



DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

By TechMIS

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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.

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Top News

Several thousand migrants headed north through Mexico, push past blockade to head north

The Hill [10/23/2021 8:09 PM, Lexi Lonas, 1776K] reports several thousand migrants pushed past authorities in southern Mexico and are heading north to the United States border, according to a report from Reuters. The caravan with about 3,000 migrants is made up of individuals from Haiti, South America and Central America, the wire service reported. The group began its trek Saturday by the city of Tapachula near the Guatemalan border and is its making its way through Mexico. There was a checkpoint in Tapachula where migrants had to get past about 400 law enforcement officers in riot gear. A Reuters video captured families putting children on their shoulders while they tried to get past officers. One family with a small child was knocked down with their personal items strewn on the ground. Irineo Mujica, one of the organizers of the group, said that the mass of people will go to Mexico City to protest the lack of government assistance in southern part of the country. Reuters reported that Mexican authorities have tried to contain migrants in the country. The caravan comes as Customs and Border Protection (CBP) released data Friday that 1.7 million migrants have been arrested at the southern border in fiscal 2021. The AP [10/23/2021 1:27 PM, Edgar H. Clemente] reports El Salvador and Haiti have been waiting in the southern city of Tapachula for refugee or asylum papers that might allow them to travel, but have grown tired of delays in the process. Unlike previous marches, the one that started Saturday from Tapachula did not include as many Haitian migrants, thousands of whom reached the U.S. border around Del Rio, Texas in September.

Reported similarly:

Reuters [10/23/2021 6:05 PM, Jose Torres, 4947K]

Bloomberg [10/23/2021 6:16 PM, Scott Squires, 257K]

FOX News [10/23/2021 2:09 PM, Adam Shaw, Griff Jenkins, 9251K]

Telemundo51 [10/23/2021 2:00 PM, Staff, 14K]

Telemundo [10/23/2021 4:54 PM, Ronny Rojas, 346K]

Letter calling parents domestic terrorists has ‘thrown gasoline’ on the fire, parent activist says

FOX News [10/23/2021 5:23 PM, Tyler O’Neil, 9251K] reports a parent activist and former school board member who has trained hundreds of concerned parents across the country to run for school board themselves tells Fox News that parents will not accept the National School Board Association’s “disingenuous” apology after it compared parents to domestic terrorists in a letter to the Biden administration. She predicted that the NSBA letter will only energize concerned parents. “It’s really disingenuous, it’s a little too late for that,” Laura Zorc, Director of Education Reform at Building Education for Students Together (BEST), told Fox News in an interview on Saturday. “It’s almost as if it’s a forced apology.” Zorc told Fox News that the NSBA apology is “an apology to their membership, it’s not an apology to the parents it needs to be going to.” At least 21 states had distanced themselves from the NSBA letter, according to Parents Defending Education. The Washington Times [10/23/2021 8:56 AM, Valerie Richardson, 381K] reports the National School Boards Association issued an apology late Friday for urging federal authorities to target unruly school board meetings, a missive that spurred Attorney General Merrick Garland’s much-decried decision to bring in the FBI. In a memo to state affiliates, the NSBA board of directors cited the Sept. 29 letter to President Biden from association president Viola M. Garcia and interim executive director and CEO Chip Slaven that raised the specter of domestic terrorism and hate crimes. “On behalf of NSBA, we regret and apologize for the letter,” said the NSBA memo. “There was no justification for some of the language included in the letter. We should have had a better process in place to allow for consultation on a communication of this significance. We apologize also for the strain and stress this situation has caused you and your organizations. Mr. Garland insisted “we are not investigating peaceful protest or parent involvement at school board meetings.” “We are only concerned about violence, threats of violence against school administrators, teachers, staff, people like your mother, a teacher, that is what we’re worried about,” he said. “We are worried about that across the board.” The NSBA memo also said that the association has launched a formal review of its “processes and procedures,” and that parents should have a role in decision making about their children’s education. “As we’ve reiterated since the letter was sent, we deeply value not only the work of local school boards that make important contributions within our communities, but also the voices of parents, who should and must continue to be heard when it comes to decisions about their children’s education, health, and safety,” the association said.

Reported similarly:

FOX News [10/23/2021 6:39 PM, Kelsey Koberg, 9251K]

FOX News [10/23/2021 9:06 AM, Kyle Morris, David Spunt, 9251K]

Murder rates in border cities lower than national average

Axios [10/23/2021 3:39 PM, Russell Contreras, 526K] reports even as the nation’s homicide rate jumped in 2020 amid rising gun violence, the murder rate in 11 of the largest communities along the U.S. border stayed below the national average, an Axios analysis found. The wide disparity between majority-Mexican American and Mexican immigrant border communities and other similar-size cities further north conflicts with images and myths of the U.S.-Mexico border as a region filled with crime and disarray. New FBI statistics show some cities along the southern U.S. border had a murder rate 10 times lower than northern cities of the same size. The Axios analysis using FBI data and the 2020 census found 11 border communities from San Diego to Brownsville, Texas, had a homicide rate of 4.1 per 100,000 residents — well below the national average. The Axios analysis

found the 11 border communities did see a small increase in the homicide rate in 2020 from the previous year when it was 3.7 — well below the national average of 5.1 then. The latest FBI numbers on the 11 border communities are consistent with previous years that showed those cities annually have a much lower violent crime rate than the rest of the country.

[DE] Biden builds beach home fence after halting border wall construction

FOX News [10/23/2021 9:14 PM, Joshua Comins, 9251K] reports a new caravan with a reported 2,000 migrants is en route toward the United States as Border Patrol arrests reached their highest level in 35 years. President Biden has yet to visit the southern border as the Department of Homeland Security recently secured a contract to build a \$456,548 tax-payer-funded security fence around the president's Delaware home. The DHS secured the builders contract in September and has an expected completion date by the end of the year. Fox News' David Webb and Anita Vogel addressed the optics of the deal. "The optics are not good here," said Vogel.

[Colombia] Colombia captures most wanted drug lord, 'Otoniel,' in bust compared to Pablo Escobar's fall

The Washington Post [10/24/2021 3:15 AM, Rachel Pannett, Diana Durán and Samantha Schmidt, 11773K] reports Colombia's most wanted drug lord, Dairo Antonio Úsuga, widely known by his alias Otoniel, has been captured by armed forces in his jungle hideout. Úsuga, 50, a former left-wing guerrilla and later a paramilitary fighter, is the alleged leader of the notorious drug trafficking group Clan del Golfo, or Gulf Clan, which dominates major cocaine smuggling routes through thick jungles in the country's restive north. President Iván Duque likened his arrest Saturday to the capture of Pablo Escobar three decades ago. The billionaire drug baron, known as "the Godfather," once sat on top of the drug world with tentacles reaching around the globe. "Otoniel was the most feared drug trafficker in the world, killer of police, of soldiers, of social leaders, and recruiter of children," Duque said during a broadcast video message. "This blow is only comparable to the fall of Pablo Escobar in the 1990s." Úsuga is accused of sending dozens of shipments of cocaine to the United States. He is also accused of killing police officers, recruiting minors and sexually abusing children, among other crimes, Duque said. The U.S. government had put up a reward of \$5 million for help locating him. In its reward notice, the U.S. Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs said Úsuga's criminal network used violence and intimidation to control narcotics trafficking routes, cocaine processing laboratories, speedboat departure points and clandestine landing strips.

Reported similarly:

CNN [10/24/2021 12:30 AM, Stefano Pozzebon, 4876K]

Citizenship and Immigration Services

U.S. to allow private groups to sponsor Afghan evacuees

CBS News [10/23/2021 2:16 PM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 2612K] reports the Biden administration is set to unveil on Monday a program that would allow groups of private individuals to sponsor Afghan evacuees and help them resettle in communities across the U.S., three sources familiar with the plan told CBS News. Under the new program, groups of at least five individuals could apply to become "sponsor circles" that would be responsible for helping evacuated Afghans secure housing, basic necessities, financial support, legal

counsel and medical services for at least 90 days, according to a presentation describing the plan. The sponsorship program would serve as an alternative to the traditional refugee resettlement process overseen by nine national agencies and their local affiliates, which facilitate the U.S. integration of immigrants fleeing violence and war around the globe. Private sponsor groups would also be charged with enrolling Afghan children in U.S. schools; helping adults find jobs; assisting families with English-language translation; and making sure evacuees can access government programs designed to help newly arrived refugees. The "Sponsor Circle Program" will be a joint initiative between the Department of State and the Community Sponsorship Hub, a non-governmental organization that will oversee online applications from prospective sponsors, a source familiar with the effort told CBS News. The hub will connect sponsors with Afghan families.

White House takes unprecedented steps to allow private citizens to sponsor Afghan refugees

CNN [10/23/2021 2:13 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 4876K] reports the Biden administration is taking an unprecedented step to resettle the 55,600 Afghan evacuees from the US military bases where they've been living for weeks and into permanent homes, an official leading the effort told CNN. The move marks the biggest change to the resettlement program since 1980, when the modern-day infrastructure for admitting refugees was put in place. The resettlement challenge has dogged the administration since the frenzied evacuation from Afghanistan in August: resettling tens of thousands of people -- many of whom worked with or on behalf of the US -- within only weeks or months. The abrupt arrival of evacuees strained already-overwhelmed refugee resettlement agencies and left both the administration and organizations scrambling to find permanent homes in a housing crunch. Now, to increase options to evacuees, the Biden administration is launching a program that would allow veterans with ties to Afghans, as well as others, the opportunity to bring them to their cities and serve as a support network as they get their lives started in the US, former Delaware Gov. Jack Markell told CNN.

Customs and Border Protection

Probe into Border Patrol agents drags on over a month, despite Mayorkas claim it would take 'days'

FOX News [10/23/2021 1:30 PM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports an ongoing investigation into Border Patrol agents pictured on horseback turning away Haitian migrants – and who were the subject of false claims that they "whipped" migrants – is still ongoing, a month after Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas promised the probe would take "days, not weeks." "The facts will drive the actions that we take," Mayorkas said in September. "We ourselves will pull no punches and we need to conduct this investigation thoroughly, but very quickly. It will be completed in days, if not weeks." Now, as October comes to an end, the investigation is said to still be ongoing – as its conclusion threatens to create a political headache for the Biden administration. "The investigation is ongoing," a DHS spokesperson told Fox on Friday. "The Department is committed to a thorough, independent, and objective process. We are also committed to transparency and will release the results of the investigation once it is complete."

[Thailand] Tens of millions of filthy, used medical gloves imported into the US

CNN [10/24/2021 12:02 AM, Scott McLean, Florence Davey-Attlee, Kocha Olarn and Tim Lister, 4876K] reports trash bags stuffed full of used medical gloves, some visibly soiled, some even blood-stained, litter the floor of a warehouse on the outskirts of Bangkok. Nearby is a plastic bowl, filled with blue dye and a few gloves. Thai officials say migrant laborers had been trying to make the gloves look new again, when Thai health authorities raided the facility in December. There are many more warehouses just like it still in operation today in Thailand -- trying to cash in on the demand for medical-grade nitrile gloves, which exploded with the coronavirus pandemic. And they're boxing up millions of these sub-standard gloves for export to the United States, and countries around the world amid a global shortage that will take years to ease. A months-long CNN investigation has found that tens of millions of counterfeit and second-hand nitrile gloves have reached the United States, according to import records and distributors who bought the gloves -- and that's just the tip of the iceberg. Criminal investigations are underway by the authorities in the US and Thailand. Yet, despite the potential risk to frontline healthcare workers and patients, US authorities have struggled to get a handle on the illicit trade -- in part because import regulations for protective medical equipment were temporarily suspended at the height of the pandemic -- and remain suspended today. In February and March this year one US company warned two federal agencies -- Customs and Border Protection and the Food and Drug Administration -- that it had received shipments filled with substandard and visibly soiled gloves from one company in Thailand. The FDA told CNN it could not comment on individual cases but said it has taken "a number of steps to find and stop those selling unapproved products by leveraging our experience investigating, examining and reviewing medical products, both at the border and within domestic commerce."

Federal Emergency Management Agency

A multi-day severe storm event will impact more than 50 million people from Oklahoma to New Jersey

CNN [10/23/2021 1:23 PM, Allison Chinchar, 4876K] reports a potent system in the central US is stirring up severe weather this weekend that will move eastward early next week, impacting more than 50 million people. Damaging winds, hail, and isolated tornadoes are the main threats from this system, forecasters say. NOAA's Storm Prediction Center (SPC) issued a slight risk, level 2 of 5, of severe storms for portions of Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska on Saturday. The primary threat looks to be isolated large hail, but damaging winds and an isolated tornado are also possible. "Scattered severe thunderstorms associated with damaging wind gusts, isolated large hail and some tornadoes will be likely from parts of the Ozarks into the mid Mississippi Valley," the SPC said regarding Sunday. The system shifts farther east Monday, bringing the severe storm threat to areas of the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast. There is a slight risk, level 2 out of 5, Monday for much of the southern and central Appalachian region including Atlanta, Knoxville, Charlotte, and Raleigh. Strong to severe thunderstorms are also possible for cities such as New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Newark, and Virginia Beach.

Secret Service

[DE] Biden builds taxpayer-funded wall around Delaware beach house, kills border project: Hannity

FOX News [10/22/2021 10:58 PM, Charles Creitz, 9251K, Neutral, Primary] reports that in his Opening Monologue on Friday, Sean Hannity ripped President Joe Biden for what he characterized as hypocrisy after reports surfaced that the Delaware Democrat will have a fence built around his summer home in Rehoboth Beach at the expense of the U.S. taxpayer. Hannity went on to criticize the president for what turned out to be an applause line during his Baltimore town hall on Thursday, wherein he "mock[ed] Americans' obsession with freedom" by invoking the First Amendment mantra in comments criticizing police officers who refuse to submit to the coronavirus vaccine. "Joe Biden and his radical advisors do not care about safety and security, they only care about politics – just look at the border." Hannity noted that Biden sought to "appease the radical left" by ending President Trump's border wall project, cancelling contracts and allowing largely unfettered egress by illegal aliens into the United States. "Ironically, at the same time Biden started construction on a giant wall around his beach house – at your expense of course." Earlier Friday, in an allocation first discovered by the Lewes Cape Gazette, the Department of Homeland Security awarded nearly \$457,000 to a Sussex County, Del., company to construct a security fence around the address of Biden's \$2.7 million summer home near Cape Henlopen. When asked about the matter by the New York Post, the U.S. Secret Service "declined to discuss protective means and methods."

[LA] Breaux Bridge police warn of man passing counterfeit money; release image of suspect and vehicle involved

KLFY [10/23/2021 5:12 PM, Dionne Johnson, 16K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Breaux Bridge Police say they need the public's help identifying a man passing counterfeit cash. Police say the suspect passed the fake cash at a local business. Video showed the suspect leaving the business in a blue vehicle, police said. Anyone with information on his whereabouts is asked to call Breaux Bridge Police at 337-332-2186.

Reported similarly:

KATC 3 [10/22/2021 7:40 PM, Staff, 49K, Neutral, Secondary]

[MI] Public's tips help MSP identify man, woman suspected of using counterfeit bill in Lake City

Cadillac News [10/23/2021 2:00 AM, Rick Charmoli, 5K, Neutral, Secondary] reports that after several tips were received, troopers from the Houghton Lake Michigan State Police Post were able to identify two people suspected of using a counterfeit bill at a Lake City business. On Aug. 16, a trooper from the Houghton Lake Post went to Roger's Grocery Store in Lake City after a suspected counterfeit \$100 bill was used. Police said surveillance images of the suspects were obtained, but troopers previously were unsuccessful in identifying the two people. For that reason, the post asked the public for help in identifying the man and woman believed to have used the fake bill at the grocery store. Michigan State Police Seventh District Public Information Officer Spl. Lt. Derrick Carroll said the two individuals have yet to be arrested and the investigation continues. He also said with the two people identified, the MSP doesn't need any more tips but the post appreciated the public's assistance in this matter.

[MI] Feds seize \$12M, allege its part of money laundering scheme

The AP [10/23/2021 1:12 PM, Staff] reports federal prosecutors in Detroit have seized about \$12 million in cash that they allege was part of a money laundering scheme operating between the U.S. and the United Arab Emirates. A forfeiture complaint unsealed Thursday

in U.S. District Court in Detroit alleges that some of the laundered money was used to buy armored vehicles for an illegal drug trafficking operation based in Michigan, the Detroit Free Press reported. Prosecutors are seeking court approval to allow the U.S. Treasury to keep the \$12 million in cash, which was seized in separate actions in 2020 and 2021. The forfeiture complaint alleges that “The Shadow Exchange” moved cash from the United Arab Emirates to the U.S. using shell companies, mostly located in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. “The Shadow Exchange provided services to persons seeking to transfer U.S. dollars in a manner calculated to avoid anti-money laundering measures of the financial system and the scrutiny of international law enforcement,” the complaint states. It does not identify any specific individuals suspected of being involved in the money laundering but states that “at least one international criminal organization” was among its customers.

[NV] Nevada Attorney General’s Office Partners with the United States Secret Service to Host The 2021 Law Enforcement Summit

AG.NV.com [10/22/2021 9:06 PM, Staff, 99K, Neutral, Secondary] reports that on Thursday, Oct. 21, Nevada Attorney General Aaron D. Ford hosted the 2021 Law Enforcement Summit, bringing together members of law enforcement agencies from around the state and country. The Summit, a partnership between the Nevada Office of the Attorney General and the United States Secret Service, allowed attendees to learn from each other and discuss best practices to deal with many of the issues faced by law enforcement today. “As the top law enforcement officer, I swore a sacred oath to serve and protect the public,” said AG Ford. “Every officer also swore a sacred oath to serve and protect the public, but it is difficult to serve and protect a public that does not trust us or is afraid of us. We all wear the same badge and shoulder the same burden to earn the public’s trust. We cannot just say the right thing. We have to do the right thing.” “I want to thank the U.S. Secret Service for their help in putting on this important event, and I want to thank all attendees for coming out today to learn or to share their expertise,” AG Ford continued. The event, held in Reno, was attended by over 100 members of law enforcement both in-person and virtually at different points during the day. The Summit included presentations on topics relevant to the modern law enforcement community, including discussions on cybersecurity, violence prevention, the sovereign citizen movement and acts of terrorism, including the Oct. 1 shooting in Las Vegas, among others.

Coast Guard

[NC] Shipwreck along North Carolina beach to be removed

The AP [10/23/2021 11:48 AM, Staff] reports an abandoned vessel that ran aground on a North Carolina beach over a year ago will finally be removed. WRAL-TV reports that the removal process will start just in time for Halloween. Initially, most of the former scallop boat was visible along the shoreline. But it has been slowly sinking in sand along the beach south of Cape Hatteras National Seashore’s Oregon Inlet Campground. Now, more than half of it is buried. The crew was rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard. The National Park Service has been warning people to stay away. They say exploring the vessel is dangerous, because of unstable sand shifting beneath it. Officials must remove the vessel before it disappears beneath the sand. The removal project is expected to cost around \$295,000. It is expected to begin on October 25 and take roughly a month to complete.

[CA] 25 people on boat stranded off San Diego coast for 3 days rescued by Coast Guard

The [San Diego Union Tribune](#) [10/23/2021 9:51 PM, Lori Weisberg, 302K] reports a Coast Guard crew on Friday morning came to the rescue of 25 passengers on a panga-style boat offshore San Diego's coast that had been stranded for three days. The passengers, including 23 Mexican nationals and two individuals from Guatemala, were later transferred to the custody of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, said Petty Officer Alex Gray. The passengers had told Coast Guard crew members that they had been at sea for about three days. When the Coast Guard's Cutter Tern reached the boat, it was about 100 miles offshore of Point Loma, Gray said.

[Canada] Fire blazes on cargo ship containers off British Columbia

[Reuters](#) [10/24/2021 5:19 AM, Bhargav Acharya, Chris Helgren and Nur-Azna Sanusi, 4947K] reports a fire broke out on Saturday on containers on a cargo ship carrying mining chemicals off British Columbia, and the Canadian Coast Guard said it is working with the U.S. Coast Guard to assess the situation, including environmental hazards. Sixteen crew members have been evacuated from the MV Zim Kingston, while five remained onboard to fight the fire, the Canadian Coast Guard said in a statement late on Saturday. Ten containers were currently burning, it said, adding the fire continued to spread but the ship itself was not on fire. The agency said it was working with its U.S. counterpart to track 40 containers that had fallen overboard, saying they pose a significant risk to mariners. [Bloomberg](#) [10/24/2021 6:00 AM, Charlotte Ryan, 257K] reports a container vessel has been evacuated after a fire broke out aboard the ship off British Columbia. Sixteen people have been rescued from the Zim Kingston, the Canadian Coast Guard said on Twitter. The fire, affecting 10 containers, remained "a dynamic event," and responders were on the scene near the provincial capital, Victoria, according to the post late Saturday local time. The Zim Kingston lost more than 40 containers in rough seas on Friday, with the U.S. Coast Guard saying in a Twitter post that it was monitoring several of them after they went adrift in the choppy conditions. Zim Integrated Shipping Services Ltd said in a statement that it's "closely coordinating with the vessel's owners, the Canadian authorities and other relevant agencies, while working under heavy weather conditions, to handle the incident." The company added its main concern was crew safety and preventing environmental impact.

Terrorism Investigations

[VA] White supremacists are returning to Charlottesville. But this time, they're on trial.

The [Washington Post](#) [10/23/2021 12:00 PM, Hannah Allam and Ellie Silverman, 11773K] reports such detailed planning is central to a lawsuit filed by nine Charlottesville residents who allege physical harm and emotional distress during Unite the Right, the deadly two-day rally where a torch-carrying mob chanting "Jews will not replace us!" awakened the country to a resurgence of far-right extremism. After four years of legal wrangling, a civil trial begins Monday in a federal courtroom in Charlottesville, where a jury will decide whether the organizing of the rally amounted to a conspiracy to engage in racially motivated violence. Because only a handful of participants faced criminal charges, the plaintiffs' lawyers say, the civil suit is one way to correct what they call a lack of accountability that paved the way for other extremist violence, including the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol. The racist, bigoted imagery on display in Charlottesville in August 2017 — a shock to much of the nation at the time — is now regularly spotted at right-wing gatherings throughout the

country. Suing two dozen white supremacists and hate groups means that virtually everything about the trial is unusual. The judge has ordered litigants not to discuss the extraordinary security backdrop to the trial; personal security is the top expense for the plaintiffs. Potential jurors will be asked their opinions on, for example, Black Lives Matter and antisemitism. Court exhibits will include vile messages that come from more than 5 terabytes of evidence. To make their case, the plaintiffs' attorneys are dusting off a Reconstruction-era statute that was designed to protect newly emancipated Black people from the Ku Klux Klan. Some of the defendants are expected to testify, but court documents show that many have been uncooperative, failing to comply with court orders. One defendant, Jeff Schoep, former commander of the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement, said his cellphone "accidentally" fell into the toilet, making it impossible to recover potential evidence, the plaintiffs complained in court filings.

National Security News

[Pakistan] Report: U.S. nears formal agreement to use Pakistan's airspace

Politico [10/23/2021 3:01 PM, Maeve Sheehey, 1707K] reports the U.S. is nearing a formalized agreement with Pakistan to use its airspace to conduct operations in Afghanistan, according to a CNN report Saturday. Though the U.S. military already uses Pakistan's airspace for intelligence-gathering operations, a formalized agreement would be significant in guaranteeing that this access would continue. A classified briefing with members of Congress took place on Friday morning, at which the Biden administration told lawmakers the U.S. was nearing the agreement, CNN reported, citing three sources familiar.

[Afghanistan] Americans in Afghanistan face hard choice of dividing their families

CBS News [10/23/2021 8:52 AM, Catherine Herridge, 2612K] reports when CBS News first met Angela, an American mother in Afghanistan, she said she was visiting family in August when the government fell and the Taliban came to power. She said repeatedly that she feared for her life. "Angela might not have that much time. Her family might not have that much time," said Army Veteran Brian Kinsella, who first heard about Angela in August while volunteering at a temporary evacuation operation based out of a Washington, D.C., hotel. CBS News spoke to a second family in Afghanistan who faced a similar dilemma. The father, a green card holder, said he sent his wife and American born sons back to a nation in the Gulf earlier this year while he stayed behind to help an elderly Afghan parent and an extended family, including a half dozen nieces under the age of 25. The green card holder, who also said he feared for his safety, had worked as a translator for Special Operations for U.S. forces for six years. Recently, all the pieces fell into place after another group of volunteers came together and scrambled a flight out of Afghanistan. The flight was not funded by the U.S. government. In response to inquiries from CBS News about Angela's case, the State Department did not address her case specifically or the policy that could divide families like hers. In a statement, the State Department said that American citizens are their priority, and they are pressing the Taliban to let those who want to leave Afghanistan be permitted to do so. "Our commitment to U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents, and others to whom we have a special commitment has not changed," the statement said. "U.S. citizens remain our first priority. We are working on a case-by-case basis to assist U.S. citizens and their immediate family members to depart from Afghanistan if and when they decide they wish to leave. We are not providing support for expedited departure or resettlement in the United States for extended family members of U.S.

citizens."

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Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

By TechMIS

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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.

