such a thing,” he told reporters. “I just feel betrayed.”

In the court filing, Andrade Tafolla’s lawyers wrote that he “could not sleep for months” after being approached by the officers and had to take time off from his job as a road maintenance worker for the county.

Caitlin Mitchell, an attorney assisting with the complaint along with the ACLU, said the case of Andrade Tafolla relates to a bigger picture playing out within — and just outside — Oregon courthouses.

These arrests, she said, happen “to many, many people — some of whom are U.S. citizens, some of whom are not.”

There are no available hard numbers on how many arrests by ICE officials have taken place in Oregon courthouses, though advocates from the ACLU of Oregon believe there’s been a sharp uptick under the Trump administration.

Leland Baxter-Neal, a staff attorney with the ACLU, said the organization believes immigration officials are now targeting at least 16 county courthouses in the state. The effects of even one arrest can snowball, he said.

“Every time one person’s arrested, an entire community can be affected. An entire community can be deterred from going to court,” he said, describing clients who now refuse to challenge parking tickets because they don’t want to risk the court appearance.

ICE declined to comment specifically on the filing, citing pending litigation, but told OPB that officers have “every legal right to carry out its mission on courthouse grounds,” though they do “not make civil immigration arrests inside courthouses indiscriminately.”

[Iraq] Lawmakers urge Trump to stop deportations to Iraq after Michigan man’s death (Politico)

Politico [8/13/2019 5:33 PM, Nahal Toosi, 2512K]

Dozens of House Democrats are urging President Donald Trump to stop detaining and deporting Iraqi nationals after the death of a Michigan man sent to the Middle Eastern country.

In a letter dated Tuesday, the lawmakers say Trump is risking causing more “preventable deaths” if he continues the deportations. Many of the people targeted for removal are Iraqi Christians living in the United States who have not been to Iraq in many years. Christians face discrimination and persecution in the Muslim-majority country.

The Trump administration’s failure to stop the deportations “calls into question its stated interest in protecting religious minorities, especially Christians, from persecution, and underscores the horrific consequences of your immigration policies,” the letter states.

The 41 lawmakers, led by Democratic Rep. Andy Levin of Michigan, note that the administration has repeatedly been asked to end the deportations but refused. Although many of the people affected are fighting their deportation in court, some already have been removed.

One, Jimmy Aldaoud, was deported in June to Iraq, where he died last week.

The 41-year-old’s criminal record made him a target for deportation. But he spoke no Arabic, had lived in the U.S. since he was a toddler and was Christian. He suffered from mental illness and diabetes. He is believed to have died because he couldn’t get the insulin he needed in Iraq.

The signatories of the letter said they felt “outrage and grief” over Aldaoud’s death.

“To force a man living with chronic illnesses into an unknown country without adequate access to life-sustaining medicine is nothing short of a death sentence,” the letter states.

Many of the Iraqi nationals targeted for deportation are members of the Chaldean Christian community who, for any number of reasons, never obtained U.S. citizenship. However, many of the citizens in their community voted for Trump because of his promises to protect Christians abroad and be tough on Islamist extremists.

The potential deportees have in some cases faced the possibility of being removed from the U.S. But Iraq long resisted accepting the deportees, while previous presidents hesitated to send them because of the risks they would face.

Trump's hard-line approach to immigration led his administration to push the Iraqi government to accept the deportees, among them Aldaoud.

"National attention is now focused on Jimmy's heartbreaking story," the lawmakers say in the letter. "It is incumbent upon us to act, in this moment of tragedy, to ensure that this never happens again."

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

[Iraq] House Democrats urge Trump to end deportations of Iraqis after diabetic man's death (The Hill)

The Hill [8/13/2019 4:56 PM, Zack Budryk, 2806K]

Dozens of House Democrats are calling on President Trump to halt deportations of Iraqi nationals following reports that an Iraqi-born diabetic man who spent most of his life in the U.S. died after being deported and then was unable to obtain insulin.

The man, Jimmy Aldaoud, who was brought to the U.S. as a toddler, had reportedly also been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, which advocates have said led to the criminal conviction that led to his deportation.

"He already faced tremendous danger in a country that was completely foreign to him, as he was entirely Americanized and a Chaldean Christian, a religious minority that is highly persecuted in Iraq," the 41 House Democrats wrote.

"However, to force a man living with chronic illnesses into an unknown country without adequate access to life-sustaining medicine is nothing short of a death sentence. Jimmy's death was a direct and predictable result of his deportation, and we are horrified that this cruelty was perpetrated on our watch," they added.

Aldaoud's deportation followed a decision by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals earlier this year that allowed Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to detain and deport Iraqi nationals, despite calls from lawmakers in both parties to halt the process, the letter stated.

For example, in April, more than 20 members of Congress wrote to ICE and the Department of Homeland Security asking for the deportations and detentions to be deferred.

The same month, Rep. Andy Levin (D-Mich.), who signed the letter, joined Reps. John Moolenaar (R-Mich.), Elissa Slotkin (D-Mich.) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-Neb.) in passing the letter on to Vice President Pence due to his history of advocating for the protection of Christian minorities abroad.

Levin and Moolenaar have similarly reached out to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on the issue, according to the letter.

“All of these requests have gone unanswered beyond a cursory acknowledgment. Your Administration’s total failure to act calls into question its stated interest in protecting religious minorities, especially Christians, from persecution, and underscores the horrific consequences of your immigration policies,” the letter states.

Signers of the letter include Levin and Reps. André Carson (D-Ind.), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.), Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.), Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.) and Ted Deutch (D-Fla.).

The Hill has reached out to the White House as well as Pence’s office and the State Department for comment.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Big Tech, Big Banks Use Outsourcing Firms to Import Thousands of H-1B Foreign Workers (Breitbart)

Breitbart [8/13/2019 4:26 PM, John Binder, 2034K]

Tech conglomerates and big banks have imported thousands of foreign workers through the H-1B visa program to take U.S. white-collar jobs, newly released federal data reveals.

Every year, more than 100,000 foreign workers are brought to the U.S. on the H-1B visa and are allowed to stay for up to six years. There are about 650,000 H-1B visa foreign workers in the U.S. at any given moment. Americans are often laid off in the process and forced to train their foreign replacements, as highlighted by Breitbart News.

More than 85,000 Americans annually potentially lose their jobs to foreign labor through the H-1B visa program. Despite claims by the big business lobby, American workers who have been replaced by H-1B foreign workers say there is no shortage of talented and qualified citizens for high-paying, white-collar jobs.

For years, multinational corporations importing H-1B foreign workers have not been listed in federal records as doing so because they obtained the hires through a number of outsourcing firms. New rules by the Trump administration, though, now mandate that corporations hiring these H-1B workers are disclosed publicly.

Department of Labor data compiled by the research site RedBus2Us.com — as well as records reviewed by Bloomberg Law — reveal that tech corporations like Apple, the Microsoft Corporation, Hewlett-Packard, and Amazon, and companies like Nike, McDonald’s, CVS, AT&T, and Pfizer have used a variety of outsourcing firms like Infosys, Cognizant, Tata Consulting Services, Accenture, Wipro, and Capgemini to import thousands of H-1B foreign workers

Big banks, credit card corporations, and financial service companies, likewise, have also used these outsourcing firms to funnel thousands of H-1B foreign workers into American jobs that otherwise would have gone to qualified Americans.

State Street Bank, Capital One, MasterCard, Wells Fargo, Morgan Stanley, American Express, JPMorgan Chase Bank, Discover, and Citibank have all imported H-1B foreign

workers through outsourcing firms.

Last year, U.S. businesses and corporations attempted to outsource nearly 420,000 American jobs to foreigners through the H-1B visa program — a number that outpaces the population of Tampa, Florida.

As Breitbart News previously reported, more than 2.7 million H-1B foreign workers have been approved to come to the U.S. to take American jobs between 2007 and 2017. During that same period, businesses tried to outsource almost 3.5 million American jobs to foreign workers instead of hiring Americans.

About four million young Americans enter the workforce each year, many looking for white-collar jobs in the STEM fields. Those Americans' prospects of finding work are crippled by the country's legal immigration process, which admits more than 1.5 million immigrants and hundreds of thousands of foreign visa workers annually. Already, the wage-cutting business scheme has led to foreign-born workers overwhelmingly outnumbering Americans in the tech industry in Silicon Valley, California.

Customs and Border Protection

[TX] Immigrants Citing 'Horrific Conditions' in Texas Sue for Release (Bloomberg)
Bloomberg [8/13/2019 6:45 PM, Gerald Porter Jr., 5350K]

Immigrants along the Texas-Mexico border, citing indefinite detention in "horrific conditions," have asked a federal judge to order the U.S. to improve the conditions, give them access to lawyers and release them after 72 hours.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection "has intentionally packed these people into filthy holding cells for lengthy periods of time, where they routinely sleep on concrete floors or concrete benches and are denied access to adequate food, water, medical and sanitation facilities," according to the complaint, filed Monday in federal court in Brownsville, Texas.

The administration has pursued an increasingly aggressive course on immigrants from Latin America, staging workplace raids right after the mass shooting in El Paso, Texas, that targeted Latinos and, more recently, proposing rule changes for green card applications that would favor wealthier applicants. Last month it moved to narrow protections for asylum seekers if their relatives have a criminal history.

The conditions at U.S. detention facilities along the southern border have been the subject of intense scrutiny. In recent months, at least seven children in CPB custody have died, the petition says.

The case is Gonzalez-Recinos v. McAleenan, 19-cv-95, U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas (Brownsville).

[TX] US sued over legal access, better conditions for migrants (ABC News)
ABC News [8/13/2019 2:29 PM, Staff, 2702K]

Lawyers are asking a federal judge to order U.S. Customs and Border Protection to provide legal access to detainees and improve conditions in detention cells where reports of fetid

conditions have sparked outrage.

The request for a preliminary injunction was filed Monday in federal district court in Brownsville, Texas, on behalf of detainees who allege they have been held for weeks or months in fenced-in pens without the ability to call their relatives or lawyers.

In more than a dozen cases, lawyers have been contacted by people who say their relatives have disappeared inside detention.

CBP, which includes the Border Patrol, is allowed to detain people for only three days. But the Trump administration has held thousands of people longer because long-term facilities are full and it doesn't want to release adults who have entered the U.S. without permission.

CBP did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

[TX] CBP: 3 migrants found dead in South Texas in past week (San Francisco Chronicle)

San Francisco Chronicle [8/13/2019 9:24 PM, Staff, 2613K]

The U.S. Border Patrol says it suspects 3 people found dead in the South Texas Brush over the past week were abandoned by migrants abandoned by smugglers.

In a statement Tuesday, the patrol says the Texas Department of Public Safety reported Thursday the body of a person was found in remote brush near Sullivan City, about 70 miles (113 kilometers) west of Brownsville. The body was taken to the Hidalgo County morgue.

The patrol statement says agents at a checkpoint in Sarita, about 93 miles (150 kilometers) north of Brownsville, were told Friday of a Mexican national abandoned by smugglers in a nearby ranch. Agents dispatched to the scene found the man dead. The body was taken to a funeral home.

On Saturday, agents found a body in the brush near La Grulla, about 75 miles (120 kilometers) west of Brownsville. The body was taken to a funeral home.

[AZ] Border patrol agent called migrants 'subhuman.' Then he hit one with his truck. (Washington Post)

Washington Post [8/13/2019 10:36 PM, Reis Thebault, 245K]

Matthew Bowen thought the U.S. Border Patrol did some important work. Sadly, he told his fellow agents, they just don't get a fair shake.

In a series of racist and violently worded text messages made public in court filings, Bowen lamented his "failed agency" where, he said, law enforcement officers aren't given enough resources to do their job — which entails, in Bowen's words, "hunting down s---bags with your crew."

"We are treated like s---," he said in a November 2017 message to another agent. "Prosecuted for doing what it takes to arrest these savages."

Bowen didn't know it at the time, but he was days away from encountering one of the very migrants he was disparaging, an incident that would unfold into a years-long investigation and culminate in a criminal trial. It ended this week in Bowen's forced resignation from the Border Patrol, his guilty plea to a misdemeanor charge and his admission that he intentionally hit a migrant with his truck.

The case against the former agent, and the derogatory remarks it brought to light, is another episode in a summer of scandal for authorities who enforce immigration laws — one already punctuated by revelations of a Facebook group filled with racism and sexism, controversial leaked images from inside a detention facility and the drowning of a father and his 23-month-old daughter who tried to cross the Rio Grande into the United States.

Bowen faces up to a year in prison and \$100,000 in fines for deprivation of rights under color of law, his plea agreement states. His sentencing is scheduled for Oct. 15. Bowen's lawyer, Sean Chapman, declined to comment, and the U.S. attorney's office in the Arizona district did not respond.

In the court filing, Bowen admits he "intentionally struck [the migrant] with an unreasonable amount of force" and said his actions "were not justified and violated [the migrant's] rights protected by the Constitution of the United States."

Documents filed in Tucson's U.S. District Court over the last 15 months reconstruct the events of that day, Dec. 3, 2017. It began when a U.S. Customs and Border Protection camera operator spotted Antolin Lopez Aguilar, a 23-year-old Guatemalan man they believed had just jumped the border fence near Nogales, Ariz.

As Lopez ran toward a nearby gas station, Bowen chased him in a government-issued Ford F-150 truck. Prosecutors said Bowen "accelerated aggressively" until he was close behind a still-sprinting Lopez. He hit Lopez twice, knocking him down the second time and nearly running him over. Bowen stopped the truck "within inches" of Lopez.

Another border agent later told investigators he had "never seen anything like that before" and said he didn't think Lopez posed a threat. As Bowen handcuffed Lopez, the second agent noticed cuts on Lopez's hand and gravel on the side of the man's face.

Lopez was then charged with unlawful entry into the country and sent by prisoner transport to Tucson, according to court records. Prosecutors say Bowen later filed a false report about what happened that morning.

In the days after, though, Bowen exchanged messages with other agents, downplaying the seriousness of the allegations and complaining about the scrutiny he was under. In the texts, which are laced with more profanity and slurs, he apparently admits to hitting Lopez with his truck.

"Chasing a guat with an f150 and accidentally bumped him at like 7 mph," he wrote in one.

In another, he said he hit Lopez on purpose to immobilize him.

"Just a little push with a ford bumper," Bowen wrote.

But it was the messages Bowen sent in the weeks before he ran Lopez down that showed the agent's "great disdain" for the migrants he policed, prosecutors said. In one message, he called them "mindless murdering savages."

"PLEASE let us take the gloves off trump!" Bowen wrote. "Disgusting subhuman s--- unworthy of being kindling for a fire."

In one of those exchanges, the 10-year Border Patrol veteran mused about finding a new job.

"Im to the point where there is more negative than positive," he wrote, "and if I can make a lot more money in a different career field then I feel like I owe it to my family to try and do that."

Booted from the agency and facing possible prison time, Bowen now has no choice.

[AZ] A Border Patrol agent accused of intentionally hitting a migrant with his work vehicle has taken a plea deal (CNN)

CNN [8/13/2019 6:42 PM, Chris Boyette and Hollie Silverman, 6094K]

A Border Patrol agent accused of intentionally hitting a Guatemalan migrant with his government-issued vehicle in 2017 agreed to a plea deal in the case, according to court documents.

Agent Matthew Bowen admitted guilt in exchange for a misdemeanor charge and no more than one year in prison, court records show.

"On December 3, 2017, near Nogales, in the District of Arizona, I was on duty and acting as a United States Border Patrol Agent. On that day, I arrested A.-L.A. for unlawful entry into the United States," says the statement from Bowen in an August 8 plea agreement. "During my apprehension of A.L.-A., I intentionally struck him with an unreasonable amount of force. My actions when I struck A.L.-A. were not justified and violated his rights protected by the Constitution of the United States."

The maximum penalties for the misdemeanor violation are a fine of \$100,000, one year in prison, or both and not more than one year of supervised release, according to the plea.

"Matthew Bowen resigned from the Border Patrol on August 8, 2019. CBP does not plan to comment until Mr. Bowen is sentenced and the case is fully adjudicated," said Pete Bidegain III, a spokesman for Border Patrol Tucson Sector.

Neither Bowen's attorney Sean Chapman nor the US Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona has responded to a request for comment.

He began working for Customs and Border Patrol in 2008. He had been placed on indefinite suspension without pay after his indictment in June 2018, according to the agency. The deal required Bowen to resign from Border Patrol.

Bowen was indicted by a federal grand jury on charges that he deprived the Guatemalan man of his civil rights and filed a false report for the incident.

Court records filed in US District Court in Tucson allege that Bowen used his government-issued Ford F-150 to strike the victim in the back to stop him from fleeing.

Bowen admitted intentionally hitting the victim with his truck in a December 4, 2017, text message to a fellow agent, according to court papers.

"I used an f150 to do a human pit maneuver on a guat running from an agent," Bowen wrote. "Just a little push with a ford bumper."

The agent had sought to prevent prosecutors from introducing his text message at trial, court records show. But prosecutors argued that his text messages should be admissible because they show that he intentionally ran over the migrant with his service vehicle and then lied about the incident in a report.

Prosecutors also asked a judge to allow use of the text messages because they felt that they provided insight into Bowen's mindset and how he approached his job.

In multiple text messages, Bowen allegedly expressed his discontent with the limitations of Border Patrol and his "disgust" with the migrants he encountered during work.

According to court records, Bowen sent a text to a fellow agent two weeks prior to the December incident that said, "mindless murdering savages. PLEASE let us take the gloves off trump!" He also wrote that migrants were "disgusting subhuman sh*t unworthy of being kindling for a fire," court documents show.

Bowen is out on bail and has a sentencing scheduled for October 15, according to court documents.

[CA] Border Patrol agents seized \$90K in heroin, arrested convicted sex offender over weekend (San Diego Union Tribune)

San Diego Union Tribune [8/13/2019 7:37 PM, Karen Kucher and Alex Riggins]

Border Patrol agents in Pine Valley, San Ysidro and Tecate over the weekend seized more than eight pounds of heroin, arrested three people in a fleeing SUV and detained a convicted sex offender who had illegally crossed the U.S.-Mexico border, officials said.

Officials highlighted the three incidents, which occurred between Friday and Sunday, in a news release that noted it had been an "eventful weekend" of enforcement.

In a separate news release Tuesday, Border Patrol officials said they also detained 25 unauthorized immigrants Sunday in three alleged ocean-smuggling incidents off the coast of San Diego County. As many as 17 suspected unauthorized immigrants may have escaped capture in one of the incidents in Mission Bay.

In the first land-based incident, a 23-year-old man driving on Interstate 8 at the checkpoint near Pine Valley around noon Friday was told to go to secondary inspection after a drug-

sniffing dog indicated his 2007 Cadillac CTS might be carrying narcotics.

Agents searched the vehicle and found four packages of heroin inside a fake battery. The driver and the drugs, with an estimated street value of \$89,700, were turned over to the Drug Enforcement Administration. The vehicle was seized.

The second incident occurred shortly before 9:30 p.m. Saturday when agents spotted a person jumping into the back seat of an SUV about a mile north of the U.S.-Mexico border. They tried to pull the Nissan Pathfinder over but the driver sped off on southbound Interstate 5, heading toward San Ysidro.

Agents broke off the chase but Customs and Border Protection officers stopped before it entered Mexico.

Agents arrested a U.S. citizen who was driving and his two passengers, a 43-year-old Mexican citizen and a 29-year-old Honduran citizen. The driver is facing criminal prosecution and the two others were processed for removal, officials said.

In the third case highlighted, agents on Sunday morning came across four men hiding in brush near the Tecate Port of Entry who were determined to have crossed illegally into the U.S., said Supervisory Border Patrol Agent Jeffery Stephenson.