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Top News

US expels Venezuelan migrants to Colombia under COVID powers

The [AP](#) [1/31/2022 6:42 PM, Manuel Rueda and Elliot Spagat] reports the Biden administration said Monday that it has begun expelling Venezuelan migrants to Colombia without a chance to seek asylum after entering the United States from Mexico, its latest use of pandemic-related authority. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security said it will expel Venezuelans to Colombia "on a regular basis," without elaborating on the frequency. They will be limited to Venezuelans who previously resided in Colombia, it said. The first two Venezuelans were expelled Thursday after entering the U.S. illegally from Mexico, U.S. and Colombian officials said. Colombia's immigration agency said they were on a commercial flight. Homeland Security said it acted after discussions with the Colombian government. Colombia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said a meeting was held in December to discuss the possibility of receiving Venezuelan deportees who had already been granted temporary residency in Colombia. It said there was no specific figure on how many Venezuelans would be sent to Colombia, but both sides agreed that the operation would be conducted "with the coordination" of both countries and "following health and safety protocols." [CNN](#) [1/31/2022 12:27 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 5705K] reports the flights of Venezuelans to Colombia, which have not been previously reported, marks another effort by the administration to try to stem the flow of migrants, pushing those who arrive further away from the US-Mexico border including those seeking asylum. In December, US Customs and Border Protection encountered more than 13,000 single adults from Venezuela on the US southern border, compared with 96 in December 2020, according to agency data. A humanitarian crisis and political instability have taken hold of Venezuela in recent years. Around 6 million people have fled the country, according to the United Nations, usually fleeing to other parts of Latin America which have also struggled during the pandemic. Colombia also granted temporary legal status to Venezuelans who had fled there, allowing them to legally work in the country. But for those who opted to journey to the US-Mexico border to seek protections in the US, expulsion to Colombia now puts them thousands of miles away from the possibility of claiming asylum in the US. Last Thursday, the Department of Homeland Security returned two Venezuelan nationals to Colombia, where they had previously resided, the department told CNN, adding that flights to Colombia are expected to take place "on a regular basis." "As part of the United States COVID-19 mitigation efforts, DHS continues to enforce CDC's Title 42 public health authority with all individuals encountered at the Southwest border. However, DHS's ability to expel individuals may be limited for several reasons, including Mexico's ability and capacity to receive individuals of certain nationalities," DHS said in a statement, adding that the department has removed migrants to third countries in the region where they had lived or had status. DHS has also acknowledged the precarious situation in Venezuela by granting a form of humanitarian relief for Venezuelans already in the United States.

Biden says admin trying to ‘figure out’ why illegal immigrants leave their countries
FOX News [1/31/2022 1:16 PM, Jessica Chasmar, 11051K] reports President Biden said Monday that his administration is committed to improving the border crisis by trying to "figure out" why migrants are leaving their home countries for the U.S. in the first place. "We're working a lot with neighboring countries. A lot to do," Biden said during a meeting with Vice President Kamala Harris and the National Governors Association (NGA) at the White House. "I think one of the fundamental things we've got to do in addition to some of the changes we'll make, which we won't get into it today, is that if we figure out why they're leaving in the first place," the president continued. "It's not like people sit around and say, in Guadalajara, 'I got a great idea, let's sell everything we have, give it to a coyote, take us across the border, leave us in the desert in a country doesn't want us. We don't speak the language. Won't that be fun?' "You know, there are gangs we're working on, there's a whole lot of illegal movement, but there's also a way to begin to deal with the reason they're leaving in the first place," he added. Biden's comments came after Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, a Republican and chairman of the NGA, asked the president to explain what the administration is doing to help remedy the influx of migrants over the southern border.

Second draft order by Trump advisers sought to ask DHS to seize voting machines: report

The Hill [1/31/2022 10:07 PM, Joseph Choi, 2054K] reports advisers to former President Trump drafted another version of an executive order that would have directed the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to seize voting machines reported on Monday, citing multiple sources. Earlier this month, Politico obtained a draft order from the Trump administration that would have instructed the Department of Defense to seize voting machines. Now, according to multiple sources who spoke with CNN, the Trump administration also drafted another version of that executive order that had the intention of ordering DHS to seize voting machines. CNN reported there were now two versions of the same document. The idea was spearheaded by retired Col. Phil Waldron and former Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn's sources said, with one source saying Flynn was committed to the idea of seizing election equipment and personally reached out to a senior defense official for help with the plan. CNN [1/31/2022 9:26 PM, Zachary Cohen and Paula Reid, 5705K] reports any operation for the military or federal agents to seize voting equipment for political purposes would have been unprecedented in US history. CNN has reported the existence of a draft order tasking the Pentagon with seizing voting machines. That document has been handed over by the National Archives to the House select committee, which is investigating the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol. Multiple sources now tell CNN that a second version of the document, instructing DHS to carry out the same task, also exists.

Federal authority again prohibits the formation of a union of immigration judges
Univision Austin [1/31/2022 3:18 PM, Jorge Cancino, 389K] reports in a surprise and unexpected decision, a panel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) issued a second ruling that closes the doors to the certification of the union of immigration judges and continues to leave them silent in the face of criticism they may have of the system. migratory. The FLRA panel determined last week (in a 2-1 vote) that the National Association of Immigration Judges (NAIJ) "cannot organize, as they are comparable to managers and act under the command of the Department of Justice (DOJ)", a decision that constitutes a new rejection of the collective bargaining capacity of just over 500 judges.

[DC] January 6 committee uses Pence team to try to penetrate Trump's West Wing
CNN [2/1/2022 1:46 AM, Stephen Collinson, 5705K] reports the House committee probing the US Capitol insurrection racked up one of its most significant wins yet, just as fresh evidence shed new light on ex-President Donald Trump's coup plotting. CNN reported exclusively on Monday that ex-Vice President Mike Pence's former chief of staff Marc Short had given lengthy testimony under subpoena last week. His appearance before the committee was the latest sign that the panel has carved out a window through Pence's staff into events in the West Wing on and before January 6, 2021, that Trump's aides have tried to hide. CNN on Monday also reported new details of the depth of the conspiracy to steal President Joe Biden's election win. Multiple sources said that Trump aides drafted two versions of an executive order to seize voting machines intended for the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security. While the orders were never issued, they flesh out the depravity of the plotting in the final days of Trump's White House that had more in common with a developing world tyrant's desperate bid to cling to power than the conduct expected of a US President. In another development, the National Archives on Monday also released an extraordinary statement saying that West Wing documents sent to the agency had been torn up by the former President and had to be taped up before they were handed to the January 6 committee -- casual destruction of what has now become evidence in a congressional inquiry that also serves as a fresh reminder of Trump's contempt for history and record keeping.

[IL] Vandals strike Chicago synagogue, businesses

The Hill [1/31/2022 4:19 PM, Monique Beals, 2054K] reports on Sunday, a Chicago synagogue and its affiliated Jewish school were vandalized with images of swastikas and antisemitic graffiti. The vandalism occurred at the FREE Synagogue and Hanna Sacks Bais Yaakov High School, in addition to more at a synagogue in Lincolnwood, a suburb of Chicago, according to The Associated Press. Notik also told the outlet that a man was physically and verbally assaulted on his way to the synagogue. Windows were broken Saturday at a Chicago bakery and a kosher food store, according to the Concerned Citizens League, a Jewish group in the city. "No official pronouncement has been made on a possible motive, but these have all the hallmarks of hate-based crimes," said Debra Silverstein, a Chicago City Council member, the AP added. Earlier this month, the FBI and Department of Homeland Security warned in a letter that faith-based groups are likely to remain targets of violence. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas has said that his agency would work alongside Congress to increase funding to allow faith-based groups to better security measures and provide more protection against terrorism, hate crimes and targeted violence.

[TX] Biden's ICE Cancels Deportation Order for Illegal Immigrant Accused of Killing Teen Girl in Drunken Hit-and-Run

The Independent Journal [1/31/2022 7:28 AM, Jack Davis, 38K] reports deportation is no longer in the cards for an illegal immigrant accused of the hit-and-run death of a 19-year-old Texas woman. Adrienne Sophia Exum died in a north Houston crash in November 2020 when the car she was driving was hit by a pickup truck driver, Heriberto Fuerte-Padilla, according to KTRK-TV. She was ejected from her car and died at the scene. Police said Fuerte-Padilla was drunk at the time of the crash and tried to run away from police after the accident. But now, as the Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement implement new Biden administration rules designed to reduce the number of deportations, Fuerte-Padilla is no longer up for deportation, according to the Washington

Times. Texas and Louisiana are pushing back and have filed suit in federal court. A similar case is underway involving officials from Arizona, Montana and Ohio. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas has changed the Trump-era rules, so being in the country illegally does not mean ICE will deport someone. Only those that are national security risks, recent illegal entrants or a public safety risk qualify under the new rules.

[Mexico] Mexico rated very high risk for travel by the CDC

CNN [1/31/2022 4:57 PM, Marnie Hunter and Forrest Brown, 5705K] reports after more than six months in the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's lower-risk Level 3 travel category, Mexico moved into "very high" risk Level 4 on Monday along with 11 other destinations. Tourism powerhouse Mexico had been listed at Level 3 since June 7. A record-high number of new Covid-19 cases has been recorded this month in Mexico. Among the 12 destinations added to Level 4, five were in South America: Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay and French Guiana (an overseas territorial collectivity of France). In the Caribbean, Anguilla and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines moved into Level 4. Singapore and the Philippines in Southeast Asia also moved into the highest-risk category, as did Moldova and Kosovo in Europe. The CDC places a destination at Level 4 when more than 500 cases per 100,000 residents are registered in the past 28 days. The CDC advises travelers to avoid travel to Level 4 countries.

[Qatar] Biden Will Designate Qatar as Major Non-NATO Ally

The New York Times [1/31/2022 4:55 PM, Michael D. Shear, 25484K, Neutral] reports President Biden said Monday that he would name Qatar as a "major non-NATO ally" of the United States, a designation that will clear the way for greater security cooperation and investment in the Gulf nation at a time when Mr. Biden is seeking help boosting natural gas supplies in Europe. The president is eager to reassure European nations that they will not suffer natural gas shortages if a war between Ukraine and Russia breaks out in the weeks ahead. Russia is one of the largest suppliers of natural gas to Germany and other countries in western Europe. Mr. Biden's comments on Monday came ahead of a meeting at the White House with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the emir of Qatar. Speaking to reporters, the president praised the relationship between the two countries over the past half-century on issues like Afghanistan, the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, and the fight against the Islamic State. The Wall Street Journal [1/31/2022 5:50 PM, Gordon Lubold, Neutral] reports "Qatar is a good friend and a reliable and capable partner," Mr. Biden said. "I'm notifying Congress that I will designate Qatar as a 'major non-NATO ally' to reflect the importance...of our relationship; I think it's long overdue." The designation opens the door to more exercises, joint operations and potential arms sales, defense officials said later. As the U.S. has shrunk its military footprint in the Middle East, allies and partners such as Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have sought support from Washington over security threats posed by Iran and Iran-backed rebels inside Yemen. Rebels in Yemen have launched rockets and drone attacks in the region, and the emir's visit comes as rockets targeted Qatar's neighbor, the U.A.E., from inside Yemen on Monday. The U.S. has been attempting to persuade Doha and other nations to help secure energy supplies to Ukraine and other parts of Europe should Russian President Vladimir Putin invade Ukraine. Several North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries are reliant on gas flows from Russia through pipelines that cross Belarus and Ukraine. U.S. officials declined to say whether there was progress on the assurances the U.S. wants from Doha but said the designation of Qatar as a non-NATO ally wasn't connected to Washington's request for energy supplies. U.S. officials Monday said the designation would create a closer bilateral relationship,

nearly 50 years after the U.S.-Qatar diplomatic relationship was first formed. "It does open up a whole new range of opportunities, exercises, operations, and perhaps the application of acquisition of capabilities as well," said Pentagon press secretary John Kirby. The Hill [1/31/2022 3:41 PM, Alex Gangitano, 2054K] reports that in November, the U.S. and Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding for the Gulf state to continue to temporarily host Afghan special immigrant visa applicants and eligible family members while their applications are processed. Biden said on Monday that the bilateral meeting will cover topics including security in the Gulf, the broader Middle East, global energy supplies, the people of Afghanistan and "strengthening commercial and investment cooperation between our two countries." Reuters [1/31/2022 9:08 PM, Trevor Hunnicutt] reports Biden's agenda for the Oval Office also included the Iran nuclear talks and relations with Afghanistan, where Washington's interests are now represented by the small Gulf country. Tamim was also meeting separately with Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and discussing arms sales and other military issues with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, an official told reporters. Biden said he and the emir had a lot on their agenda on Monday including strengthening commercial and investment cooperation.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

[CA] ICE settles claims over COVID spread at California detention centers (Reuters)
Reuters [1/31/2022 12:56 PM, Daniel Wiessner, 5304K] reports U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and private prison operator GEO Group Inc have agreed to settle a class-action lawsuit claiming they failed to take steps to address the COVID-19 pandemic at two California immigrant detention centers. ICE and GEO agreed to maintain population caps, regularly test detainees and require staff to be vaccinated at the Yuba County Jail and GEO-operated Mesa Verde Detention Center, according to a filing in San Francisco federal court on Friday. They denied wrongdoing in the lawsuit, which was brought in 2020 by the American Civil Liberties Union and other groups on behalf of 10 detainees. A judge must approve the settlement, which also would require ICE to pay \$4.1 million in legal fees to the plaintiffs. The plaintiffs claimed ICE and GEO violated their constitutional rights by holding them in cramped facilities and failing to heed guidance on social distancing, cleaning and isolation of symptomatic people. The proposed settlement incorporates many temporary terms imposed by U.S. District Judge Vincent Chhabria in San Francisco during the litigation, and sets a high bar for the government to re-detain any of the 400 people released from the facilities by the judge. The two facilities currently house 62 people. Martin Schenker of Cooley, who represents the detainees who sued, said in a statement that the settlement "is a victory for the rights of detained people and the rule of law. It holds ICE and its private-prison contractor accountable for their conduct." ICE and Florida-based GEO Group did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Monday.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

H-1B visas for tax year 2023: when will you know if you were shortlisted
Univision Austin [1/31/2022 1:24 PM, Jorge Cancino, 389K] reports applicants to obtain a foreign professional worker visa type H-1B for fiscal year 2023 already have a date to register electronically on the page of the US immigration service. The Office of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that the tool will be available between noon on March 1 and noon on March 18, and that each participant in the system "will be assigned

a number." The federal agency explained that "during this period potential petitioners and representatives can complete and submit their records using our online H-1B registration system." USCIS also said that the number that will be given to each registered person "will only be used to follow up on the process," but that the immigrant "cannot use it to track the case through the digital tool known as 'Case Status Online' (Find out the status of your case online). H-1B visas for fiscal year 2023 will be granted as of October 1, "but electronic registration begins on March 1," said immigration attorney Armando Olmedo, co-author of the book 'Immigration, the new rules'.

Split up at the U.S.-Mexico Border, Family Finally Reunites

The US News & World Report [1/31/2022 8:04 AM, Mica Rosenberg and Carlos Barria] reports that on a Tuesday in January, four years after American authorities pried Maria Hernandez away from her daughters and deported her back to Honduras, she returned to the United States - this time with the blessing of the U.S. government. At the Los Angeles International Airport, Nicole, now 7, greeted her mother with a single red rose. Michelle, nearly a teenager, hung back with a bouquet of roses and sunflowers. When Hernandez turned towards her, Michelle rushed into her embrace, sobbing. Hernandez had last held Nicole when she was 3 years old; Michelle was 8. Days after Christmas in 2017, the mother had clung to her weeping girls at a border patrol station in Arizona before a U.S. official pulled them apart, Hernandez said. The trio had crossed into the United States in search of asylum. Once apprehended, Hernandez said, she was given an impossible choice: Leave the country, either with the girls or without them. Rattled by recent threats to Michelle from Honduran gangs, Hernandez decided the girls would be safer in the United States, she said. The sisters were sent to a children's shelter in California and eventually released to live with their brother Maynor, now 34, who earns a living selling oranges in Los Angeles. Hernandez was deported, one of thousands of parents separated from their children under then-President Donald Trump's controversial "zero tolerance" policy to deter illegal immigration. Reuters, which has followed the family since mid-2020, is referring to the girls by their middle names to protect their privacy. The Trump administration contended that allowing families to be released together in the United States while they applied for asylum only encouraged illegal immigration. In response, the administration sought to prosecute and deport parents like Hernandez and place their children in U.S. custody as "unaccompanied minors." As of Jan. 25, the Biden task force had reunited 126 kids with their parents or legal guardians. About 377 more - from Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Brazil, and Venezuela - have reunifications in progress, according to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Setting up a process to bring back parents who were deported to countries across Latin America took months, in part because of the Trump administration's incomplete and shoddy record-keeping, the task force said. A spokeswoman for Trump did not respond to a request for comment.

Customs and Border Protection

Republicans insist on release of report on alleged whippings at the border

FOX News [1/31/2022 6:56 PM, Michael Lee, 11051K] reports a group of Republican lawmakers penned a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas insisting the Biden administration release the findings of its investigation into accusations Border Patrol agents on horseback were photographed whipping Haitian migrants. "It has been more than four months since senior members of the Biden Administration, including President Biden and Press Secretary, Jen Psaki participated in a widely spread falsehood

and accused United States Border Patrol agents of 'whipping' Haitian migrants attempting to illegally cross into the United States near Del Rio, Texas on September 19, 2021," reads the letter sent to Mayorkas Monday. At issue were September images that showed Border Patrol agents on horseback preventing Haitian migrants from crossing the border, with one picture showing an agent grabbing onto a migrant's shirt. The images became controversial after some media outlets and Democratic lawmakers incorrectly stated that the split reins used to control the agents' horses were "whips" being used on the migrants. "To see people treated like they did, horses barely running over, people being strapped – it's outrageous," President Biden said at the time, making a whipping motion with his hand. "I promise you, those people will pay. There will be an investigation underway now and there will be consequences. There will be consequences. Mayorkas had promised in September that a report on the incident would be available to lawmakers in "a matter of days, not weeks," a self-imposed deadline that has now been missed by over four months.

[TX] Truck full of undocumented migrants found in Texas

Telemundo 48 El Paso [1/31/2022 2:00 PM, Staff, 10K] reports more than 60 undocumented migrants ended up under arrest after they were found inside a cargo truck, the Dimmit County Sheriff's Office confirmed. The agency revealed in a Facebook post that its officers made a routine traffic stop shortly before 7 a.m. Sunday, but the driver attempted to flee on foot as soon as the trailer stopped. The authorities then lifted the cover of the truck and discovered that the truck was full of people. All of them were transferred to a Border Patrol detention center in Carrizo Springs, Texas.

[CA] Boat found ashore in Ocean Beach in suspected human smuggling incident

The San Diego Union Tribune [1/31/2022 4:47 PM, David Hernandez, 353K] reports a small boat came ashore in Ocean Beach early Sunday in a suspected human smuggling incident, and everyone on board evaded capture, officials said. Witnesses reported the 16-foot, single-engine boat landing on the beach just north of the Ocean Beach pier about 5 a.m. The suspected smugglers reportedly took the boat back out to sea, but the vessel capsized in the water, said Supervisory Border Patrol Agent Tekae Michael. When agents arrived, everyone on board had escaped, Michael said. U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations planned to impound the boat.

[Canada] Trucker Protest Strands Beef Shipments at U.S.-Canada Border

Bloomberg [1/31/2022 6:57 PM, Jen Skerritt, 227K] reports protesters who are rallying against vaccine mandates are holding up shipments of Canadian beef to the U.S. More than 150 loads of beef are stuck at the border at Coutts, Alberta, the Canadian Meat Council said Monday. A blockade of vehicles has been slowing traffic at the crossing between Alberta and Montana since the weekend in a protest against rules that require truckers crossing the border to be fully vaccinated. "It is not yet clear what the provincial or federal government is doing to facilitate a resolution. The longer this takes, it will cause more supply chain issues and this will affect everyone from producer to consumer," Marie-France MacKinnon, a spokesperson for the council, said by email. The vaccine mandate for truckers has sparked concerns about delivery problems and higher freight costs at a time when the supply chain is already under strain from weather disruptions and a lack of available workers. Canadian trucking groups have estimated as many as 90% of truckers are vaccinated, but in the U.S., only about half of truckers are vaccinated. Earlier Monday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau denounced the convoy of truckers and other protesters who have blockaded parts of Ottawa, Canada's capital city. The protest has become a catch-all

movement against Covid restrictions, with many demonstrators carrying anti-Trudeau flags and signs. Canadian Transport Minister Omar Alghabra said the mandate has not had a "measurable impact on the volume of traffic crossing our border" and about 100,000 truckers crossed in the first week after the rule was implemented.

Transportation Security Administration

Daines introduces Senate bill to prevent illegal immigrants from boarding planes with arrest warrants

FOX News [1/31/2022 5:11 PM, Houston Keene, 11051K] reports Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont., is introducing the Senate version of a bill barring illegal immigrants from showing arrest warrants to board planes. According to the release, the bill was introduced after Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) administrator David Pekoske confirmed the agency was accepting the arrest warrants to fly. The pair introduced the House version of the Crime Doesn't Fly Act last week, which would prohibit TSA from allowing illegal immigrants to use civil immigration warrants as an alternative form of identification. "For noncitizens and non-U.S. nationals who do not otherwise have acceptable forms of ID for presentation at security checkpoints, TSA may also accept certain DHS-issued forms, including ICE Form I-200 (Warrant for Arrest of an Alien)," a TSA spokesperson told Fox News. That refers to a civil immigration arrest warrant.

[CA] FBI: No Bombs Found After Alleged Threat Made on Plane at San Diego Airport

Telemundo [1/31/2022 2:32 PM, Rafael Avitabile, 4K] reports a bomb threat investigation centered on an Alaska Airlines plane that landed at San Diego International Airport Monday afternoon yielded no credible threats, according to the FBI. The "non-specific" threat concerned flight 3352 from San Francisco and was first reported by the TSA, according to Alaska Airlines. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents and Port of San Diego Police officers responded to the airport. "The aircraft was isolated and safely evacuated. The aircraft was searched and has been rendered safe. No explosives were found. All passengers and flight crew are safe and accounted for. As this is a pending matter, we will have no further comment," said a statement from the FBI's San Diego field office. "This afternoon, TSA received a non-specific and non-credible bomb threat impacting Alaska Flight 3352 from San Francisco to San Diego, operated by SkyWest. We cooperated with TSA and the San Diego airport to resolve the issue. All passengers were disembarked and transferred to the terminal without incident, and the aircraft was cleared."

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Major winter storm to sweep across central and eastern U.S. this week

The Washington Post [1/31/2022 1:05 PM, Matthew Cappucci, 12515K] reports it's been barely 36 hours since the conclusion of a historic nor'easter that brought record snow, damaging winds and moderate coastal flooding to New England and the Mid-Atlantic. Now meteorologists are eyeing a new storm that could impact an even broader swath of real estate with snow, ice, thunderstorms and bouts of flooding. Wintry precipitation gets underway Tuesday night, the eve of Groundhog Day, across the Ozarks and the Midwest before expanding eastward along a slow-moving cold front. St. Louis, Chicago and Detroit could deal with heavy snow Wednesday and Thursday, while Dallas, Little Rock, Memphis and Cincinnati face the prospect of a dangerous glaze of ice. The sloppy storm will then

shuffle toward Washington, New York and Boston on Friday with a mix of precipitation types. Winter storm watches stretch from Colorado and the Red River Valley of Texas all the way to the Canadian border, outlining where high-impact snow and ice totals are probable. The watches, affecting more than 35 million people, include Oklahoma City, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, Indianapolis and Detroit.

[KY] FEMA opens hotlines for free legal, mental health services for residents of tornado-impacted areas

WKU Public Radio [1/31/2022 2:30 PM, Lisa Autry] reports the Federal Emergency Management Agency is now offering free legal advice and crisis counseling to victims of the Dec. 10-11 tornadoes that spanned several counties in Kentucky. The help is available to residents in the 16 counties hardest hit by the storms: Barren, Caldwell, Christian, Fulton, Graves, Hart, Hickman, Hopkins, Logan, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, Muhlenberg, Ohio, Taylor, and Warren. A news release from FEMA says when leaving a message, callers should include the county where they're located and describe what type of legal issue they're experiencing. FEMA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have opened another hotline to provide free and confidential counseling to those facing mental health challenges related to the storms.

[OK] Earthquake in northwest Oklahoma felt in multiple states

The AP [1/31/2022 1:11 PM, Staff] reports an earthquake centered near the northwestern Oklahoma city of Medford on Monday had a preliminary magnitude of 4.5, the U.S. Geological Survey reported. The quake was reported shortly after 11 a.m. and was centered about 4 miles (7 kilometers) northwest of Medford, not far from the Kansas state line. There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries, said Grant County's emergency management director, Madelline Wheeler. People across Oklahoma, as well as in Kansas and Arkansas, reported feeling the quake. CNN [1/31/2022 3:28 PM, Gregory Lemos and Caroline Kucera, 5705K] reports the USGS gave the quake a "V" rating on its shake map, indicating "moderate" shaking and "very light" damage. Larger cities such as Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Wichita, Kansas, felt "weak" shaking, according to USGS. The Tulsa Fire Department told CNN they had received no calls of damage nor injuries so far. A spokesperson for the Wichita Police Department also said they had received no reports of damages or injuries and felt "nothing significant."

[ID] Idaho National Guard to aid COVID-hit prisons, clinics

The AP [1/31/2022 5:55 PM, Rebecca Boone] reports the Idaho National Guard is being deployed to help doctors' offices and the state prison system amid overwhelming staffing shortages caused by coronavirus. Idaho Gov. Brad Little made the announcement Monday, saying 75 Idaho National Guardsmen will assist Primary Health Group and the Idaho Department of Correction. Another 503 staffers will be sent to Idaho hospitals under a state contract. At least 48 states and 3 territories have used National Guard members to fill critical gaps, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The National Guardsmen will help at the complex of state prisons south of Boise by patrolling the prison perimeters, staffing the front entrances, administering COVID-19 tests, counting inmates and handling other duties, the IDOC said. At Primary Health Group, the state's largest independent family medicine and urgent care provider, National Guard soldiers will help clinics quickly provide COVID-19 tests to more patients, said CEO Dr. David Peterman. The help will also allow Primary Health Group to keep more of its 21 clinics open with normal operating hours despite staffing shortages, he said.