All four were transported to a Border Patrol station for processing and a records check conducted there showed that one man in the group, a 63-year-old Mexican national, had several criminal convictions for sexual assault. He will be prosecuted on suspicion of re-entering the country after deportation.

About 2 p.m. Sunday, Coast Guard officials noticed a suspicious vessel off the coast and intercepted the 25-foot pleasure craft near Pepper Tree Park Marina in National City, according to San Diego Sector Border Patrol spokeswoman Mary Beth Caston. Agents determined the nine men and three women aboard the boat were all Mexican citizens who entered the country without permission.

Two of the boat's occupants were arrested on suspicion of smuggling, Caston said.

Around 5:30 p.m. that same day, Border Patrol agents spotted a 32-foot Sea Ray craft pulled up to a dock in Mission Bay, with dozens of people spilling out of it, officials said.

"Agents apprehended 11 out the 28 people seen running from the boat," Caston said in a statement. "After an extensive search, agents were unable to locate the remaining people."

Then around 9 p.m. Sunday, Coast Guard officials notified Border Patrol agents of a small personal watercraft heading north from the border that passed the Imperial Beach Pier about one mile from the coast, Caston said. Agents responded and found two people, including a pregnant woman, who'd been dropped off on the beach.

Agents detained both people, though the driver of the personal watercraft escaped.

[CA] Young Tijuana man accused of running cross-border teen drug mules (San Diego Union Tribune)

San Diego Union Tribune [8/13/2019 8:43 PM, Kristina Davis and Wendy Fry]

As a pre-law student at a Tijuana university, the 20-year-old known as “Milo” was supposed to be preparing for a legal career.

Instead, he is accused of running a drug-smuggling cell that used Mexican teenagers who attend school in San Diego as cross-border couriers, using threats of violence to keep them in check, prosecutors allege.

Oswaldo Mendivil Tamayo is being held without bail after his July 20 arrest in San Diego. A grand jury indictment, issued under seal a month earlier, charges him with conspiracy to import and distribute cocaine, fentanyl, heroin and methamphetamine, as well as conspiracy to launder money.

He has pleaded not guilty.

The arrest comes as federal investigators have issued numerous warnings in recent years to San Diego County high school students who might fall prey to smooth-talking recruiters. Teens who are frequent border crossers are often asked to conceal drugs — including incredibly potent fentanyl — underneath their clothing as they walk through the pedestrian lanes of San Diego ports of entry.

“He targeted juvenile couriers, which exhibits a level of callousness because he lured these vulnerable young adults into an extremely dangerous situation,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Meghan Heesch told a San Diego federal judge during a detention hearing July 25. She argued that Mendivil should not be released from custody because he was a flight risk.

To illustrate the threats of violence Mendivil allegedly wielded, Heesch described one incident involving a juvenile who had drugs seized from him. Mendivil allegedly offered \$20,000 to co-conspirators asking them to find the juvenile and bring him to Mendivil to answer for the loss, she said, according to an official audio recording of the hearing.

The prosecutor did not offer additional details as to the alleged recruitment methods or reference particular San Diego County schools.

Teen smuggling has been a troubling trend that has resurfaced in the past few years. In fiscal 2018, U.S. Customs and Border Protection documented 87 incidents of minors trying to smuggle a total of 307 pounds of various narcotics through ports of entry along the California-Mexico border, according to agency records.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration began investigating Mendivil in May 2018, slowly building a case against him and alleged associates through drug seizures, extensive surveillance of suspected distributors and coordinators in the U.S., confidential sources and intercepted communications, Heesch said.

Over the course of the investigation, agents have seized 4 kilograms of fentanyl, 94 kilograms of cocaine, 9 kilograms of heroin and 77 kilograms of methamphetamine in San Diego County, the prosecutor said.

Mendivil is also accused of being responsible for the importation and distribution of “huge” quantities of counterfeit oxycodone pills which subsequently tested positive for fentanyl, Heesch said.

“Mendivil polluted our community with this drug for over a year,” Heesch told the judge. “Agents in this case have interdicted over 30,000 fentanyl pills that Mendivil coordinated to be distributed in the United States.”

The distribution arm of the cell had narcotics destined for markets as far away as New York and Philadelphia, prosecutors said.

Mendivil, a Mexican citizen, was born in Tijuana and has lived there most of his life, according to defense attorney Richard Boesen, who was initially appointed by the court to represent him. The attorney said Mendivil lives in the Colonia Herrera neighborhood with his mother, who listened to the proceedings from the courtroom gallery.

A reporter Tuesday went to the address given in court but no one appeared to be home.

Mendivil was studying pre-law at CETYS University in Tijuana before going on hiatus about six months ago.

“His intention was to get into law but he has decided to change his field to business administration and obtain a BA,” Boesen said. “He was to return to school in September in order to do so.”

In the meantime, he has been doing accounting work for his father, who is CEO of a construction company in Tijuana, Boesen said.

Mendivil used a valid visa to cross into the U.S. when he was arrested on the indictment. It was a privilege he didn’t appear to use often. The last time he’d crossed was in January 2018, according to Heesch. The visa has since been revoked, she added.

Boesen asked for Mendivil to be released in lieu of \$75,000 bond secured by property and the signature of two financially responsible adults, but U.S. Magistrate Judge Peter Lewis found him to be a risk of flight.

“It sounds like you come from a very good family,” Lewis told Mendivil at the conclusion of the hearing. “Your mother is here, that means a lot. But, you know, even if I were to set bail I doubt you’d be released from custody given the fact you lack any immigration status here in the United States.”

Mendivil’s retained attorney, John Lanahan, has asked that the court declare the case complex, a legal designation that gives the defense more time to prepare for trial. Lanahan noted the “voluminous discovery” in the case, including 79 arrest and investigative reports dating back to May 2018. Lanahan did not return a phone call or email seeking comment.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

[CA] California officials warn of ‘unsustainable’ taxpayer costs in disaster bill (San Francisco Chronicle)

San Francisco Chronicle [8/13/2019 2:41 PM, Alexei Koseff, 337K]

A bill that state finance officials warn could saddle California taxpayers with expensive and unnecessary premiums for disaster insurance is sweeping toward passage in the Legislature, so far without dissent.

SB290, sponsored by Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, would authorize the governor to directly purchase policies and other financial products from insurance companies in hopes of mitigating California’s costs from natural disasters such as wildfires and floods. It would change current law that requires state agencies to buy insurance through a broker selected in a competitive bidding process, something intended to lower costs to taxpayers.

Lara, who promoted the measure at an insurance industry conference last month, has come under fire in recent weeks from critics who charge that he is too cozy with the companies he regulates.

Michael Soller, a spokesman for Lara, said the bill would merely provide the state with more options in dealing with costly disasters.

“Californians really want to see people collaborating to solve the problems of extreme wildfire,” Soller said.

But Consumer Watchdog, an advocacy group whose founder wrote the 1988 ballot initiative that created the elected position of insurance commissioner, called the disaster insurance bill a betrayal of the office.

“This is a very elaborate boondoggle to give the insurance companies a blank check from the state,” said the group’s president, Jamie Court.

Lara’s relationship with insurers has been closely scrutinized since the San Diego Union-Tribune reported last month that soon after becoming insurance commissioner in January, he began accepting contributions from out-of-state donors with industry ties for his 2022 re-election campaign. Most previous California insurance commissioners have refused industry donations to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Lara pledged during his campaign last year to reject money from insurers. After the story was published, he promised to return more than \$54,000 in re-election contributions. Most of the money came from people connected to Applied Underwriters, a workers’ compensation provider that is being sold in a deal that requires the insurance commissioner’s approval.

The Union-Tribune subsequently found that Lara had intervened in at least four cases challenging the cost of Applied Underwriters policies, including twice when he overruled decisions against the company by his department’s administrative law judges.

Lara later told KQED-FM that he had met with the CEO of Applied Underwriters, who asked him to review the cases, but that “nothing in that meeting that came out changed the course of my decision.” He said he had intervened to protect injured workers “from losing their

coverage and from businesses being on the hook for major financial losses.”

Lara introduced the disaster insurance bill in February alongside Sen. Bill Dodd, a Napa Democrat whose district was hit hard by the 2017 Wine Country fires. State Treasurer Fiona Ma is also a sponsor. Under the bill, the governor could buy policies from insurers, after consulting with the insurance commissioner and treasurer to determine the appropriate product.

Lara, Ma and Dodd argued that a new financial model — relying on insurance to pay for disaster response, rather than dipping into state reserves — would free up resources to do more wildfire prevention work. California spent nearly twice what it budgeted last year to combat blazes.

“It is flat-out wrong to assume the governor, insurance commissioner and state treasurer are not capable of designing and researching various insurance options without being somehow scammed by the insurance industry,” Mark DeSio, a spokesman for Ma, said in a statement.

The bill breezed through the Senate without a single “no” vote and now awaits action in an Assembly fiscal committee. Half a dozen insurance industry trade groups support the measure and, until recently, it had no formal opposition.

But in an analysis issued last month, the state Department of Finance opposed SB290 because the governor already has “broad authority” to tap into any available state funds and take other steps to pay for emergency response.

“Finance expects insurers will be wary of the wildfire risk in California, and the premiums would likely be high and financially unsustainable for the state” if the bill passes, the Department of Finance said.

Soller, the insurance commissioner’s spokesman, said the bill does not require the governor to buy insurance if it is not financially practical.

“If that policy becomes too expensive, California can walk away,” he said.

During a speech last month in Los Angeles, at a conference organized by the American Property Casualty Insurance Association, Lara suggested that the bill had been developed alongside the insurance industry.

“We’ve made several meetings and (are) really working collaboratively in a place that’s open and transparent to figure out how we find new ways to promote prevention and to also allow us to be a little bit more innovative when it comes to the department,” Lara said.

He thanked the insurance executives at the event for “being one of the first organizations to support SB290” and said he looked forward to partnering to ensure the bill was ultimately signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom. The governor said it is one of many ideas he’s looking at.

“I’m ready to get creative, just like all of you have been for so many years,” Lara said. “And now you have somebody who’s receptive to that in the department.”

Those comments raised alarms for Consumer Watchdog. Court said the legislation would let companies develop new types of insurance and related financial products to deal with disaster costs, leaving taxpayers on the hook without the scrutiny that exists in current law.

"This bill is worse than being cozy with the industry. This is becoming their spokesman," Court said.

Soller said he did not know if Lara consulted with insurers when crafting the proposal, but he said the idea came from successful programs in Oregon and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The Oregon Department of Forestry and private timberland owners have paid about \$61 million and received \$102 million to help cover the costs of fighting wildfires since 1973. FEMA recovered \$1 billion for Hurricane Harvey damage in 2017, after buying a flood coverage plan for \$150 million.

"The insurance commissioner is speaking for taxpayers. He's speaking for homeowners who want to see California being proactive with climate risk," Soller said.

Mark Sektan, vice president of state government relations for the American Property Casualty Insurance Association, said the insurance market was designed to meet challenges like financing California's firefighting costs.

"An insurer is going to analyze the risk and determine whether they can make a return on the risk," Sektan said. "There's nothing wrong with a company that wants to sell a product thinking they could make money off of it."

Secret Service

[NC] Edenton cops nab 2 with fake money (Daily Advance)

Daily Advance [8/13/2019 9:13 PM, Nicole Bowman-Layton, 4K]

Edenton police seized \$8,000 in counterfeit money Monday and arrested two men accused of trying to pass it off as the real thing.

According to a press release, police received a report Sunday that someone used counterfeit money to make a purchase at the Walgreen's drugstore at 717 North Broad Street.

On Monday, a photo of the counterfeiting suspect was placed on the department's Facebook Page. Based on tips from two citizens, police later that day arrested two men recently out of jail who were living at a transitional house on Carteret Street.

Hikeem Cooper, 25, of New Jersey, is charged with felony obtaining property by false pretense and felony possession of counterfeit instrument/currency. He's being held at the Chowan County Jail in lieu of a \$15,000 secured bond.

Dontae Allen, 19, of Kinston, was charged with felony possession of a counterfeit

instrument. He's being held at the jail in lieu of a \$10,000 secured bond.

"The Edenton community stepped up and answered the call," Chief Henry King said in the press release. "It's because of two citizens who used the concept of 'see something, say something' that the Edenton police were able to make two arrests."

Besides arresting the two men, Edenton police seized a total of \$8,000 in counterfeit money, King said.

More charges may be pending against Cooper and Allen because both were on probation at the time they're accused of passing counterfeit money, King said.

The U.S. Secret Service assisted Edenton police with the investigation, King said. King said Special Agent Crowder, who is based in Raleigh, will be monitoring the case closely as law enforcement researches all of the counterfeit bills seized.

Business owners can buy devices to detect counterfeit money, King said. "The Safescan 185-S is a great tool to ensure you don't receive counterfeit money," he said.

[NC] Two men arrested, \$8K in counterfeit money seized in Edenton (WTKR)

WTKR [8/13/2019 8:54 PM, Staff, 88K]

Edenton Police arrested two men on counterfeit-related charges Monday.

On August 11, officers responded to a report of someone passing counterfeit money at the Walgreens located at 717 North Broad Street. The next day, a picture of the suspect was put on the police department's Facebook page as authorities sought assistance from the community.

"The Edenton community stepped up and answered the call. It's because of two citizens who used the concept of see something say something that the Edenton Police was able to make two arrests," Chief Henry King said in a press release.

Though King said his staff worked hard Sunday and Monday to bring the case to a close, he acknowledged it was through teamwork with the community that made solving the case successful.

"The community are the police, and the police are the community," he said.

The police department seized a total of \$8,000 in counterfeit money in connection with the case.

25-year-old Hikeem Cooper of New Jersey was charged with felony obtain property by false pretense and felony possession of counterfeit instrument/currency. A secured bond was set at \$15,000.

19-year-old Dontae Allen of Kinston, North Carolina, was charged with felony possession of a counterfeit instrument. His secured bond was set at \$10,000.

Police say both men were living in a halfway house on Carteret Street. They are being held at the Chowan County Jail.

More charges may be pending since both were on probation.

The United States Secret Service assisted with this case. An agent in the Raleigh office will be monitoring the case closely as they research all of the bills that were seized.

Chief King is reminding people that business owners can buy devices, such as the Safescan 185-S, to detect counterfeit money.

[SC] 'We've got monsters:' 28 arrested, wanted by South Carolina in sex crimes operation (10connects)

10connects [8/12/2019 6:22 PM, Staff, 48K] Video: [HERE](#)

Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott says over two dozen people have been arrested or identified in a sex crimes operation.

Lott unveiled the results Tuesday of what investigators called Operation Relentless Guardian, a five-day crackdown. "We've got monsters who live that live in our community," Lott said about the actions of the men.

The Operation targeted two groups of people. One part of the Operation went after men trying to have sex with what they thought was an underage girl. The other was men involved in soliciting prostitution. Among those arrested included one of Lott's own deputies and a former SC Department of Transportation Commissioner.

The operation involved multiple state law enforcement agencies, along with the South Carolina Attorney General's office, United States Secret Service, Homeland Security, and the US Marshals Service.

Fourteen of the people caught up in the arrest were what Lott called "travelers," men who were willing to travel to have sex with a 13 to 15-year-old girl (It was actually an undercover officer.)

Lott said some of the travelers came from other states, including Georgia and Florida, and one suspect drove seven hours to meet what he thought was a girl. The men sent nude pictures and communicated in chat groups, and tried to convince the "girl" to have sex.

The other group was men who were soliciting prostitutes, which Lott and Attorney General Alan Wilson said promoted sex trafficking.

"When you travel and engage in prostitution, you're creating the market that human trafficking thrives in. And this is something that we have got to attack. It's a supply and demand issue," Wilson said at the press conference.

But the effort against child predators also nabbed one of Lott's own: 34-year-old Derek Vandenharm. Lott said Vandenharm was actually on duty as a deputy for the department when he attempted to communicate with what he thought was a 15-year-old girl.

"It made me sick to my stomach," Lott said. "This is probably one of the most frustrating things, one of the most disgusting things I've had to deal with is have a deputy do this."

Vandenharm was immediately fired.

"I will tell you he will be prosecuted to the fullest extent. There's not going to be any plea agreements or anything with that. We've already notified the South Carolina criminal justice academy to make sure he's not certified in this state as a police officer. He shouldn't be a cop anywhere, not just in this state, but anywhere," Lott said about the deputy.

The Operation led to the arrest of five 'travelers' and pending warrants for nine others, yet to be identified for offenses against minors. The nine yet to be identified include locals, one person from Ohio, and others from North Carolina, according to an Operation investigator.

Another 14 suspects were involved in solicitation of prostitution, or what Lott called the promotion of human sex trafficking. Once again, according to Lott, the suspects communicated in chat rooms, social media, and other websites looking for sex, this time with an adult female. Included in the group was an American Airlines pilot who was due to fly out the next day.

But perhaps the most well-known name is 72-year-old John Hardee, a former SCDOT commissioner who has part of a road named after him near the Columbia Metropolitan Airport.

Just last week, Hardee was sentenced to 45 days of home confinement and 18 months of probation for telling someone to destroy emails before the FBI could read them in an obstruction case that's unrelated to the new arrest.

The sheriff said while officers will target these criminals, he needs parents to help.

"Parents you have to know what your children are doing. That computer, that phone that they have is not a distraction. You have to be a parent, you have to monitor what they're doing."

"Every day these monsters are reaching out to our young kids, particularly young females, and sometimes it doesn't turn out well."

[TN] Training by Secret Service on how to spot counterfeit cash offered Thursday (WSMV)

WSMV [8/13/2019 5:21 PM, Alexandria Adams, 44K]

Franklin Police and the Secret Service are offering a free course on Thursday for local business owners and their employees on how to spot counterfeit money.

Lt. Charles Warner, Public Information Officer with Franklin PD said fake money is something that affects everyone.

"Counterfeit money is so impactful to both the economy, its impactful to the businesses. It

really hurts everyone except for the counterfeiter because they're getting something for nothing."

Counterfeit cash makes its rounds. Back in May we reported about fake \$100 dollar bills that were used at East Nashville business. Lt. Warner said the money usually has a connection to the region that it's found in.

"It's not happening just here, but when we see it in spurts it's usually regionally across the area. We're in close communication with other departments as well as the secret service about the influx that we see," said Lt. Warner.

Police use a detector that scans the money and beeps when it is detected as a fake.

Black lights and markers are also good indicators of spotting phony money, but it also takes employers educating their employees on what to look for.

"Empower them with that knowledge so they can call the police and we can respond and we can take these suspects into custody and stop this in its tracks."

Police advise if you do find yourself with some questionable cash, take it to your bank and they'll be able to check and walk you through the next steps on what you need to do.

[AR] Jonesboro police issues warning over counterfeit money (Kait 8)

Kait 8 [8/13/2019 4:42 PM, Staff, 21K]

Jonesboro police want to remind you to be on the lookout for any counterfeit bills that could be circulating.

According to a Facebook post by the police department, police have taken 18 reports of counterfeit money since July 1, 15 of them involving 29 different counterfeit \$100 bills.

According to the post, the bills are passed all across town, from banks, stores, and citizens.

While a few are easily recognizable, police said some of the counterfeit bills aren't.

According to police, a person forging any fake money, security, postage or revenue stamp, or any other instrument can be charged with first-degree forgery, a Class B felony.

[LA] Credit Card Skimmers Found At Louisiana Gas Stations (973 The Dawg)

973 The Dawg [8/13/2019 5:05 AM, Bruce Mikells, 6K]

The last time I stopped to put fuel in my vehicle I got out of the car and did my usual routine. I pulled my credit card out of my wallet and then reached for the credit card slot on the gas pump and gave it a pull. Since it didn't wiggle and looked as if it was the original credit card reader I slid my card in and continued with my transaction.

If you don't follow similar steps when you use your credit card to fuel up at Louisiana gas stations you're leaving your identity and your money exposed to the bad guys. Just this past week a sweep of gas stations in the Greater New Orleans area uncovered at least one credit card skimmer that had been inserted into a self-service gas pump.

These skimmers read the data on your card and collect it for the ne'er do wells to collect later. The practice is a lot more common than you might suspect. However, there are a few things you can do to make sure that slot your about to slide your card into is legit.

It's always a good idea to just look at the card reader near the keypad. If it looks to be in good shape and looks as if it belongs with the machine that's a good thing. I always grab the card reader and attempt to wiggle it. If it wiggles, I move on to the next station. If it's solid, it's probably okay. Another tip is to purchase gas at reputable stations. If the business looks sketchy then maybe the pumps are sketchy too.

Oh, one more thing, gas pumps aren't the only places where card readers and skimmers have been found. You should follow the same common-sense guidelines we've outlined here when using an ATM. Bad guys have been known to use skimmers at those places too.

[LA] Tri-parish sweep of more than 500 gas stations found single credit card skimmer in St. Tammany Parish (Times Picayune / NOLA)

Times Picayune / NOLA [8/13/2019 5:00 PM, Sara Pagones, 259K]

A law enforcement sweep of 535 gas stations in East Baton Rouge, Jefferson and St. Tammany parishes earlier this month found a single credit card skimmer at a gas pump in St. Tammany Parish. The skimmer has been removed, authorities said.

The four-day sweep was conducted Aug. 6-8 by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, along with the U.S. Secret Services and the Jefferson and Tammany Parish sheriff's offices, according to a Department of Agriculture news release.

Authorities did not specify where the skimmer was found, but Capt. Scott Lee, spokesman for the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office, said that it was rural St. Tammany and not in a high-volume store near an interstate, which are more popular targets.

Investigators looked at 4,830 fuel pumps during the sweep, which was done partly to educate local law enforcement jurisdictions on how to detect and remove skimmers, the release said.

Commissioner Mike Strain called the joint effort a success in keeping ahead of criminals "who continue to find new ways to scam people."

In all, agency inspectors have confiscated 48 devices over the past two years.

Strain said employees should pay attention to what happens at gas pumps and urged customers to be vigilant in monitoring credit card statements for unauthorized purchases.

Leslie Pichon, special agent in charge of the U.S. Secret Service New Orleans Field Office said pump skimming investigations are a priority for that agency.

St. Tammany Parish Sheriff Randy Smith said that thefts with credit card skimmers are often not noticed until days or weeks later, when criminals have moved on. The sweep

allowed the Sheriff's Office to draw on the knowledge of the other agencies to learn how to locate skimmers in the future.

The Department of Agriculture suggests that consumers avoid using the debit card function at the gas pump, opting for the credit card function, to protect their PIN numbers. Customers should also use pumps that are more easily seen by gas station employees as they are less commonly targeted. Customers should also look for signs of forced entry, such as bent panels or security tape that has been broken.

[IN] Fake bills, puppies found after police chase (Elkhart Truth)

Elkhart Truth [8/13/2019 6:00 AM, Rasmus S. Jorgensen, 4K]

Two men have been arrested after one allegedly bought puppies with counterfeit bills and the other led police on a multi-county chase, according to the Elkhart County Sheriff's Office.

Officers were advised on Thursday evening that David Stewart, 21, of Chicago, was accused of buying puppies with counterfeit money in Allen County earlier that day.

At 8:29 p.m., after a deputy arrived at a house in the 71000 block of C.R. 101 in reference to fraudulent activity, he watched a car matching the description from the puppy purchase pull up at the house. He then saw Stewart get into the passenger seat of the car. When the officer went up to the car with his weapon drawn and told Stewart and the driver, Zamarco Manns, 24, to step out of the vehicle, the two drove off.

Manns led the officer on a chase reaching speeds at above 100 mph, police said. He drove into Marshall County, where he lost control on 3B Road by Beech Road and ran off the roadway and into a ditch. Stewart and Manns were then arrested.

Police found a box with approximately seven puppies in the back seat. Stewart's phone had a navigation app set for the Chicago area, police said.

Stewart admitted to buying the puppies with the counterfeit money, though he said he didn't know that the money was counterfeit, because he received it in a bank envelope. An officer with the Allen County Sheriff's Office said Stewart had taken off before receiving a receipt when he bought the puppies.

A search of the car led police to find four additional puppies behind the driver's seat.

Police also found \$5,200 in counterfeit bills in the car. The bills all had the same serial number. They had Chinese writing on them and did not feel like real bills, police said.

Stewart was charged with the counterfeiting.

Manns, after being handcuffed, managed to slip his handcuffs to the front of his body and refused to put his hands behind his back. He had to be pulled out of the vehicle twice, police said.

Manns was charged with resisting law enforcement, reckless driving and assisting a

criminal.

Police did not report on the condition of the puppies.

[WI] Counterfeit bills making rounds in Green Bay area, police say (NBC26)

NBC26 [8/13/2019 11:49 PM, Alice Reid, 10K]

Green Bay Police is warning the community about counterfeit money. Police state they've had had multiple cases of passed, or attempts to pass, counterfeit bills.

Police shared photos of one of the fake bills on their Facebook page Tuesday. While the bill looks realistic, police note the fake bill has words printed on it that say "This is a replica" and "Replica".

Police also said the fake bill does not have color fading ink, which is noted with the markings from a counterfeit pen that show up dark brown. The dark brown color indicates that it's fake, police said.

Anyone who has encountered someone trying to pass off fake bills is asked to contact police.

[MN] 'Trying To Be Very Aware': Twin Cities Retailers On Lookout For Counterfeit Cash (CBS Minnesota)

CBS Minnesota [8/13/2019 6:00 PM, Reg Chapman, 106K]

Karin Tappero has all of her workers on the lookout for counterfeit bills that have been passed at area Twin Cities Patina stores.

"We're just really, really trying to be very aware of all cash passed to us at this point," Tappero said. "It appears they are trying to pass \$100 bills."

Three of the eight Patina stores in the Twin Cities have been hit.

Surveillance video from the Patina store on Selby and Snelling Avenues in St. Paul shows one of several people who have been caught on camera passing counterfeit bills.

"It's in tens of thousands of dollars. I'm sure just in the metro area alone these guys are all over every day. There are multiple people passing them," financial security expert Scott Nelson said.

Nelson says most retailers rely on a marker to determine if a bill is counterfeit or not.

"The old pens just aren't cutting it anymore. They are finding ways to defeat them," Nelson said.

He is telling retailers to invest in a \$40 UV pen light that shows the security strip present on all real currency.

"If you take a fake one, there is no strip," Nelson said.

For now, retailers are spreading the word and telling cashiers what to look for.

"If someone comes in and wants to buy a small ticket candle or a gift bag and they pass over a high increment bill, that is the biggest red flag," Tappero said.

What they want is the red flags to lead to arrests.

The U.S. Secret Service is also working with retailers to stop the flow of counterfeit money coming into the Twin Cities.

[TX] New Braunfels Police warning people of fake money used for 'motion picture use only' (Fox San Antonio)

Fox San Antonio [8/13/2019 6:04 PM, Staff, 11K]

New Braunfels Police is warning the public that fake money is making rounds in their city.

So if you are dealing in cash, make sure to take a good look at it. The money is used for movies, and says "Motion picture use only" on it.

The fake money looks real with a quick glance.

Don't accept it and call police if you see it.

[TX] Fake money is spreading through New Braunfels, police warn (KVUE News)

KVUE News [8/13/2019 12:31 PM, Staff, 88K] Video: [HERE](#)

The New Braunfels Police Department is warning residents of fake money spreading throughout the city.

According to a Facebook post from NBPD, the department has seen an increase in reports of novelty currency being used to fraudulently pay for services or property.

The department offered a list of what residents can look out for in order to spot counterfeit bills. Those steps include checking for bills marked with "In Props We Trust," "For Motion Picture Purposes," or "replica," as well as checking for Asian writing or symbols; and checking the size and feel of the bill.

Residents who spot these bills should not accept the fake money as a form of payment, police said; they should immediately report the incident to NBPD by calling (830) 221-4100.

According to NBPD, people trying to use the bills may not be aware that they are fake. Police said that the situation "doesn't have to be confrontational. Explain the situation to the other person and call police for assistance."

In July, police in Kerrville warned their residents about several incidents involving counterfeit cash. Those bills featured red Chinese characters, watermarks that are missing or altered, and unusual texture.

[CO] Police: Colorado Springs ID theft case has 123 victims (Colorado Springs Gazette)

Colorado Springs Gazette [8/13/2019 2:46 PM, Jessica Snouwaert, 53K]

Colorado Springs police and postal inspectors made an arrest in an alleged identity theft case that officials say could have more 123 victims, the agencies announced Tuesday.

A woman, whose name was not released by authorities, was in possession of counterfeit money, forged identification cards, credit cards and checks, police said. Officers claim she had personal identifying information and documents of scores of victims from across the United States.

Some of those documents included tax forms, titles and deeds, and certificates of marriage.

Police say the woman gleaned much of the information from the internet. Officers tumbled into the identity theft scheme while investigating a car theft, police said.

[CO] Springs suspects accused of obtaining personal info belonging to 100+ nationwide (KKTV)

KKTV [8/13/2019 3:44 PM, Lindsey Grewe, 39K]

Three car theft suspects in Colorado Springs are now being investigated for obtaining information belonging to more than 100 people nationwide.

Springs police say they began investigating the trio in connection to the car theft on Aug. 7, alongside investigators with the U.S. Postal Service. In the course of the investigation, they learned at least one of the suspects was "heavily involved in identity theft and forgery." Evidence included counterfeit money, forged state ID cards, and forged credit cards and checks.

From there, detectives found personal information and documents such as tax forms, titles and deeds, and marriage certificates linked to at least 123 people across the country. Police say the suspects got most of the items of the internet through various websites that facilitate the buying and selling of personal information.

The investigation is ongoing. The suspects have not been identified at the time of this writing.

Coast Guard

Coast guard investigates death of woman who plunged from cruise ship (CNN)

CNN [8/13/2019 10:55 AM, Ben Westcott, 6094K]

Officials are investigating the death of a passenger who fell into the ocean from the 11th deck of a cruise ship, according to Taiwanese news agency CNA.

The 41-year-old Taiwanese woman was first declared missing on Friday morning at 6 a.m. She had embarked days earlier on the Sun Princess, Princess Cruises said in a statement.

According to the cruise line, surveillance footage showed her "intentionally" going over a railing on the 11th deck and falling into the sea.

"(She) was alone at the time," the statement said. Princess Cruises did not say when

exactly the woman went overboard. The ship reversed course and sent out a search crew who found her body with the help of the Japanese coast guard.

Once she was brought back on board, the ship's medical crew declared her dead.

After the Sun Princess returned to Keelung in Taiwan on Sunday it was boarded by Taiwan Coast Guard officials who are investigating to determine whether there was any foul play involved in the woman's death, CNA said.

The woman had been traveling with her mother and aunt, according to CNA. They boarded the cruise to Okinawa on Wednesday at Keelung and were expected to stay on board for four days.

Both of her relatives left the ship by helicopter after her death.

"We activated our Princess Care Team to provide assistance to our guest's family during this difficult time," the cruise line statement said.

It is the second fatal incident involving Princess Cruises in 2019. At least 8 people were killed in May when three floatplanes crashed in Alaska with cruise line tourists on board.

All of those killed were passengers on board the Royal Princess, which was en route to Anchorage, Alaska.

CISA/Cybersecurity

Coming together to protect Americans from foreign cyberattacks (Washington Examiner)

Washington Examiner [8/14/2019 12:00 AM, Kirk Thompson, 855K]

One of the most basic duties of our federal government is to protect citizens against the threat of attack from hostile foreign powers. Each year, we spend hundreds of billions to insure that our military forces have the tools they need to keep us safe from foreign invasion or attack so that we can lead out our lives in peace and pursue our happiness.

But in the 21st Century, a new threat to our citizens has arisen from hostile powers abroad. Today, foreign governments are strategically targeting Americans through cyberattacks against email and other electronically stored information systems. These foreign governments do so in order to intimidate and silence perceived enemies, influence debates over policy, and ultimately to achieve political outcomes that benefit them rather than the United States.

Unfortunately, it is doubtful that we are currently equipped to deal adequately with these threats. Just recently, the New York Times reported that Chinese-sponsored hackers were behind the disruption of information systems administered by the city of Baltimore. They shut down email and disrupted real estate sales, water bills, health alerts, and many other city services. According to the report, these cybercriminals have been targeting other towns, cities, hospitals, airports, rail, ATMs, and university systems across the country. They have paralyzed operations, stolen personal information, and otherwise wreaked havoc.

This is just the latest in a series of state-sponsored cyberattacks targeting U.S. companies and U.S. citizens. Back in 2014, North Korean hackers broke into computer systems at Sony Pictures and threatened the release of confidential data unless the entertainment company canceled the release of an upcoming motion picture, *The Interview*, critical of the North Korean regime. Sony complied with the demands.

Since 2017, North Korea has engaged in “increasingly hostile cyber activities, including theft [and] website vandalism” according to the Congressional Research Service. Government-backed hackers have reportedly conducted cyber-espionage against tens of thousands of U.S. targets, accessing computer networks and intellectual property, and raking in hundreds of millions through cyber-crime.

The same group of Russian hackers responsible for interfering in the 2016 presidential election with a cyberattack on the Democratic National Committee have reportedly gone after hotel WiFi networks and American companies like FedEx and Merck.

Iranian hackers have used ransomware widely against U.S. citizens.

And late last year, National Security Advisor John Bolton verified that China had been behind the 2015 cyberattack on the Office of Personnel Management, the most extensive hack of U.S. government data in history, which entailed the theft of personal data for over 22 million people (most of them federal government employees), including Social Security numbers, fingerprints, passwords, and other personal information gathered in the process of granting security clearances.

This issue transcends party lines. Both Republicans and Democrats — as well as liberal and conservative think tanks — have been targeted for perceived opposition to the interests of governments sponsoring the cyberattacks. The common thread is a desire to intimidate opponents of a particular agenda favored by a foreign government, by means of blackmail, theft, extortion, and invasion of privacy. Cyberattacks have become the weapon of choice for bad foreign actors who want to invade the privacy of American citizens in their quest to infiltrate the American political system to further their own interests.

The fact is, foreign governments have been aggressively using cyberattacks on private data systems for years to influence politics and policy in the U.S. They have realized that they can effectively curtail the First Amendment rights of American citizens and compromise our election system through the use of espionage organizations to infiltrate, intimidate, and silence opposition to their governments’ stated policy aims. They are willing to invest a lot of resources to do it, and there is little risk of retribution because victims lack effective means to strike back. American courts have consistently ruled that foreign governments have immunity from legal action on the part of U.S. plaintiffs, including the seizure of assets, as a result of the Foreign Sovereignty Immunities Act, a law passed in 1976 before the advent of the Internet.

In short, our laws provide hostile powers with immunity for their nefarious behavior by allowing them to exploit a legal loophole.

Congress should enact a cyberattack exception to the FSIA to protect the privacy and

property of Americans. A clear precedent for such action already exists: Since the 1990s, Congress has enacted several laws that limit sovereign immunity for states sponsors of terrorism, providing a cause of action to certain victims of terror attacks. As recently as the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, which was passed over President Obama's veto in 2016, Congress has engaged legislation that reduces FSIA's jurisdictional immunity in the terrorism context. A cyberattack exception would extend the same protections to hacking victims as terrorism victims currently enjoy.

Until Congress acts, foreign governments such as Russia, North Korea, Iran, and China will have a free hand to intimidate and silence Americans. That's why we have come together as Republicans and Democrats to found Americans for Transparency and Accountability, a new organization which seeks to protect our democratic system and promote a healthier, more transparent debate about policy issues. We will advocate for policies that would place greater constraints on foreign influence campaigns, beginning with an update to the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act.

It is time for all of us to come together to take measures that will effectively protect Americans from cyberattacks sponsored or conducted by foreign governments.

[WI] Wisconsin Elections Officials Scale Back Security Proposal (US News & World Report)

US News & World Report [8/13/2019 3:28 PM, Todd Richmond, AP, 3196K]

Wisconsin elections officials scaled back a plan Tuesday to buy scores of new loaner computers for local clerks using outdated systems open to cyberattacks, saying the proposal is too expensive when they don't have a firm grasp on how many clerks really need new computers.

Wisconsin Elections Commission staff had proposed spending up to \$300,000 on 250 new machines to loan to clerks who can't afford to upgrade their systems. The commission agreed to buy 25 computers for \$30,000 after learning that only five clerks out of 2,000 are using old systems.

"If they're at risk we should help them," Commissioner Mark Thomsen said. "(But) buying a machine isn't the answer."

The commission's chief security officer, Tony Bridges, wrote in a memo released last week that "at least a handful" of clerks are logging into the state elections system using Windows XP and hundreds more are logging in using Windows 7.

Microsoft stopped supporting Windows XP in 2014. Free security upgrades for Windows 7 will end in January. Bridges wrote that it's safe to assume a large percentage of clerks won't upgrade and even clerks with current operating systems often fail to install security patches.

Bridges proposed spending up to \$69,000 annually on software that can test clerks' vulnerabilities each time they log onto the state election system, up to \$300,000 on 250 loaner computers for clerks, and up to \$100,000 to hire a technology expert to help clerks with the loaner computers. The money would come from a \$7 million federal grant the state received in 2018 to upgrade election security.

He told the commission Tuesday that staff learned about the outdated systems by asking all 2,700 local clerks to log into the system one day and testing their connections. Commission spokesman Reid Magney said the test occurred a few weeks ago but didn't have a date.

Bridges said 2,000 clerks logged in. Staff detected only five using Windows XP. Commission Administrator Meagan Wolfe told the panel said she didn't know who the five clerks were; Magney told a reporter after the meeting he didn't know why the commission doesn't have the names.

Bridges went on to say nearly 600 clerks were using Windows 7. Seven hundred clerks didn't log in on the test day.

Thomsen complained repeatedly that he didn't have enough data about clerk vulnerability to justify a loaner program. Commissioner Ann Jacobs balked at the \$300,000 price tag, saying that works out to about \$1,000 per machine when simple netbooks cost anywhere from \$100 to \$250. She also said a loaner program would reward clerks who don't upgrade with new machines.

Wolfe and Bridges stressed the cost licensing, tech support, delivery and warranties. Wolfe called the loaner program an emergency stopgap designed to ensure elections can continue as cyberattacks increase.

In the end, Chairman Dean Knudson amended the loaner program language to authorize only 25 machines. The commission adopted the revised motion 4-2. Thomsen and Jacobs voted against it.

The commission voted unanimously to purchase the testing software and asked the board to implement it in time to produce at least some data for the commission's Sept. 24 meeting. The panel also unanimously approved setting up the new technical support position but ordered staff to get the panel's permission before posting the job.

Kelly Michaels, president of the Wisconsin Municipal Clerks Association, said she suspects clerks need more than 25 computers but there's still time before the 2020 elections begin in earnest.

The commission also approved spending up to \$341,000 to hire Madison-based advertising firm KW2 to develop an outreach campaign to combat disinformation about election security. The money will come from the 2018 federal election security grant.

[CA] Facial recognition software mistook 1 in 5 California lawmakers for criminals, says ACLU (Los Angeles Times)

Los Angeles Times [8/13/2019 8:00 AM, Anita Chabria, 3575K]

California Assemblyman Phil Ting has never been arrested, but he was recently mistaken for a criminal.