Federal Protective Service

[GA] Georgia prosecutor asks FBI for security assistance following Trump comments at Texas rally

The Washington Post [1/31/2022 9:32 AM, John Wagner, 12515K] reports the Atlanta-area prosecutor who is weighing whether to bring election-related criminal charges against former president Donald Trump is seeking FBI help in securing a county courthouse and government center in the wake of “alarming” rhetoric from Trump at a rally this weekend. In a letter Sunday, Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis pointed to comments from Trump at a rally in Texas about “racist” and “mentally sick” prosecutors examining a range of issues, including his company and his actions following the 2020 election. “Security concerns were escalated this weekend by the rhetoric of former President Trump at a public event in Conroe, Texas that was broadcast and covered by national media outlets and shared widely on social media,” Willis said in her letter to J.C. Hacker, the special agent in charge of the Atlanta field office of the FBI. “His statements were undoubtedly watched by millions.” In the letter, Willis asked that Hacker immediately conduct a risk assessment of the Fulton County Courthouse and Government Center and provide “protective resources to include intelligence and federal agents.” Willis asked that resources be in place “well in advance” of May 2. That is the day a special purpose grand jury is set to convene to hear evidence in Willis’s criminal probe involving Trump and his associates.

Reported similarly:

Reuters [1/31/2022 4:13 PM, Doina Chiacu, 5304K]

NPR [1/31/2022 5:41 PM, Alana Wise]

CBS News [1/31/2022 12:00 PM, Graham Kates, 2907K]

Secret Service

2 men charged with making separate threats to kill president

The AP [1/31/2022 5:00 PM, Michael Kunzelman, Positive, Secondary] reports a Maryland man and a Kansas man have been charged with making separate threats to kill President Joe Biden, authorities said Monday. Ryan Matthew Conlon, 37, of Halethorpe, Maryland; and Scott Ryan Merryman, 37, of Independence, Kansas; were both arrested last week. Conlon’s case was sealed until Monday. He is also charged with making threats to blow up National Security Agency headquarters. Merryman was arrested after he traveled from his home to Maryland. Merryman called police in his hometown last Tuesday and said he was on his way to Washington, D.C., to see the president, federal authorities said. When a Secret Service agent called him last Wednesday, Merryman said God told him to travel to Washington to “lop off the head of the serpent in the heart of the nation,” according to an FBI agent’s affidavit. “Merryman denied that the serpent was the President of the United States, but stated that he had information about the Book of Revelation that he was being instructed by God to give to the President,” the agent wrote. Merryman didn’t have a weapon but was carrying ammunition and a spotting scope in his backpack when agents found him in a restaurant’s parking lot in Hagerstown, Maryland, last Wednesday. The next day, Merryman called the White House switchboard and said he was coming there to “cut off the head of the snake/anti-Christ,” the FBI affidavit said. Merryman made his initial court appearance by video conference on Monday afternoon. U.S. Magistrate Judge Pamela Meade Sargent ordered him held in custody pending a detention hearing on Feb. 2.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas Sullivan said prosecutors will ask the court to keep him jailed until trial.

Kansas Man Facing Federal Charges in Maryland for Making Threats to Harm the President of the United States and United States Secret Service Agents

The United States Department of Justice [1/31/2022 3:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a criminal complaint was filed on January 28, 2022, charging Scott Ryan Merryman, age 37, of Independence, Kansas, for federal charges of making threats against the President of the United States and interstate communication containing a threat to harm. Merryman is expected to have an initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Baltimore today at 3:45 p.m. before U.S. Magistrate Judge Pamela Meade Sargent. The criminal complaint was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Erek L. Barron; Special Agent in Charge Bo Keane of the United States Secret Service - Baltimore Field Office; and Special Agent in Charge Brandon Bridgeforth of the United States Secret Service – Kansas City Field Office. According to the affidavit filed in support of the criminal complaint, Merryman has made threats against the President of the United States and several United States Secret Service Agents and traveled from his home in Kansas to Maryland. The affidavit alleges that in a series of telephone calls on January 25 and January 26, 2022, Merryman advised law enforcement officers that he was en route to Washington, D.C. to see the President and that he was going to “cut the head off the snake in the heart of the nation.” As detailed in the affidavit, during an in-person interview with a Secret Service agent on January 26, 2022, in Hagerstown, Maryland, Merryman allegedly reiterated his plans to travel to Washington, D.C. to “cut the head off the snake in the heart of the nation.” During a consent search of Merryman, the agent found no weapons, but Merryman did have a loaded magazine containing three bullets that he was carrying on his person, and a spotting scope in his backpack. The Washington Post [1/31/2022 10:32PM, Jasmine Hilton, 12515K] reports a federal judge ordered a Kansas man accused of threatening President Biden and several U.S. Secret Service agents to remain detained pending a detention hearing set for Wednesday and indicated that he should receive mental health treatment.

[DC] Kamala Harris reportedly drove within yards of pipe bomb during Capitol riot

The New York Post [1/31/2022 7:54 AM, Yaron Steinbuch, 6459K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Vice President Kamala Harris came within yards of a pipe bomb during last year’s US Capitol riot – and was inside the Democratic National Committee building for about two hours before the device was discovered, according to a new report. Several sources told CNN that Harris drove just a short distance away from the explosive, which was lying next to a bench outside the DNC on Jan. 6, 2021. Her motorcade pulled into the headquarters garage about 11:30 a.m. and stopped at the parking deck near where the bomb was later discovered, according to the network. The explosive was first investigated by Capitol Police at 1:07 p.m. that day, according to a timeline of events obtained by Politico, and seven minutes later, the Secret Service evacuated then-Sen. Harris from the building. According to an internal Capitol Police timeline, an unnamed “protectee” was removed at about 1:14 p.m. — seven minutes after law enforcement began investigating the bomb reported. A pipe bomb also had been placed outside the Republican National Committee headquarters. Both were reportedly neutralized by authorities later that afternoon. A law enforcement source told CNN that the US Secret Service had swept the interior of the building, the driveway, parking deck and entrances and exits before Harris’ arrival. The source said she was evacuated using an alternate route away from the device. “In order to maintain operational

security, the Secret Service does not discuss protective means and methods,” a Secret Service spokesman told the network in a statement. The White House declined to comment to CNN and the veep’s office referred the outlet to the Secret Service.

[NC] Suspect charged with murder from Charlotte shooting on Christmas Day captured in Georgia

WCNC [1/31/2022 11:52 PM, Curtis Carden, 50K, Positive, Secondary] Video: [HERE](#) reports an arrest has been made following a deadly shooting on Christmas in the Queen City, according to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. Investigators say Bruce Japel Adams was arrested on Thursday, Jan. 27, in Snellville, Georgia for the murder of Fredrick Antonio Edwards. CMPD says Adams is currently in Gwinnett County Jail awaiting extradition to North Carolina. According to a news release from the department, officers responded to a call on Dec. 25 along Beatties Ford Road near Catherine Simmons Avenue in Charlotte. Officers say Edwards was pronounced dead at the scene by Medic. Two other victims were also involved in the incident, but were treated for "non-life-threatening injuries." Adams was taken into custody with assistance from the Charlotte FBI Office, Atlanta FBI Office and the U.S. Secret Service Office based in Atlanta. CMPD homicide detectives traveled to Atlanta to interview Adams.

[GA] Thomasville police investigator named top forensic examiner

The Albany Herald [1/31/2022 2:19 PM, Staff, 8K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Detective Lisa Maxwell, a crime scene investigator with the Thomasville Police Department, received the 2021 Top Forensic Examiner Award by the United States Secret Service. The annual award recognizes the nation’s top 50 state and local digital forensic expert examiners in the nation. “I am honored to be recognized by the Secret Service as one of the top forensic experts in the country,” Maxwell said. “It is truly humbling to receive this prestigious award for the fourth time. The recognition is a testament to all the hard work that digital forensic experts provide nationwide and serves as a reminder of the important role that forensics play in criminal investigations.” The 23-year veteran of TPD joined the USSS task force in 2013. “As a member of the task force, I am assigned to cover all of southwest Georgia, from Perry to the north, Eufaula to the west, and Waycross to the east,” Maxwell said. “Covering such a large territory provides me the opportunity to assist local law enforcement agencies throughout the region while also assisting agencies such as the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.” Maxwell processed 505 exams throughout the 2020-21 Fiscal Year, ranking her 22nd out of 2,442 law enforcement personnel that comprise the nationwide task force.

[TX] Scammers are attaching phony QR codes to Houston’s parking meters, city officials say

The Houston Public Media [1/31/2022 6:08 PM, Gail Delaughter, 42K, Neutral, Secondary] reports scammers are attaching phony QR codes to a parking meters in downtown Houston, city officials confirmed. The QR code links to a website that’s not affiliated with the city where people are asked to give their credit card information. ParkHouston Assistant Director Maria Irshad said they were alerted to the scam after phony QR codes started popping up on parking meters in San Antonio and Austin. Then they found the fake codes on 10 parking meters in downtown Houston, Irshad said. "On the side of the meter we have a pay-by-app sticker," Irshad explained. "They just glued a QR code to the corner where there’s some white space on the sticker." Along with the ParkHouston app, the city has several options to pay for on-street parking that doesn’t use a QR code. Irshad added that

the agency has yet to receive reports of residents using the fraudulent website, but advised that action can be taken if a person is duped by the phony QR code. "Dispute the charges with your credit card," Irshad said. "If you perhaps received a citation, because you would show up as unpaid in our system, contest the citation with the hearing officers and explain what happened." Irshad said the FBI and U.S. Secret Service are now looking into the QR codes since the scam involves multi-jurisdictional crimes. An FBI spokesperson didn't confirm whether the agency was officially investigating the scam, but added that victims of fraud in Houston can report the fraud to at 713-693-5000 or on the FBI's website.

[CA] Downtown Los Angeles Man Sentenced to 4 Years in Prison for Fraudulently Obtaining Credit Cards He Used at Luxury Retail Shops

The United States Department of Justice [1/31/2022 8:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a Los Angeles man was sentenced today to 48 months in federal prison for leading a conspiracy that fraudulently obtained American Express credit cards and then used the cards to purchase more than a half million dollars in goods at luxury stores. Trace Jevon Jones, 33, a.k.a. "Million Dollar," a transient living in downtown Los Angeles when he was arrested in 2019, was sentenced by United States District Judge André Birotte Jr., who also ordered him to pay \$521,128 in restitution to American Express. Jones pleaded guilty in September 2020 to one count of conspiracy to commit bank fraud and one count of aggravated identity theft. From at least November 2016 to July 2018, Jones masterminded a scheme to fraudulently obtain and use American Express credit cards for unauthorized purchases at high-end retail stores. To carry out his scheme, Jones enlisted co-conspirators, and obtained the credit card information and other personal identifying information of true American Express account holders. Jones and his co-conspirators then used this information to convince American Express to send out replacement credit cards in the victims' names. Jones and his co-conspirators then used the fraudulently obtained credit cards to make purchases at luxury stores such as Barneys, Goyard and Gucci in Los Angeles, Beverly Hills and Costa Mesa. There, Jones and other conspirators used victims' stolen information to obtain luxury bags, shoes, jewelry, and other goods. Four other defendants have been sentenced in this case. Terry Ellis Jr., 40, of Chino, and Davion Raymonte Ellis, 32, of Eastvale, are serving federal prison sentences of two years and three years, respectively, after pleading guilty to conspiracy and aggravated identity theft charges in this case. Cherelle Daire Beal, 31, of Eastvale, and Miranda Clare Hensley, 31, of Las Vegas, were given credit for time served and were ordered to serve three years of supervised release. An additional defendant, Jonathan Randall Ross, 33, of Canoga Park, is scheduled to be sentenced in the coming weeks. The United States Secret Service and United States Postal Inspection Service investigated this matter.

Coast Guard

[FL] Sole survivor of capsized boat off Florida coast recalls harrowing ordeal of losing his sister and spending days at sea

CNN [2/1/2022 2:58 AM, Claudia Dominguez and Ana María Mejía, 5705K] reports the sole survivor of a boat that capsized off the coast of Florida last week lost his sister at sea and spent harrowing days fighting to survive, he told reporters at a news conference on Monday. Colombian national Juan Esteban Montoya, 22, was traveling with his sister Maria Camila Montoya, 18, and about 38 other immigrants from different countries, he told CNN en Espanol. Montoya chose to make the trip to the US by boat because it was safer than traveling through Mexico and he and his sister wanted to reunite with their US-based

mother, who joined him at Monday's news conference in Fort Pierce, Florida. He was determined to survive so he could tell his parents what happened to his sister, he said. "It hurts me so, so, so much losing her, because I spent all the energy I could when I didn't have any, looking for her," he said, speaking in Spanish. "It was impossible to find her." Hours after they left the Bahamas, the boat capsized after its motor stopped working and waves crashed into the vessel filling it with water, he said. Montoya last saw his sister sinking when the boat overturned. As time went by, others who were hanging onto the boat would slip beneath the waves after losing strength, Montoya said. "The lack of food, the lack of water, the lack of rest, starts to affect you more," he said. "The solitude was another blow," he said of eventually becoming the last person remaining. "But I didn't lose faith."

CISA/Cybersecurity

Hackers prey on public schools, adding stress amid pandemic

The AP [1/31/2022 3:08 PM, Cedar Attanasio] reports cyberattacks like the one that canceled classes for two days in Albuquerque's biggest school district have become a growing threat to U.S. schools, with several high-profile incidents reported since last year. And the coronavirus pandemic has compounded their effects: More money has been demanded, and more schools have had to shut down as they scramble to recover data or even manually wipe all laptops. Precise data is hard to come by since most schools are not required to publicly report cyberattacks. But experts say public school systems — which often have limited budgets for cybersecurity expertise — have become an inviting target for ransomware gangs. The pandemic also has forced schools to turn increasingly toward virtual learning, making them more dependent on technology and more vulnerable to cyber-extortion. School systems that have had instruction disrupted include those in Baltimore County and Miami-Dade County, along with districts in New Jersey, Wisconsin and elsewhere.

Terrorism Investigations

[NC] Bomb plot: North Carolina man accused of teaching others how to make IEDS meant for killing law enforcement

FOX News [1/31/2022 7:30 PM, Michael Ruiz, 11051K] reports a North Carolina man is facing federal charges for allegedly writing and distributing instruction manuals on how to make bombs — as well as how to booby-trap one's home to kill the FBI or other law enforcement. Authorities arrested Christopher Arthur, a 38-year-old from Mount Olive, North Carolina, on Jan. 22 on bomb making and attempted murder charges after a months-long FBI-led sting operation. He was indicted on Jan. 4 and made his first court appearance Monday. "Law enforcement officers are being feloniously killed in the line of duty at an alarming rate -- 2021 saw the most officers murdered since the 9/11 attacks," FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert Wells said in a statement Monday. "The behavior alleged in this indictment, training someone in methods of how to kill or injure law enforcement, is both serious and frightening." On May 27, 2020, authorities in New York got into a deadly shootout with a fleeing suspect accused of attempting to organize a militia and attack the U.S. government, according to the Justice Department. After a police chase and gunfight that left the suspect dead, law enforcement uncovered three improvised explosive devices in the man's car and more at his home, as well as a stockpile of firearms, the DOJ said. An

undercover FBI agent requested a PDF document from Tackleberry Solutions, according to the DOJ, and Arthur allegedly hinted that he could share more in-depth information offline.

[FL] At Least Six HBCU Campuses Shut Down After Receiving Bomb Threats

BuzzFeed [1/31/2022 8:30 PM, Salvador Hernandez, 5962K] reports at least six historically Black colleges and universities were forced to lock down their campuses and cancel classes after receiving a series of bomb threats Monday morning. Howard University, Albany State University, Bethune–Cookman University, Bowie State University, Southern University and A&M College, and Delaware State University received the threats, according to statements and social media posts by the schools. This was the second time in January that multiple HBCUs across the country received bomb threats, forcing students to stay on lockdown in dorms and shuttering classes. Albany State University in Georgia issued an alert to students Monday morning, briefly canceling classes and all campus operations while law enforcement officials conducted an investigation into the threat. "Rest assured that we are working with the proper authorities to thoroughly investigate this threat," the university said in a statement. The bomb threat prompted university officials to shut down all operations, including dining halls. By Monday afternoon, the campus had been cleared and deemed safe, but students and employees were still required to show identification cards before being allowed into buildings.

[CA] Shelter-in-place-orders in Antioch after man apparently killed by explosive

The San Francisco Chronicle [1/31/2022 4:50 PM, Andres Picon, 706K] reports Antioch police ordered several schools and their surrounding neighborhood to shelter in place Monday morning after a man was found dead in the area from an apparent explosion, officials said. Officers responded to the area of West 17th Street and F Street near Live Oak High School shortly after 7:30 a.m. following a report that a man was lying on the ground. They found a man in his 50s who had "suffered severe trauma and was unresponsive." He was pronounced dead at the scene, said Officer Darryl Saffold, strategic communications officer with Antioch police. There were wires found near the man's body and his injuries appeared to have been caused by an "improvised explosive device," Saffold said. The man was not identified. The Walnut Creek police bomb squad was called to help investigate and the schools and surrounding streets were swept by officers and police K-9s. The FBI; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Department of Homeland Security; BART police; the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and paramedics were also at the scene, Saffold said. "There is no indication that there are any other improvised explosive devices," Saffold said. The man's death and the origins of the explosive device were under investigation, Saffold said.

National Security News

U.S. weighs more troops to eastern Europe beyond 8,500 on alert

Reuters [1/31/2022 8:06 PM, Phil Stewart, 14195K, Neutral] reports the Pentagon said on Monday it is in active discussions with Eastern European allies about possible U.S. troop deployments to NATO's eastern flank, as Washington moves to reassure jittery NATO allies in the face of a Russian military buildup near Ukraine. Any decisions on new troop movements would be separate from the some 8,500 forces in the United States who were put on alert last week to potentially bolster a NATO rapid response force, the Pentagon said, adding context to President Joe Biden's comments on Friday about potential near-

term deployments to Eastern Europe. Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said the troops that Biden was referring on Friday to could potentially be redeployed from within Europe. "We're going through the rigorous work of providing options for the commander in chief should he decide to do that ... in close consultation with the actual allies themselves," Kirby said. Separately, the U.S. military last week put about 8,500 troops inside the United States on alert to be ready to deploy to Europe, largely to fill the ranks of a NATO rapid response force should the alliance call them up for duty. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is expected to speak by phone with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Tuesday, a State Department spokesperson said. Biden stressed diplomatic efforts aimed at averting a conflict. "We continue to engage in nonstop diplomacy and to de-escalate tensions," Biden told reporters in the Oval Office.

[United Arab Emirates] Biden vows support after UAE intercepts latest incoming missile

Bloomberg [1/31/2022 3:52 PM, Vivian Nereim and Josh Wingrove] reports U.S. President Joe Biden pledged support for the United Arab Emirates after it intercepted a ballistic missile fired by Yemeni fighters during a visit by Israel's president, the third attack in a month on the Middle East's financial hub. "We've been in daily contact with the UAE, addressing those threats," Biden told reporters during an Oval Office visit Monday by Qatar's ruler. Biden said he directed Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin "to do everything he can to communicate the support of the United States for the UAE, Saudi Arabia and throughout the Gulf region." The UAE destroyed the latest incoming missile and there were no casualties, with fragments falling "outside of populated areas," a Defense Ministry statement said on Monday, without giving details on the location. A spokesman for the Iranian-backed Houthi fighters confirmed the attack, which the U.S. State Department said had targeted Abu Dhabi. U.S. military personnel activated Patriot missile batteries to defend against the attack by Houthi rebels, but the missile was shot down by the Emirati missile defense systems, Defense Department spokesman John Kirby told reporters at the Pentagon on Monday.

[Belarus] U.S. orders family members of government employees in Belarus to leave

Reuters [1/31/2022 8:37 PM, Costas Pitas, 14195K] reports the United States on Monday ordered the family members of its government employees in Belarus to leave the country as it warned against travel there amid tensions between Washington and Russia over Ukraine. "Due to an increase in unusual and concerning Russian military activity near the border with Ukraine, U.S. citizens located in or considering travel to Belarus should be aware that the situation is unpredictable and there is heightened tension in the region," the State Department said. CNN [1/31/2022 10:04 PM, Jennifer Hansler, 5705K] reports the developments come as US officials warn that Russia could mount a major invasion of Ukraine, including from neighboring Belarus. At a UN Security Council meeting Monday, US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield said the US had seen evidence that Moscow intends to mass more than 30,000 troops at the Belarus-Ukraine border by early February and that 5,000 troops were already there. In an updated travel advisory issued Monday, the State Department said that "due to an increase in unusual and concerning Russian military activity near the border with Ukraine, U.S. citizens located in or considering travel to Belarus should be aware that the situation is unpredictable and there is heightened tension in the region." "Given the heightened volatility of the situation, U.S. citizens are strongly advised against traveling to Belarus," the advisory said, adding that "the U.S. government's ability to provide routine or emergency services to U.S. citizens in Belarus is

already severely limited due to Belarusian government limitations on U.S. Embassy staffing." On Monday, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said the US has "been very clear, including to Belarusian authorities directly, that if it allows its territory to be used for an attack on Ukraine, it would face a swift and decisive response from the United States and our allies and partners." "We've spoken of the unprecedented nature of sanctions and other economic measures that would befall the Russian Federation in the event of an invasion. Were Belarus -- what should be a sovereign, independent country -- if that country were to support such an invasion, our response would also be swift and decisive," he said at a State Department briefing.

[Ukraine] Blinken, Austin to brief House members on Russia-Ukraine conflict

The Hill [1/31/2022 1:04 PM, Jordan Williams, 2054K] reports Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will lead a classified briefing for House members on Thursday about the ongoing tensions between Russia and Ukraine. Blinken and Austin will be joined by Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Mark Milley, according to a notice sent to members. Officials from the departments of Treasury, Commerce and Homeland Security, as well as the United States Agency for International Development, will also participate, the notice said. Senators are also expected to receive a briefing from senior administration officials on Thursday, a Senate aid confirmed to The Hill on Sunday.

[Ukraine] Biden Moves Toward Naming Bridget Brink as U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine

Bloomberg [1/31/2022 1:08 PM, Jennifer Jacobs, 8629K] reports Ambassador Bridget Brink is the front-runner as President Joe Biden's choice for ambassador to Ukraine, according to two people familiar with the choice that would put in place a career diplomat with broad experience in Eastern Europe as tensions between Kyiv and Moscow soar. The decision isn't final, but White House officials have told people privately that Biden intends to nominate her, according to the people.

[Russia] Blinken to try diplomacy again with Russian counterpart after receiving Russia's written responses

The Washington Post [2/1/2022 1:31 AM, Rachel Pannett, 12515K] reports Secretary of State Antony Blinken will speak with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov on Tuesday in a bid to defuse tensions over the Ukraine crisis, just hours after U.S. and Russian diplomats squared off at the United Nations in one of the most confrontational international meetings in years. Tuesday's conversation between Blinken and Lavrov is likely to include a discussion on Moscow's written response to a U.S. proposal aimed at de-escalating the Ukraine crisis. A U.S. official told The Washington Post that the administration had received the response Monday, but declined to provide details. Blinken has described the U.S. proposal as something that offers the Kremlin "a serious diplomatic path forward, should Russia choose it." But U.S. officials have said the West did not bow to Russia's demand that NATO close its "open door policy," barring countries such as Ukraine and Georgia from joining the military alliance. The Washington Post [1/31/2022 5:44 PM, John Hudson and Ashley Parker, 12515K] reports the Russian government has delivered a written response to a U.S. proposal aimed at de-escalating the Ukraine crisis, said a U.S. official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive diplomatic discussions. The delivery of the response comes as the Biden administration continues a delicate dance that seeks to keep Russia at the diplomatic table without conceding to any of its core demands. The Kremlin has moved about 100,000 troops and heavy weaponry near the Ukrainian border

and ignored calls by the United States to return its forces to their barracks. "We can confirm we received a written follow-up from Russia," the official said Monday. "It would be unproductive to negotiate in public, so we'll leave it up to Russia if they want to discuss their response." CBS News [1/31/2022 10:27 PM, Staff, 2907K] reports last week, the U.S. responded to Russia, emphasizing Ukraine's sovereignty while suggesting potential for progress in areas like arms control in Europe and ways to increase transparency and stability. The U.S. and its NATO allies have warned for weeks that President Vladimir Putin could use the forces he has built up near the Ukraine border to launch a new invasion of the country as soon as February, though Putin's government denies any such intentions. Reuters [2/1/2022 2:30 AM, Maxim Rodionov] reports Russia has sent follow-up questions rather than a response to the United States in their exchange on Moscow's demands for security guarantees, a senior Russian diplomat was quoted as saying on Tuesday. A State Department spokesperson said on Monday the United States has received a written follow-up from Russia on the matter. But a senior diplomatic source told Russia's state news agency RIA the letter contained questions from Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, also sent to other NATO members, on how Moscow's counterparts understood the "indivisibility of security" principle. Moscow was still working on an actual response to Washington's counter-proposals, the source said.