He's not surprised.

Ting (D-San Francisco), who authored a bill to ban facial recognition software from being used on police body cameras, was one of 26 California legislators who was incorrectly matched with a mug shot in a recent test of a common face-scanning program by the American Civil Liberties Union.

About 1 in 5 legislators was erroneously matched to a person who had been arrested when the ACLU used the software to screen their pictures against a database of 25,000 publicly available booking photos. Last year, in a similar experiment done with photos of members of Congress, the software erroneously matched 28 federal legislators with mug shots.

The results highlight what Ting and others said is proof that facial recognition software is unreliable. They want California law enforcement banned from using it with the cameras they wear while on duty.

“The software clearly is not ready for use in a law enforcement capacity,” Ting said. “These mistakes, we can kind of chuckle at it, but if you get arrested and it’s on your record, it can be hard to get housing, get a job. It has real impacts.”

Ting’s proposal, Assembly Bill 1215, could soon be on the governor’s desk if it passes the Senate. Sponsored by the ACLU, the civil rights organization hopes its recent test will grab attention and persuade legislators to put the technology on hold.

There is little current federal regulation of facial recognition technology. Recently, members on both sides of the aisle in Congress held oversight hearings and there has been a strong push by privacy advocates for federal action. But concrete measures have yet to materialize.

That has left states and local jurisdictions to grapple with the complex technology on their own. New Hampshire and Oregon already prohibit facial recognition technology on body-worn cameras, and San Francisco, Oakland and Somerville, Mass., also recently enacted bans for all city departments as well as police.

“I think it’s extremely important for states to be regulating the use of technology by police,” said Barry Friedman, a privacy expert and professor of law at New York University. “It is the Wild, Wild West without a regulatory scheme. Regulation is what we need.”

Friedman serves on an ethics committee for Axon, one of the largest manufacturers of body-worn cameras. The company has publicly said it will not put facial recognition technology on its cameras because it doesn’t have confidence in its reliability. Microsoft, which makes a facial recognition product, also recently said it had refused to sell it to a California law enforcement agency. The moves mark an unusual position from corporations seeking boundaries for their products.

“The body camera technology is just very far from being accurate,” Friedman said. “Until the issues regarding accuracy and racial bias are resolved, we shouldn’t be using it.”

But other companies are moving ahead with facial recognition, including Amazon, developer of Rekognition, the software used in the ACLU tests. Government agencies including ICE have also reportedly used the technology, culling through databases of driver’s licenses.

Proponents of the technology contend it could be an important law enforcement tool, especially when policing large events or searching for lost children or elderly people. The bill is opposed by many law enforcement groups.

Amazon said it could not immediately comment on the most recent ACLU test, but has previously disputed that the Rekognition software was unreliable, questioning the group's methods of scanning members of Congress. In its developer guide, Amazon recommends using a 99 percent confidence threshold when matching faces, and criticized the ACLU for using a lesser bar — the factory setting for the software, according to Matt Cagle, an attorney with the Northern California chapter of the ACLU — when testing it.

The Ting proposal would make California the largest state to ban the software, potentially having a “ripple” effect, Cagle said. The bill would ban not just facial recognition, but other “biometric surveillance systems” such as those that analyze a person's gait or log tattoos.

Critics contend that the software is particularly problematic when it comes to identifying women, people of color and young people. Ting said those demographics were especially troubling to him, since communities of color have historically often been excessively targeted by police, and immigrant communities are feeling threatened by federal crackdowns on illegal immigration.

Police body cameras, he said, have gained popularity in recent years as a police accountability measure in the wake of shootings of black and brown men across the country, including the 2014 death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., which garnered national attention for the issue.

Transforming body cameras from an accountability measure to a surveillance tool would undermine their purpose, Ting said.

“Body cameras were really deployed to build trust between law enforcement and communities,” said Ting. “Instead of trust, what you are getting is 24/7 surveillance.”

[CA] Facial-recognition technology flagged 26 California lawmakers as criminals. This bill to ban the tech is headed to the Senate (CNN)

CNN [8/14/2019 1:54 AM, Amanda Jackson, 6094K]

A picture of every California state legislator was run through a facial-recognition program that matches facial images to a database of 25,000 criminal mugshots, the American Civil Liberties Union of California (ACLU) said Tuesday in a statement.

The program falsely flagged 26 legislators as criminals, the ACLU said.

The ACLU announced the results of its test in pressing for passage of a bill to ban the technology in police body cameras.

“This experiment reinforces the fact that facial recognition software is not ready for prime time - let alone for use in body cameras worn by law enforcement,” Assemblymember Phil Ting, whose photo was flagged as a match to a mugshot, said in the ACLU's statement.

Facial-recognition systems have gained popularity in recent years and are being used at airports, schools, homes and even concerts. The technology can also help a bartender identify who's next in line for a drink. It works by identifying people's faces from videos and photos and then comparing their facial features to those in a database.

But the ACLU is concerned the technology shows bias and is inaccurate, especially with woman and people of color.

Ting, along with the ACLU, co-sponsored AB 1215, also known as The Body Camera Accountability Act. The bill would ban the use of facial recognition and any biometric surveillance system in police-worn body cameras. Currently, there are no cities in California that have that technology in their police body cameras, Ting said Tuesday at a news conference.

"I could see innocent Californians subjected to perpetual police lineups because of false matches," said Ting. "We must not allow this to happen."

More than half of the falsely matched lawmakers were people of color, according to the ACLU. Last year, the organization conducted a similar test that misidentified 28 members of Congress. In those results, they found that the program was more inaccurate with woman and people of color.

"Facial recognition-enabled police body cameras would be a disaster for communities and their civil rights, regardless of the technology's accuracy," said Matt Cagle, Technology and Civil Liberties Attorney, ACLU of Northern California.

"Even if this technology was accurate, which it is not, face recognition-enabled body cameras would facilitate massive violations of Californians civil rights."

Some law enforcement agencies disagree and say the bill would impair the ability of officers.

During a Senate committee on public safety committee hearing in June, the Riverside Sheriffs' Association said the technology would help provide events that draw massive crowds like Coachella Music and Arts Festival and the Rose Bowl with the best security available.

"By banning this technology, California will be announcing to the nation and world that it doesn't want our law enforcement officers to have the necessary tools they need to properly protect the public and attendees of these events," their sheriffs' association statement reads.

John Mirisch, the mayor of Beverly Hills, echoes those sentiments in a letter he wrote to Ting in June stating his opposition. He said the technology will help manage events that attract high-profile entertainers to the area such as The Golden Globes.

"This technology allows law enforcement agencies to compare images of hundreds of thousands of individuals, which saves time and agency resources," Mirisch writes.

If the bill is passed, California will become the largest state to prohibit facial-recognition technology in police-worn body cameras. New Hampshire and Oregon both passed legislation in 2017 to prohibit the practice.

This year, San Francisco, long one of the most tech-friendly and tech-savvy cities in the world, and Oakland, California, banned the use of the technology by police and other government departments.

Axon, who makes police worn body-cameras worn by Los Angeles police, also announced this year that facial-recognition systems will not be added to those devices.

AB 1215 was first introduced in February and approved by the California Assembly in May. It is set to be voted on in the California Senate in the coming weeks, according to the ACLU.

Terrorism Investigations

[OH] Dayton Gunman Was Obsessed With Mass Shootings, Police Say (New York Times)

New York Times [8/13/2019 9:53 PM, Adeel Hassan, 22840K]

The gunman in last week's massacre in Dayton, Ohio, texted his sister and another victim minutes before the shooting, the Dayton Police Department said in a news conference on Tuesday. The police also said the gunman was obsessed with mass shootings, but they declined to say what motivated the attack.

With the help of extensive video surveillance, the police offered an updated timeline of the gunman's movements and actions in the hours before he killed nine people and wounded 17 others outside a bar in the city's popular Oregon entertainment district on Sunday, Aug. 4.

The police said the gunman went to the district on Friday night and returned with his sister and a friend at 11:04 p.m. on Saturday. "He was not unfamiliar with this territory," Chief Richard S. Biehl said.

After visiting a bar with them, the gunman left after midnight, the officials said, walking past a police vehicle to go to his car. They said he went there about 15 minutes before the shooting to retrieve an AR-15-style rifle, ammunition and body armor. He returned wearing a dark hoodie and carrying a backpack, which contained the weapon, they said.

His sister was among the first people he shot, Chief Biehl said. Though the gunman knew where she and her companion were, he said the department could not conclusively say whether she was a target.

"We have radically different views in this regard," he said of the many officers who reviewed the video evidence. "Based on the evidence of that night, I don't think we can make that call."

The gunman started shooting at 1:05 a.m., striking 26 people in 32 seconds before he was fatally shot by an officer. The chief added that the gunman did not wear his body armor in the most protective manner.

"Their response was crucial," Chief Biehl said of his officers. "Their response was immediate. Their response was effective. And their response was compassionate."

Chief Biehl did not say whether any victims were struck by bullets fired by his officers, leaving that ruling to the coroner's report.

The chief said that there was some evidence of drug paraphernalia in the gunman's car, and that he was awaiting toxicology reports to state whether there was evidence of drug use. He said the gunman had "undergone some treatment" but would not elaborate.

Female classmates of the gunman have said he threatened women with violence, but the chief did not speak about a specific motive during Tuesday's news conference.

"There's this history of obsession with violence and violence ideations, a discussion of an interest in mass shootings and the expression of a desire to carry out a mass shooting," Chief Biehl said. "I think that should be enough thematically that you should get a pretty clear picture of what was going on here."

[OH] 26 shot in 32 seconds: New details, videos released in Dayton mass shooting (ABC News)

ABC News [8/13/2019 4:14 PM, Emily Shapiro, 2702K]

New surveillance videos of the suspected gunman's movements ahead of the Dayton, Ohio, mass shooting were released by authorities on Tuesday.

Police on Tuesday also updated the victim total, correcting the number of those shot and injured to 17, revealing that 26 people were shot in the roughly 30-second attack. Nine were killed in the massacre.

The shooting unfolded in a popular part of town that had a number of bars and restaurants. The gunfire started on Aug. 4 at 1:05 a.m. and lasted about 32 seconds, authorities said, until the suspect, 24-year-old Connor Betts, was killed by an officer in front of the Ned Peppers bar.

It is not clear at this time if Betts's sister, who was shot and killed, and Betts's companion, who was injured, were intentional victims, Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl said Tuesday.

No one besides Betts has been found to be involved in the shooting, authorities said.

Betts, who was familiar with the popular downtown Dayton area, went with his sister and companion to Blind Bobs that night, authorities said. He then headed to Ned Peppers at 12:13 a.m. and left that bar at 12:42 a.m., authorities said.

Betts "then goes back to the parking lot where the vehicle is at and spends the next eight minutes gathering content out of the trunk," authorities said at a news conference.

Newly released video shows Betts leaving his car with a change of clothes and a heavy bag on his back.

At 1:04 a.m., Betts emerged behind an alley and "that's when the shooting begins," authorities said.

The new video shows the chaotic scene as bar-goers disperse and officers run towards the gunfire.

[OH] Dayton gunman shot 26 people in 32 seconds before police killed him, officials say (FOX News)

FOX News [8/13/2019 9:59 PM, Vandana Rambaran, 10258K]

The gunman who carried out the Aug. 4 mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio spent nearly two hours in the area before he opened fire, killing nine people and injuring 17 more, according to newly released surveillance footage pieced together from several local businesses.

Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl said Tuesday that 24-year-old Connor Betts shot 26 people in the span of 32 seconds before responding officers fatally shot him outside of Blind Bob's bar. Previously, police and hospital officials said at least 14 injured people suffered gunshots wounds. Overall, 15 of the people shot that night were female and 11 were male.

Betts was first caught on camera in the area at 11:04 p.m. when he parked his car and walked to Blind Bob's with his sister Megan and another companion.

Police said the footage "strongly suggests that his [the siblings'] companion," who was wounded in the rampage, "had no idea what he [Betts] was gonna do nor did he have any knowledge of the weapons that were in the trunk of that vehicle."

All three of them went to Blind Bob's, where they remained until 12:13 a.m. Betts left the bar alone and went across the street to another bar, Ned Peppers, staying there until 12:42 a.m.

Betts, dressed in a t-shirt and shorts, then left Ned Peppers and headed back in the direction of the parking lot, crossing paths with a police cruiser that was in the area, Lt. Paul Saunders said during a press conference.

Biehl said there is a "strong probability" that Betts went into Ned Peppers to case it but added, "he was very familiar with the Oregon district so this was not a place that he did not know."

"This was a plan well before he got to the Oregon district," Biehl said noting that its unlikely that anything happened inside of the bars that made the shooter decide to carry out his rampage.

Police say the shooter went back to his car and spent eight minutes changing into a long sleeve dark hoodie and "gathering content out of the trunk of that vehicle," which included a "very heavy backpack."

Authorities say Betts spent about nine minutes making his way from the parking lot towards the strip of bars again, through an alley connecting the two and used that time to load his AR-15 style gun before he emerged from behind the alley and opened fire near Blind Bob's at 1:04 a.m.

Police confirmed that the shooter's sister, Megan Betts, was one of the first three fatalities, but Biehl conceded that law enforcement officials had "radically different views" about whether the shooter intentionally killed his sister first.

Biehl revealed that phone evidence from that night showed that the shooter texted back and forth with his sister and their companion as soon as seven minutes before the shooting began and that the companion told Betts that they were at a taco stand near Blind Bob's.

Biehl said Betts "did know where they were at because they were communicating during this hour back and forth."

Biehl also said that Betts and his sister spoke on the phone before the shooting, although it is unclear the content of the phone call. Despite knowing their whereabouts, police said they could not conclusively say whether the shooter could see his sister and her companion from his vantage point across from Blind Bob's, as they may have been obscured by the decor of the bar, which included umbrellas on the patio.

"By our best resources that we have at our fingertips, we believe that the shooting started at approximately 1:05 and 35 seconds. We believe it ended at 1:06 and 7 seconds; that's 32 seconds" Saunders said.

Biehl's said that although Betts was wearing body armor throughout the shooting, the armor was "vulnerable," allowing responding officers to shoot and kill him.

"He had (ballistic) plates but that's all," Biehl's said.

Although authorities could not confirm the shooter's motive, Biehl's said Betts had a "history of obsession with violence and violence ideations, the discussion of interests in mass shootings and the expression of desire to carry out a mass shooting."

Biehl's said Betts was in the Oregon District the night before the shooting, adding you "certainly have to consider there was some thought being given to it at that time."

Police found some evidence of drug paraphernalia "on his person" but whether Betts was intoxicated or under the influence of drugs remains uncertain pending toxicology reports, Biehl said.

Authorities have said there was nothing in Betts' background to prevent him from buying the gun, stating that the weapon was purchased online from a dealer in Texas and shipped to another firearms dealer in the Dayton area.

[OH] Police split on whether Dayton, Ohio, gunman targeted sister (CBS News)

CBS News [8/13/2019 5:35 PM, Staff, 3332K]

Investigators are split on whether the Dayton shooter intentionally killed his sister, who was one of the first nine he killed, the city's police chief said Tuesday. Text messages show that the gunman knew where his sister, Megan Betts, was when he began shooting, but what's not known is whether he could see her standing under an umbrella at a taco stand, Chief Richard Biehl said at a news conference.

The evidence is so far inconclusive on whether the 24-year-old gunman targeted his 22-year-old sister, Megan, two hours after they arrived with a friend at Dayton's Oregon entertainment district. "If we can't seem to make that call conclusively — that we're divided about how, whether that was intentional or not — I think it's inconclusive," Biehl said.

Authorities have been trying to piece together a motive and other factors that led to the mass shooting August 4.

A video of pieced-together surveillance from businesses showed Connor Betts before the shooting with his sister and their friend, and again after he went to his car and changed into a black hoodie, put on body armor and retrieved a gun from the trunk.

The gunman was very familiar with the area and its night spots and had been there the night before, Biehl said. It's clear he had a plan for the mass shooting, although why he chose that place at that time is still being investigated, he added.

Nine people were killed and 17 others were wounded before police killed the gunman, Biehl said. Previously, police and hospital officials said at least 14 people suffered gunshot.

The coroner's report will determine whether anyone besides the shooter was hit by police, Biehl said.

Authorities said Tuesday that a friend, Ethan Kollie, bought armor and a 100-round magazine for Betts, authorities said. But there was no evidence he knew what Betts planned, they said.

Kollie will appear Wednesday in federal court. His attorney said he has been cooperating with investigators. "He was as shocked and surprised as everyone else that Mr. Betts committed the massacre," attorney Nick Gounaris said Monday.

Prosecutors accused Kollie of lying about not using marijuana on federal firearms forms in the purchase of a pistol that wasn't used in the shooting. Police have said there was nothing in Betts' background to prevent him from buying the gun.

The weapon was purchased online from a dealer in Texas and shipped to another firearms dealer in the Dayton area, police said.

Ohio Republican Gov. Mike DeWine last week proposed a package of gun-control measures, including requiring background checks for nearly all gun sales in Ohio and allowing courts to restrict firearms access for people perceived as threats.

Two state lawmakers Monday reintroduced legislation that would restrict access to guns.

One bill would establish universal background checks. The second would raise the minimum age for all gun purchases to 21.

[Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[OH] Dayton police chief says shooter's motive may never be known (CNN)

CNN [8/13/2019 4:35 PM, Staff, 6094K] Video: [HERE](#)

Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl explains the difference between knowing the shooter's motive versus his mindset following the mass shooting in Ohio.

[OH] Dayton gunman was very familiar with the mass shooting site and visited the night before (CNN)

CNN [8/13/2019 4:43 PM, Eric Levenson, 6094K]

The man who opened fire at a busy nightlife neighborhood in Dayton, Ohio, last weekend was very familiar with the area and even visited the night before, police said Tuesday.

"This was a plan well before he got to the Oregon District (that night)," Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl said.

Police on Tuesday provided a detailed timeline of the shooting in which 24-year-old Connor Betts used a souped-up assault rifle to fire 41 shots in about 30 seconds in the bustling area, killing his sister and eight others. Police clarified Tuesday that 17 people were injured by gunfire, three more than a previous count, and more than two dozen were injured overall, including people hurt in the stampede.

According to the timeline, Betts, his sister, Megan Betts, and a friend arrived together to the Oregon District of Dayton at 11:04 p.m. Saturday and went to a bar named Blind Bobs, Biehl said. Betts split off to another bar called Ned Peppers at 12:14 a.m., and after 30 minutes he went back to the vehicle in a parking lot to gather the weapon and change clothes, Biehl said.

With a weapon in his backpack, Betts walked toward an alley and began firing at 1:04 a.m., authorities said. Based on a timeline pieced together from security cameras, police engaged with him after less than 20 seconds and Betts was killed 32 seconds after his first shot.

Betts knew that his sister and friend were still in the area when he opened fire, Biehl said, but police are still divided on whether he intentionally sought out and killed his sister.

Authorities said they do not know his immediate motivation -- why this location at this time and these victims -- but Biehl said police knew his broader violent mindset.

Police have said he had an obsession with violence and had expressed a desire to commit a mass shooting. Comments from police, memories from former classmates and posts on his apparent Twitter account show he had a deep interest in violence -- as well as the easy access to high-powered guns that is the common thread of all American mass shooters.

The rifle used in the shooting was ordered online from Texas and transferred to the suspect at a local firearms dealer, the Dayton police chief said. Authorities also found a shotgun,

acquired from a separate local firearms dealer, in the shooter's nearby vehicle, police said.

Friend arrested

On Friday, the gunman's friend, Ethan Kollie, was arrested on federal firearms charges for allegedly possessing a firearm while using or addicted to a controlled substance and falsely filling out a firearms application form. Authorities also accused Kollie of providing Betts with the body armor and a 100-round double-drum magazine used in the Dayton attack.

In an interview with federal agents, Kollie said he had done hard drugs, marijuana and LSD with Betts several times a week between 2014 and 2015, the affidavit says. Still, prosecutors emphasized that Kollie did not intentionally help plan the shootings.

Kollie's attorney told CNN in an emailed statement that Kollie gave three separate interviews to federal authorities "to provide helpful information to aid investigators."

"He does not deny his friendship with Connor Betts and he was as shocked and surprised as everyone else that Mr. Betts committed the violent and senseless massacre in the Oregon District," Nick Gounaris, the attorney, said.

[Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[OH] Dayton shooter spent two hours in area before attack, likely acted alone: police (Reuters)

Reuters [8/13/2019 5:56 PM, Brendan O'Brien, 5436K]

A gunman who killed nine people in Dayton, Ohio earlier this month spent two hours in the nightlife neighborhood before unleashing an attack on bar goers and probably carried it out alone, police said on Tuesday.

The Aug. 4 attack, which ended when police shot and killed the gunman, 24-year-old Connor Betts, was one of three high-profile mass shootings over three weeks that stunned the United States and stoked its long-running debate on gun rights.

During an afternoon news conference, Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl used footage from video cameras from several businesses in the neighborhood to lay out a detailed timeline of the gunman's movements around the neighborhood known for its night life before the early Sunday morning shooting.

At 11:04 p.m., Betts arrived in his car with his sister and a companion. The trio went to a tavern known as Blind Bob's. Some 69 minutes later, Betts left the bar alone and went to Ned Pepper's, a bar across the street, Biehl said as he showed the footage.

Betts stayed at Ned Pepper's for 28 minutes before heading back to his car, where he spent nine minutes. He changed his clothes, got his AR-15 semi-automatic rifle, body armor and a mask and placed some of the items in a backpack.

Twenty minutes later at 1:04 a.m., two hours after he arrived in the neighborhood, he went back to Ned Pepper's and opened fire outside the bar, shooting 17 people and killing nine,

including his sister, Biehl said.

It is a “strong probability” that Betts went into Ned Pepper’s beforehand to case the establishment, Biehl said.

“He was very familiar with the Oregon District,” he said. “This was a plan well before he got to the Oregon District.”

Biehl said the video footage indicated that Betts acted alone that night.

“Clearly, that day during that time period, we don’t see anyone assisting in committing this horrendous crime,” he said.

The investigation also “seems to strongly suggest” that his companion, who was wounded in the rampage, did not know Betts was planning to carry out the shooting or that he had weapons in the vehicle.

But investigators “have radically different views” on whether Betts targeted his sister and his companion.

“Based on what we know now, we cannot make that call conclusively,” Biehl said.

The FBI said last week that Betts had a history of violent obsessions and had mused about committing mass murder before his rampage in Dayton’s historic downtown.

[OH] Ohio man arrested for threatening law enforcement allegedly posted about support for Planned Parenthood attacks, mass shootings (The Hill)

The Hill [8/13/2019 3:33 PM, Zack Budryk, 2806K]

Federal prosecutors charged an Ohio man on Monday with threatening law enforcement after an investigation revealed he allegedly expressed support online for mass shootings.

Prosecutors allege that Justin Olsen, 18, lived in a house with 25 firearms and 10,000 rounds of ammunition, according to an affidavit released by authorities.

Olsen, who was arrested on state charges on Aug. 7, was taken to the Mahoning County Jail where he has been in custody, facing a charge of threatening to assault a federal law enforcement officer, Cleveland.com reported.

In the affidavit, FBI agent Themistocles Tsarnas alleged Olsen posted in support of mass shootings and attacks on Planned Parenthood on iFunny, a site that allows users to upload memes, GIFs and statements.

In June, Olsen allegedly wrote in support of the Branch Davidians, many of whom were killed during a standoff with state and federal law enforcement in 1993 in Waco, Texas. “[I]n conclusion, shoot every federal agent on sight,” Olsen allegedly wrote.

The affidavit also alleges Olsen wrote “don’t comply with gun laws, stock up on stuff they could ban. In fact, go out of your way to break these laws, they’re f-----g stupid.”

The FBI affidavit alleged that Olsen wrote “Hell, even the Oklahoma City bombing shows that armed resistance is a viable method of political change. There is no legal solution.”

The Oklahoma City bombing, committed by Timothy McVeigh in 1995, killed 168 people and remains the deadliest domestic terror attack in American history.

Olsen, who allegedly posted under the username ArmyofChrist, had been under investigation since February, but a prosecutor in Boardman, southeast of Cleveland, said last week he opted not to wait to act on the information after two mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio.

Olsen allegedly admitted to Tsarnas as he was being arrested that he posted comments supporting violence on iFunny from his cellphone, telling the agent that they were “a joke.” According to the affidavit, he allegedly added that his comments on shooting federal agents were “a hyperbolic conclusion based on the results of the Waco siege ... where the ATF slaughtered families.”

Officers seized 15 rifles, including some which were assault style, 10 semi-automatic pistols and an estimated 10,000 rounds of ammunition from Olsen’s residence. Authorities also reportedly found a machete in the trunk of his car, according to the affidavit.

“Urging people to shoot federal agents is never acceptable,” U.S. Attorney Justin Herdman said in a statement. “This defendant had access to an arsenal and we take his threats very seriously.”

[OH] Ohio Man Threatened to Shoot Federal Agents, Authorities Say (New York Times)

New York Times [8/14/2019 1:36 AM, Mihir Zaveri, 22840K]

In February, F.B.I. agents in Alaska who were researching an online chat room found that someone had posted several times about supporting mass shootings and assaults, and targeted Planned Parenthood, the authorities said.

The person’s online following was growing, they said. Delving deeper, the authorities found that he had written in June about shooting federal agents. Investigators traced his email address and found that it originated in Boardman, Ohio.

Last week, the authorities arrested Justin Olsen, 18, in Boardman, and he was charged on Monday with threatening to assault a federal law enforcement officer, according to documents filed in federal court. The authorities seized more than a dozen rifles, including some AR-15-style rifles, and about 10,000 rounds of ammunition from a home where Mr. Olsen was living, according to the court filing.

It is not clear whether the weapons belonged to Mr. Olsen, or whether he even had access to them — many were kept in a “gun vault” in his father’s room, according to the filing.

But the details of the F.B.I.’s investigation, outlined in the filing, provided a glimpse of how the authorities investigate and seek to stop online threats from becoming reality at a time

when back-to-back mass shootings in Dayton, Ohio, and El Paso this month have shocked the United States.

Mr. Olsen is being held in federal custody, according to the court filing. His lawyer, Ross T. Smith, did not immediately respond to requests for comment Tuesday evening.

Mr. Olsen told an F.B.I. agent that his online posts were jokes and that his comment about shooting federal agents was an exaggeration, according to the court filing.

In a message that Mr. Olsen sent referencing the 1993 gun battle in Waco, Tex., between a religious sect, the Branch Davidians, and agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms — four agents and several members of the sect were killed — he said: “In conclusion, shoot every federal agent on sight.”

He told the F.B.I. that his comments were a “hyperbolic conclusion based on the results of the Waco siege” where “the A.T.F. slaughtered families,” according to the court filing.

Efforts to reach Mr. Olsen’s family on Tuesday evening were unsuccessful.

The F.B.I. did not immediately respond to requests for comment Tuesday evening.

The agency said in the court filing that in March, agents in Alaska found that the online account associated with Mr. Olsen “showed a large increase in subscribers” from the previous month. He had 4,400 followers on iFunny, a website and mobile application where users can share photos, videos and messages, according to the filing.

A message posted by the account in August suggested that people should not comply with gun laws, according to the court filing. “Stock up on stuff they could ban,” the post reads. “In fact, go out of your way to break these laws.”

“Even the Oklahoma City bombing shows that armed resistance is a viable method of political change,” Mr. Olsen posted online, according to the affidavit, apparently referencing the 1995 bombing that killed 168 people. “There is no legal solution.”

Mr. Olsen was living with his father in Boardman at the time of his arrest, according to the affidavit. On Aug. 7, the authorities arrested Mr. Olsen as he was leaving the home.

That same day, federal investigators searched the home. In one bedroom, they found 10,000 rounds of ammunition, camouflage clothing and backpacks, according to the court filing. In the trunk of Justin Olsen’s car, investigators found a machete.

In Mr. Olsen’s father’s bedroom, investigators found AR-15-style rifles and shotguns.

The authorities seized 15 rifles, several shotguns, 10 semiautomatic pistols and 10,000 rounds of ammunition from the home, according to the affidavit.

The next hearing in Mr. Olsen’s case is scheduled for Aug. 16.

[OH] Ohio teen threatens to shoot federal agents, Planned Parenthood; had about 10,000 rounds of ammunition, 25 guns: Police (ABC News)

ABC News [8/13/2019 5:46 PM, Ella Torres, 2702K]

An Ohio teenager threatened to shoot federal agents, a Planned Parenthood and a gay bar and was found at a residence that had a gun vault and around 10,000 rounds of ammunition, according to police and court documents.

Justin Olsen, 18, was the moderator of an online chat where he made light of mass shootings and made the threats against all federal agents, the nonprofit, and an undisclosed gay bar, according to a police report from the Boardman Police Department.

After searching his father's house in Boardman, a suburb south of Youngstown, FBI agents seized 15 rifles and 10 semi-automatic pistols, according to a criminal complaint. Investigators also observed an estimated 10,000 rounds of ammunition in one room and another 300 rounds of ammunition on the stairway leading to the second floor, according to the complaint.

ABC News could not immediately confirm who owned them, or if they were legally purchased.

When Olsen turned 18 in May, he boasted in a post that he couldn't "wait to start stockpiling weapons," according to the police report.

He also wrote that he was planning on buying an AR-15 parts kit after posting a photo of it, the police report said.

The case began in February, when the FBI received a complaint about Olsen in Anchorage, Alaska, and traced his computer information back to Olsen's address.

On Aug. 6, an FBI agent approached a Boardman police detective with the information and "in light of the recent mass shootings in the United States," officials decided to arrest him. He was taken into custody the next day at his father's residence.

In the span of a week ahead of Olsen's arrest, 34 people were killed in three recent but separate mass shootings in El Paso, Texas (Aug. 3); Dayton, Ohio (Aug. 4); and Gilroy, California (July 28).

Olsen, who is charged with aggravated menacing, admitted to making the threats, according to police, but said it was all a joke and for fun.

He is currently being held at the Mahoning County Jail. It was not immediately clear if he had legal representation.

[OH] Ohio teen arrested for threats against federal agents had 10,000 rounds of ammo in his house, FBI affidavit says (USA Today)

USA Today [8/14/2019 10:31 PM, Jordan Culver, 6620K]

An 18-year-old Ohio man has been arrested on state and federal charges after investigators said he made threats against federal law enforcement and Planned Parenthood, authorities

said.

According to an FBI affidavit posted by The Vindicator newspaper in Youngstown, Ohio, Alaska-based FBI agents in February began monitoring the iFunny account of Justin Olsen, who posted under the name "ArmyOfChrist."

The investigation began "based upon the observation by FBI Anchorage into multiple Internet postings in which ArmyOfChrist discussed supporting mass shootings, and assault and/or targeting of Planned Parenthood," according to the affidavit.

In June, "ArmyOfChrist" posted, "In conclusion, shoot every federal agent on sight," when engaged with another iFunny user about the siege of a Branch Davidians compound in Waco, Texas, in 1993, according to the affidavit.

In July, the account was linked to Olsen, according to the affidavit. The following month, an FBI investigator found more online posts from Olsen, including one that urged "don't comply with gun laws, stock up on stuff they could ban," and "even the Oklahoma City bombing shows that armed resistance is a viable method of political change," according to the affidavit.

Also included in the posts was another, "In conclusion, shoot every federal agent on sight."

According to the affidavit, Olsen was arrested on state charges Aug. 7 and, in an interview, told the FBI his posts were "only a joke."

The report states Olsen gave the FBI written consent to search his bedroom in his father's house in Boardman, Ohio, and when officers entered the home, they saw about 300 rounds of ammunition on the stairway leading to the second floor.

According to the affidavit, officers swept the house and found about 10,000 rounds of ammo, 15 rifles (including assault rifles), shotguns and approximately 10 semi-automatic pistols.

Olsen was booked into the Mahoning County Jail on state charges of telecommunications harassment and aggravated menacing on Aug. 7. The federal charge of threatening a federal law enforcement officer was added Monday, according to the Mahoning County Jail's website.

[TX] Texas teen arrested after posting threat to blow up plane on Snapchat (ABC News)

ABC News [8/14/2019 3:18 AM, Mark Osborne, 2702K] Video [HERE](#)

Authorities have charged a 17-year-old from Texas with making a terroristic threat after he allegedly posted on Snapchat about blowing up a plane before flying from Houston to Guatemala.

The 17-year-old, Hector Fernando Fonseca, posted messages on the app on Aug. 2, saying, "blown this s--- up," along with a photo of George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston and then "time to blow up the plane." Both photo messages included a smiley face

and bomb emoji, according to a charging document.

The threats were only discovered after Snapchat discovered the photos and tipped off the FBI National Threat Operations Center, the documents show.

"Defendant, heretofore on or about August 3, 2019, did then and there unlawfully, threaten to commit an offense involving, namely, a Bombing upon George Bush Intercontinental Airport and aircraft located in Harris County, Texas with the intent to cause impairment and interruption of public transportation, place the public in fear of serious bodily injury, and place a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury," the court document says.

Snapchat provided GPS coordinates for many of Fonseca's previous posts in Humble, Texas, and FBI agents went to the location on Aug. 4, where they were directed to a friend of Fonseca. The friend, in the presence of his parents, even said he knew the reason the agents came to his home was due to Fonseca's threatening posts, the charging document describes.

The friend confirmed the Snapchat user account belonged to Fonseca and authorities even matched the passport seen in one of the threatening posts to the suspect.

Fonseca returned from Guatemala on Aug. 10, according to the documents. He was arrested and charged with the third-degree felony of making a terroristic threat after he returned home.

"What everyone needs to know is that we take threats of mass violence seriously -- especially when they involve airports, schools and other public, weapon-free places," Harris County District Attorney Dane Schiller said in a statement. "Houston Police filed charges with prosecutors after receiving information from FBI and Customs and Border Protection agents, who investigated a tip regarding a planned act of violence directed toward Bush Intercontinental Airport."

Fonseca made his first court appearance on Tuesday, where prosecutors were criticized by Harris County magistrate Lisa Porter. She questioned if he was "just a kid popping off" and wondered aloud why they didn't search his home for bomb-making materials according to the Houston Chronicle.

He is being held on \$10,000 bond.

The teen faces up to 10 years in prison if convicted.

In the charging documents, the FBI admitted the airport would have been shut down if it had been made aware of the threats before Fonseca left the country.

National Security News

Pentagon says US can defend against Russian and Chinese missile threats — if it's willing to invest (Washington Examiner)

Washington Examiner [8/13/2019 3:39 PM, Russ Read, 855K]

The Pentagon's chief of research and engineering says the military is capable of defending against missile attacks from China and Russia — should the country choose to invest in the necessary systems.

Countering the vast missile arsenals of major adversaries is technologically possible, according to Michael Griffin, but national policy hasn't historically considered it a priority.

"Today's systems are designed to counter rogue states," the defense undersecretary said during a talk at the Hudson Institute Tuesday. "If you want more, you can buy more. We've chosen not to do that."

An apparent botched nuclear missile test in Russia last week has brought increased attention to the missile issue as the Pentagon shifts its focus to countering the dangers China and Russia pose.

For nearly two decades, American officials assumed the greatest missile threat came from countries such as North Korea or Iran. As Russia and China continue to expand and invest in their missile stockpiles, there are concerns that the United States has fallen behind.

Hypersonic missiles have been the area of greatest concern. These advanced weapons are significantly faster and more agile than other missiles, making them capable of avoiding conventional missile defense systems. Griffin explained that hypersonics operate in a middle space between the areas of air defense and missile defense. They are 10 to 20 times "dimmer" than other missiles, meaning by the time they are picked up by radar, it's often too late to take them out.

Russia and China are both believed to have made significant advances in hypersonics that the U.S. has not.

"We chose not to weaponize it," Griffin said. "From a policy perspective, you know, we didn't think the world needed a new class of weapons."

To defend against them, Griffin, a former NASA administrator, said the country needs a new space-based detection system that would operate in a low orbit. Today's higher orbit satellites are too high up, while the number of forward-deployed long-range radars on the ground needed to counter the threat would be impractical.

"President Trump, quite correctly, enunciated the need for such a layer and yet our budget didn't show it," Griffin said. The administration decided to focus on producing offensive missile capabilities as a deterrent instead.

Griffin and his colleagues plan to push for funding for the detection system in next year's budget.

Russia's botched test made international headlines last week. The incident, which occurred Thursday off the country's northern coast, caused a nuclear explosion, spiking radiation in the area by 200 times the normal level. Some experts and intelligence officials think it was the result of a failed test of Russia's new 'Skyfall' missile, which is believed to be powered

by a small nuclear reactor.

Russian President Vladimir Putin unveiled the missile in March 2018, claiming that it renders defense systems "useless."

Trump weighed in on the issue Monday. "The United States is learning much from the failed missile explosion in Russia," he tweeted. "We have similar, though more advanced, technology. The Russian 'Skyfall' explosion has people worried about the air around the facility and far beyond. Not good."

When asked about this technology by a reporter from Russian state media, Griffin said at the event, "I don't have any comment on that."

[FL] After odd hearing, trial date moved for alleged Mar-a-Lago trespasser Yujing Zhang (ABC News)

ABC News [8/13/2019 5:15 PM, Karen D'Uva and Lee Ferran, 2702K]

The trial for Chinese national and alleged Mar-a-Lago trespasser Yujing Zhang has been delayed until early next month, following a bizarre pretrial hearing in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on Tuesday afternoon.

During the hearing Zhang, who had previously dismissed her public defenders, at times appeared to not hear the judge, refused to answer some questions verbally, claimed she was feeling "sick" and "dizzy," and generally didn't cooperate with the proceedings.

"I'm not available today," she said.

U.S. Judge Roy Altman of Florida's Southern District accused Zhang of "playing games" with the court.

Earlier Tuesday prosecutors filed documents related to the case, such as jury instructions and witness and evidence lists, but Zhang has not done so. When asked about her lack of filing by the judge, Zhang appeared not to know what the judge was talking about.

During the hearing, the government said they would waive a jury trial and allow the judge to rule directly on the case, and Zhang was asked if she wanted a jury to decide her case or for the judge to rule.

"Maybe I don't need that many people to make that decision," she said.

"I'm not in my right mind," she added, in an apparent reference to her feeling ill.

Zhang, who previously told the court she worked as a consultant in China, is accused of trespassing onto the grounds of Mar-a-Lago, President Donald Trump's Florida country club, in late March after she was mistakenly allowed in by Mar-a-Lago staff. In addition to the purported trespassing, prosecutors allege she lied to Secret Service officers as she was let through checkpoints. She was only discovered when a receptionist realized her name was not on the access list for the club.

When Zhang was detained, investigators said they found several electronic devices on her and in her room at a local hotel, purportedly including a device to detect hidden cameras. Early on, prosecutors suggested Zhang was being investigated for potential links to espionage, but no further charges have been brought. Before they were dismissed, public defenders for Zhang argued the whole thing was a misunderstanding and said she had not made "direct misrepresentations" to federal agents as alleged.

Zhang pleaded not guilty in April, but was ordered held in detention in Florida ahead of her trial.