[Russia] US readies sanctions on Russian elites in event of Ukraine invasion

The Hill [1/31/2022 11:43 AM, Morgan Chalfant, 2054K] reports the Biden administration is readying sanctions on Russians with links to the Kremlin that would be triggered if Russian President invades Ukraine. The administration has identified Russians who are "In or near the inner circles of the Kremlin and play a role in government decision making or are at a minimum complicit in the Kremlin's destabilizing behavior," a senior Biden administration official said Monday. The administration is preparing to block assets of these individuals and members of their families in the event of a renewed Russian invasion of Ukraine. The official did not provide names of those who would be subject to sanctions, but said the list is "Broad" and draws in part from a classified report the Treasury Department submitted to Congress in 2018, under the Trump administration, as required by the 2017 sanctions law. That report named senior Russian government officials, political leaders and oligarchs. The sanctions would be imposed under an executive order that Biden signed last April. "Many of these individuals are particularly vulnerable targets because of their deepened financial ties with the west," the senior Biden administration official said. "Sanctions would cut them off from the international financial system and ensure that they and their family members will no longer be able to enjoy the perks of parking their money in the west and attending elite western universities." The sanctions list is part of a broader effort by the Biden administration to signal harsh penalties on Russia if Putin were to invade Ukraine, something U.S. officials have warned could be imminent. The Biden administration has also threatened to impose export controls that would prevent Russia from gaining access to key U.S. technologies, a move that officials say would hurt Moscow in key sectors like artificial intelligence, defense, and aviation.

[Russia] Kremlin accuses US of stoking 'hysteria' over Ukraine, as UN Security Council prepares to meet

CNN [1/31/2022 12:38 PM, Jack Guy, Anna Chernova and Nathan Hodge, 5705K] reports Russia has accused Washington of stoking "hysteria" over the crisis on the Ukrainian border, as the US Ambassador to the United Nations warned "the consequences will be horrific" if Russia invades. "To our dismay, American media have lately been publishing a

very large amount of unverified, distorted and deliberately deceitful information about what's happening in Ukraine and around it," Peskov said Monday. Zelensky, however, restated his position that the threat from Russia remains "dangerous but ambiguous," and it is not certain that an attack will take place, the official said. On Monday, Peskov called on the US and its European allies "to take a more constructive approach," and said the recent threat of sanctions from the United Kingdom is "extremely worrying."

[China] FBI Director Christopher Wray on China: 'No country presents a broader threat' to US

USA Today [2/1/2022 2:20 AM, Mike Harris, 7620K] reports no country poses a greater threat to the United States than China, FBI Director Christopher Wray said in a sharply worded speech Monday night at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum in Simi Valley, California. The Chinese Communist Party threatens the United States' "economic security and our freedoms – our freedom of speech, of conscience, our freedom to elect and be served by our representatives without foreign meddling, our freedom to prosper when we toil and invent," Wray said. The director spoke for about 30 minutes in conjunction with the library's current exhibition, FBI: From Al Capone to Al Qaeda. To a full house in the library's Air Force One Pavilion, he said the Chinese government steals "staggering" volumes of information and causes deep, job-destroying damage across a wide range of industries. To counter China's intelligence operations, the FBI opens new cases about every 12 hours. "There's just no country that presents a broader threat to our ideas, innovation and economic security than China," said Wray, the eighth director of the FBI who has headed it since 2017. "Here in the U.S., they unleash a massive, sophisticated hacking program that's bigger than those of every other major country combined," Wray told the audience, which included Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko and Ventura County Sheriff Bill Ayub. In one such case, he said, a group of criminal hackers associated with China's intelligence, security and secret police agency, the Ministry of State Security, stole terabytes of data from hundreds of companies. "They're not just hacking on a huge scale, but causing indiscriminate damage to get what they want, like in the recent Microsoft Exchange hack, which compromised the networks of more than 10,000 American companies in a single campaign alone," Wray said.

[North Korea] North Korea confirms test of a missile capable of striking Guam

The AP [1/31/2022 6:59 AM, Hyung-Jin Kim, 3976K] reports North Korea confirmed Monday it test-launched an intermediate-range ballistic missile capable of reaching the U.S. territory of Guam, the North's most significant weapon launch in years, as Washington plans steps to show its commitment to its Asian allies. Sunday's launch could be a prelude to bigger provocations by North Korea such as nuclear and long-range missile tests that pose a direct threat to the U.S. mainland, as the North tries to further pressure the Biden administration to win sanction relief or international recognition as a legitimate nuclear state. The official Korean Central News Agency said the purpose of the test was verifying the overall accuracy of the Hwasong-12 missile that is being deployed in its military. North Korea said the missile was launched toward waters off its east coast on a high angle to prevent flying over other countries. It gave no further details. According to South Korean and Japanese assessments, the missile flew about 800 kilometers (497 miles) and reached a maximum altitude of 2,000 kilometers (1,242 miles) before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. The reported flight details make it the most powerful missile North Korea has tested since 2017, when the country launched Hwasong-12 and longer-range missiles in a torrid run of weapons firings to acquire an ability to launch nuclear strikes on

U.S. military bases in Northeast Asia and the Pacific and even the American homeland. The [Washington Post](#) [1/31/2022 5:17 AM, Michelle Ye Hee Lee, 12515K] reports North Korea had a busy month in January, capping it Sunday with its seventh missile test, the longest-range one launched in years, as the country pursues a sophisticated weapons arsenal. North Korea announced Monday that it had test-fired the Hwasong-12, an intermediate-range ballistic missile, to “verify the overall accuracy of the weapon system.” It was the first test since 2017 of the missile, which is capable of reaching the U.S. territory of Guam. The tests may slow down in February, with some analysts expecting North Korea to pause with the start of the Beijing Winter Games this weekend, to avoid crossing China, its key security and economic ally.

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DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

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TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Sunday, March 20, 2022 8:00 AM ET

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Top News

Border Patrol told to consider exempting Ukrainians at southern border from Title 42 restrictions: report

FOX News [3/19/2022 1:48 PM, Adam Shaw, 10541K] reports Border Patrol agents have reportedly been told to consider exempting Ukrainians encountered at the southern border from Title 42 restrictions that are being used to quickly expel migrants -- the latest immigration measure put in place for Ukrainians amid the ongoing Russian invasion. In a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) memo, reported by CBS News, officials say that "the unjustified Russian war of aggression in Ukraine has created a humanitarian crisis." "CBP is authorized, consistent with the Title 42 Order, on a case-by-case basis based on the totality of the circumstances, including considerations of humanitarian interests, to except Ukrainian nationals at land border ports of entry from Title 42," the memo reportedly says. The guidance issued to agents allows exceptions for Ukrainians who are in possession of valid Ukrainian ID and are not deemed national security or public safety threats. There were 272 encounters with Ukrainians at the border in February, according to CBP, compared to 19 in Feb. 2021. There have so far been 1,301 encounters since October.

Attorneys help Ukrainian immigrants stay in US, bring family members from war-torn home

FOX News [3/19/2022 12:59 PM, Joe Schoffstall, 10541K] reports a group of attorneys is helping Ukrainian immigrants remain in the U.S. and bring their family members over from the war-torn nation. The Department of Homeland Security announced earlier this month that Ukrainian migrants living in the U.S. as of March 1 would be eligible for temporary protected status, which allows qualified individuals to receive work authorization and protects them from deportation. Nearly 4,000 Ukrainians were facing deportation proceedings at the time of the announcement, CBS News reported. DHS estimated the move could help 75,100 Ukrainian immigrants in the U.S. The group of attorneys is also assisting Ukrainian immigrants bring their family members to the U.S., Curran said. "Some people are still trying to bring family temporarily on tourist visas," she told Fox News. "There are situations of people trying to get family who can't get into the United States with a tourist visa into other countries or into Mexico." Some Ukrainians have fled to Mexico in order to seek asylum at the U.S. border, Curran said. She added that several of the families she is working with are still trying to get family out of Ukraine. Men 60 and under, however, are not allowed to leave the country.

Ukrainians only: Racial disparities in U.S. border policies grow more obvious

The San Diego Union Tribune [3/19/2022 8:00 AM, Kate Morrissey] reports disparities have plagued the U.S. asylum system since its implementation, and for many, the Biden administration's new practice of letting in Ukrainians at the pedestrian entrance while turning away other nationalities fleeing harm is the latest iteration of that trend. Title 42 has left thousands of asylum seekers stranded in Mexican cities along the border, where cartels and other criminal groups have frequently taken advantage of them. Human Rights First has documented at least 9,886 violent attacks on asylum seekers stuck in Mexico because of Title 42, including kidnapping, torture and rape. With public attention high on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and pressure on the Biden administration to support Ukrainians fleeing the violence, that disparity has only grown. "The CDC's Title 42 public health order remains in place with respect to single adults and family units, and the Department of Homeland Security continues to operate in accordance with that order to the greatest extent possible," a DHS spokesperson said. "Consistent with the CDC order, DHS excepts particularly vulnerable individuals, on a case-by-case basis, from Title 42 for humanitarian reasons." A Union-Tribune analysis of Customs and Border Protection data found that while people from certain countries of origin, including India, Turkey, Romania, Ukraine and Russia, who reach U.S. soil are almost never expelled under Title 42, people from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador are expelled most of the time. Expulsions of certain nationalities have also changed over time, adding to the unpredictable and seemingly arbitrary nature of the policy. DHS recently issued guidance reminding border officials that individualized exceptions to Title 42 "can be applied to Ukrainians," Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told a small group of reporters on a recent call. He emphasized that there was no categorical exemption for them as a nationality. When asked about the possibility of ending Title 42, Mayorkas told reporters that the decision is up to the CDC.

[TX] Texas wildfire kills 1, as officials worry extreme drought could worsen conditions

The Washington Post [3/19/2022 7:22 PM, Jack Douglas and Jacob Bogage, 12597K] reports all Raquel Robles could do was watch the video on her phone, horrified and helpless, as first smoke, then fire, moved up her driveway and then destroyed the house she and her family had lived in for 13 years. Flames raced through the front yard and caught on to a tree on the edge of her property in this small ranching town in West Central

Texas. Then the wind-swept smoke got even thicker, small debris flew by and orange bursts appeared. Robles knew the house, and everything in it, was turning to ash. The Eastland Complex fire — made up of three smaller wild fires in Central Texas — has incinerated more than 45,000 acres of land since sparking Thursday, destroying hundreds of homes and killing a deputy sheriff who was helping evacuate residents. Deputy Sgt. Barbara Fenley, 51, was evacuating homes in Carbon, the Eastland County Sheriff's Office said, when, due to poor visibility and deteriorating conditions, she steered her vehicle off the road and into flames. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) declared a disaster in 11 counties affected by the blaze. Smoke on Friday drifted into skies above Houston, some 300 miles away. Only 15 percent of the fire was contained as of Saturday afternoon, officials said. And conditions could worsen. Large swaths of Texas — from the Dallas and Fort Worth suburbs in the east to Lubbock in the north and Odessa and Midland in the west — are suffering extreme drought conditions. Meteorological officials expect winds from the arid southwest to kick up Sunday and Monday, fueling the fire's spread. [Univision](#) [3/19/2022 7:49 PM, Staff, 514K] reports the fires that consumed more than 45,000 acres, mainly in the towns of Carbon and Ranger, may have been started by a barbecue or grill. This was stated Friday morning by Darrell Fox, Ranger fire chief. High winds Thursday night and Friday morning helped the flames spread and quickly consumed acres of dry grass, according to the Texas Forest Service. The latest official report of acres affected is 45,383, which to give an idea of the magnitude is equivalent to 333 times the Dallas Cowboys stadium. Regarding the material damage, the authorities still do not have a precise estimate, but the last reports said that there were 60 homes consumed by the flames. For this reason, on Friday afternoon, Texas Governor Greg Abbott visited the city of Eastland to visit the affected areas. After his tour, he signed the emergency declaration for 11 North Texas counties, including Eastland, one of the most affected by the fires during the extreme drought in the state. As of Saturday afternoon, Texas Forest Services reported having contained 15 percent of the wildfires in Eastland. [AP](#) [3/19/2022 10:44 AM, Staff] reports fire crews in Texas hope to make progress Saturday against a massive complex of wildfires that have killed one person and burned at least 50 homes, officials said. Winds were expected to diminish on Saturday, raising hopes for the attack on the flames, said Angel Lopez, a spokesman for the task force attacking the wildfire complex near Eastland, about 120 miles west of Dallas. However, gusty winds were expected to return Sunday, again raising the wildfire threat to critical levels in western and central Texas, he said. At a news conference in Eastland, Gov. Greg Abbott said late Friday that at least 50 homes had been destroyed by flames with more possibly to be found. He declared a disaster in the 11 counties hardest hit by wildfires. The Texas A&M Forest Services warned that fires could also affect parts of Oklahoma and Kansas, and Nebraska warned of an extreme fire risk. [Reuters](#) [3/19/2022 11:14 PM, Daniel Trotta, 5304K] reports wildfires wiped out 86 homes and a majority of the small town of Carbon, Texas, the Dallas Morning News reported on Saturday, as four fires west of Dallas burned 54,000 acres (22,000 hectares) and killed a sheriff's deputy who was helping people flee. The four fires, designated as the Eastland Complex, have raged since Wednesday or Thursday in Eastland County, about 120 miles (190 km) west of Dallas, and were about 30% contained, the Texas A&M Fire Service said on Saturday. About 85% of Carbon, with a population of 225, was burned, the newspaper reported, publishing photos of homes that were reduced to piles of rubble.

Reported similarly:

[CNN](#) [3/19/2022 6:53 PM, Paradise Afshar and Christina Maxouris, 5600K]

[Ukraine] UN reports nearly 900 civilian deaths in Ukraine, believes true figure 'considerably higher'

The Hill [3/19/2022 6:48 PM, Caroline Vakil, 1877K] reports the United Nations reported that close to 900 civilians have died in Ukraine since the start of Russia's invasion, but added that it believes the true death toll is "considerably higher." The U.N.'s human rights office said in an update on Saturday that it had recorded the deaths of 847 civilians in Ukraine since Feb. 24, including 155 men, 119 women, 21 boys and 7 girls. The U.N. office noted that officials did not know the sex of 509 adults and 36 children. The U.N. office also noted that it had recorded the injuries of 1,399 civilians in the country. The "[Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights] believes that the actual figures are considerably higher, especially in Government-controlled territory and especially in recent days, as the receipt of information from some locations where intense hostilities have been going on has been delayed and many reports are still pending corroboration," the U.N. office said in a statement. "This concerns, for example, Mariupol and Volnovakha (Donetsk region), Iziium (Kharkiv region), Sievierodonetsk and Rubizhne (Luhansk region), and Trostianets (Sumy region), where there are allegations of numerous civilian casualties. These figures are being further corroborated and are not included in the above statistics." The development comes as Ukraine last week reported that at least 1,300 Ukrainian soldiers had died, according to The Guardian. An adviser to Ukraine's defense minister said in an interview being aired Sunday that over 1,400 Russian soldiers have been killed during the conflict. The Russian government has previously reported different casualty figures for its forces than Ukrainians have.

Reported similarly:

NPR [3/19/2022 5:10 PM, Jaclyn Diaz, 5K]

CBS News [3/19/2022 4:05 PM, Tori B. Powell, 2818K]

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

[NM] ICE accuses DHS inspector general of staging photograph in critical report on migrant facility

FOX News [3/19/2022 12:47 PM, Adam Shaw, 10541K] reports Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) accused the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) inspector general of having staged a photograph which the watchdog used to show allegedly poor conditions at a New Mexico migrant facility -- as it railed against the "integrity" of the report. The report found that the Torrance County Detention Facility in Estancia, New Mexico, which is privately run under contract for ICE, was unsafe and unsanitary -- and it took the unusual step of recommending the migrants there be transferred to different facilities. "We have determined that ICE must take immediate steps to address the critical facility staffing shortages and unsanitary living conditions that have led to health and safety risks for detainees at Torrance," it said. It described an understaffed facility with unsanitary conditions including clogged toilets, non-working sinks. ICE should "immediately relocate" everyone held there, the report said. But the enforcement agency railed against the report, with acting chief of staff Jason Houser writing in a formal response that the agency had "serious concerns about the accuracy and integrity of this report" and whether it meets government standards. "In a number of instances, it appears OIG has falsified or mischaracterized evidence, and has ignored facts presented to it in order to achieve preconceived conclusions," he wrote. ICE accused the OIG inspector of "very disconcerting and unprofessional behavior" including making comments 30 minutes in that there is "no

way detainees should be housed here," suggesting a predetermined outcome. The company that runs the facility, CoreCivic, has been similarly critical of the report, including the allegedly staged photo. In an email to Fox News Digital, a spokesperson accused the DHS inspectors of acting "in a deeply unethical manner, including misrepresenting evidence to negatively portray the facility." "This deliberate effort to falsely portray our company and this facility in a negative light is even more disturbing because it was done under the guise of legitimate oversight. We're asking for an immediate review of the conduct of the inspectors," ICE spokesperson Ryan Gustin said. The report comes after DHS ended contracts in May with two detention facilities in Georgia and Massachusetts over conditions. At that time, DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in a memo to acting ICE Director Tae Johnson that "[w]e will not tolerate the mistreatment of individuals in civil immigration detention or substandard conditions of detention."

Citizenship and Immigration Services

No entry: Ukrainian Americans struggle to get fleeing relatives into United States

The [Washington Post](#) [3/19/2022 9:00 PM, Marc Fisher, Maria Sacchetti and Mark Shavin, 12597K] reports every morning and every night, from her home in Falls Church, Va., Nadiia Khomaziuk messages her sister Lidiia in her hideaway in western Ukraine. Is Lidiia still okay? How about her kids, who are 7 and 11? Every day, Khomaziuk scours the Internet, calls U.S. government offices and connects with lawyers and other Ukrainian Americans, in search of a path to bring her family to safety in the United States. To get to there, Khomaziuk's family and other Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion would need a visa, but the earliest appointment Khomaziuk could get for an interview for her sister at the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw is in September. Lidiia, who asked that her last name not be published because of security concerns, isn't ready to leave Ukraine. She wants to fight "till the last breath," Khomaziuk said, though "the kids' bags are packed, so they can jump in the car the minute they need to. But then I don't know if I can get them here. Waiting six months for an interview just isn't right." More than 3 million Ukrainians have fled their ravaged country, and the great majority of them are in the border states of Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Moldova and Hungary, according to the United Nations. As Russian missiles obliterate more cities, refugees crowded into family basements and church social halls across Eastern Europe confront a painful choice to hold out where they are or try to be resettled as refugees, possibly in faraway countries. Over 5,000 miles away, the reality is setting in for Ukrainian Americans eager to bring their relatives to safety that despite government pledges of solidarity, getting into the United States is a lengthy and cumbersome process that remains largely unchanged from before the war, according to those trying to bring relatives into the country and advocates who are helping them.

Lying on an asylum application would lead to the loss of any other immigration benefit in the US

[Univision](#) [3/19/2022 11:42 AM, Staff, 514K] reports a recent ruling by the Washington DC appeals court could complicate the situation for those who apply for a process of political asylum. In the event that the applicant lies and the court proves it, they would be up against the wall in future legal proceedings in the country. The ruling has an immediate effect, although it was dated March 11, 2022. According to the decision, if a person lies in their political asylum process, they will not be able to legalize themselves in the country.

[NC] Suspended North Carolina attorney sentenced for visa fraud

The [AP](#) [3/19/2022 11:15 AM, Staff] reports a suspended North Carolina attorney has been sentenced to prison for continuing to submit documents for immigration benefits by impersonating another attorney, federal authorities said. Roydera Hackworth, 63, was sentenced Friday to a year and one day in prison and two years of supervised release for fraud in connection with visas, permits and other documents, said U.S. Attorney Michael Easley in a news release. Information from court documents showed that Hackworth was suspended in 2012 by the N.C. State Bar from practicing law. Two years later, she was suspended by the Board of Immigration Appeals from practicing in immigration matters before the Executive Office for Immigration Review, the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. In 2019, evidence indicated Hackworth continued to practice, prepare, and submit petitions and applications on behalf of client petitioners and applicants for immigration benefits. A review by authorities showed that as many as 24 clients were represented by Hackworth with no knowledge that she was submitting their immigration petitions and applications under the name of another attorney.

Customs and Border Protection

[TX] Border Patrol union fears agents getting railroaded in DHS probe of 'whipping' Haitian migrants

The [Washington Times](#) [3/19/2022 11:04 AM, Stephen Dinan, 350K] reports President Biden was adamant after images of tense confrontations between horse-mounted Border Patrol agents and Haitian migrants emerged in September, vowing that the agents "will pay." One image showed a mounted agent with reins in his hand while a Haitian dodged around the horse, which led some to speculate the migrant was being whipped. A video caught another agent insulting a migrant and calling Haiti "S**t." Vice President Kamala Harris likened the agents' treatment of the Haitians to the oppression of plantation slavery. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas initially defended the agents but then rushed to Capitol Hill to condemn them and promised lawmakers results from his investigation in "days." That was six months ago. Now, with the investigation dragging on, several agents remain sidelined from field duty and fellow agents fear the department is setting them up as fall guys to fulfill Mr. Biden's demand for someone "to pay."

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Southeast braces for 'significant tornado event' this week

[CNN](#) [3/20/2022 4:54 AM, Allison Chinchar, 5600K] reports a "substantial severe weather event -- including potential for significant tornadoes -- remains evident over the Lower Mississippi Valley/central Gulf Coast" this week, the Storm Prediction Center said Sunday. A potent low pressure system sweeping across the Intermountain West Sunday will become the catalyst for a multiday severe weather outbreak this week across the Southern Plains and Gulf Coast region. Beginning Monday, more than 20 million people along the Gulf Coast could be affected by damaging winds, very large hail, and tornadoes. By Tuesday the threat for severe weather increases as it shifts further east. The potential for strong tornadoes, hail, and damaging straight line winds exist from Lafayette, Louisiana, east into Huntsville, Alabama. Wednesday, the focus becomes an area between Mobile, Alabama and Columbia, South Carolina.

[NY] Undocumented immigrants affected by Ida in NY will have until April 29 to apply for financial assistance

Telemundo [3/19/2022 9:01 PM, Staff, 11K] reports undocumented victims of the devastating passage of Storm Ida in New York in early September 2021 will have more time to apply for assistance because the grace period was extended, the New York State Office for New Americans announced Saturday on its Twitter account. The grace period for New Yorkers who are ineligible for FEMA assistance to apply for the Excluded New Yorkers One-Way Relief Fund was extended to April 29. To qualify for assistance under the extended assistance program, New Yorkers must not be eligible for FEMA assistance or live with someone who is eligible for federal assistance.

[FL] 'We were weightless': Florida woman says she was in her home as a suspected tornado lifted it off the ground

USA Today [3/19/2022 1:50 PM, Samantha Neely, The News Herald, 7147K] reports on Friday evening, a suspected tornado tore through the historic St. Andrews community in Panama City, leaving a path of damaged homes and vehicles, scattered debris and shaken residents in its wake. The National Weather Service issued tornado watches for parts of Florida, Alabama and Georgia on Friday morning. There were also reports of a possible tornado in Atmore, Alabama, where a Friday storm injured six people and damaged mobile homes, local media reported.

[TX] Chilling photos show Texas communities devastated by wildfires that burned 50 homes

USA Today [3/19/2022 12:35 PM, Christine Fernando, 7147K] reports an outbreak of wildfires around several small Texas communities has burned at least 50 homes, killed a sheriff's deputy and left a trail of charred vehicles, ash-filled homes and seared grass. Several wildfires merged to form a complex that continued to burn Saturday near Eastland, about 120 miles west of Dallas. Gov. Greg Abbott declared a disaster in the 11 counties hit hardest by the wildfires that were fueled by several months of dry weather and high winds. The Eastland County Sheriff's Office said the fire killed Deputy Sgt. Barbara Fenley, who was going door to door, getting residents to evacuate their homes Thursday. With winds expected to diminish Saturday, fire crews hoped to make progress against the flames, said Angel Lopez, a spokesman for the task force combatting the fire. But with wind gusts expected to return Sunday, the threat of wildfires in western and central Texas may again rise to critical levels, Lopez said. Smaller fires burned in other parts of Texas amid the low humidity and high winds. About 15% of the Eastland Complex fires were contained as of Saturday morning, according to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group. More than 45,000 acres have burned, officials said during a Friday news conference.

Secret Service

Women make up just 24% of the cyber workforce. CISA wants to fix that.

CBS News [3/19/2022 12:48 PM, Nicole Sganga, 2818K] reports as the race to recruit female talent in STEM continues moving ahead with steady progress, stunning statistics still wrack the cybersecurity sector: Women working in cybersecurity currently account for less than one quarter of the overall workforce. Pressed on how close America's cyber defense agency is to "getting there," Easterly responded down to the decimal. "Right now, we're at 36.4% women at CISA's workforce, but I think we can get to 50% before 2030." She paused

before adding, "Actually, I'm hoping we can get there before 2025." Easterly says she hopes colleagues across the federal workforce – including FBI, NSA, U.S. Secret Service – make similar pledges. But the gender gap marks just one of the cybersecurity workforce's persistent challenges. Hispanic, African American, Asian and American Indian/Native Alaskan workers made up just 4%, 9%, 8% and 1% respectively of the cyber security workforce, according to the Aspen Institute. An estimated 3.7 million cybersecurity jobs are available but unfilled, according to the latest (ISC)² Cybersecurity Workforce Study, with 377,000 of those vacancies located in the United States. By that measure, the global cybersecurity workforce will need to grow 65% in 2022 to effectively defend organizations' critical assets.