In Tuesday's hearing, Judge Altman told Zhang she has until Aug. 20 to decide if she wants a jury trial and then has until Aug. 30 to file whatever pretrial documents she wants to file or object to anything in the government documents. Her trial date was reset to Sept. 3.

[Brazil] FBI looking for suspected al Qaeda operative in Brazil (Washington Examiner)

Washington Examiner [8/13/2019 5:15 PM, Russ Read, 855K]

The FBI is seeking to interrogate an Egyptian man in Brazil suspected of planning terrorist attacks against the United States.

"Mohamed Ahmed Elsayed Ahmed Ibrahim is wanted for questioning by the #FBI in connection with his alleged role as an Al Qaeda operative and facilitator since approximately 2013," the FBI said on Twitter.

The Brazilian government issued a statement shortly after the FBI's notice saying it "stands ready to cooperate with authorities in the United States." It said that Ibrahim, 42, has been living in Brazil since 2018. He should be considered armed and dangerous, according to the FBI.

The FBI's notice did not include details on Ibrahim's whereabouts within Brazil or the kind of plots in which he was involved.

While the presence of an Egyptian al Qaeda operative in Brazil may sound strange, the country's southwest border with Argentina and Paraguay, called the Tri-Border Area, is known to harbor jihadist terrorist groups.

"U.S.-sanctioned terrorist groups, including Hezbollah and al-Qaeda, are believed to recruit, plan attacks, and fundraise in the TBA with the knowledge of local authorities," according to the Counter Extremism Project.

Khaled Hussein Ali, the suspected leader of al Qaeda's Brazilian online propaganda wing, Jihad Media Battalion, is believed to be operating from Brazil. The group has distributed the communications of al Qaeda leaders in at least 17 countries. Brazilian authorities, in collaboration with the FBI, arrested Ali in March 2009 after a four-month investigation. He served only 21 days in jail, as Brazil did not have a terrorism law on the books at the time.

Brazil avoided a terrorist attack in 2016 when authorities arrested 10 members of the Defenders of Sharia, an Islamist militant group planning to carry out attacks before the

Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

The FBI may have an easier time getting in touch with Ibrahim after the Brazilian justice ministry issued a new regulation in July facilitating the expulsion of dangerous foreigners.

[United Kingdom] John Bolton promises Britain will be ‘front of the trade queue’ after Brexit, says E.U. treats citizens like ‘peasants’ (Washington Post)

Washington Post [8/13/2019 7:33 AM, Adam Taylor, 9425K]

With the British economy suffering a battering in recent days due to the country’s impending exit from the European Union, the United States sent a familiar face to offer assurance: White House national security adviser John Bolton.

At a briefing with British reporters on Monday evening, Bolton said Britain would be “front of the trade queue” for a new trade deal with the United States, adding that any agreement could be worked out “sector by sector” to speed up the process.

Bolton added that he and President Trump were “leavers before there were leavers” who supported Britain’s 2016 vote to end its membership of the E.U. His message from Trump was simple, he told reporters: “We are with you.”

The U.S. official also criticized the European bloc’s treatment of its members’ citizens. “The fashion in the European Union when the people vote the wrong way from the way that the elites want to go is to make the peasants vote again and again until they get it right,” he said, according to the BBC.

Bolton remarks came after he met with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson at No. 10 Downing Street. He is the most senior Trump administration official to meet with Johnson since he took office in July.

Bolton will meet not only with Johnson during his two-day visit to the British capital but also the foreign secretary, defense secretary, Brexit secretary and international trade secretary.

Britain is currently expected to leave the European Union on Oct. 31. But despite repeated attempts, the British government has failed to find support for a withdrawal agreement on the terms of its exit.

Analysts say that a “no-deal” Brexit, in which Britain reverts to World Trade Organization rules on its borders, could be disastrous for the country, prompting huge delays at the borders and disrupting the nation’s entire economy.

In some areas, the disruption may be already showing. Britain’s Office for National Statistics announced last week that the country’s economy shrank for the first time since 2012, while the pound fell to a 10-year low against the euro.

Bolton’s reassurances appeared likely to elicit a sigh of relief from Johnson, who has refused to rule out a no-deal Brexit amid a push against the E.U. for better terms.

The U.S. official said that if the British government ultimately opted to leave the E.U. without

a deal, “we would support it enthusiastically.” And he rejected the suggestion, made by President Barack Obama in 2016, that Britain would join the “back of the queue” for a new trade deal.

Bolton’s idea that trade agreements could be reached sector by sector, without the need for a single comprehensive deal first, is a concession that should make the lives of negotiators easier and speed up progress on deals.

Although Bolton said that in some areas of trade, such as financial services, it may be hard to reach a deal, he was optimistic that working in a “modular fashion” could result in progress. “In other words, you can carve out some areas where it might be possible to reach a bilateral agreement very quickly, very straightforwardly,” he said, according to the Guardian newspaper.

Although friendly, Bolton’s comments masked the often fraught relationship that the Trump administration has had with Britain since the beginning of Trump’s term. The U.S. leader is deeply unpopular with the British public, and his visits to Britain have been accompanied by protests and controversy.

The British government is also at odds with the United States over a number of key Trump administration policies, including those involving Iran and Huawei, a Chinese telecom giant under pressure from Washington.

Speaking on Monday, Bolton downplayed differences in policy and said that he “fully understands” that Brexit is the British government’s main priority.

However, some former British officials worried that the Trump administration would ultimately drive a hard bargain in trade talks.

“This is a highly transactional administration,” Jack Straw, a former foreign secretary under Tony Blair’s government, told BBC Radio 4’s “Today” program on Tuesday. “You don’t get something for nothing.”

Johnson is expected to have his first face-to-face meeting with Trump as prime minister later this month when the leaders of the Group of Seven economies meet in Chantilly, France. The two leaders spoke on the phone on Monday.

Trump has spoken warmly of Johnson in the past, dubbing him a “good guy” and a “friend of mine” in remarks to reporters last month. “I think we’re going to have a great relationship,” he said in the Oval Office.

But Trump’s relationship with Johnson’s predecessor, Theresa May, also started out cordially. As she prepared to leave office last month, the U.S. president slammed her for failing to accept his advice on Brexit.

“She went her own foolish way — was unable to get it done. A disaster!” he tweeted.

[Czech Republic] Czechs Blame Foreign State for Foreign Ministry Cyberattack (US News & World Report)

US News & World Report [8/13/2019 10:22 AM, Staff, 3196K]

A parliamentary committee in the Czech Republic says a national security agency told its members that a foreign country state is believed to be behind a cyberattack on the Czech Foreign Ministry.

The committee of the upper house of parliament said it received the findings of the National Cyber and Information Security Agency on Tuesday. The allegedly responsible country wasn't specified.

Interior Minister Jan Hamacek told the CTK news agency that authorities have been dealing with the attack for several months. He didn't give details.

A Czech spy agency blamed Russia for previous cyberattacks targeting the Foreign Ministry in 2016, including the hacking of 150 ministry email accounts.

[Czech Republic] Foreign power was behind cyber attack on Czech ministry: Senate (Reuters)

Reuters [8/13/2019 10:10 AM, Robert Muller, 5436K]

A foreign state staged the latest cyber attack targeting the Czech Foreign Ministry, the Senate's security committee said on Tuesday, though it did not identify the nation concerned or provide any details on the incident.

Earlier, the Czech daily Denik N reported that the cyber attack on the Foreign Ministry had taken place in June but that no confidential data was compromised. Citing three sources, the paper also said the attack had originated in Russia.

The Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security has called on the government to take cyber security seriously, citing information from the Czech Republic's National Cyber and Information Security Agency (NUKIB).

"(The committee) states with concern that the latest incident, the cyber attack against the Foreign Ministry, was perpetrated by a foreign state power, according to NUKIB," the committee said in a statement posted on the Senate website, without elaborating.

A Foreign Ministry spokeswoman declined to comment. An NUKIB spokesman was not immediately available.

Last December, the Czech counter-intelligence service, BIS, said in its annual report that Russia's intelligence services were behind cyber attacks targeting the Foreign Ministry in 2017.

[Iran] Iran Says It Expects Tanker Held by U.K. to Be Released Soon (Bloomberg)

Bloomberg [8/13/2019 6:32 AM, Arsalan Shahla, 267K]

Iran expects an oil tanker seized by the U.K. in the Strait of Gibraltar in July will be released soon, the semi-official Fars News agency reported Tuesday, a move that could help to ease concerns about the safety of shipping routes in the Middle East.

“Official and unofficial documents have been exchanged to resolve the matter and we hope the problem will be dealt with in the very near future,” Fars cited Jalil Eslami, deputy for maritime affairs at Iran’s Ports and Maritime Organization, as saying. The future of a U.K.-flagged tanker that Iran seized later in the Persian Gulf depends on “the necessary judicial processes,” Eslami added.

Iran’s Grace 1 tanker was seized by the Royal Navy on suspicion it was sending crude oil to Syria in violation of European Union sanctions. Tehran denied breaking sanctions and two weeks later impounded the U.K.-flagged Stena Impero near the Strait of Hormuz, the world’s most important chokepoint for oil.

The tanker seizures and other suspected Iranian operations against shipping in the Persian Gulf region have inflamed a crisis between Iran and the West triggered by the Trump administration’s decision to quit the multiparty nuclear deal with Iran a year ago and renew crippling economic sanctions. Iran has responded by abandoning some restrictions on uranium enrichment imposed by the 2015 accord.

The frictions on the seas have led the U.S. and U.K. to mount a joint mission to protect commercial shipping lanes in the Middle East. Reports of Israeli involvement in that mission have drawn fire from Tehran, and on Tuesday, the commander of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards Corp’s naval forces warned against “any illegal presence in the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz, especially Israel’s.”

“We in the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps are in charge of providing security for the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf, and there is no need for strangers,” Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri said, according to the semi-official Iranian Students’ News Agency.

Last week, Israel’s Ynet website reported that Israel is providing intelligence and other, unspecified assistance to U.S.-led efforts to protect Persian Gulf shipping routes. It cited Foreign Minister Israel Katz’s remarks to parliament’s foreign affairs and defense committee.

Israel considers Iran to be its most formidable enemy, due to its nuclear work, ballistic missile program and support for anti-Israel militant groups in the Middle East. Iranian officials have also referred multiple times to Israel’s annihilation. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu lobbied hard against the nuclear deal, and pressed President Donald Trump to abandon it.

Israel has been striking Iranian targets in Syria over the past few years in an effort to limit the Islamic Republic’s presence in its immediate neighborhood, and according to recent reports, has expanded those operations to hit Iranian-backed militias in Iraq.

[Russia] Russia Says Radiation Levels Reached 16 Times Normal in Blast (Bloomberg)

Bloomberg [8/13/2019 8:16 AM, Jake Rudnitsky and Ilya Arkhipov, 5350K]

Russia said it’s far ahead of the U.S. in developing new nuclear-powered missiles despite a failed test that prompted President Donald Trump to boast of American superiority in the

field.

President Vladimir Putin “has repeatedly said that Russian developments in this area surpass the level achieved by other countries, and are quite unique,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Tuesday on a conference call, in response to a question on Trump’s tweet. U.S. officials have said repeatedly in the past year that its military is working on such programs, so Trump’s statement offers no new information, he said.

An Aug. 8 blast in Russia’s Arkhangelsk region killed five atomic scientists during the test of a missile engine that used “isotope power sources” on an offshore platform in the White Sea. Trump later tweeted that the U.S. “is learning much from the failed missile explosion in Russia” and added that “we have similar, though more advanced, technology,” without giving more details.

Trump’s comment appeared to confirm speculation in Russian media that the weapon being tested was the SSC-X-9 Skyfall, known in Russia as the Burevestnik. Putin introduced the nuclear-powered cruise missile to the world in a brief animated segment during his state-of-the-nation address last year.

Radiation levels in the port city of Severodvinsk, near the site of the failed test, reached as high as 16 times normal immediately following the incident, according to the state meteorological service.

Gamma radiation measured at six of eight testing stations in the city of 180,000 ranged from 4 to 16 times the normal rate of 0.11 microsieverts per hour, with one observation point showing 1.78 microsieverts per hour, Roshydromet said in a statement.

The maximum reported level of radiation would be harmless and on a par with a dental x-ray, according to Jonathan Cobb, a spokesman for the World Nuclear Association.

The radiation levels at the six stations declined steeply within half an hour and were close to normal levels after two and a half hours according to Roshydromet. Severodvinsk is about 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the offshore platform where the explosion occurred.

The Defense Ministry initially reported two were killed in the accident, which it said involved testing of a liquid-fueled missile engine. The ministry didn’t mention the nuclear element.

News of the explosion set off in nearby cities and towns a run on iodine, a form of which is believed to help prevent the thyroid gland from absorbing radiation. Norway said it had stepped up radiation monitoring after the incident but hadn’t detected anything abnormal. Finland’s Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority said it didn’t expect to find an increase in radiation after the incident.

Local activists remained wary about the government’s disclosures.

“The authorities still haven’t provided enough information about the full spectrum of radiation that may have been released,” said Rashid Alimov, the head of Greenpeace Russia’s Energy Campaign. “They need to publish more comprehensive data on the event before we can know if the local population faces danger.”

[Russia] Evacuation reports spark confusion after Russia nuclear accident (CBS News)

CBS News [8/13/2019 11:39 AM, Daria Litvinova, 3332K]

Residents of a Russian village near the site of a nuclear accident that killed seven people in Russia's far north last week were left confused on Tuesday by conflicting reports that they would be evacuated while work is carried out on the site. Several unidentified residents of Nynoksa, in Russia's Arkhangelsk region, told local news website 29.ru that they had been told they would have to leave the village for at least two hours, between 5 and 7 a.m. on Wednesday, and that a train would be provided for them.

The government of Severodvinsk, a city 25 miles away from Nynoksa, seemed to confirm the evacuation ordered to the state-run Interfax news agency.

"We have received a notification... about the planned activities of the military authorities. In this regard, residents of Nynoksa were asked to leave the territory of the village from August 14," officials were quoted by Interfax as saying.

However, the governor of the Arkhangelsk region, Igor Orlov, dismissed that report in a separate interview with Interfax as "complete nonsense," saying "no evacuation (is taking place)."

There was no consensus about a possible evacuation on social media channels frequented by both Nynoksa and Severodvinsk residents. Concerned villagers post comments about "having heard" that they would need to leave, but not finding any official information about it.

Some of them said short-term evacuations were a regular occurrence in their communities, due to the work carried out at the military testing site near the village.

Finally, on Tuesday evening, Interfax quoted the local government of Severodvinsk as saying the military had canceled plans to conduct work on the testing grounds that would have necessitated the evacuation of Nynoksa.

"We have information that the military canceled their activities tomorrow that required moving residents (out of the village)," an unidentified official at the Severodvinsk administration told the state-run news agency.

On Thursday last week an explosion at the testing ground near Nynoksa left five scientists and two military personnel dead. Immediately after the blast, radiation levels in Severodvinsk spiked to up to 16 times the normal reading, according to the TASS state-run news agency.

Doctors that tended to people injured in the accident were to undergo additional medical examination. Representatives of the Arkhangelsk regional government told TASS on Tuesday that the doctors had requested the additional screening themselves, and it was not compulsory.

Russia's Defense Ministry initially claimed it was just a failed rocket engine test, but later Rosatom, Russia's state nuclear energy corporation, admitted the test involved a "radioisotope source of energy" -- or, as the company's spokespeople put it in comments to

the Fontanka newspaper, "a nuclear battery."

U.S. intelligence officials believe it "likely" was a failed test of the SSC-X-9 Skyfall, known in Russia as the 9M730 Burevestnik. President Vladimir Putin boasted in a 2018 speech about a new, experimental nuclear-powered cruise missile with virtually unlimited range and the ability to penetrate U.S. missile defense systems.

Many Russian and U.S. military analysts have long expressed doubts about whether Skyfall exists, or whether the core technology involved is even viable. The U.S. experimented with similar technology decades ago, but abandoned it as the highly unstable, nuclear-powered missile engines weren't deemed to be worth the associated risks.

"This accident reminds us how hard this is and how complicated it is, and just because President Putin made a speech talking about six new scary things, it doesn't mean that they're going to actually happen or happen any time soon," Lynn Rusten, at the Washington-based Nuclear Threat Initiative organization, told CBS News on Tuesday.

Rusten said the people who should be most concerned by the explosion in northern Russia, "are the Russian citizens, who should be asking their government 'why are we doing this?'"

Commenting on the accident Tuesday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov would neither confirm nor deny suggestions about a test of a Skyfall missile.

He said the organization that carried out the test "gave information about it and explained the cause of the accident that occurred during testing and, unfortunately for all of us, led to the tragic death of our colleagues. I have nothing to add to that."

Conflicting reports from Russian officials about the accident over the weekend prompted speculation that the blast might have been more damaging than they were letting on. Some commentators compared the release of information about the explosion to what happened in the immediate wake of the Chernobyl disaster, when it took the authorities several weeks to reveal the truth.

[Russia] Radiation levels at Russian test site spiked up to 16 times above normal after explosion (FOX News)

FOX News [8/13/2019 1:47 PM, Travis Fedschun, 10258K]

A mysterious explosion in northern Russia caused radiation levels to spike up to 16 times above normal, the state weather agency said Tuesday, amid reports that evacuations have been ordered in the village not far from the blast site and medics who treated the initial victims have been ordered back to Moscow.

Last week's deadly explosion took place at a military shooting range in Nyonoksa, in the far northern Arkhangelsk region.

Russia's Defense Ministry initially said the blast killed two people and injured six, but the state-controlled nuclear agency, Rosatom, later disclosed that the explosion killed five of its workers and injured three others. Rosatom said the explosion occurred while engineers were testing "a nuclear isotope power source" for a rocket.

The group of engineers was thrown into the sea by the explosion.

Russia's state weather agency, Rosgidromet, said on Tuesday that it believed radiation levels had risen by four to 16 times after the accident, the TASS news agency reported.

Local authorities in nearby Severodvinsk, a city of 183,000, initially reported a brief spike in radiation levels after the explosion but claimed it didn't pose any health hazards. Data cited by Greenpeace from Russia's Ministry of Emergency Situations, however, showed radiation levels rose 20 times above the normal level in the city, which is about 18 miles from the testing site.

Even though authorities said the brief spike didn't pose any health hazards, regional authorities in northwestern Russia said Tuesday the military has advised residents of the village near a navy testing range to move out following the rocket explosion. The Interfax news agency reported that the regional administration based in Severodvinsk said a notice from the military recommended the evacuation due to unspecified activities at the test range.

While officials offered no further details about the advisory for the village of Nyonoksa, Interfax reported that the evacuation was ordered as clean-up work is being carried out after the blast, according to Reuters.

Local news outlet TV29.ru reported that Nyonoksa residents would be evacuated by train to "a safe distance." The village is located about 30 miles from Severodvinsk.

Meanwhile, medics who treated victims of the explosion have been ordered back to Moscow for a medical examination, the TASS news agency reported. The medics have signed non-disclosure agreements about the nature of the accident, according to the news report.

The Kremlin on Tuesday did not address any reports of the evacuation, instead telling reporters that Russia remains at the forefront in developing new nuclear weapons.

"I can assure that all relevant agencies are working to fully ensure safety of Russian civilians," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, according to Interfax.

Neither the Defense Ministry nor Rosatom mentioned the type of rocket that exploded during the test, saying only that it had liquid propellant. But Rosatom's mention of a "nuclear isotope power source" led some Russian media to conclude it was a missile Russia calls the 9M730 Burevestnik. The NATO alliance has designated it the SSC-X-9 Skyfall.