[MA] Great Barrington man arrested for child pornography after investigation, search
Berkshire Eagle [3/18/2022 5:45 PM, Heather Bellow, 26K, Positive, Secondary] reports police arrested a State Road man Friday on child pornography charges after an investigation by police and federal agents led to allegations he was distributing material depicting children in sexual acts. James J. Keough, 54, is currently held in the Great Barrington Police Department in lieu of \$50,000 bail, police said in a statement Friday. His arraignment is scheduled for Monday in Southern Berkshire District Court. Great Barrington Police Chief Paul Storti told The Eagle that he does not believe the victims are local. Keough is not suspected of making pornography, but of downloading and sharing computer files, Storti said. Town police working with the U.S. Secret Service and state police detectives attached to the Berkshire District Attorney's Office searched Keough's apartment Friday in a multifamily building at 220 State Road. Officers were seen carting out boxes and other materials from Keough's apartment.

[NY] Woman who used counterfeit money to pay off bad check sent to prison
The Daily News Online [3/19/2022 10:15 AM, Scott Desmit, 3K, Positive, Secondary] reports a Bath woman who issued bad checks at a business in Gainesville and then returned with counterfeit money to pay off the debt was sentenced to state prison Thursday in Wyoming County Court. Grace Brown, 46, was sentenced by Judge Michael Mohun to three to six years in state prison. She had pleaded guilty to second-degree forgery. Brown was arrested in October 2020 after an investigation revealed she forged a check and possessed counterfeit money. She originally was charged with first-degree possession of a forged instrument, forgery and issuing a bad check.

[NC] NC federal jury convicts father, son over virus business aid
The AP [3/19/2022 6:03 PM, Staff, 2818K] reports a father and son now await sentencing after a federal jury in North Carolina convicted them of charges involving \$1.7 million in pandemic business relief received by the father's businesses that the U.S government say was obtained fraudulently. After a six-day trial, jurors convicted Tarik Freitekh of bank fraud, money laundering, conspiracy to commit both wire fraud and money laundering, as well as falsifying and concealing material facts, according to a U.S. Justice Department news release. His father, Izzat Freitekh, 55, of Waxhaw, also was found guilty on Wednesday of money laundering, money laundering conspiracy and making false statements. But he was found not guilty of several of more serious charges directly tied to the conspiracy, The Charlotte Observer reported.

[IL] Counterfeit \$100 bills found in Uptown Normal

Week.com [3/19/2022 4:18 AM, Howard Packowitz, 5K, Neutral, Secondary] reports people who found \$100 bills on the ground in Uptown Normal on St. Patrick's Day may have thought the luck of the Irish was with them, but it really wasn't their lucky day. Normal Police are warning the public that it was fake cash was scattered about, looking much like the money in a picture posted on the department's Facebook page. Police are advising anyone pocketing one of those bills to shred it and don't spend it.

Coast Guard

[MD] Ever Forward cargo ship could be stuck in Chesapeake Bay for over a week, officials say

CBS News [3/19/2022 1:20 PM, Staff, 2818K] reports it has been nearly a week since a massive cargo ship with thousands of containers on board got stuck in the Chesapeake Bay. And officials say it could be another 10 days before the ship is able to float again because it is a rare, complex mission. On Friday morning, CBS Baltimore's Ava-Joye Burnett traveled out onto the bay with U.S. Coast Guard engineers and investigators as they tried to bring the vessel afloat. "It's rare for a vessel to run aground in the Chesapeake Bay," Captain David O'Connell, the section Sector Commander of the Maryland-National Capital Region, said ahead of the excursion. He leads Coast Guard operations in the coordination of all maritime safety, security and environmental missions in the region. "I've been here a year and it's the first major incident we've had in the port. You'll see when we go out there that it is an impressive sight to see and because of its size, it's a very complex operation," he said. "Right now it's 24 feet, so basically as it traveled outside the channel, it almost buried itself into the bank," O'Connell said. "That's why it's not an easy operation of just putting some tugs on it and pulling it free." A team of engineers, investigators and even divers are working on a plan to move her. The department of the environment is there too, because with 2,200 tons of fuel onboard, they want to make sure nothing is leaking. As of now, no leaks have been detected, but the crew will have to monitor certain elements every four hours to make sure that doesn't change.

[FL] Coast Guard rescues 189 people near Haiti

Telemundo [3/19/2022 10:09 PM, Staff, 41K] reports the U.S. Coast Guard on Saturday rescued 189 people 20 miles off the coast of Haiti, who were taken in on the freighter off Cape du Mole on the island's northwest coast. The rescued Haitians were on an overloaded vessel and in the midst of bad weather conditions, the Coast Guard said. The U.S. Coast Guard recently said it has "significantly increased its patrols" in the Windward Passage (Windward Passage), a strait in Caribbean waters between Cuba and Haiti, in the face of a wave of Haitian migrants trying to reach U.S. territory. In a statement, Seventh Coast Guard District Rear Admiral Brendan McPherson said that this increased surveillance also extends to all "approaches to the southeastern United States" in order to "intercept and rescue migrants in overloaded and unsafe vessels." The District 7 commander added that his institution works closely with the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Defense to "prevent these illegal immigrant trips and protect them from unscrupulous smugglers".

Terrorism Investigations

[NY] Trial set for MS-13 associate charged in deaths of 4 men

The [San Diego Union Tribune](#) [3/19/2022 3:14 PM, Staff] reports a federal jury will hear opening statements Monday in the trial of a Long Island woman accused of luring four young men to their slaughter by more than a dozen members of the MS-13 street gang. Prosecutors say Leniz Escobar helped orchestrate the 2017 massacre as a teenage associate of the gang before falsely claiming to be a victim in the ambush. Escobar has pleaded not guilty to racketeering charges in the four deaths that prosecutors described as “a horrific frenzy of violence” involving machetes, knives and tree limbs in a Central Islip park. Defense attorney Jesse Siegel told The Associated Press that “after almost five years, Ms. Escobar is looking forward to having her day in court.” MS-13 had been seeking to settle a score, prosecutors allege, and believed the young victims to be members of the rival 18th Street Gang. The victims’ families have denied that any of the slain men were in a gang.

National Security News

[Ukraine] Russian forces bomb art school in Mariupol housing 400 refugees-city council, Zelenskyy cites war crimes

[Reuters](#) [3/20/2022 3:15 AM, Staff] reports Russian forces have bombed an art school in the besieged Ukrainian port city of Mariupol, where about 400 residents had taken shelter, the city council said on Sunday. There was no immediate word of casualties from the Saturday attack, although the council said the building was destroyed and there were victims under the rubble. Reuters could not independently verify the claim. The [AP](#) [3/20/2022 4:28 AM, Cara Anna] reports Ukrainian authorities said the Russian military bombed an art school where about 400 people had taken refuge in the port city of Mariupol, where President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said an unrelenting siege by Russian troops would go down in history for what he said were war crimes. Local authorities said the school’s building was destroyed and people could remain under the rubble. There was no immediate word on casualties. Russian forces on Wednesday also bombed a theater in Mariupol where civilians were sheltering, authorities have said. “To do this to a peaceful city, what the occupiers did, is a terror that will be remembered for centuries to come,” Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address to the nation. Mariupol, a strategic port on the Azov Sea, has been under bombardment for at least three weeks and become a symbol of the horror of Russia’s war in Ukraine. Local authorities have said the siege has cut off food, water and energy supplies, and killed at least 2,300 people, some of whom had to be buried in mass graves.

Reported similarly:

[Reuters](#) [3/20/2022 5:08 AM, Raju Gopalakrishnan and Dominic Evans, 5304K]

[Turkey] Turkey says Russia and Ukraine nearing agreement on ‘critical’ issues

[Reuters](#) [3/20/2022 6:05 AM, Ali Kucukgocmen, 5304K] reports Turkey’s foreign minister said in an interview published on Sunday that Russia and Ukraine were nearing agreement on “critical” issues and he was hopeful for a ceasefire if the two sides did not backtrack from progress achieved so far. Foreign ministers Sergei Lavrov of Russia and Dmytro Kuleba of Ukraine met in the Turkish resort town of Antalya earlier this month with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu also attending. The discussions did not yield concrete results. But Cavusoglu, who also travelled to Russia and Ukraine last week for talks with Lavrov and Kuleba, told Turkish daily Hurriyet that there had been “rapprochement in the positions of both sides on important subjects, critical subjects”. “We can say we are hopeful for a ceasefire if the sides do not take a step back from the current positions,” he said, without

elaborating on the issues. Turkish presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin, speaking to al Jazeera television, said the two sides were getting closer on four key issues. He cited Russia's demand for Ukraine to renounce ambitions to join NATO, demilitarisation, what Russia has referred to as "de-nazification", and the protection of the Russian language in Ukraine.

[North Korea] N. Korea fires artillery into sea days after missile launch

The [AP](#) [3/20/2022 4:51 AM, Hyung-Jin Kim, 23K] reports North Korea fired suspected artillery pieces into the sea on Sunday, South Korea's military said, days after the North's latest missile launch ended in failure amid the country's recent burst of weapons testing activity. There is speculation that North Korea could soon try to launch its developmental longest-range ballistic missile to bolster its arsenal and dial up pressure on the United States to wrest concessions as negotiations remain stalled. South Korea's military suggested North Korea's midair missile explosion last Wednesday involved parts of the Hwasong-17 missile, its biggest weapon. On Sunday, South Korea's Defense Ministry said it detected firings likely from multiple rocket launch systems off North Korea's west coast. The ministry said the military closely monitors North Korean moves and maintains its readiness. South Korea's presidential office said in a separate statement it held an emergency national security council meeting to discuss what it called the North's "short-range projectile launches."

Reported similarly:

[Reuters](#) [3/20/2022 2:32 AM, Josh Smith and Minwoo Park, 5304K]

[South Korea] S. Korea's National Security Council Meets on North's Projectile

[Bloomberg](#) [3/20/2022 3:06 AM, Sangmi Cha, 9409K] reports South Korea convened a National Security Council meeting to discuss North Korea's launch on Sunday of a short-range projectile, according to the presidential office. North Korea appears to have fired from its multiple rocket launcher this morning, the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Seoul said in a text message to reporters. The military has been maintaining defense readiness while closely monitoring related developments, it said. "The NSC participants will closely analyze the details of the projectile in close cooperation with the U.S. and maintain alert over the recent series of North Korea's missile launches," presidential spokeswoman Park Kyung-mi said in a statement. "We should also work to prevent a security vacuum during the presidential transition period," she said. Concerns have been mounting that North Korea was looking to fire off its first intercontinental ballistic missile in five years after Yonhap News reported this month South Korea and the U.S. have detected signs of an imminent ICBM launch.

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DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

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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.

TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Monday, September 27, 2021 6:00 AM ET

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Mayorkas says as many as 12K out of 17K migrants have been released into U.S., and 'it could be higher' as DHS

FOX News [9/26/2021 11:21 AM, Ronn Blitzer, 9251K] reports Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas admitted Sunday that the vast majority of Haitian migrants who crossed the southern U.S. border in recent weeks have already been released into the United States, and it is possible that more will follow them. So far, approximately 12,400 of the people are having their cases heard by immigration judges, while another 5,000 are being processed by the Department of Homeland Security. Currently, only 3,000 are in detention. "Approximately, I think it's about ten thousand or so, twelve thousand," Mayorkas told "Fox News Sunday" when asked how many have already been released. He then acknowledged that this number could very well go up as the 5,000 other cases are processed. "It could be even higher. The number that are returned could be even higher. What we do is we follow the law as Congress has passed it," Mayorkas said. The secretary said the administration "will make determinations whether they will be returned to Haiti based on our public health and public interest authorities." Mayorkas said that those who are released have conditions placed on them, "are monitored by us," and authorities "ensure their appearance in court as the law requires." Host Chris Wallace noted that according to the Department of Justice 44% of those who are released miss court appearances. When asked whether many of the thousands who have just been released will just stay in the U.S., Mayorkas insisted that the system will work. UPI [9/26/2021 3:18 PM, Daniel Uria, 203K] reports that speaking of the approximately 12,000 migrants released into the country, Mayorkas said that individuals placed in immigration court proceedings go before a judge where they can make a claim of asylum or other claims to remain in the United States and are permitted to remain or removed based on the judge's ruling. He added that the United States has "enforcement guidelines" in place to ensure that people who have recently crossed the border and do not show up for their hearings are removed. "It is our intention to remove them, that is what our policies are, and we deploy our enforcement resources according to certain priorities to ensure the safety and security of the American people," he said.

Reported similarly:

Washington Times [9/26/2021 10:54 AM, Valerie Richardson, 381K]

Homeland Security chief Mayorkas defends Biden administration over treatment of Haitian migrants; says Haitian migrant crisis is 'nothing new'

NBC News [9/26/2021 11:53 AM, Teaganne Finn, 4437K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas sought Sunday to fend off criticism of the Biden administration's handling of the crisis at the border, specifically the cases of Haitian migrants who had been encamped under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas. "I'm intensely and immensely proud of the men and women of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. In fact, in Del Rio, Texas, I saw them act heroically," Mayorkas said on NBC's "Meet the Press." Criticism of the administration erupted last week after images began circulating showing an agent on horseback grabbing a migrant as the man tried to cross into the U.S. from Ciudad Acuña, Mexico, as well as other video showing agents on horseback chasing the migrants and waving what appeared to be a leather rein or a lariat, lashing it toward them. Mayorkas said the viral images of immigration officers on horseback chasing and intimidating mostly Haitians "does not reflect who CBP is, who we are as a department, nor who we are as a country." The White House said last week that Border Patrol officers in Del Rio will no longer use the horses and that an investigation will continue. Mayorkas defended the horseback training, saying horse patrol "serves an incredibly important function," but he would not comment directly about the viral images. The Biden administration has been criticized for sending Haitian migrants, many who have been in Central and South American

countries for several years, back to Haiti when it is dealing with a humanitarian crisis after a recent earthquake and a hurricane. The official response led the U.S. special envoy for Haiti, Daniel Foote, to resign last week over what he called the administration's "inhumane" treatment of Haitian migrants. [Editorial note: consult video at source link] The Hill [9/26/2021 9:46 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Sunday shot back at criticisms of the Biden administration's handling of the Haitian migrant crisis, saying, "this is nothing new." While appearing on Fox News Sunday, host Chris Wallace asked Mayorkas to respond to Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) who accused the White House of failing to secure the U.S.-Mexico border. Wallace questioned whether or not the administration has created a "magnet" for migrants who feel they have a strong chance of staying in the U.S. when they cross illegally. "This is nothing new. We've seen this type of irregular migration many, many times throughout the years. I don't know if Governor Abbott said the same thing in 2019, when there were more than a million people encountered at the southern border," Mayorkas said. Mayorkas stressed that the Biden administration was operating under the laws and statutes that are in place in the U.S.

Mayorkas: Investigation into border agents will be fair despite Biden's vow that 'people will pay'

The Washington Times [9/26/2021 6:31 AM, Valerie Richardson, 381K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas insisted Sunday that the mounted border agents under investigation for their treatment of Haitian migrants would receive a fair hearing, despite President Biden's declaration that "those people will pay." Mr. Mayorkas said his department would rely on the facts as determined by an independent investigation, even though he said last week that the images of the agents swinging their reins as they sought to deter migrants crossing the Rio Grande "horrified us." "The facts that are determined will drive the outcome. Nothing less and nothing more," Mr. Mayorkas told CNN "State of the Union" anchor Jake Tapper. "What those images suggest, what they appear to portray, was horrifying, and that I think deserves attention. That is quite different than fact determinations." FOX News [9/26/2021 5:19 PM, Cortney O'Brien, 9251K] reports CNN host Jake Tapper hit critics who spread "patently false" rumors about the mounted Border Patrol agents on the southern border on Sunday's "State of the Union," some of whom were members of the Biden administration. When a now infamous image of a Border Patrol agent mounted on a horse appearing to be corral migrants with a rope made the rounds on social media last week, critics were quick to accuse the agents of "whipping" Haitian migrants trying to enter the country illegally. More context for the photo revealed, however, that the reins were only used to control their horses. Still, leading Democrats and members of the media pushed ahead with the original story and the Department of Homeland Security launched an investigation into the matter. To some, it sounded as though members of the Biden administration had already made up their minds about the agents. Despite saying he was going to "wait for the facts" in the DHS probe, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, also said the images "horrified" Americans. Tapper pressed him on how DHS can "claim" to conduct an independent investigation, considering how the administration has described the images at the border. The CNN host wondered if the agency will conduct the probe "based on the facts, and not based on Twitter outrage." Mayorkas clarified that what the images "suggest" is what "horrified" Americans, and pledged that the facts in case are going to drive the outcome.

DHS secretary: We are working in a 'completely broken' immigration system

The Hill [9/26/2021 11:08 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Sunday said that the U.S. is capable of addressing the immigration crisis at the southern border, but acknowledged that "we are working in a completely broken system." Appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," Mayorkas pointed to the Biden administration's actions in Del Rio, Texas, where thousands of Haitian migrants had been camped out under a bridge. "We have an incredible ability to deploy resources to meet the challenges that we face. And we actually have evidence that, quite powerfully, in Del Rio, Texas, in less than a week, we addressed a population of 15,000 there and now there are none," said Mayorkas. Host Chuck Todd also asked if the U.S. has the ability to properly handle the crisis or if existing laws need to be changed, and Mayorkas appeared to agree with both options. "Well, I think we meet the challenges, but we are working in a completely broken system. And as to that, there is unanimity in Washington and in the country. I've never heard anyone say that the laws in immigration are well structured."

Mayorkas Says U.S. Won't Protect Southern Border With Wall

Bloomberg [9/26/2021 12:38 PM, Craig Torres, 6400K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said the Biden administration won't build walls on the border despite a pickup in crossings. "We have seen large numbers of individuals encountered at our border making a claim for asylum, for humanitarian relief," Mayorkas said in an interview with "Fox News Sunday," adding that it's nothing new and spans several administrations. "It is the policy of this administration, we do not agree with a building of the wall." "The law provides that individuals can make the claim for humanitarian relief," he said. When asked on NBC's "Meet the Press" whether the administration's policies are encouraging even more immigration, Mayorkas said: "I don't think that is the case at all."

Texas newspaper updates viral border incident: 'it was not an actual whip'

The Washington Times [9/26/2021 5:25 AM, Valerie Richardson, 381K] reports the El Paso Times has walked back its explosive claim that a border agent used a whip to deter Haitian migrants crossing the Rio Grande in Texas, saying that "it was not an actual whip." "Clarification: Our reporting team witnessed at least one agent on horseback swing his reins like a whip," said the editor's note added to the top of the Sept. 19 story. "We have updated the story to clarify that fact since it was not an actual whip." The original story said: "The agent swung his whip menacingly, charging his horse toward the men in the river who were trying to return to an encampment under the international bridge in Del Rio after buying food and water in Ciudad Acuña, Mexico." The story now reads: "The agent menacingly swung his reins like a whip, charging his horse toward the men in the river who were trying to return to an encampment under the international bridge in Del Rio after buying food and water in Ciudad Acuña, Mexico."

Why Haitians are fleeing Chile for the U.S. border

The Washington Post [9/26/2021 12:24 PM, John Barlett, 11773K] reports along empty streets lined with shuttered businesses, there's little sign of the bustle that just a few years ago earned the neighborhood of Quilicura the nickname "Little Haiti." Increasingly restrictive migration policies here, and a belief that the United States has grown more welcoming to immigrants under President Biden, have led a wave of Haitians to abandon the country they once saw as a land of opportunity. "There's hardly anyone left here now," said 24-year-old Wilbert Pierre, pointing across the dusty road into the Tawtaw barbershop, where he is training to be a hairdresser. "Of all the people I've known in my four years in Chile, more

than 100 have gone to the U.S. since March alone.” Tens of thousands of Haitians came to Chile, Brazil and other South American nations after the 2010 earthquake near Port-au-Prince that killed more than 220,000 people. Now feeling growing pressure here, thousands in recent months have traveled north. After spending months in southern Mexico, they began moving toward the U.S. border this month by the busload. An estimated 14,000 gathered at a camp in Del Rio, Tex.

[Panama] Thousands of mostly Haitian migrants traverse Panama on way to United States

Reuters [9/26/2021 11:43 AM, Elida Moreno, 5304K] reports up to 4,000 migrants, most of them Haitians, have passed through the treacherous jungles of the Darien Gap in Panama on the Colombian border as they make their way north to the United States, two Panamanian government sources said. An impromptu camp arose in recent weeks on the U.S.-Mexican border that included Haitians, adding to President Joe Biden’s migration policy headaches. At its peak on Sept. 18 there were some 15,000 people there as Haitians flee economic, political and social chaos in their homeland. The camp was cleared of thousands of Haitians here by Friday, with most remaining in the United States for now and others expelled on deportation flights or returned to Mexico. Between 3,500 to 4,000 migrants are passing through migration reception stations in Darien and Chiriqui, said a source with Panama’s security ministry, who requested anonymity. The group includes Cubans and other nationalities, the source said.

[Afghanistan] Pressure grows to cut diplomatic red tape for Afghans left behind

The Hill [9/26/2021 7:51 PM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports the State Department is under pressure to find creative solutions to aid vulnerable Afghans who were left behind in the evacuation now that the U.S. doesn’t have an embassy or any obvious way to facilitate their exit. While the Biden administration evacuated about 125,000 people from Afghanistan last month, independent analysts estimate that more than 100,000 people who fall into a priority for evacuation were left behind — a group that includes activists, those who assisted the military and individuals who worked with U.S. aid and development organizations. The U.S. withdrawal has put the State Department in a consular conundrum: With no presence on the ground, it’s significantly harder to issue visas and assist with departures, particularly for people who may have destroyed their documents for fear of retaliation from the Taliban. Congressional staff and advocates have been meeting with State Department officials to discuss evacuation plans for the thousands of vulnerable Afghans who are still stuck in the country. But some worry that those challenges might mean thousands are left in limbo.

Top News (Sunday Talk Shows)

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Influx of Haitian Migrants at US Southern Border, Part 1 (CNN’s State of the Union With Jake Tapper)

CNN’s State of the Union With Jake Tapper [9/26/2021 9:23 AM, Staff]

The Biden administration has struggled to manage influx of Haitian migrants at the southern border and images of border patrol agents on horseback using reins on their horses while dissuading migrants from crossing over. The president condemned and is raising more questions about his broader immigration policy. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas discusses these matters today on State of the Union. Secretary Mayorkas said about 2,000 have been sent to Haiti. 8,000 voluntarily returned to Mexico. Where are the

other 20,000 now and how many of them do you expect will ultimately be deported from the United States? “About 4,000 actually have been expelled under the public health authority of the Centers for Disease Control. There are about 13,000 that are in immigration court proceedings. When we do not expel an individual by reason of the public health imperative, those individuals are actually placed in immigration court proceedings. They go before a judge. They can make a claim of asylum or other claim to remain in the United States. If the judge approves that claim, they are under the law able to remain. If the judge denies it, then they are removed from the United States,” Mayorkas reports. Top Democrats in Congress want the Biden administration to stop invoking it. When asked if he would be open to that, Mayorkas says, “It is a public health authority that is determined to be an imperative for the public health reasons that I just expressed. We made one important exception at the very outset and that was to not apply it to unaccompanied children. There are exceptions to the application of that public health authority. The convention against torture if someone makes a legitimate claim that they would suffer torture if they’re returned to the country from which they have come. If we have operational capacity constraints or if there’s an acute humanitarian need such as an urgent medical situation.” Mayorkas also takes issue with comments made by special envoy to Haiti, Daniel Foote who resigned saying the Biden administration’s decision to deport thousands of Haitians as you just mentioned was, “inhumane and counterproductive” as well as accusations that the Biden administration continues to invoke Trump era policies for deportations. Mayorkas says, “I respectfully disagree with the envoy’s position and let me say a few things if I may because this administration, the Biden/Harris administration has, indeed, rescinded the immoral, unethical and cruel policies and we are rebuilding a system that has been entirely dismantled by the prior administration. With respect to the conditions in Haiti, we studied those conditions very carefully and we made a determination several months ago that individuals resident in the United States who are from Haiti, who were unlawfully present could not safely return there and, therefore, we granted them temporary protected status. That applied to individuals who were already here in the United States on or before July 29th. We then continued to study the conditions in Haiti as is our responsibility and we made a determination based upon the facts that in fact individuals could be safely returned to Haiti. We worked closely with the Haitian government and we have provided \$5.5 million in humanitarian aid to assist in their humanitarian and safe return.”

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Influx of Haitian Migrants on US Southern Border, Part 2 (CNN’s State of the Union With Jake Tapper)

CNN’s State of the Union With Jake Tapper [9/26/2021 9:23 AM, Staff]

Many House Democrats have expressed deep concern about you and your department and how you’re implementing policies. This letter from the House Oversight Committee Chair Woman and several others states, “Reports that thousands of migrants are being deported to Haiti raises serious concerns about whether the federal government is failing to treat migrants, including those fleeing violence, political instability and natural disasters with respect and dignity and affording them a meaningful opportunity to seek asylum”. Mayorkas is flatly asked if he believes asylum seekers are welcome in the United States. “They most certainly are,” he replies. “Remember, it is very important to remember that the Title 42 authority is a public health authority in light of the pandemic. It is not an immigration policy nor is it an immigration policy that we would embrace. We are rebuilding our immigration system. We are rebuilding humanitarian, safe and orderly pathways for individuals to make their claims here in the United States. We are also applying the law, in this case it is a public health law to protect the American public, communities and the migrants themselves. And there is much disagreement about almost everything that involves immigration in this

country, but there is one thing as to which there is complete unanimity. That we are dealing with a broken immigration system and that is why President Biden on day one sent a bill to Congress to once and for all fix what everyone agrees is a broken system.” But Mayorkas later says if the CDC determines that Title 42 is no longer necessary to be implemented then DHS would stop enforcing it.

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas Defends Decision to Sending Haitian Nationals in Del Rio Back to Haiti (NBC’s Meet the Press)

NBC’s Meet the Press [9/26/2021 9:16 AM, Staff, 3167K]

On Friday, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas announced all the Haitian migrants under the bridge in Del Rio had been cleared out. More than 12,000 allowed to request asylum. Approximately 8000 were allowed to return to Mexico voluntarily. As of Friday, 2,000 were expelled to Haiti. The images of white border patrol agents drew sharp criticism. Secretary Mayorkas is questioned if he thinks that was a mistake. Mayorkas says, “No, that isn’t. That’s an exercise of a public health imperative. We’re in the midst of a pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control has a Title 42 authority that we exercise to protect the migrants themselves, to protect the local communities, our personnel and the American public. The pandemic is not behind us. Title 42 is a public health policy, not an immigration policy.” However, it is being reported that these Haitians were not coming directly from Haiti, but rather immigrants living in different countries in South America for sometimes years. Secretary Mayorkas says, “We’re working with other countries, Chile, Brazil, other countries in South America and the region. These are Haitian nationals. Some of them don’t have documents from the countries from which they just left. They are subject to removal. They are subject to Title 42 expulsion and we work with the countries that receive them. In Haiti specifically, we’ve contributed about \$5.5 million to ensure there’s safe and humane resettlement there.” Mayorkas additionally addresses the outcry against the images of CBP agents on horseback subduing Haitian nationals trying to run into Texas. He says there will be an independent investigation into the matter but stands behind his agency saying, “I’m proud of the members of the CBP. What those images suggest does not reflect who CBP is, who we are as a department nor who we are as a country.”

DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Border Crisis, Part 1 (Fox News Sunday With Chris Wallace)

Fox News Sunday With Chris Wallace [9/26/2021 9:05 AM, Staff, 1M]

30,000 Haitian migrants have come across the southern border into Del Rio, Texas since September 9th. Of those, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas says 12,400 of them will have their cases heard by an immigration judge and another 5,000 are being processed by the DHS. Mayorkas says another 3,000 people are in detention, and around 10-12,000 individuals have been released into the U.S. with conditions as they wait. Regarding the 5,000 that are being processed, Mayorkas says, “We will make determinations whether they will be returned to Haiti based on our public health and public interest authorities.” Removal proceedings, including asylum cases, can take anywhere from six months to several years, and the Department of Justice says 44% of those released from custody for immigration enforcement proceedings miss their court hearings. “We have enforcement guidelines in place that provide that individuals who are recent border crossers who do not show up for their hearings are enforcement priorities and will be removed,” Mayorkas says. According to internal documents, the DHS is now tracking many more people, including Haitians, who are on their way to the U.S. from South America and Central America to cross the border, with 20,000 Haitians in Colombia, 3,000 in Peru, and

1,500 in Panama. This week, there were 15,000 Haitians huddled under a bridge in Del Rio with nowhere to go. Mayorkas argues that the current large group of migrants seeking asylum is “nothing new,” spanning years and administrations. The DHS allowed migrants to cross into the U.S. because, “The law provides that individuals can make a claim for humanitarian relief.” Mayorkas says there are “strict” COVID-19 testing protocols, and the DHS tests, isolates, and quarantines unaccompanied children. The department also works with nonprofit organizations to test families and people in ICE custody.

DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Border Crisis, Part 2 (Fox News Sunday With Chris Wallace)

Fox News Sunday With Chris Wallace [9/26/2021 9:15 AM, Staff, 1M]

The Department of Homeland Security is now investigating the Border Patrol for the officers on horseback who were at the border trying to keep Haitians from coming across in to the U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham says on the subject, “I think the most inhuman thing going on right now in America is that the men and women of the Border Patrol have been completely abandoned, demagogued, scapegoated, and treated like dirt by elected officials in the Democratic party and this administration.” DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas says the horses used by Border Patrol agents are used to “cover terrain that might not otherwise be covered” and “to assess the situation and very often to help people in distress.” The subject of the current independent investigation, Mayorkas explains, is whether or not the officers caught on camera complied with DHS policies and training. More than a month ago, the Supreme Court overruled the Biden administration’s decision to rescind former President Trump’s “Remain in Mexico” policy. Mayorkas says the current administration is “complying with the court’s order” while the U.S. negotiates with Mexico on the policy’s protocols.

Senator Tim Scott reacts to the Haitian deportations to Haiti under Title 42 (CBS’s Face the Nation)

CBS’s Face the Nation [9/26/2021 10:52 AM, Staff, 3103K]

President Trump adopted Title 42 which allows for migrants crossing the border to be expelled without first being guaranteed asylum hearings. This was all justified under the pandemic. The Biden administration kept those things in place. When asked how he felt about this, South Carolina Senator Tim Scott says, “I was for a strong border under President Trump. I’m for a strong border right now under President Biden.” I think President Biden and his administration owns a crisis that they’ve created at the border, the humanitarian crisis that’s unfolding before every eye in the- in the American public.” Later, Scott explains, “It is the responsibility of the president to secure our borders. President Biden has not done so. The crisis of his own making looks very similar to the one that he made in Afghanistan, the one we’re experiencing right now with taxing, the one we’re experiencing with spending. So yes, this president should do a much better job of avoiding crises that are avoidable.” The president has said those people he’s talking about, the men on horseback who at times it looked like they were whipping some of these Haitian migrants who were running, he said, “I promise you those people will pay.” Senator Scott responds, saying, “I certainly think he should hold accountable his agency- his agency. Absolutely.”

French Ambassador to U.S. Philippe Etienne: Lack of Consultation on Sub Deal “Costs a Tremendous Amount of Trust” (CNN’s Fareed Zakaria GPS)

CNN’s Fareed Zakaria GPS [9/26/2021 10:07 AM, Staff, 673K]

Paris’s reaction to the submarine deal was swift and furious, as France was several years into its own agreement to provide subs to Australia. This week, President Biden spoke to

France's Emmanuel Macron on the phone, and the White House says Biden holds himself responsible for the lack of consultation with America's oldest ally. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, however, took a rather different tack. "I just think it's time for some of our dearest friends around the world to, you know, prenez un grip about all this and donnez-moi un break." France's ambassador to the United States, Philippe Etienne, will be back in Washington this week, according to Macron, "where I will have a lot of work to do with our American interlocutors," Etienne says. The ambassador points out that the phone call between Biden and Macron was "completed by joint statement," and there is a recognition that allies should have more consultations between one another. "If we are really allies, allies behave in another way so that they consult each other, and it did not happen, and it costs a tremendous amount of trust." Etienne's task as he returns to the U.S., he says, is to rebuild that trust between the two countries and work together on issues the two presidents discussed in their phone call. The U.S. shares its nuclear technology with Britain, showing a strong bond between the two countries, but the U.S. does not share nuclear technology with France. Etienne does not see this as a sign of a weaker bond with the U.S. He says that the U.S. and France fight together to stop terrorist groups, marking a strong bond. Macron has called for strategic autonomy for France, particularly on China, but Etienne says that is because the issue with China does not only affect France, but the whole European Union.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Nuclear Submarine Deal, COVID-19 (CBS's Face the Nation)

CBS's Face the Nation [9/26/2021 11:13 AM, Staff, 5.4M]

The U.S. and China appear headed towards confrontation. To push back against China's military buildup in the Pacific, President Biden brokered a new defense partnership with Australia to sell it stealth nuclear-powered submarines. That decision came at the expense of U.S. ally France. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison says his country is "resilient to foreign interference," whether foreign attacks are cyber or other forms. Morrison says Australia needs the U.S. to make nuclear submarines because "Australia's defenses depend on having a long reach" with how far it is from other nations. Morrison says Australia is going to shift from its current Collins-class submarines to nuclear submarines with higher capabilities for these long ranges, especially as China continues to be a threat. "There's been an increased militarization of the Indo-Pacific for many, many years... and we've seen that escalating for some time. And so the escalation predates our decision." Morrison says he thinks war with China is "completely avoidable," but that will mostly be up to the United States and China. "What Australia has to do is, understanding that environment, we have to take decisions in our national interest to ensure we have adequate defenses and an adequate way of providing stability in the region, not just for Australia, but all of our friends in the region." The French government made clear they were not happy they lost this contract for submarines. A defense contractor in France says it's sending Australia a bill for \$66 billion. Morrison says that in the contract, Australia had the option to terminate the contract for many reasons, including the submarines no longer meeting Australia's "strategic need." Meanwhile, Australia is one of the few Western democracies that has put in place some strict COVID protocols, shutting down its borders 18 months ago. Morrison says the borders will reopen by the end of the year to allow Australians overseas to return, if not sooner. "But I'll tell you what shutting those borders did. It saved over 30,000 lives in Australia. Almost — it's around about 1,200 Australians have lost their lives to COVID. That is what is lost in a day here in the United States." The Delta variant has caused Sydney to lock down again, and there have been protests in Melbourne against some COVID-19 mandates. Morrison says these restrictions are already starting to be lifted,

and “our rates of vaccination on a daily basis per capita have even exceeded those that were achieved in the United States, in the United Kingdom at their peak.”

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey on the Middle East and Relations with the U.S. (CBS’s Face the Nation)

CBS’s Face the Nation [9/26/2021 11:05 AM, Staff, 2054K]

President Biden has described the world as split between autocrats and Democrats. And he’s called you an autocrat. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey says, “Well, as of now, Mr. President’s definition of an autocrat remains unknown to me, I don’t know what he meant, but my past is of a political past, and in my political past, which dates back to four decades -- and I’ve always internalized democracy and I have dedicated these four decades to servicing my people. That’s the kind of a leader I am and this is how I came to be what I am today. And because of the fact that my people never complained of me, I’ve always accomplished and triumphed at the end of every election that I partook in the last 20 years. In 1994, I became the mayor of Metropolitan City of Istanbul. And then I became the prime minister, and then I became the president, and I still am the president of my country servicing my people. This is the process, and I really don’t know what Mr. President meant by saying autocrat.” President Biden has said when he was a candidate and he talked about human rights abuses Erdoğan is going to have to pay a price for some of his actions. Erdoğan replies saying, “Well, on the contrary, he never mentioned any of these issues to me. And, I know whenever we got together, he’s very respectful towards me. And ever since the days when he was the vice president, he was always very respectful-- that’s how he approached me, and it is very difficult for me to understand why he’s using such a definition when he’s talking about me. And the last time we got together was in Brussels in June. We just discussed the situation vis-a-vis the Karzai airport in Afghanistan when they were preparing to withdraw from the airport. He proposed us to possibly run the airport, and this is a great demonstration of his confidence in us. So I would like to ask you, he trusts us enough to propose us to run the Karzai airport?”

Iraqi President Barham Salih On A Post-War Future (CNN’s Fareed Zakaria GPS)

CNN’s Fareed Zakaria GPS [9/26/2021 10:24 AM, Staff, 673K]

President Barham Salih of Iraq discusses the future of Iraq and the Middle East generally after the United States has left Afghanistan. He begins by explaining his reaction to the way things devolved in Afghanistan quickly after the U.S. military left. “Obviously, I was very concerned about the plight of the Afghani people. I feel for them. I know what it means to be in a situation of conflict for so long. I know the plight of refugees. I have been a refugee myself and many Iraqis have been forced to flee their country. So I felt very concerned about the plight of the Afghani people. But there was also a lesson learned from what happened 20 years on from the American intervention and international intervention in Iraq tells you in southern Afghanistan. No matter how much international support, no matter how much investment is made in these situations without legitimacy and without good governance and without the support of your own population, you cannot survive. And the lesson of Afghanistan is that corruption stands in the way of good governance, stands in the way of stability. And the hopefully the lesson learned from that is that good governance should be at the heart of any international engagement with any anywhere in the world.” He further explains his and Iraq’s thoughts on the withdrawal from Afghanistan by saying, “There are lots of implications to what happened in Afghanistan and everybody has to watch very carefully. To be fair, the United States has been engaged in this war for the last 20 years or so. I can understand the reasoning behind the policy. And it is not for me to

question it. It is for Americans to debate that. But at the end of the day, we cannot, in this part of the world, continue to blame our failures on the outside world, try to claim all the successes to ourselves. I think it is about us, in the case of Iraq, we have had the support of the United States and other members of the international community. We will continue to need their support to develop our economy, to develop our societies for the better. But at the end of the day, we also need to move away from military dynamics to one of development, one of developing our political systems based on good governance”

Prime Minister Stefan Lofven on Sweden’s COVID-19 Experiment (CNN’s Fareed Zakaria GPS)

CNN’s Fareed Zakaria GPS [9/26/2021 10:30 AM, Staff, 673K]

Last December, many were surprised to hear a European monarch criticizing his own government’s handling of the COVID-19 crisis. Sweden’s king said of his nation’s response to the pandemic, “I believe we have failed. We have a large number who have died, and that is terrible.” Sweden remained relatively free when much of the rest of Europe was on strict lockdown. Sweden’s Prime Minister Stefan Lofven recently announced that he would step down from his post in November. Sweden’s approach relied on people to make their own judgements rather than enforcing lockdowns, but the feeling is that the data suggests that it was not a successful strategy. Lofven still says the COVID response was not a failure and there was “not that big a difference” compared to other European countries’ measures. “We also choose to stay home with symptoms, keep the distance, use masks. We came to that later. But so it was like, ‘Do whatever you want. We trust you to do the right thing’.” Sweden also encouraged people to work from home if they were able. Part of the reason for the country’s lockdown choices was because, “as we saw the pandemic develop, and we said also last spring, this is a marathon, it is not going to be over summer 2020. It is going to last for a long, long time, which it did.” Lofven also points out that countries with strict lockdowns “did not manage to keep the number of deaths down.” If he could redo the pandemic response, Lofven says he still would not impose a lockdown for more than two weeks. Another justification for not shutting down the country was to keep up economic activity, but like many other countries, Sweden also suffered a large drop. Lofven says the Swedish economy is now recovering quickly with the government making large investments in reviving the economy.

Gen. Jack Keane: Biden’s failure to bring together world powers a ‘lost opportunity’ (Fox News Sunday Morning Futures with Maria Bartiromo)

Fox News Sunday Morning Futures with Maria Bartiromo [9/26/2021 9:23 AM, Staff]

Fox News senior strategic analyst Gen. Jack Keane criticizes the president’s representation at UN meeting. After repeated escalations from China over the past year including Hong Kong, suspiciousness around the COVID-19 outbreak possibly starting in Wuhan and more, Biden did not mention them as any issue at all for the world. Keane says, “It is quite remarkable in my mind and what a lost opportunity. Usually, when we have a new president, and he is going before the UN general assembly where all the leaders of the world are present, or at least their representatives are there, it’s an incredible platform that usually most presidents take advantage of. And before that platform, given the debacle that happened in Afghanistan just a short while ago and the whole world watched that, and United States competence and resolve were brought into question, I think that is indisputable and certainly people had that on their minds, this was an opportunity for the president of the United States, he is making the claim that we are returning to the world stage as a global leader. Therefore, deal with the United States competence and resolve.

Lay out that strategic framework how we are going to deal with adversarial nations that are destabilizing the world order. China, Russia and Iran.”

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi: Infrastructure Bill Will be Passed This Week (ABC's This Week With George Stephanopoulos)

ABC's This Week With George Stephanopoulos [9/26/2021 9:01 AM, Staff]

This week may make or break President Biden's ambitious agenda, which aims for more than one trillion dollars for infrastructure investments and another three trillion plus for climate change, child education, and more. This comes as a government shutdown looms on Friday, plus the prospect of America defaulting for the first time in history if Congress does not soon authorize government borrowing to pay past debts. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi says the infrastructure bills are part of his agenda to “build back better,” which Pelosi says has over 95% support from the caucus. Pelosi says there are some disagreements still about the size of the \$3.1 trillion package. Pelosi says the infrastructure bill will pass, but Progressive leader Representative Pramila Jayapal is balking. She said in Friday that voting on the bill on Monday is an “arbitrary date,” adding that more than 50 members will vote against the bill if there is not first an agreement on the broader social investment bill. “Let me just say we're going to pass the bill this week,” Pelosi says, adding that she would not bring a bill to the floor if it did not have the votes. On Saturday, Pelosi says the Budget Committee distributed the plans for the “Build Back Better” legislation with the \$3.5 trillion, but, “there will have to be some changes in that, and the sooner, the better.” The most notable Senate holdouts are Joe Manchin, who says \$3.5 trillion is too much, and Kyrsten Sinema, who says she will not support any increases in income or corporation taxes. Pelosi says the bill will be paid for by having corporations “pay their fair share” in taxes. “We've... documented everything that we need to be ready with legislative language to go forward,” Pelosi says. The House Speaker says it is “self-evident” that the final \$3.5 trillion will end up being a smaller number as negotiations continue. Meanwhile, Pelosi calls it “irresponsible beyond words” for Republicans to not provide any votes on the government debt default. “The full faith in credit in the United States should not be questioned — that's in the Constitution of the United States,” Pelosi says.

CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky on New Booster Vaccination Guidance (CBS's Face the Nation)

CBS's Face the Nation [9/26/2021 10:33 AM, Staff]

CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky joined CBS's Face the Nation to discuss new guidance on booster shots. “Let me start by saying that we still have 70 million Americans who are unvaccinated in this country, and these are people who are 10 times the risk of being hospitalized and 11 times more likely to die. So, we have hard work in making sure we get those people vaccinated. But as I'm here to talk about boosters, let's- let's get to protecting the people to optimize people who have already been vaccinated. So, there is a scientific process. We have an FDA advisory board meeting. They then provide the regulatory authorization and then it comes to a CDC advisory meeting. And then I provide those recommendations,” she said. “And there has been remarkable consensus in a lot of those discussions, people over the age of 65 people at high-risk conditions and where there was some real scientific discussion, and a scientific close call was for those people who are at high risk of living by virtue of where they live or where they work. And because of that close call and because of all the evidence we reviewed both of the FDA and at the CDC, I felt it was appropriate for those people to also be eligible for boosters. So, who are those people? Those are people who live and work in high-risk settings, that includes people in

homeless shelters, people in group homes, people in prisons, but also importantly are people who work for- work with vulnerable communities. So, our health care workers, our teachers are grocery workers, our public transportation employees." On risks, Walensky said, "o, you know, as we've looked at the risks, benefits and safety profiles of people who have gotten third doses, we have a lot of experience from other countries. Israel has vaccinated millions of people now with third doses, and we've actually vaccinated here up to two and a half million people now with third doses. So, we just don't have as long of a duration of safety for those third doses. But what I can tell you is so far in the 20,000 people we've looked at; the safety signals are exactly the same as what we've seen for the second dose. So- and we've vaccinated over 160 million people with MRNA vaccines in this country. We have an extraordinary amount of safety data. So, you know, some in- some scientists may say, Wait, we want to wait and see what more safety data come in, what- whether there is a true benefit to be seen in- in- in trials and effectiveness. But there's extraordinary data to demonstrate the safety of these vaccines and in fact, that they work. So, if you're in a high-risk position, I would absolutely recommend you get the boost."

Citizenship and Immigration Services

DHS admits approving DACA applications in violation of court order

The [Washington Times](#) [9/26/2021 9:54 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports Homeland Security's legal immigration agency has admitted to a judge that it approved new DACA applications despite the court's order halting that work. Tracy Renaud, who was acting director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at the time, said last week that it had just discovered two applications were approved as renewals, but in fact, they should have been treated as new applications and should have been blocked under Judge Andrew Hanen's July ruling. Those are in addition to nine other new applications found in late July that had been fully processed. Ms. Renaud, who is now the acting deputy director at USCIS, also said the agency advanced more than 600 initial DACA applications after the judge's order. None of those were ultimately approved, Ms. Renaud said in a declaration filed with Judge Hanen. The Biden administration insisted it has used "an abundance of caution" in following the judge's orders, but officials said the bumbles happened "despite those efforts."

[CA] Listen: Green card backlog leaves Silicon Valley workers in limbo

The [San Diego Chronicle](#) [9/27/2021 12:00 AM, Staff, 302K] reports the U.S. is allowing more than 80,000 visas to vanish at the end of September, despite having a backlog of more than a million skilled immigrants who have been waiting — sometimes as long as decades — for their green cards. Most of those people are tech workers from India, including in Silicon Valley. On this episode of the Fifth & Mission podcast, Chronicle reporter Deepa Fernandes joins host Cecilia Lei to talk about their desperation, and the impact it's having on their families. [Editorial note: consult audio at source link]

Customs and Border Protection

[TX] Abbott vows to hire horseback border agents if Biden fires them, says president 'in dereliction of duty'

[FOX News](#) [9/26/2021 10:23 AM, Tyler Olson, 9251K] reports Texas Gov. Greg Abbott Sunday promised to hire the border agents on horseback accused of whipping Haitian

migrants if they're fired by President Biden – as he slammed the president and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas for failing to secure the sovereignty of the United States. "Secretary Mayorkas and, if I can be candid, even President Biden, they are in dereliction of duty," Abbott said on "Fox News Sunday." "The Biden administration has abandoned any pretense of securing the sovereignty of either Texas or the United States by having these open border policies," the governor said. "The people in south Texas, they are angry about the Biden administration for ignoring, for abandoning them. The Biden administration cares far more for the people who are not in this country than he does for the people, American citizens who live in this country." Abbott and his state have been on the front lines of the migrant crisis on the southern border, which returned to the headlines in recent days thousands of Haitian migrants crossed into Texas in recent weeks. One of the more controversial stories from the border last week was based on images that showed agents on horseback blocking Haitian migrants from entering the U.S. Initial claims that agents were using "whips" were debunked by officials and agents, who noted the agents were using long reins to control the horse, and were twirling their reins to move the horse forward. The Washington Times [9/26/2021 8:13 AM, Valerie Richardson, 381K] reports President Biden vowed Friday that "those people will pay," referring to images of agents on horseback flipping their reins as they sought to block migrants Sept. 19 from crossing the Rio Grande near Del Rio, Texas, fueling an outcry over agents "whipping" migrants. Mr. Abbott told Fox News Sunday host Chris Wallace that "if he takes any action against them whatsoever — I have worked side-by-side with those border patrol agents. "I want them to know something," the Republican governor said. "If they are at risk of losing their job [from] a president who is abandoning his duty to secure the border, you have a job in the state of Texas. I will hire you to help Texas secure our border."

[UT] 'There's no control': Border chaos invades America's heartland

The Washington Times [9/26/2021 5:51 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports Iron County in Utah is about the furthest thing from a border community. But Sheriff Kenneth Carpenter says incidents like a traffic stop this month on the interstate, where a deputy nabbed a motorist for reckless driving and found 5 pounds of methamphetamine and \$8,000 in cash, are results of the chaos on the U.S.-Mexico boundary. State officials have warned sheriffs that Honduran gangs have stepped up drug trafficking along the Wasatch Mountains, Iron County's SWAT team callouts are "way up" and deputies are finding more guns when they serve search warrants, Sheriff Carpenter said. "Since the border's been just wide open now, there's no control," he told The Washington Times. "The floodgates have been opened, and we're seeing it on a much more frequent basis. We're seeing a surge in the [drug] pipelines, we're seeing a surge in fentanyl houses, we're seeing a surge in criminal activity." Some voices in Washington say what comes across the U.S.-Mexico boundary makes its way into the interior. In other words, every community is a border community. Iron County's experience suggests that's true.

Transportation Security Administration

Passengers attempting to pass guns through security at a higher rate during pandemic, TSA says

The Houston Chronicle [9/26/2021 2:58 PM, Timothy Fannin and Ryan Serpico, 183K] reports despite a drastic decrease in air travel because of the pandemic, the rate of passengers attempting to pass firearms illegally through airport security in Texas jumped 67 percent from 2019 to 2020, according to the Transportation Security Administration. In

2019, TSA found 1.15 guns per 100,000 passengers at Texas airports. The following year, the agency found 1.92 guns per 100,000 people screened — a 67 percent increase during a time in which passenger traffic in Texas fell 57 percent, from 68 million in 2019 to 29.6 million in 2020. San Antonio International Airport saw the second-largest percentage increase in firearms nabbed at TSA checkpoints in the state during that time among airports with at least 15 catches. George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston saw the highest-percentage increase in Texas last year at 122 percent. The rate rose from 0.85 guns in 2019 per 100,000 passengers among airports with at least 15 catches to 1.88 guns per 100,000 airline travelers in 2020. According to Patricia Mancha, a spokeswoman for TSA's Southwest region, the most common excuses from passengers is "I forgot it was in my bag" or the firearm belongs to a relative.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Category 4 Hurricane Sam looks likely to avoid US landfall

The Hill [9/26/2021 9:55 PM, Mychael Schnell, 1776K] reports Hurricane Sam, a Category 4 storm, is picking up speed as it sweeps north over the Atlantic, but will likely avoid a US landfall, according to AccuWeather. The storm as of Sunday night was located roughly 880 miles to the east-southeast of Leeward Islands in the northeastern Caribbean Sea and was moving northwest at 7 miles per hour, according to AccuWeather. The storm is still a Category 4 major hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, with sustained winds of 150 miles per hour. Hurricane-force winds are extending out up to 30 miles from the center of the storm, and tropical-storm-force winds were moving up to 90 miles from the center. The National Weather Center on Sunday said Sam is expected to remain a major hurricane for several days. The AP [9/27/2021 12:00 AM, Staff, 302K] reports no coastal watches or warnings were in effect, however swells from Hurricane Sam could cause dangerous rip current conditions off the coast of the Lesser Antilles early this week, officials said. CBS News [9/26/2021 2:36 PM, Tori B. Powell, 2612K] reports "Some fluctuations in intensity are expected during the next day or so," the National Hurricane Center said. "Thereafter, some slow weakening is forecast."