During his 2018 state of the nation address, Russian leader Vladimir Putin unveiled the missile, along with other new weapons that he said made NATO's U.S.-led missile defense system "useless."

The Russian leader claimed the nuclear-powered cruise missile had an unlimited range, flew at a high speed and was capable of maneuverability that would allow it to pierce any missile defense. While Putin boasted of the ability to strike long-range targets, two U.S.

officials briefed on Moscow's military capabilities told Fox News at the time the weapon was not operational yet and still in its "nascent" stage.

"The nuclear-powered cruise missile Putin bragged about has actually crashed a few times," during recent testing in the Arctic, one official said. "Think about the environmental impact of that," the official added. Both agreed to speak only on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak with the media.

President Trump weighed in Monday on the blast, tweeting, "The United States is learning much from the failed missile explosion in Russia. We have similar, though more advanced, technology. The Russian 'Skyfall' explosion has people worried about the air around the facility, and far beyond. Not good!"

The U.S. and the Soviet Union pondered nuclear-powered missiles in the 1960s, but they abandoned those projects as too unstable and dangerous.

Thousands of people attended the funerals Monday of the five Russian nuclear engineers as they were laid to rest in Sarov, which hosts Russia's main nuclear weapons research center, where they worked. Flags flew at half-staff in the city 230 miles east of Moscow that has been a base for Russia's nuclear weapons program since the late 1940s. The coffins were displayed at Sarov's main square before being driven to a cemetery.

Rosatom director Alexei Likhachev praised the victims as "true heroes" and "pride of our country." "Our further work on new weapons that we will certainly complete will be the best tribute to them," Likhachev said during the funeral, according to Rosatom. "We will fulfill the Motherland's orders and fully protect its security."

[Russia] Town told to evacuate, then stay, after Russian rocket explosion: Here's what we know now (USA Today)

USA Today [8/13/2019 5:02 PM, Ryan W. Miller, 6620K]

A mysterious explosion at an offshore Russian military site involving a nuclear power source for a missile is fueling international speculation as few details are available about what caused the blast and what its effects are.

Officials with Russia's nuclear energy company Rosatom said five of its scientists were killed in an explosion Thursday during a test of "a nuclear isotope power source" for a rocket.

The accident occurred on a platform in the White Sea off Nyonoksa and caused a reported radiation spike in nearby Severodvinsk.

On Tuesday, Russian newswire Interfax and the Washington Post and CNN, citing other local Russian news outlets, reported that residents in Nyonoksa were being temporarily evacuated, but Russian officials cancelled the order hours later.

An evacuation early Wednesday was ordered for the small town of Nyonoksa on the White Sea because of activities at the test site where the explosion occurred, Interfax news agency reported.

However, hours later, Russian officials backtracked on the order. Ksenia Yudina, a spokeswoman for the Severodvinsk regional administration, said planned military activities at the site were canceled and the town's 500 residents did not have to leave.

Nyonoksa is about 30 miles from Severodvinsk, a city of 183,000, where the radiation spike was reported. Residents in Severodvinsk also received evacuation orders that were later canceled Tuesday.

At least five people were killed and others were injured in the blast, but an official death toll has not been confirmed as Russian officials have issued conflicting statements.

Severodvinsk experienced a radiation increase four to 16 times above normal background levels, Russian weather service Rosgidromet said, according to news agency TASS.

TASS reported that the city's civil defense department head Valentin Magomedov said immediately after the blast that Severodvinsk saw radiation levels at 2 microsieverts per hour, which is about three times above normal levels.

Safe exposure is 0.6 microsieverts per hour, and a normal X-ray of someone's digestive tract would be 3.3 millisieverts per examination, TASS reported.

Local officials in Severodvinsk said radiation levels normalized shortly after the blast occurred, and Russian officials were assuring residents that the region was safe.

President Donald Trump tweeted Monday evening that the "United States is learning much from the failed missile explosion in Russia."

"We have similar, though more advanced, technology. The Russian 'Skyfall' explosion has people worried about the air around the facility, and far beyond. Not good!" Trump added.

Nuclear experts believe the accident occurred during a test of a missile that Russian President Vladimir Putin has touted in the past year, the New York Times and Reuters reported.

The SSC-X-9 Skyfall is a prototype cruise missile that could reach any corner of the world with a nuclear reactor as its power source, the Times reported.

Putin's spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters Tuesday that "security is fully ensured" in the region but didn't comment on the missile that exploded, the Post reported.

Vyacheslav Solovyov, scientific director at the Russian Federal Nuclear Center, told a local newspaper that the institute was studying "small-scale" power sources that include "fissile materials," the Times and Reuters reported.

[China] Trump Bows to Economic Fears in Move to Delay China Tariffs (Bloomberg)
Bloomberg [8/13/2019 9:43 PM, Shawn Donnan, Jenny Leonard, Olivia Rockeman, 5350K]
President Donald Trump bowed to pressure from U.S. businesses and concerns over the

economic fallout of his trade war with China, delaying the imposition of new tariffs on a wide variety of consumer products including toys and laptops until December.

Tuesday's move to at least hit the pause button in his fight with China came as senior officials on both sides had their first phone conversation since Trump threatened the tariffs at the beginning of this month. It also cheered markets that had been growing increasingly concerned over the impact of trade tensions on a slowing global economy. U.S. stocks halted a two-day slide, and Asian equities climbed.

Trump said the latest conversation with China had been "productive" and that "they would really like to make a deal." Though he has often denied his tariffs have any impact on consumer prices and insists their cost is being borne by China, he also said the delay had been made "so it won't be relevant to the Christmas shopping season."

The move announced Tuesday involved the splitting of an almost \$300 billion list of products from China into two separate ones. Lots of agricultural products, antiques, clothes, kitchenware and footwear remained on the list to be hit Sept. 1 -- with a total value of more than \$110 billion, according to a Bloomberg News analysis of last year's import figures. But big-ticket categories such as smart-phones, laptops, and children's toys -- worth about \$160 billion -- would only be subject to tariffs after Dec. 15, according to Tuesday's announcement. Nearly \$2 billion worth of products were removed from the combined lists including bibles and shipping containers.

The delay "is an incrementally positive sign," Goldman Sachs Group Inc. chief economist Jan Hatzius wrote in a note. "It suggests that the disruption in financial markets over the last several days could have led to a softening of the White House position."

China's commerce and foreign ministries didn't immediately respond to faxes seeking comment.

While markets applauded the splitting of the new tariffs, some businesses expressed frustration with the sudden turnaround and the fact that they were once again being left to make important business decisions on the fly because of the president's trade policies.

"It's too late and it's not enough," said Peter Bragdon, chief administrative officer for the Columbia Sportswear Co. "There's continued chaotic policy making and incoherence coming out of Washington that makes it very hard for businesses in the United States to plan."

Columbia still has products including footwear such as waterproof hiking boots that would be hit with a 10% tariff come next month. While only 10%-15% of Columbia's products were made in China, production of specialized footwear was difficult to move, Bragdon said, and the company had already warned customers it would be forced to raise some of its prices.

In some cases the splitting of the tariffs will make life more complicated for retailers and other businesses. Some categories of golf shoes, for example, will be subject to a 10% tariff Sept. 1 while others will not be targeted until Dec. 15. Apple Inc.'s iPhones will not face new import taxes until mid-December. But the popular wireless AirPods that go with them will be taxed in September.

Stocks surged on the news Tuesday. Apple Inc. spiked as much as 5.8% and Best Buy Co. climbed as much as 11% on optimism that the reprieve would boost electronics sales in the holiday season. Apparel retailers including Gap Inc. and L Brands Inc. rose, as did toymaker Hasbro Inc. and discount chain Dollar Tree Inc.

“What this means is that retailers will be able to get their shipments in without the 10% tariff, which is a sigh of relief,” said Poonam Goyal, a retail analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence. “It definitely saves the holiday season.”

With the Sept. 1 deadline, there wasn’t time for retailers to speed up ordering for the holiday season because it often takes more than four weeks for inventory to come from China, Goyal said.

About \$250 billion of Chinese goods have already been hit by 25% duties.

David French, a spokesman for the National Retail Federation, said the organization was pleased by the delay on certain consumer goods but expressed caution.

“Continued uncertainty for U.S. businesses and consumers is a drag on the economy,” he said. “What we really need is an effective strategy to address China’s unfair trade practices by working with our allies instead of using unilateral tariffs that cost American jobs and hurt consumers.”

Chinese Vice Premier Liu He talked with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin by phone on Tuesday, Chinese and U.S. officials said. Another conference call is planned again in two weeks. It’s still unclear if an in-person meeting would take place sometime in September.

But whether the two sides had made any progress was unclear and some analysts saw Tuesday’s move to delay some tariffs as a sign of Trump’s political vulnerabilities at home as much as an olive branch to China.

“It shows the increasing chaos of the administration’s trade strategy toward China. And despite the president’s claims, it’s the clearest sign yet that Trump actually does understand that the tariffs are hurting American companies and consumers,” said Edward Alden, a trade expert at the Council on Foreign Relations. “It will also further weaken the already slim chances for any negotiating progress in September. Why would the Chinese make difficult decisions if they can wait out Trump and wait for him to fold when the stock market sags?”

Scott Kennedy, a China expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said there was still a danger of further escalation, especially around the tech sector. “But much of this is just keeping up appearances for a strategy that hasn’t succeeded,” he said. “That does not mean that the U.S. and China are likely to reach a trade deal, but rather that the relationship will be stuck in this purgatory for the remainder of the current administration.”

The International Monetary Fund last month cited trade tensions as one of the biggest risks to the global economy as it downgraded its 2019 growth forecast, while Goldman Sachs has

said there's growing concerns that the trade war will trigger a U.S. recession. A Bloomberg News August survey of economists gave a 35% probability of a recession in the next 12 months, up from 31% previously.

Trump's Aug. 1 announcement about the new duties ended a tentative trade truce that he forged with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the end of June in Japan, just as the two sides were resuming negotiations. In the past week tensions have escalated further as the U.S. Treasury Department formally labeled China a currency manipulator.

[China] Trump delays tariffs on key Chinese goods (The Hill)

The Hill [8/13/2019 10:30 AM, Sylvan Lane, 2806K]

The White House trade office announced Tuesday it would delay tariffs on certain Chinese goods until mid-December and exempt others from a new round of import taxes.

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) said in a statement it would delay tariffs on "cell phones, laptop computers, video game consoles, certain toys, computer monitors, and certain items of footwear and clothing," until Dec. 15.

The agency also said it would remove an unspecified number of items from a list of Chinese products that will be subject to a 10 percent tariff starting Sept. 1.

"Certain products are being removed from the tariff list based on health, safety, national security and other factors and will not face additional tariffs," the USTR said.

The full list of exempted products will be released later Tuesday, the office added.

The White House decision to narrow the scope and somewhat weaken the blow of President Trump's escalating trade war with China comes after weeks of deepening anxiety about the state of the global economy.

Economists at Bank of America, Goldman Sachs and Moody's Analytics have warned in the past week of the rising chances of a recession between now and the 2020 elections, blaming Trump's trade policy in part.

The British economy shrank for the first time since 2012 in the second quarter, according to data released last week, while growth in China slowed to its lowest level in nearly three decades.

U.S. businesses and farmers have pleaded with Trump for relief amid the rising costs and tensions of a trade war with China that began in July 2018. Retailers warned that new tariffs on a slew of consumer goods could lead to layoffs, store closings and price increases ahead of the holiday shopping season.

The products subject to the delayed tariffs include items likely on holiday gift lists, giving a boost to the critical consumer spending sector. Roughly 70 percent of the U.S. economy is driven by consumer spending, and several retail stores and chains depend on booming holiday sales for annual profits.

The delay was welcome news to Wall Street. The Dow Jones Industrial Average soared 500 points on the news after closing 400 points lower Monday. Shares of Apple, which manufactures laptops and cellphones in China, grew 5 percent.

[China] US delays tariffs on cellphones, laptops and toys from China (ABC News)

ABC News [8/13/2019 12:20 PM, Ban Gittleson, 2702K]

The United States announced Tuesday that a 10% tariff set to be slapped on \$300 billion of Chinese imports starting next month would be delayed until later this year for certain products, including "cell phones, laptop computers, video game consoles, certain toys, computer monitors and certain items of footwear and clothing."

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer's office said that, in addition, certain products were completely removed from the list of goods subject to tariffs on Sept. 1, "based on health, safety, national security and other factors."

The cellphones, toys and other products subject to the delay would still be subject to the tariffs starting Dec. 15, the USTR said. The move would likely come as a relief during the holiday shopping season, as economists say the cost of the U.S. tariffs are passed on to American businesses and consumers.

"Just in case it might have an impact on people, what we've done is delayed it, so they won't be relevant for the Christmas shopping season," President Donald Trump told reporters in New Jersey.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average spiked over 500 points after the delay was announced, as Wall Street appeared to react positively after weeks of negative news on U.S.-China trade talks. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce called the delay "welcome news for American businesses and consumers."

Meanwhile, China's Commerce Ministry said Lighthizer, U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Chinese Vice-Premier Liu He spoke on Tuesday about trade. During the call, "China lodged solemn representations" over the tariffs set to go into effect next month, according to China's official Xinhua news agency.

The two sides agreed to speak on the phone again in two weeks, according to the ministry.

The 10% tariff, set to go into effect Sept. 1, was intended to cover virtually all remaining imports from China not already subject to tariffs.

The U.S. Trade Representative on Tuesday published a list of goods that it will cover.

Trump on Tuesday morning accused China of failing to follow through with promises it had made in ongoing trade talks, after Trump tweeted that China said "they were going to be buying 'big'" from American farmers.

"So far they have not done what they said," Trump tweeted. "Maybe this will be different!" Trump did not specify what "this" referred to, although trade talks were set to resume next month.

The president also suggested, as he has before, that the U.S. was benefiting from a trade war with China. The U.S. Treasury Department last week labeled Beijing a currency manipulator after China devalued its currency, leading to fears of currency war.

"Through massive devaluation of their currency and pumping vast sums of money into their system, the tens of billions of dollars that the U.S. is receiving is a gift from China," Trump tweeted. "Prices not up, no inflation. Farmers getting more than China would be spending. Fake News won't report!"

But economists say the China trade war has hit both sides -- and that tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars worth of Chinese imports are passed on to American business and, through price increases, to U.S. consumers.

U.S. markets experienced their largest drops of the year last week, the same day the U.S. labeled China a currency manipulator.

[China] U.S. blinks in trade fight with China, delaying tariffs on some imports (CBS News)

CBS News [8/13/2019 10:46 AM, Rachel Layne and Irina Ivanova, 3332K]

The U.S. announced it will not impose a 10% tariff on certain Chinese products starting Sept. 1 and is pushing back planned duties on a range of popular consumer goods, sending stock markets surging.

"Certain products are being removed from the tariff list based on health, safety, national security and other factors and will not face additional tariffs of 10 percent," the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative said Tuesday. The agency did not specify which items would be stricken from the list.

Tariffs on other items will be delayed until Dec. 15, the USTR said. That leaves time for items to be shipped to the U.S. ahead of the holiday rush. Those items include cell phones, laptops, video game consoles, computer monitors, holiday lights and some types of toys, shoes and clothing. President Trump specifically linked the delay at least in part to holiday shopping.

"We've delayed it so it won't be relevant for the Christmas shopping season," President Donald Trump told reporters as he left for Pennsylvania Tuesday.

The retail industry, which had lobbied for exemptions, cheered the move.

"Clearly, the administration understands the importance of avoiding higher taxes on American families during the holiday season. Still, continued uncertainty for U.S. businesses and consumers is a drag on the economy," said David French, senior vice president for government relations for the National Retail Federation. He reiterated the group's opposition to using tariffs as a tactic to change China's approach.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin held discussions with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He on Tuesday morning, a spokesperson for the

USTR said. Another call will take place in two weeks, the spokesman said.

Economists at Goldman Sachs on Sunday lowered their economic forecasts, citing the impending tariffs on consumer goods. Bank of America Merrill Lynch recently raised their odds of a recession in the next year to roughly 33%, up from about 20%.

"We are worried," Michelle Meyer, Bank of America Merrill Lynch's head economist, wrote in a note on Friday. "We now have a number of early indicators starting to signal heightened risk of recession."

New U.S. tariffs on China have increased uncertainty for businesses, which experts say could cause them to curb hiring and investing in new equipment. Mr. Trump's duties on Chinese goods have also pushed stock prices lower, which could depress spending by wealthier Americans, Goldman said.

The Dow was up 383 points, or 1.5%, to 26,291 in afternoon trade. The S&P 500 rose 1.5%, and the technology-heavy Nasdaq added 2%.

While stocks of retailers and some consumer goods including Apple, Best Buy and Mattel rose on the news, some retail groups reiterated they oppose the use of tariffs as a way to negotiate with China on trade.

"Rebalancing" trade with China is "of critical importance, but taxing U.S. companies, U.S. consumers, and the U.S. economy is not the way to achieve that goal," said Rick Helfenbein, CEO of the American Apparel & Footwear Association said in a statement. That was a sentiment echoed by Naomi Wilson, senior director of policy for the Information Technology Industry Council, a group representing technology companies in Washington.

"While we appreciate the delay, tariffs – even the threat of tariffs -- hurt consumers, rattle markets, disrupt supply chains, increase costs, and create uncertainty across economies," Wilson said. She urged the administration to stop "creating an environment of extreme uncertainty."

Some experts also said the move to push back tariffs doesn't mean the U.S. trade war with China is over.

"The three-month delay to the imposition of tariffs on more than half of the \$300 [billion] of Chinese imports, originally scheduled to take effect next month, is obviously designed to avoid a politically damaging rise in consumer prices ahead of the holiday season," Andrew Hunter of Capital Economics said in a report. "It should not be misinterpreted as a sign that trade tensions are easing."

[Editorial note: consult source link for extensive commentary]

[China] US will delay tariff hike on Chinese-made cell phones, toys (CNN)

CNN [8/13/2019 10:17 AM, Donna Borak, Kaitlan Collins, Kevin Liptak, 6094K]

The top US trade negotiator on Tuesday said that new tariffs on Chinese-made consumer goods including cell phones, toys and video game consoles would be delayed until

December 15.

It's the latest turnaround on tariffs for President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly dangled threats to ratchet up import duties on goods from China and other countries, including Mexico, as leverage in negotiations.

Trump, who is campaigning for reelection in part on his China trade war, said the move was designed in part to avoid any pain for consumers heading into the holiday season.

"What we've done is we've delayed it so they won't be relevant in the Christmas shopping season," Trump told reporters en route to western Pennsylvania. "Just in case they might have an impact on people."

The move comes after a phone call between US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and top Chinese negotiator Liu He in which the parties agreed to pick up negotiations by phone within two weeks, according to a statement from the Chinese Commerce Ministry. There was no mention of whether negotiators would meet in person next month in Washington as previously scheduled.

Trump and aides have been spooked by the markets' turbulence for the past several days and the President had been encouraging officials to find ways to turn it around as markets have continued to slide.

In his comments to reporters, Trump said his negotiators had a positive call with their Chinese counterparts, and that "they would really like to make a deal."

The President also made sure to note that the stock market -- his favorite measuring stick -- was "way up" for many reasons, including the tariff news.

The US announcement immediately sent stocks surging, a sign of how heavily the ongoing trade war is weighing on markets. Rising concerns about a global slowdown contributed to the decision last month by the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates.

Last year, Trump imposed tariffs on about \$250 billion in Chinese-made goods, targeting industrial materials and components.

He said earlier this month that he would add a 10% tariff on an additional \$300 billion of Chinese-made products on September 1, which would effectively put a tax on all Chinese goods coming into the United States.