Secret Service

[ME] Maryland Man sentenced in Maine for credit card fraud offenses

The Portland Press Herald [9/26/2021 11:41 AM, Staff, 84K, Positive, Secondary] reports a Maryland man was sentenced for using counterfeit credit cards, Acting U.S. Attorney Donald E. Clark announced recently U.S. District Judge John A. Woodcock, Jr., sentenced Charles Harris, 38, to eight months in prison and three years of supervised release. He was also ordered to pay about \$1,000 in restitution. Harris pleaded guilty in December 2020. According to court records, in December 2018, Harris and his co-defendant, Bryan Boley, used counterfeit credit cards at Maine retail outlets. The credit card numbers were bought online. Harris's co-defendant Boley was sentenced to 22 months in prison and three years of supervised release on Nov. 15, 2019. The U.S. Secret Service; Maine State Police; and Auburn, Brunswick, Cape Elizabeth and Yarmouth police departments investigated the case.

[NJ] Arrest Made in September 11 Shooting Death of Paterson Man

TAPinto [9/26/2021 10:37 AM, Steve Lenox, Positive, Secondary] reports a 19-year-old Paterson man believed to be responsible for the September 11 shooting death of Elijah Wilson, 20, is under arrest. According to Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes and Paterson Police Chief Ibrahim Baycora, Rasheed Thomas, is charged with Murder, Possession of a Handgun for an Unlawful Purpose, and Unlawful Possession of a Handgun. As previously reported, on the day of the incident members of the Paterson Police Department responded to the area of East 18th Street at approximately 2:49 a.m. on a report of a shooting. Upon their arrival, officers located Wilson lying on the corner of East 18th Street and Fulton Street with apparent gunshot wounds. Wilson was transported to Saint Joseph's University Medical Center by Paterson Fire Department EMS where he succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced deceased just three hours later. Thomas was subsequently arrested at approximately 5:15 p.m. Saturday with the assistance of the United States Secret Service and the Elmwood Park Police Department.

[NJ] Former Elizabeth USPS Employee Admits to Stealing Credit Cards in the Mail

TAPinto [9/25/2021 8:00 AM, Skylyr Vanderveer, Positive, Secondary] reports a former Union County woman admitted stealing credit cards sent through the mail while employed as a clerk at the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) in Elizabeth, Acting U.S. Attorney Rachael A. Honig announced Thursday. Myriam Jimenez-Valentin, 33, who relocated to Barbourville, Virginia, pleaded guilty by videoconference before U.S. District Judge Kevin McNulty to an information charge charging her with one count of theft of mail. According to a press release from the United States District Attorney's Office, documents filed in this case and statements made in court: Acting U.S. Attorney Honig credited postal inspectors of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Inspector in Charge Raimundo Marrero, and special agents with the USPS-Office of Inspector General, Northeast Area Field Office, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Matthew Modafferi, with the investigation leading to today's charge. She also thanked the U.S. Secret Service, the New Jersey State Police, the Elizabeth Police Department, and the Secaucus Police Department for their assistance.

[OH] Fake bills passed on to restaurant

The Tribune Today [9/24/2021 6:00 PM, Staff, Neutral, Secondary] reports a manager at the Pizza Hut on East Market Street reported to police that one of his delivery drivers turned in two counterfeit \$20 bills after a run Tuesday evening. The manager told police officers the fake money was passed by a customer named Miller about 8 p.m. in the 2000 block of North Feederle Drive SE. Officers took the fake bills in as evidence, the report states.

National Security News

[Turkey] Erdogan says Turkey plans to buy more Russian defense systems

Reuters [9/26/2021 6:35 PM, Humeyra Pamuk, Ezgi Erkoyun, Arshad Mohammed, 5304K] reports President Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey still intended to buy a second batch of S-400 missile defense systems from Russia, a move that could deepen a rift with NATO ally Washington and trigger new U.S. sanctions. Washington says the S-400s pose a threat to its F-35 fighter jets and to NATO's broader defense systems. Turkey says it was unable to procure air defense systems from any NATO ally on satisfactory terms. "In the future, nobody will be able to interfere in terms of what kind of defense systems we acquire, from which country at what level," Erdogan said in an interview that aired on CBS News' "Face

the Nation" on Sunday. "Nobody can interfere with that. We are the only ones to make such decisions." The United States imposed sanctions on Turkey's Defense Industry Directorate, its chief, Ismail Demir, and three other employees in December following the country's acquisition of a first batch of S-400s. Talks continued between Russia and Turkey about the delivery of a second batch, which Washington has repeatedly said would almost certainly trigger new sanctions. "We urge Turkey at every level and opportunity not to retain the S-400 system and to refrain from purchasing any additional Russian military equipment," said a State Department spokesperson when asked about Erdogan's comments. "We continue to make clear to Turkey that any significant new Russian arms purchases would risk triggering CAATSA 231 sanctions separate from and in addition to those imposed in December 2020," the spokesperson added, referring to the 2017 Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act. The spokesperson also said the United States regards Turkey as an ally and friend and seeks ways to strengthen their partnership "even when we disagree."

[Russia] Russia escalates strikes in northwest Syria, Turkey sends reinforcements ahead of summit

Reuters [9/26/2021 1:16 PM, Suleiman Al-Khalidi, 5304K] reports Turkey sent reinforcements to the last rebel-held enclave in northwestern Syria as Russia stepped up air strikes there on Sunday, several sources said, three days before leaders Vladimir Putin and Tayyip Erdogan are due to meet for talks. Residents as well as opposition and military sources said that Russian jets bombed villages around the city of Afrin on Sunday, intensifying air strikes on towns and villages held by Turkish-backed rebels which have escalated in the last week. Rebel sources said at least five fighters from a Turkey-backed faction were killed while at least 12 civilians were injured when Russian jets flying at high altitudes dropped ordnance, according to a network of plane spotters who document sightings of jet fighters. The Russian bombing campaign has spread from Jabal al Zawya in Idlib province further northwest to the Afrin area near the Turkish border, with shelling from Syrian army outposts aided by Iranian-backed militias.

[Russia] Russian fighter jets escort U.S. bomber in Pacific Ocean

Reuters [9/26/2021 9:01 AM, Vladimir Soldatkin, 5304K] reports three Russian SU-35S fighter jets have escorted a U.S. B-52H strategic bomber which was approaching Russia's border in the Pacific Ocean, RIA news agency reported on Sunday, citing Moscow's Defence Ministry. It said the bomber had subsequently moved away from the border, while the Russian jets had returned to their bases. CNN [9/26/2021 12:33 PM, Manveena Suri and Olga Pavlova, 4876K] reports there were no violations of Russia's state border during the episode, according to TASS, which, citing Russia's National Defense Command Center, said "three Russian fighters Sukhoi-35S have been scrambled to escort a US strategic bomber B-52H, which approached Russia's airspace." "The fighters' crews identified the target as a strategic B-52H bomber of the US Air Force and escorted it over the Pacific Ocean. There were no violations of Russia's state border or dangerous proximity of planes in the air," TASS added. According to the state-owned news agency, Russia's Sukhoi-25S fighters "strictly followed" international rules and returned to base after the US plane moved away from the Russian border.

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DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

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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.

TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Tuesday, September 28, 2021 6:00 AM ET

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Top News

Biden Administration Moves to Protect Undocumented Young Adults

The [New York Times](#) [9/27/2021 4:37 PM, Miriam Jordan and Eileen Sullivan, 24635K] reports the Biden administration plans to publish a proposed rule on Tuesday in hopes of preserving Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, a program that has protected hundreds of thousands of undocumented young adults from deportation and allowed them to legally work in the United States. The new rule, to be published in The Federal Register, would go into effect after the administration considers public input during a 60-day comment period. It would protect some 700,000 undocumented people brought to the United States as children from being deported or losing their work permits, even if Congress does not pass comprehensive immigration reform. The 205-page rule "basically is an effort to bulletproof the DACA program from litigation challenges," said Stephen W. Yale-Loehr, an immigration law professor at Cornell Law School. Democrats had hoped to include a path to citizenship for the Dreamers and about 7 million other undocumented immigrants living in the United States in a \$3.5-trillion budget bill. But after the Senate parliamentarian ruled last week that those measures did not belong in the bill, Democrats are preparing backup plans. One would update the immigration registry, a process for extending legal permanent residence to immigrants on the basis of their longstanding presence in the country. The measure would benefit many in the DACA program. "The Biden-Harris administration continues to take action to protect Dreamers and recognize their contributions to this country," Alejandro N. Mayorkas, the homeland security secretary, said in a statement. "This notice of proposed rule-making is an important step to achieve that goal," he added. [Bloomberg](#) [9/27/2021 9:31 AM, Ellen M. Gilmer and Lydia O'Neal, 18K] reports "However," he added, "Only Congress can provide permanent protection. I support the inclusion of immigration reform in the reconciliation bill and urge Congress to act swiftly to provide Dreamers the legal status they need and deserve." [Roll Call](#) [9/27/2021 11:30 AM, Suzanne Monyak, 119K] reports the Department of Homeland Security's proposal would maintain the same eligibility criteria as the 2012 program, known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, which provides work permits and deportation protections to people without legal status who entered the U.S. prior to June 15, 2012, and who were born after June 16, 1981. Applicants must also be at least 15 years old to apply, have no criminal record, and either be enrolled in or have graduated from school. In its 205-page proposal, the department emphasized the contributions that "Dreamers" have made to their communities since the Obama administration rolled out DACA nearly a decade ago. Studies show DACA recipients and their households pay \$5.6 billion in federal taxes and about \$3.1 billion in state and local taxes annually, according to DHS. They also include 30,000 health care workers and professionals in a wide array of occupations, the rule says. "Over the 9 years in which the DACA policy has been in effect, the good faith investments recipients have made in both themselves and their communities, and the investments that their communities have made in them, have been, in the Department's judgment, substantial,"

the proposal says.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/27/2021 9:42 AM, Brett Samuels, 1776K]

[AP](#) [9/27/2021 11:40 AM, Elliot Spagat and Mark Sherman, 302K]

[Reuters](#) [9/26/2021 8:00 PM, Daniel Wiessner, 4947K]

[Univision](#) [9/27/2021 10:36 AM, Jorge Cancino, 366K]

[Telemundo Washington DC](#) [9/27/2021 8:13 AM, Staff, 4K]

DHS chief says 1 in 5 migrants have 'illness' after Del Rio fiasco

[USA News Lab](#) [9/28/2021 12:33 AM, Staff] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas stated Monday that the "Rate of illness" amongst unlawful immigrants who have arrived on the US-Mexico border in current months is "Approximately 20 percent" - days after admitting that hundreds of Haitian migrants who arrange a short lived encampment underneath a bridge in Del Rio, Texas weren't examined for COVID-19. "When one is speaking of 7,000 or 7,500 people encountered at the border every day, if one takes a look at that system, it is not built for that in a COVID environment where isolation is required," Mayorkas stated throughout remarks on the Immigration Law and Policy Conference. Mayorkas didn't specify whether or not the "Illness" he was referring to was COVID-19, although he additionally stated that he didn't anticipate "The tragic rise of the Delta variant" over current months. The encampment underneath the bridge linking Del Rio with Ciudad Acuña, Mexico was cleared Friday, lower than per week after roughly 15,000 migrants had congregated there and waited to be picked up by border authorities. "We did not test that population of individuals," Mayorkas instructed reporters on the White House that day. Earlier in the week, White House press secretary Jen Psaki defended not requiring migrants be examined or vaccinated for COVID-19, telling reporters that the brand new arrivals have been "Not intending to stay here for a lengthy period of time." [TheFloridaPost](#) [9/28/2021 12:17 AM, Staff] reports the website Border Report, citing the Department of Homeland Security, reported that of those 13,000 migrants mentioned by Mayorkas, 10,000 had been released into the US and 3,000 were being held by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Another 8,000 had returned "Voluntarily" to Mexico and 4,000 were being processed by DHS "To determine whether they will be expelled or placed in immigration removal proceedings."

Thousands of Haitian migrants again moving toward US: report

[The Hill](#) [9/27/2021 10:53 AM, Monique Beals, 1776K] reports that Panamanian government officials have reported that approximately 4,000 migrants, most of whom came from Haiti, have passed through Panama on the Colombian border and are en route to the United States. The migrants traveled through "treacherous" jungles to migration reception stations in Darien and Chiriqui, an anonymous source from Panama's security ministry told Reuters. While the officials say the migrants are mostly Haitian, some people from Cuba and other places are also part of the group, Reuters said. Reuters also reported that about 16,000 people are in Necocli, a town in northern Colombia, where they await a boat ride to the Darien Gap. There, smugglers will reportedly take them through "one of the most dangerous and impassable regions of Latin America." Last month, Colombia and Panama decided to allow 500 migrants a day to pass through their borders, far fewer than the nearly 1,500 arrivals seen daily, Reuters reported. Over 80,000 migrants traveled through Panama this year, Panama's President Laurentino Cortizo said to the United Nations General Assembly on Thursday. In January, the country was receiving about 800 people per day,

and as of August, that figure was up to 30,000, per Reuters. As of Friday, a makeshift camp of Haitian migrants in Del Rio, Texas, that had drawn national attention was cleared completely after it was home to about 15,000 people earlier this month. Most of those people remain in the U.S. while others were either deported or went to Mexico, Reuters said. Over the weekend, Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry said that such migration was bound to continue amid global inequality. "Migration will continue as long as the planet has both wealthy areas, whilst most of the world's population lives in poverty, even extreme poverty, without any prospects of a better life," he said on Saturday in a video to the U.N. General Assembly.

Faith groups aid Haitian migrants, denounce mistreatment

The [AP](#) [9/27/2021 11:47 AM, Luis Andres Heano and Peter Smith, 495K] reports that faith-based groups - many of them longtime advocates for a more welcoming immigration policy - have been scrambling to keep up with fast-paced developments in the Haitian migrant crisis, trying to assist those in need while assailing the harsh Border Patrol tactics employed against them. Before thousands of Haitian migrants dispersed last week from a camp in the border city of Del Rio, Texas, a coalition of churches and other groups was providing them with sandwiches, water and other essentials. Since dispersing, many of the migrants have received help from faith-based groups in Houston and El Paso as they seek to connect with relatives and sponsors throughout the United States. Immigration hardliners criticize some of the efforts by religious activists, saying their efforts encourage still more migrants to come. Those providing the assistance see it as an extension of their religious mandate to help the needy. "We are apolitical," said Carlos Villareal, a Houston-area leader in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which has mobilized volunteers at a short-term transition center in Houston to assist hundreds of migrants arriving from Del Rio. "Our concern is mainly with the families, that we can help them," Villareal said. "It's also the Golden Rule - do unto others as you would have done unto you." The transition center was set up earlier this year at the request of the White House in response to earlier migrant surges, Villareal said. It provides the families with a place to shower, have a meal, and contact sponsors who would pay for their plane or bus tickets to join them while their cases go through the immigration process.

GSA loses 3 technology execs; DHS, Air Force, FDA gain new ones

The [Federal News Network](#) [9/27/2021 1:33 PM, Jason Miller, 49K] reports that the General Services Administration saw two long-time career executives head to the private sector and a third executive take a job with a new agency. At the same time, the Air Force and the Homeland Security Department filled open technology executive positions. The number of acting agency chief information officers continues to shrink. Welcome to another edition of *As the Technology World Turns*, where the drama happens in the boardroom, not the bedroom, and when folks reappear it's usually after a brief vacation and not coming back from the dead. The latest movements are centered on GSA, for some reason. Stacy Riggs, GSA's former lead of the human resources Quality Service Management Office, retired from federal service after more than 15 years. Dominic Sale, the deputy assistant commissioner for General Supplies and Services in GSA's Federal Acquisition Service, left after 15 years in government. Riggs and Sale both are joining Dynamic Integrated Services, a service-disabled veteran-owned business. They join Mark Forman, the former administrator of e-government and IT at the Office of Management and Budget, John Condon, who co-founded the Ambit Group and was president of Touchtone Consulting, and several other long-time government contracting veterans to lead this IT and management consulting firm.

The Department of Homeland Security named David Larrimore as its new chief technology officer. He replaced Brian Teeple, who left in October 2020 to join industry. Larrimore joined DHS headquarters after serving as a solutions engineering for Salesforce for the past two years. This is his third stint at DHS. He served the CTO for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement directorate for two-plus years and worked in the CFO's office for two years starting in 2009.

DHS whistleblower shares the 3 intel topics Trump admin covered up

CNN [9/27/2021 10:56 PM, Staff, 4876K] reports Department of Homeland Security whistleblower Brian Murphy says appointees during the Trump administration covered up intelligence about Russian interference, White supremacy, and the Southern border because the topics made the former president look bad. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Senate grapples with debt limit, stopgap funding with days to government shutdown

ABC News [9/27/2021 4:52 PM, Allison Pecorin, 37K] reports the Senate is poised to vote on a measure aimed at averting a government shutdown and raising the federal debt limit Monday evening, but Republicans have promised to block it. If Monday's vote fails, as it is expected to, Congress will be left with just four days to cobble together a government funding bill. The measure being considered by senators Monday would extend federal funding at the current levels through early December and provide billions in emergency relief funds for Afghan refugee resettlement and Hurricane Ida relief. It also includes raising the federal debt limit through December 2022. But Republicans are nearly united in their resolve to block any hike to the debt limit from moving forward, though Louisiana Sen. John Kennedy may vote to advance it because he feels his state desperately needs the hurricane relief.

[Mexico] Military will be in charge of highway and airport security in Mexico

Telemundo20 [9/27/2021 4:22 PM, Staff, 20K] reports that by June 6, 2022, more than 8,000 military personnel will assume control of security and surveillance of Mexico's main airports and highways. According to a plan of the Ministry of National Defense, these troops will be part of the Military Police and will relieve the civilian agents who were in charge of 55 national and international air terminals and 202 highway stations. The first highways to be transferred to military control are those located in the states of Guanajuato and Jalisco, as reported by the agency to Mexican media. During the next 10 months the Sedena will mobilize its troops to cover all airports and highways in the 32 states of the country.

[Afghanistan] Republican bill seeks to establish State Dept. task force on continued Afghanistan evacuation

FOX News [9/27/2021 5:57 PM, Michael Lee, 9251K] reports Senate Republicans introduced legislation aimed at tackling several issues related to the Afghanistan withdrawal, including the continued evacuation of American citizens still in the country. "We continue to see the grave implications of the Biden Administration's haphazard withdrawal from Afghanistan," said Sen. Jim Risch, ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in a statement Monday. "An unknown number of American citizens and Afghan partners remain abandoned in Afghanistan under threat from the Taliban, we face a renewed terror threat against the United States, and the Taliban wrongly seek recognition at the UN, even as they suppress the rights of Afghan women and girls," said the Idaho Republican, one of 22 senators behind the legislation. The legislation, titled the Afghanistan

Counterterrorism, Oversight, and Accountability Act, aims to establish a State Department task force that will focus on the continued evacuation of American citizens, legal permanent residents and Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders who remain in Afghanistan. The legislation would also look to provide strategies for continued counterterrorism in Afghanistan, sanction the Taliban for terrorism and human rights abuses, authorize sanctions for individuals and foreign countries providing support to the Taliban, and place restrictions on non-humanitarian foreign assistance to Afghanistan.

[Afghanistan] Military leaders head to Capitol Hill for first public accounting of Afghanistan exit

The Washington Post [9/27/2021 6:45 PM, Karoun Demirjian, 11773K] reports the military leaders who oversaw the United States' exit from Afghanistan head to Capitol Hill this week for two days of questioning, as lawmakers in both parties have lost patience with the Biden administration over the Americans and visa-bearing Afghans left behind. Back-to-back hearings with the Senate and House Armed Services committees — scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively — mark the first time the Pentagon's top decision-makers will face lawmakers publicly since the haphazard withdrawal concluded last month. The inquisition awaiting Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley, and Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, commander of U.S. Central Command, will be informed by a series of closed-door briefings held with their subordinates in recent weeks and the public testimony of Secretary of State Antony Blinken, hearings that exposed deep partisan divisions. Reuters [9/28/2021 12:38 AM, Phil Stewart and Patricia Zengerle, 5304K] reports the Senate and House committees overseeing the U.S. military will hold hearings on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively, where Republicans are hoping to zero in on mistakes that Biden's administration made toward the end of the two-decade-old war. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is expected to praise American personnel who helped airlift 124,000 Afghans out of the country, an operation that also cost the lives of 13 U.S. troops and scores of Afghans in a suicide bombing outside the Kabul airport.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

[NM] Army: Soldier says she was assaulted by Afghan refugees

The AP [9/27/2021 3:21 PM, Lolita C. Baldor] reports a soldier reported that she was assaulted by a small group of Afghan refugees at a shelter complex set up for the refugees in New Mexico, Fort Bliss officials said. A Fort Bliss statement said the assault happened Sept. 19 at the Fort Bliss Doña Ana County Range Complex about 40 miles (65 kilometers) north of El Paso, Texas. "We take the allegation seriously and appropriately referred the matter to the Federal Bureau of Investigation," said a Fort Bliss statement. The soldier was reporting for her shift around midnight when three to four men attacked her, according to a U.S. Defense Department official. She had minor physical injuries and was able to get away. She was not sexually assaulted, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation. The official said that no one had yet been charged and that the FBI was investigating. It was unclear if law enforcement had identified the attackers. The Fort Bliss statement said the woman was immediately provided "appropriate care, counseling and support" and that security measures at the complex were being strengthened.

Customs and Border Protection

U.S. expels nearly 4,000 Haitians in 9 days as part of deportation blitz

CBS News [9/27/2021 9:28 PM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 2612K] reports that in just nine days, the U.S. has expelled nearly 4,000 Haitian migrants, including hundreds of families with children, without allowing them to seek asylum as part of an ongoing deportation blitz to a country ravaged by natural and man-made calamities. The Biden administration has carried out the mass expulsions under an emergency pandemic-era policy known as Title 42 that was first enacted under former President Donald Trump, to the dismay of advocates for asylum-seekers and Democrats. The pace and scale of the expulsions to Haiti, a country where deportation flights were suspended last month because of a deadly earthquake, could make the operation one of the swiftest and largest U.S. deportation campaigns of migrants by air. Between September 19 and September 27, 37 U.S. expulsion flights landed in Haiti with 3,936 migrants on board, including 2,300 parents and children who entered U.S. border custody as families, according to Department of Homeland Security data. "Many, if not all" of those expelled in Haiti previously lived in Chile, Brazil and other South American nations and have not been in their homeland for years, exacerbating the disruption caused by the U.S. expulsions, said Giuseppe Loprete, the chief of mission for the Port-au-Prince-based chapter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Houston's Sheila Jackson Lee urges Biden to end automatic deportation

The Houston Chronicle [9/27/2021 10:30 AM, Jay R. Jordan, 183K] reports that Democrat Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee is urging President Joe Biden to end a controversial Trump administration program allowing for mass deportations without granting migrants an opportunity to apply for asylum. Houston's most senior congresswoman has been calling for the end to Title 42, a policy that allows for immediate expulsions during a public health crisis under a 1944 law invoked by former President Donald Trump at the outset of the pandemic. Since the recent proliferation of Haitian refugees at the southern border, Jackson Lee has called on the current administration to revoke the order that allows the Department of Homeland Security to expel anyone caught entering the country along the border without going through channels outlined by the U.S. For the nearly 15,000 refugees who arrived at the border last week, that meant some were systematically deported back to their home country. More than 12,000 of them are currently in the country awaiting hearings to make a case for asylum. The expulsions still happened even after a judge recently ordered the administration to stop deportations under Title 42, according to reporters Kristina Cooke and Mica Rosenberg at Reuters. The ruling only applies to families apprehended together at the border and not individuals. Jackson Lee is one of only a handful of Texas Democrats in Congress who have called on the White House for the change. During an interview with CNN's Jake Tapper earlier this week, she blamed Trump for first putting the policy in place. "We have a human rights crisis at the border," Jackson Lee said. "I am a Texan. We have a little under 2,000 miles of border. Most of that border is well protected with legal points of entry, and it operates appropriately. What has happened is, because of the Trump relic of Title 42 and the demonizing of immigrants through our governor, Gov. Abbott, who's looking toward the next election, we can't seem to really know how to handle this surge." Other Congressional Democrats including Rep. Adriano Espaillat of New York and Rep. Frederica Wilson of Florida have also called on the Biden administration to end the practice.

Border Patrol was 'thrown under the bus' by Biden administration, top union official says

FOX News [9/27/2021 2:04 PM, Lisa Bennatan, 9251K] reports that Border patrol agents are mad and upset that leadership is throwing them under the bus, a top official with the agency's union told Fox News in Del Rio, Texas. "The agents feel like - at all levels of management, from to and to the White House - that they've been thrown under the bus because no investigation has been completed, yet you're hearing the president say these people will pay," National Border Patrol Council Vice President Jon Anfinen told Fox News. "The secretary echoed those sentiments," he continued. Of course, CBP's commissioner basically said the same thing." Thousands of migrants gathered under the Del Rio International Bridge last week, overwhelming border authorities. Images of Border Patrol agents on horseback pursuing Haitian migrants went viral, with erroneous accusations that the officials were whipping the immigrants. In response, DHS temporarily suspended the use of horse patrols in Del Rio. President Biden said: "It's horrible what you saw. To see people like they did, with horses, running them over, people being strapped, it's outrageous." "I promise you, those people will pay," Biden added. Around 12,000 migrants who arrived in Del Rio were released into the U.S., Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said on "Fox News Sunday." More migrants will be encouraged to come if the vast majority of the latest group was released, Anfinen said. "People are going to think 'I stand a very good chance of staying,'" he told Fox News. "So of course they'll cross because the message to them is 'if you cross in this manner, you will get to stay.'" [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[TX] Biden said Border Patrol agents 'will pay' for treatment of Haitian migrants. Texas Gov. Abbott offered them jobs.