"Trade talks are continuing, and during the talks the U.S. will start, on September 1st, putting a small additional tariff of 10% on the remaining 300 billion dollars of products coming from China into our country," he tweeted at the time.

The tariff threat provoked warnings from US companies that costs would be passed on to consumers. The December delay would mean a tariff hike right before Christmas, but long after holiday items have been imported into the US.

The Office of the US Trade Representative said in its statement Tuesday that it would also

exclude certain products based on health, safety and national security reasons from either list.

Some goods will still be hit with the 10% tariff on September 1, including some food items, ranging from peanuts to cheese and meats. Some gloves, scarves and ski boots will still get hit earlier on, as well as baseballs, footballs, ice skates and books.

More than half of the footwear imports from China remain on the September list, while the rest will be hit with tariffs on December 15, according to the Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America. While most consumer tech products -- including smartphones, laptops and tablets -- fell to the December list, about \$52 billion worth of products will still be hit in September. That includes smart speakers, printers and TVs.

Trump has remained frustrated by the lack of China progress and with his team's performance in handling the trade talks. Aides say the trade war with China has gone on far longer than expected, and even those with an optimistic view have said privately that they don't expect it to be resolved soon.

Lighthizer and Mnuchin recently flew to Shanghai to meet with their Chinese counterparts about resuming the talks, but those meetings did not go well, according to people briefed on them, triggering the President to threaten the additional tariffs.

The President on Tuesday tweeted a complaint about China not buying US agricultural products, though he's repeatedly claimed that China would resume purchases of US goods, particularly soybeans, as a condition of limiting or removing US tariffs.

"As usual, China said they were going to be buying 'big' from our great American Farmers. So far they have not done what they said. Maybe this will be different!" the President wrote.

[China] Trump's tariff delay on China eases Christmas worries, sends markets higher (Washington Times)

Washington Times [8/13/2019 6:25 AM, Dave Boyer, Tom Howell Jr., 452K]

The Trump administration, fearing a blue Christmas, said Tuesday it will delay until December part of the president's plan to impose tariffs on a host of popular goods.

Stocks surged on Wall Street in the wake of the move, and retailers cheered the reprieve from threatened 10% tariffs on toys, electronics and some clothing imported from China.

President Trump had scheduled the tariffs for Sept. 1 but pushed them back to Dec. 15, which should clear the way for the goods to reach the U.S. in time for the Christmas shopping season and without additional penalties.

Free trade advocates said Mr. Trump's move is a tacit admission that he is wrong when he says tariffs don't hurt U.S. consumers. The president, defending the move, tried to straddle that line.

"We're doing this for Christmas season, just in case some of the tariffs would have an impact on U.S. customers, but so far there's been none," Mr. Trump said. "Just in case they

might have an impact on people, what we've done is we've delayed it."

Mr. Trump targeted \$300 billion in goods for the tariffs, but the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative said Tuesday that the levies on cellphones, laptop computers, video game consoles, certain toys, computer monitors and select types of footwear and clothing will be delayed.

The administration said other products will be removed from the tariff list altogether based on "health, safety, national security and other factors."

Mr. Trump said he recently had a "very good call with China" that left him more optimistic about a deal.

The U.S. wants China's communist government to make structural changes to how it subsidizes its economy and to reel in the theft of intellectual property.

Both sides also are trying to settle thorny questions about Huawei, a major Chinese tech company that has faced questions about its ability to conduct surveillance on behalf of Beijing through 5G networks. The company says it doesn't pose a risk.

Mr. Trump says the Chinese are to blame for the roller-coaster talks because they have moved the goal posts and reneged on promises.

"They said they're going to buy farm products," Mr. Trump said Tuesday before a trip to Pennsylvania. "So far they've disappointed me with the truth. They haven't been truthful or, let's say, they've certainly delayed the decision."

Xinhua, China's state-run news agency, reported that U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin asked for a phone call Tuesday with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He.

China complained about the tariffs that are still slated for Sept. 1, the news agency said. Both sides agreed to another phone conversation in two weeks.

Mr. Trump has sought to deflect the pain of the tariffs. He pointed out that they are adding tens of billions of dollars to the Treasury and stressed the billions of dollars in bailout payments he has authorized to protect farmers who have been hit with retaliatory tariffs by China.

Some farmers are losing patience and say they want open markets instead.

Retailers, meanwhile, say the costs of the tariffs will be passed down to customers despite Mr. Trump's claims that China is absorbing the blow.

Ryan Young, a senior fellow at the free market Competitive Enterprise Institute, said the move to delay some levies amounts to a "tacit admission that consumers pay for tariffs, not Chinese producers."

"The administration has been saying otherwise, but it is good to see that they do not believe

their own words,” he said. “Tariffs do not work. It is time to scrap them in favor of more effective policies.”

The National Retail Federation said it appreciated the partial reprieve, though it pushed for certainty.

“Clearly, the administration understands the importance of avoiding higher taxes on American families during the holiday season,” said David French, the federation’s vice president of government relations.

Stock markets surged on news of the tariff delay. The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed up 372 points, or 1.4%, to 26,280 after rising as high as 519 points.

U.S. and China appeared close to a major trade deal in May, but talks fell apart after the Trump administration accused the Chinese of reneging on previously negotiated details.

Mr. Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping seemed to get talks back on track at the Group of 20 summit in Japan, but Mr. Trump two weeks ago said he felt betrayed and announced the new round of tariffs.

China’s currency then dropped versus the dollar in a move the Beijing government suggested was intentional. The U.S. retaliated by declaring China a currency manipulator, a label it hadn’t given the country since the 1990s.

Mr. Trump and others say the Chinese might be trying to drag out the process until after the 2020 election, though the president said Tuesday that China “would really like to make a deal.”

“I’ve always been optimistic,” Mr. Trump said. “My only question is whether or not they were willing to wait and take the chance on [the election] and deal with someone who doesn’t know what he’s doing, or she’s doing — like they’ve had in the past.”

Senate Democrats said it’s important to crack down on China, though Mr. Trump doesn’t have a cogent plan.

“Postponing tariffs on video game consoles and pet toys is giving Trump the stock market bump he wants, but he’s still going ahead with tariffs on books, school supplies and clothes that will hit working Americans the hardest,” said Sen. Ron Wyden, Oregon Democrat. “As I have said many times, I fully support going after China’s cheating on trade. But Trump’s incoherent posturing is hitting American pocketbooks without changing China’s behavior.”

[China] Trump delays tariffs on some Chinese goods until December (San Francisco Chronicle)

San Francisco Chronicle [8/13/2019 1:25 PM, Paul Wiseman and Christopher Rugaber, 2613K]

Responding to pressure from businesses and growing fears that a trade war is threatening the U.S. economy, the Trump administration is delaying most of the import taxes it planned to impose on Chinese goods and is dropping others altogether.

The announcement Tuesday from the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative was greeted with relief on Wall Street and by retailers who have grown fearful that the new tariffs would wreck holiday sales.

The administration says it still plans to proceed with 10% tariffs on about \$300 billion in Chinese imports — extending its import taxes to just about everything China ships to the United States in a dispute over Beijing's strong-arm trade policies.

But under pressure from retailers and other businesses, President Donald Trump's trade office said it would delay until Dec. 15 the tariffs on nearly 60% of the imports that had been set to absorb the new taxes starting Sept. 1. Among the products that will benefit from the 3½-month reprieve are such popular consumer goods as cellphones, laptops, video game consoles, some toys, computer monitors, shoes and clothing.

The administration is also removing other items from the tariff list entirely, based on what it called "health, safety, national security and other factors."

Separately, China's Ministry of Commerce reported that top Chinese negotiators had spoken by phone with their U.S. counterparts, Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, and planned to talk again in two weeks.

The news sent the Dow Jones Industrial Average soaring more than 400 points in mid-afternoon trading. Shares of Apple, Mattel and shoe brand Steve Madden, which stand to benefit from the delayed tariffs, led the rally.

Speaking to reporters in New Jersey, Trump confirmed that he had decided to delay the tariffs, which could force retailers to raise prices, to avoid the economic pain that could result during the holiday period.

"We're doing (it) just for Christmas season, just in case some of the tariffs could have an impact," the president said.

Trump has repeatedly argued that his tariffs are hurting China, not American consumers. But by delaying higher tariffs on consumer goods, Trump is tacitly acknowledging that his import taxes stand to squeeze American households, too. Tariffs are taxes paid by U.S. importers, not by China, and are often passed along to U.S. businesses and consumers through higher prices.

Jay Foreman, CEO of the toy company Basic Fun, said he's pleased that the 10% tariffs have been delayed for products like his until December. His company, based in Boca Raton, Florida, had already set prices for the holiday season and would have had to absorb the impact of the tariffs. Foreman said he is considering layoffs this fall to offset his higher costs and noted that despite Trump's reprieve, tariffs remain a severe threat.

"We were relieved," he said. "But does that stop the volatility and instability? No."

Together, the news of negotiations and tariff delays provided at least a respite after weeks of heightened U.S.-China trade tensions. The relief might prove only temporary, though, if

the tariffs eventually take full effect and Beijing retaliates against U.S. exports.

The Trump administration is fighting the Chinese regime over allegations that Beijing steals trade secrets, forces foreign companies to hand over technology and unfairly subsidizes its own firms. Those tactics are part of Beijing's drive to become a world leader in such advanced technologies as artificial intelligence and electric cars.

But 12 rounds of talks have failed produce any resolution. Frustrated with the lack of progress, Trump raised the tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese imports from 10% to 25% in May and said Aug. 1 that he'd impose 10% taxes on an additional \$300 billion on Sept. 1.

On Sunday, economists at Goldman Sachs downgraded their economic forecasts, citing the impending tariffs on consumer goods. And economists at Bank of America Merrill Lynch have raised their odds of a recession in the next year to roughly 33%, up from about 20%.

"We are worried," Michelle Meyer, head of economics at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, wrote Friday. "We now have a number of early indicators starting to signal heightened risk of recession."

Goldman said the tariffs on China have increased uncertainty for businesses, which will likely cause them to pull back on hiring and investing in new equipment or software. Trump's tariffs on Chinese goods have also weighed down stock prices lower, which could depress spending by wealthier Americans, Goldman found.

"It's pretty clear that the problem with (Trump's) tariff tactics is it's bad for the economy," said David Dollar, a China specialist at the Brookings Institution and a former official at the World Bank and U.S. Treasury. "You try to use the weapon but then you get blowback on your own people."

Despite the exchanges between the U.S. and Chinese negotiators, the prospects for negotiations remain dim. A substantive deal would require China to scale back its aspirations to become a tech superpower. And relations between the countries have been strained by mistrust.

The best possible outcome, Dollar said, likely would be a "mini-deal" in which China agrees to buy more American products and narrow the gaping U.S. trade deficit with China. In exchange, perhaps the United States would lift some sanctions on the Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei, which the U.S. sees as a national security risk.

So far, Trump's tariffs have failed to get President Xi Jinping to yield to the U.S. demands.

"I don't think we're any closer to a deal," said Scott Kennedy, who analyzes China's economy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "I don't think there will be any deal during the Trump administration."

The decision to delay the tariffs "shows that the two economies are interdependent and that interdependence benefits many Americans" by providing affordable goods, Kennedy said. "It's not so easy to penalize China or disengage."

[China] Huawei Covertly to Sell Smartphones in U.S. (Free Beacon)

Free Beacon [8/13/2019 5:00 AM, Bill Gertz, 127K]

China's Huawei Technologies, the world's No. 2 smartphone maker, covertly planned to sell its smartphones in the United States disguised as non-Huawei devices, according to U.S. officials.

U.S. intelligence agencies learned of the plans last month and alerted senior policymakers.

According to the officials, the Shenzhen, China-based company planned to ship a large number of its smartphones to Mexico where the smartphones would be re-labeled and shipped into the United States.

As non-Huawei devices, there would be no prohibition on selling them in the United States.

The phones, however, could be identified as Huawei devices by examining their electronic components that can be traced to the Chinese telecom.

No other details of the secret smartphone operation could be learned.

Huawei's U.S. affiliate did not return emails seeking comment.

The scheme to disguise Huawei smartphones appears to be the latest effort by the company to penetrate the U.S. market.

Huawei in 2008 was forced to give up a bid to buy the U.S. telecommunications company 3Com over national security concerns. Two years later, Huawei was pressured to abandon a bid to buy the U.S. server technology company 3Leaf.

In May, President Trump slapped sanctions on Huawei that are designed to prevent use of the company's products in the United States and to block American tech companies from selling computer chips to Huawei.

Using a presidential order, Trump banned U.S. telecommunications companies from purchasing equipment supplied by foreign adversaries.

In addition to the order, Huawei was added to the Commerce Department's entities list that blocks all exports to Huawei unless an export license is granted.

On Friday, Trump was asked about relaxing curbs on Huawei and said: "We're not going to do business with Huawei."

"And I really made the decision," he said. "It's much simpler not to do any business with Huawei, so we're not doing business with Huawei. That doesn't mean we won't agree to something if and when we make a trade deal, but we're not going to be doing business with Huawei."

Sen. Marco Rubio (R., Fla.) said in a recent interview that Chinese negotiators have raised lifting U.S. sanctions on Huawei during meetings with U.S. negotiators.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper also said he is concerned about Chinese technology infiltrating U.S. and allied communications systems.

"So Huawei is the poster child right now for that," he told reporters.

Last week, the Pentagon, General Services Administration, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration announced plans to ban purchases of products from Huawei and another Chinese telecom, ZTE.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying denounced the proposed ban.

"China deplores and firmly opposes the U.S. practice of taking discriminatory and unfair measures on certain Chinese companies based on China-related negative content of its 2019 National Defense Authorization Act," she said.

"The U.S. has abused its state power and used every possible means to smear and oppress certain Chinese companies," Hua said. "This has seriously undermined its image as a country and its own interests."

Meanwhile, the Department of Homeland Security on Monday listed two Huawei smartphones as containing vulnerabilities that could be used in cyberattacks.

DHS' Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, stated in a public notice that the Huawei Emily smartphone contains a security hole that could allow "an attacker can trick a user to click a URL to exploit this vulnerability."

A second Huawei phone, the Honor, includes an "an information leak vulnerability."

"An attacker may trick a user into installing a malicious application," the notice states, adding that hackers can use this to obtain information.

Another Huawei software used on laptops called PC Manager was also listed in the DHS warning as containing security vulnerabilities.

The PC Manager software, used to check if software is up to day, can allow hackers to obtain information from laptops.

White House National Security Adviser John Bolton said in June that the administration's targeting of Huawei was a recognition of the threat the company poses to telecommunications security worldwide.

"Huawei is a state actor. We've got to stop thinking of some of these Chinese firms as if they're traded on the New York Stock Exchange," Bolton told the Washington Free Beacon.

Bolton said companies like Huawei masquerade as private entities but most are controlled by the Chinese military or other state agents in Beijing.

"These are not capitalist companies. We're not abandoning our free market principles. We're saying you're not going to use a state-owned enterprise basically to undercut us, to

treat us unfairly, in competitive terms. Or to get back doors into our telecoms," he said.

The U.S. government in 2018 pressured AT&T and Verizon to stop selling Huawei smartphones in the United States. Best Buy also stopped selling Huawei phones last year.

The Pentagon also banned sales of Huawei phones to military personnel over concerns about the security risks of using the phones.

After the recent ban, Google blocked Huawei from using its Android operating system.

Huawei was founded by Ren Zhengfei, a member of the Communist Party of China and former PLA electronic warfare expert.

Ren has denied the company collaborates with the military and intelligence services in China.

The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence concluded in a report in 2012 that the use of Huawei equipment in critical infrastructure "could undermine core U.S. national-security interests."

According to intelligence sources, Huawei in 2014 attempted to electronically penetrate National Security Agency computer networks through a U.S. defense contractor.

The incident was discussed in August 2014 during a meeting of an interagency security group called G-FIRST, for Government Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams.

The blacklisting of Huawei smartphones has hurt sales for the company abroad. The company's largest revenue came from smartphone sales, with more than \$50 billion sold in 2018, according to the Wall Street Journal.

The company recently announced the introduction of a homemade operating system to replace Android.

Sales of Huawei phones inside China have increased, however.

Presidential Tweets

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet1](#) [8/13/2019 8:16 AM] Curt Schilling, a great pitcher and patriot, is considering a run for Congress in Arizona. Terrific! @foxandfriends

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet2](#) [8/13/2019 8:24 AM] Thank you John, you are a special guy! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet3](#) [8/13/2019 8:38 AM] I thought Chris was Fredo also. The truth hurts. Totally lost it! Low ratings @CNN [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet4 [8/13/2019 8:49 AM] Through massive devaluation of their currency and pumping vast sums of money into their system, the tens of billions of dollars that the U.S. is receiving is a gift from China. Prices not up, no inflation. Farmers getting more than China would be spending. Fake News won't report!

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet5 [8/13/2019 9:38 AM] Thank you Steve! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet6 [8/13/2019 10:04 AM] Would Chris Cuomo be given a Red Flag for his recent rant? Filthy language and a total loss of control. He shouldn't be allowed to have any weapon. He's nuts!

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet7 [8/13/2019 10:10 AM] As usual, China said they were going to be buying "big" from our great American Farmers. So far they have not done what they said. Maybe this will be different!

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet8 [8/13/2019 10:53 AM] ALL THE NEWS THAT'S NOT FIT TO PRINT! "The New York Times is no longer the paper we grew up with. It is no longer a news organization. It is now an agenda driven organization out to change the Country (for the worse!)." Michael Goodwin, Highly Respected New York Post Columnist.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet9 [8/13/2019 1:11 PM] Many are blaming me, and the United States, for the problems going on in Hong Kong. I can't imagine why?

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet10 [8/13/2019 1:17 PM] Our Intelligence has informed us that the Chinese Government is moving troops to the Border with Hong Kong. Everyone should be calm and safe!

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet11 [8/13/2019 1:24 PM] Just landed in Pennsylvania. Looking forward to making a speech on energy. So important!

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet12 [8/13/2019 1:32 PM] Put it back up. We are living with a Rigged & Fake Media! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Tweet13 [8/13/2019 1:43 PM] So terrible! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet14](#) [8/13/2019 3:38 PM] Just leaving. Incredible Complex. JOBS! JOBS! JOBS!
[Editorial note: consult retweet at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet15](#) [8/13/2019 3:45 PM] See you in New Hampshire! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet16](#) [8/13/2019 4:41 PM] It always happens! When a Conservative does even a fraction of what Chris Cuomo did with his lunatic ranting, raving, & cursing, they get destroyed by the Fake News. But when a Liberal Democrat like Chris Cuomo does it, Republicans immediately come to his defense. We never learn!

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet17](#) [8/13/2019 5:00 PM] True! Without being stuck at an airport, where CNN buys (at a big price) an uninterested audience, they've got nothing going. @CNN is BAD for America!

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet18](#) [8/13/2019 8:26 PM] Thank you Bill! [Editorial note: consult retweet at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet19](#) [8/13/2019 8:46 PM] No debate on Election Security should go forward without first agreeing that Voter ID (Identification) must play a very strong part in any final agreement. Without Voter ID, it is all so meaningless!

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet20](#) [8/13/2019 9:23 PM] Great day in the incredible Commonwealth of Pennsylvania today, with the amazing energy workers, construction workers, and craft workers who make America run – and who make America PROUD. No one in the world does it better than YOU! [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

[Tweet21](#) [8/13/2019 10:38 PM] Great interview of Ron Vitiello, Former Acting Ice Director, by @JesseBWatters, on @FoxNews, about all of the work that is being (& has been) done on our Southern Border. Thanks Ron, terrific job! Now if only the Democrats would fix the Loopholes & Asylum.

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