The Washington Post [9/27/2021 7:55 AM, Jonathan Edwards, 11773K] reports denouncing their actions as "outrageous," President Biden vowed there would be consequences for the Border Patrol agents photographed riding horseback while swinging reins and charging at Haitian migrants trying to enter the country. "Those people will pay," the president said. On Sunday, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) had a different message for any federal agents who might get into trouble — the Lone Star State has a job waiting for you. Abbott, appearing on "Fox News Sunday" with Chris Wallace, said the agents were "simply maneuvering horses." Their actions were necessary, he added, because the Biden administration was failing at one of its most basic constitutional duties: to "secure the sovereignty of the United States of America." If any agents lose their jobs, Abbott said he had a backup waiting for them: "I will hire you to help Texas secure our border." Abbott's offer came a little more than two weeks after mostly Haitian migrants started flocking to the southern U.S. border near the crossing in Del Rio, Tex. Between Sept. 9 and Friday, some 30,000 Haitian migrants tried to enter the country, surprising and overwhelming immigration officials. A makeshift camp underneath the International Bridge in that city swelled to some 15,000 migrants about a week ago. Since then, federal officials beefed up resources at the Del Rio port of entry. Univision Austin [9/27/2021 11:17 AM, Staff, 366K] reports this is not the first time Governor Abbott has lashed out at the Biden administration. Since the beginning of Biden's presidency, Abbott and Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton have filed a series of lawsuits against the president and his administration. Mayorkas said on Friday that Haitian migrants had been removed from the area and of the 15,000 migrants staying in a camp, about 2,000 people were sent back to Haiti.

Reported similarly:

Houston Chronicle [9/27/2021 8:30 AM, Jonathan Edwards, 183K]

Houston Chronicle [9/27/2021 1:01 PM, Anna Bauman, 183K]

DHS spent \$330,000 on computer system that's been broken since 2018

The [Washington Times](#) [9/27/2021 10:40 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports Homeland Security paid more than \$330,000 for a software license for the last two years for a system that hadn't functioned since 2018, the department's inspector general said in a new report Monday. The bungle came at Customs and Border Protection's Office of Field Operations, which oversees ports of entry. The system in question was supposed to help officers search electronic devices of travelers suspected of illegal behavior. The equipment "has not functioned since July 2018 due to network compatibility issues," the audit found. Yet CBP paid for the equipment for 2019 and 2020 anyway. "OFO renewed software licenses for equipment that did not function," the inspector general concluded. As of March, the equipment still wasn't working, the audit found. The audit looked at 100 searches done in 2018 and 2019, and found 79 violated rules or procedures where either the search wasn't properly documented, or the search itself went beyond the boundaries allowed. It was during the audit that investigators found the agency was paying for software for systems that had been offline for years.

[TX] Migrants arrested by Texas in border crackdown are being imprisoned for weeks without legal help

The [Houston Chronicle](#) [9/27/2021 9:17 AM, Jolie McCullough, 183K] reports that hundreds of migrants arrested under Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's "catch and jail" border security push have been sitting in prison for weeks with no charges filed against them, and dozens were imprisoned for more than a month without being appointed lawyers. Most of the men are Latino and many don't speak English. Arrested on the border and dropped in prisons hundreds of miles away, they've spent weeks or months with little to no legal help, few opportunities to talk to their families and often fewer chances to find out what is happening to them or how long they will be imprisoned. Citing the widespread violations of state laws and constitutional due process rights that have mushroomed as local justice systems remain overwhelmed by the volume of arrests, defense attorneys and immigrant advocacy groups are asking courts to release the men. "We can't have a country or a system where people are being rounded up like this and sort of tucked away and hidden without the oversight and respective rights that the Constitution demands," said Amrutha Jindal, a Houston defense attorney whose organization, Restoring Justice, was recently assigned to represent dozens of migrants. "The system crumbles without due process." Abbott's office did not respond to questions Friday about the judicial delays.

[TX] Temporary center to process undocumented migrants opens in Laredo

[Telemundo 48 El Paso](#) [9/27/2021 5:00 PM, Staff, 5K] reports the constant flow of undocumented migrants at the Texas border has prompted federal authorities to open another temporary processing center, but this time in the Laredo sector. The new facilities were inaugurated this Friday to house and process individuals, family units and unaccompanied minors who have arrived at the border, explained the Customs and Border Protection Office. "Since April 2020, CBP has experienced a steady increase in Western Hemisphere border encounters due in part to worsening economic conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters affecting the area," the agency said in a press release. He added that the new temporary center is significantly larger than an average Border Patrol detention station and has the capacity to receive up to 500 migrants, with the possibility of expanding accommodation space.

[WA] Greyhound Lines settles lawsuit over immigration sweeps

The [AP](#) [9/27/2021 7:49 PM, Nicholas K. Geranios, 2701K] reports that Greyhound Lines Inc. will pay \$2.2 million to settle a lawsuit over the bus line's practice of allowing U.S. Customs & Border Protection agents to board its buses in Washington State to conduct warrantless immigration sweeps, the state attorney general said Monday. The bus company failed to warn customers of the sweeps, misrepresented its role in allowing the sweeps to occur and subjected its passengers to discrimination based on skin color or national origin, Attorney General Bob Ferguson said. The money will provide restitution to those passengers who were detained, arrested, or deported after immigration agents boarded buses at the Spokane Intermodal Center. The amount of restitution each individual receives will depend on the number of claims and the severity of harms suffered due to Greyhound's conduct, Ferguson said. "Greyhound has an obligation to its customers - an obligation it cannot set aside so immigration agents can go on fishing expeditions aboard its buses," Ferguson said in a press release. Greyhound, based in Dallas, issued a brief statement saying it was pleased with the settlement. "By agreeing to the consent decree, we will more extensively communicate to our customers the policies and procedures we already have in place to serve the citizens of Washington State," the bus company said. The settlement was filed in Spokane County Superior Court on Monday, the day the trial was set to begin. "My office first insisted that Greyhound make these corporate reforms in 2019," Ferguson said. "If Greyhound had simply accepted our reasonable demand, they would have avoided a lawsuit." For years, Greyhound contended it was legally required to allow Border Patrol agents to board its buses. In February 2020, a memo from then-U.S. Border Patrol Chief Carla Provost confirmed Ferguson's contention that CBP agents can only perform warrantless immigration sweeps on board buses with the consent of the company's owner or employees.

[China] Tariffs, seizures expose U.S. solar industry's vulnerability to imports

[Reuters](#) [9/28/2021 4:00 AM, Nichola Groom, 5304K] reports cheap imports have fueled the U.S. solar industry's dramatic growth for years. Now, mounting trade and transport issues is exposing that dependence as a vulnerability, slowing shipments and putting big projects at risk, according to industry representatives. Tighter availability of foreign panels could hurt the booming industry and set back President Joe Biden's effort to decarbonize the nation's power sector, a centerpiece of his plan to combat climate change. Some 90% of U.S. solar panels are made overseas, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Among the issues clouding solar's outlook is an attempt by U.S. authorities to block shipments of panels containing components potentially derived from forced labor in China's Xinjiang region. The Biden administration imposed an import ban targeting China's Hoshine Silicon Industry Co in June and since then, hundreds of megawatts of panels have been detained at the border, according to an industry source. U.S. Customs and Border Protection would not disclose the amount of solar products it has detained. China has denied that its solar components are produced with forced labor.

Transportation Security Administration

[VA] Loaded handmade gun, dried meat confiscated in separate incidents at Dulles airport

The [Washington Post](#) [9/27/2021 2:44 PM, Michael Laris, 11773K] reports federal authorities at Dulles International Airport stopped a Virginia man from carrying a handmade gun through security Sunday, marking the 13th firearm discovery at the airport this year. The Transportation Security Administration said Monday that the Centreville resident,

whose gun was loaded with 13 bullets, was cited on weapons charges by airport police. He also faces federal penalties, TSA said. Also on Monday, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials announced that earlier this month, agriculture specialists at Dulles barred other prohibited items from passing through the airport. A woman on a flight from Ethiopia had 66 pounds of edible cow skins confiscated Sept. 7, the agency said Monday. A man on the same flight had 44 pounds of dried beef seized. The meat was incinerated, authorities said. Wood bark or medicinal herbs in the passengers' bags also carried insects, larva and potential plant disease, which were sent to an entomologist and pathologist at the Agriculture Department, according to Customs and Border Protection. Neither passenger was fined. "It's just somebody traveling to visit somebody in the States and they bring some food over with them," said customs spokesman Stephen Sapp. "We're trying to make sure we don't allow invasive insects to become established."

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Sam could remain major hurricane into the weekend and pass close to Bermuda

The Washington Post [9/27/2021 11:29 AM, Staff, 11773K] reports that roughly one month ago, Hurricane Ida peaked at high-end Category 4 strength, slamming into southeast Louisiana. Hurricane Sam topped Ida's ferocity over the weekend as it put on a dizzying display of strength for weather satellites. Unlike its predecessor, the storm steered clear of land. The storm weakened Sunday night but remained a major hurricane early Monday while undergoing some structural changes. It is expected to pass harmlessly north of the Leeward Islands through midweek but could affect Bermuda this weekend. Residents in Atlantic Canada should also keep a close eye on the system for possible impacts by early next week. On Sunday, Sam was the most powerful system anywhere on Earth, resembling an atmospheric buzz saw. It became the fifth storm of the Atlantic hurricane season to rapidly intensify or see its peak winds increase at least 35 mph in 24 hours. It marked the fourth hurricane of 2021 rated Category 3 or higher. 2021 is the sixth year in a row with above-average tropical activity, thanks to Sam and the onslaught of previous storms. The storm's winds peaked at 155 mph on Sunday afternoon, just 2 mph shy of Category 5 strength. It took just three days for Sam to strengthen from a fledgling tropical storm to a high-end Category 4. When it neared peak strength Sunday afternoon, lightning erupted within its eyewall, the ring of intense thunderstorms surrounding its calm center. Its rate of intensification was the highest on record that far east in the Atlantic this late in the calendar year, according to Sam Lillo, a researcher at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This year, the Hurricane Center will be moving on to a supplemental list of names rather than assigning Greek letters as names. Adria, Braylen and Caridad are first up on that list. The remnants of Tropical Storm Peter could also reacquire tropical or subtropical characteristics east of Bermuda.

Reported similarly:

USA Today [9/27/2021 2:58 PM, Doyle Rice, 6282K] Video: [HERE](#)

The Secret War Over Pentagon Aid in Fighting Wildfires

The New York Times [9/27/2021 3:47 PM, William J. Broad, 2701K] reports in July, as wildfires tore through the American West, President Biden met with the region's governors to find better ways to battle the flames. Gov. Gavin Newsom of California requested use of military satellites that are designed to warn of missile attacks, calling the orbital fleet "a game changer" for spotting and fighting wildfires. Mr. Biden promised to help. "When this

meeting is over,” he said, “I’ll be on the phone with the Department of Defense.” But record-setting fires are likely to grow worse and pose grave new dangers that warrant an urgent response, according to proponents of deeper cooperation between officials who combat wildfires and those managing the military spacecraft. Even so, proponents of using the defense satellites note, the military has no established program that issues firefighting alerts to local, state and federal authorities. They also point out that the Pentagon’s spacecraft, when set against civilian and commercial ones, have repeatedly proven themselves to be superior at spotting blazes.

[NY] NYC to hire forecaster, beef up warnings after Ida flooding

The AP [9/27/2021 6:34 PM, Michelle L. Price] reports New York City is planning to hire a private weather forecaster, install more drainage features and issue earlier and more aggressive warnings to residents under a new plan to respond to heavy rainfall like the deadly deluge Hurricane Ida dropped on the city earlier this month. At least 50 people from Virginia to Connecticut, including 13 in New York City, died this month when the remnants of Hurricane Ida inundated the Northeast. Rainwater trapped hundreds of cars on submerged waterways, deluged subway stations, and stalled trains and flooded basement apartments, turning them into deadly traps. At its most intense, the storm dropped 3.15 inches (8 centimeters) of rain within an hour over New York City, overwhelming an aging sewer system designed to handle roughly half that. “We learned from Ida that we have to do some very very different things,” Mayor Bill de Blasio said Monday at a virtual news conference. “This is a brand new world.” The city will hire a private weather forecasting service to provide a “second opinion” to the city that supplements National Weather Service predictions and creates neighborhood-specific forecasts for storms, according to the Democratic mayor’s plan. He likened it to the city creating its own counterterrorism and intelligence division in the New York City Police Department after 9/11 terrorist attacks. After the storm hit, de Blasio said he’d been given a forecast that the city would see somewhere between 3 to 6 inches (7.5 to 15 cm) of rain for the day — not 3 inches within one hour. The plan calls for preemptively declaring a state of emergency and issuing mandatory evacuation orders for basement apartments hours before heavy rains are forecast, along with travel bans to keep people off roads and subways if a deluge is predicted. The city will also work with community groups to knock on the doors of those living in basement apartments to warn them of flooding threats and identify safe evacuation spaces in their neighborhood. Of the 13 people in the city who died in the storm, at least 11 of them were in flooded basement apartments, according to police. The report lays out a number of measures the city plans to enact relatively quickly, such as putting up signs warning about flood potential on roadways, creating more greenspaces and drainage features at playgrounds and expanding a program to install porous concrete pavement in some areas in the city, where small holes allow water to seep in instead of running into the streets. But the report also lays out longer-term challenges, such as the \$100 billion cost of upgrading the city’s century-old drainage system, much of which would need to be paid for with money from the federal government, or the costly conversion of about 50,000 illegal basement apartments into safer homes.

[NY] New York pledges \$27M for undocumented immigrants affected by Ida

Axios [9/27/2021 9:22 PM, Noah Garfinkel, 526K] reports New York’s undocumented residents affected by Hurricane Ida’s remnants can from Monday apply for aid from the state’s new \$27 million relief fund. This policy would help fill the gap left by FEMA as many undocumented immigrants are ineligible for FEMA relief regarding the storm, which caused

widespread flooding across the northeastern U.S. New York state will donate \$20 million and New York City will donate \$7 million, per New York Times. Fewer than 1,200 households are expected to receive aid and will receive around \$72,000, the NYT notes. There are 500,000 undocumented immigrants in New York City, so the number of applicants is likely to be higher than 1,200, per the NYT. The application deadline is Nov. 26. Gov. Kathy Hochul said in a statement that the action meant officials could "close gaps in aid and help New Yorkers in need." Mayor Bill de Blasio added: "Regardless of documentation status, we will get support to the most recent victims of our climate crisis and are here to help every step of the way."

[LA] A month after Hurricane Ida slammed into Louisiana, cleanup continues

Minnesota Public Radio [9/27/2021 11:08 AM, Cathy Wurzer and Tim Nelson, 5K] reports it's been nearly a month since Hurricane Ida slammed into Louisiana as a Category 4 storm. Weeks later, crews are still trying to clean up the damage, and residents are trying to rebuild their lives. One person who's been involved in the cleanup effort is Rochester, Minn. resident Rebecca Snap. She works for the Salvation Army and returned this weekend after two weeks in Louisiana. She told MPR News host Cathy Wurzer that some people still lack electricity to cook or store food. [Editorial note: consult audio at source link]

[CA] Heavy wildfire smoke shrouds Southern California amid air quality advisory

The Los Angeles Times [9/27/2021 8:10 PM, Lila Seidman, 3710K] reports that heavy smoke from wildfires raging in Central California has pushed south, triggering an air quality advisory for some Southern California mountain areas, and conditions are ripe for more toxic plumes later in the week. The South Coast Air Quality Management District issued the special advisory in anticipation of elevated Air Quality Index levels - a measurement of air pollution - in parts of the San Bernardino and San Gabriel mountains Monday. Smoke from the Windy and KNP Complex fires - a pair of explosive blazes in the southern Sierra Nevada region - turned skies in Los Angeles eerie shades of gray and orange in recent days and continues to sully atmospheric conditions more than 100 miles away. "It's not necessarily been blown down in the areas where we breathe - it's still high in the atmosphere - but ... the forecast shows that we would get some areas that are unhealthy for sensitive groups or maybe even higher levels," including high desert regions, said Sarah Rees, deputy executive officer for planning and rules at South Coast AQMD. Air quality on Monday morning was good to moderate throughout the region, but high-elevation areas could worsen later in the day. "I'm more concerned about the afternoon period," Rees said, adding that peak readings would probably occur after 2 p.m. North and northeast winds that have pushed the smoke into Southern California are expected to return on Wednesday and Thursday, along with high temperatures and low humidity - conditions that increase fire danger, weather officials said. "That would certainly be a favorable direction to import smoke from the Windy fire," which is burning to the north in the Tule River Indian Reservation and Sequoia National Forest, said David Sweet, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service's Oxnard station. Since igniting during a lightning storm Sept. 9, the Windy fire has surged to 85,383 acres, burning into the Giant Sequoia National Monument, and is only 2% contained.

[CA] 'Burn scars' of wildfires threaten drinking water in much of California and the West

The Los Angeles Times [9/27/2021 8:00 AM, Sara Reardon, 3710K] reports Colorado saw its worst fire season last year, with the three largest fires in state history and more than

600,000 acres burned. But some of the effects didn't appear until this July, when heavy rain pushed sediment from damaged forests down mountainsides, causing mudslides that shut down sections of Interstate 70 for almost two weeks. Immense quantities of sediment choked the rivers that supply most of the state's water. In western Colorado's Glenwood Springs, the water became so murky that the town twice had to shut off the valves that pump water from nearby rivers to avoid overwhelming its filtration system. City managers sent alerts to the town's 10,000 residents, telling them to minimize water use until the sediment moved downstream. Wildfires and their lasting effects are becoming a way of life in the West, including California, as climate change and management practices cause fires to increase in number, intensity and acreage burned, while extending the length of the fire season. In "burn scars," where fires decimated forest systems that held soil in place, an increase in droughts followed by heavy rainfall poses a different kind of threat to the water supplies that are essential to the health of communities. "You know about it; it's in the back of your head," said Glenwood Springs resident Paula Stepp. "But until you face it, you don't know how it's going to impact your town." Dirty, turbid water can contain viruses, parasites, bacteria and other contaminants that cause illness. But experts say turbid water from burn scars is unlikely to make it to people's taps, because water utilities would catch it first. Still, the cost to municipal utility systems — and the residents who pay for water — is immense. Rural small towns in particular face the choice between spending millions of dollars to try to filter turbid water or shutting off their intake and risking shortages in areas where water may already be scarce.

Secret Service

John Hinckley, who shot Reagan, to be freed from oversight

The [AP](#) [9/27/2021 11:48 AM, Ben Finley, Neutral, Secondary] reports a federal judge said Monday that John Hinckley Jr., who tried to assassinate President Ronald Reagan four decades ago, can be freed from all remaining restrictions next year if he continues to follow those rules and remains mentally stable. U.S. District Court Judge Paul L. Friedman in Washington said during a 90-minute court hearing that he'll issue his ruling on the plan this week. Since Hinckley moved to Williamsburg, Virginia, from a Washington hospital in 2016, court-imposed restrictions have required doctors and therapists to oversee his psychiatric medication and therapy. Hinckley has been barred from having a gun. And he can't contact Reagan's children, other victims or their families, or actress Jodie Foster, who he was obsessed with at the time of the 1981 shooting. Friedman said Hinckley, now 66, has displayed no symptoms of active mental illness, no violent behavior and no interest in weapons since 1983. "If he hadn't tried to kill the president, he would have been unconditionally released a long, long, long time ago," the judge said. "But everybody is comfortable now after all of the studies, all of the analysis and all of the interviews and all of the experience with Mr. Hinckley." Friedman said the plan is to release Hinckley from all court supervision in June. The [Washington Post](#) [9/27/2021 11:29 AM, Spencer S. Hsu, 11773K, Neutral, Primary] reports Hinckley's release would end court supervision of one of the nation's most notorious mental health patients. Hinckley was 25 when he shot Reagan, White House press secretary James Brady and two officers with six exploding "Devastator" bullets from a .22-caliber pistol. A federal jury found Hinckley not guilty by reason of insanity in 1982. Hinckley, 66, was released from St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington in 2016 under a host of medical, travel and other conditions after Hinckley's doctors and the court found he no longer posed a danger to himself or others. "He apologizes to the Reagan family," Levine said. "The president was a man of generous spirit and magnanimity. He

apologizes to the family of Jim and Sarah Brady, whose lives were altered by what he did. He apologizes to the families of Secret Service Special Agent Tim McCarthy and Metropolitan Police Department Officer Thomas Delahanty. He apologizes to Ms. Foster. "And he apologizes to the American people. Perhaps, perhaps it is too much to ask for forgiveness, but we hope to have an understanding that the acts that caused him to do this terrible thing were the product of mental illness."

Reported similarly:

New York Times [9/27/2021 2:58 PM, Christine Hauser, Neutral, Primary]

Wall Street Journal [9/27/2021 4:44 PM, Talal Ansari, Neutral, Secondary]

[NJ] Illinois Man Charged With Stealing Unemployment Insurance Benefits While Incarcerated

The United States Department of Justice [9/27/2021 1:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports an Illinois man was arrested today for allegedly using other individuals' personal identification information to obtain unemployment insurance benefits while he was incarcerated, Acting U.S. Attorney Rachael A. Honig announced. Devontae Stokes, 27, of Country Club Hills, Illinois, is charged by complaint with conspiracy to commit wire fraud. He is scheduled to appear this afternoon by videoconference before U.S. Magistrate Judge Jeffrey Cole in the Northern District of Illinois. Between August 2020 and November 2020, Stokes was incarcerated at FCI Fort Dix, a federal correctional institutional with an adjacent satellite camp located in Fort Dix, New Jersey. While incarcerated, Stokes and his associates caused UIB applications to be made to numerous states in the names of three victims. In response, the states provided more than \$70,000 in UIB. Acting U.S. Attorney Honig credited special agents of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jonathan Mellone, in Manhattan, New York; special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge George M. Crouch Jr., in Newark; special agents with the Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jason J. Molina, in Newark; and special agents of the U.S. Secret Service, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Mark McKeivitt, with the investigation leading to today's arrest. She also thanked Federal Bureau of Prisons personnel at Fort Dix for their assistance.

[WV] Illinois woman admits to counterfeit charge

The United States Department of Justice [9/27/2021 4:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports Asante James, of Freeport, Illinois, has admitted to a counterfeit charge, Acting United States Attorney Randolph J. Bernard announced. James, 21, pleaded guilty to one count of "Possession of Counterfeit Obligations." James admitted to having 69 \$100 counterfeit bills in December 2020 in Ritchie County. James faces up to 20 years of incarceration and a fine of up to \$250,000 fine. Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, the actual sentence imposed will be based upon the seriousness of the offenses and the prior criminal history, if any, of the defendant. Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher L. Bauer is prosecuting the case on behalf of the government. The United States Secret Service, the Ritchie County Sheriff's Office, and the South Charleston Police Department investigated. U.S. Magistrate Judge Michael John Aloï presided.

[NC] Henderson County Sheriff's Dept. asks public to ID counterfeit suspect

WBBJ TV [9/27/2021 10:10 AM, Kyle Peppers, 4K, Neutral, Secondary] reports the Henderson County Sheriff's Department is looking for a man suspected of using counterfeit

money. Authorities say the individual used a counterfeit \$100 bill to make a purchase at Dollar General on Saturday, September 24. The store is located in the Reagan community at the intersection of Highway 100 and Highway 22. According to a Facebook post from the sheriff's department, authorities have photos of the same suspect using counterfeit bills in the Scotts Hill area.

[KY] Metropolis man arrested on fraud charge

The West Kentucky Star [9/27/2021 9:47 AM, Staff, 1K, Positive, Secondary] reports a complaint about counterfeit money led to the arrest of a Metropolis man on Friday. Metropolis police responded to Hardees where an employee told them 40-year-old Ryan D. Sutton had attempted to pay for his meal with a fake \$100 bill. Officers say the bill had Chinese writing on it, amongst other things that made it obvious it was fake. Sutton was arrested on a charge of fraud and taken to the Massac County Jail.

[GA] Douglas County Police Warn Residents About Counterfeit Money

The Patch [9/27/2021 11:55 AM, Jeff Arnold, 2117K, Neutral, Secondary] reports the Douglas County Sheriff's Office is urging local merchants to be on the lookout for counterfeit cash that scammers are reportedly using around the area when paying for services. The Sheriff's Office posted the warning on its Facebook page on Monday and wrote that residents should be aware that scammers may mixing in "prop money" with actual currency. The department said that in some instances, the prop money, which can be identified on the front of bills as "copy money" may be used to pay for services in full or could be hidden in with legitimate cash. The post also offered images of what the counterfeit cash looks like as a way of helping residents tell the difference between the prop bills and legal tender. "Please be alert and examine each bill for signs that it is not real money," the post reads. A phone call seeking more information about whether incidents of counterfeit cash have turned up around Douglas County was not immediately returned to Patch on Monday.

[TX] Funny Money Suspect Sought by Police After Purchases in Kennewick

News Talk 870 AM KFLD [9/27/2021 1:49 PM, John McKay, 1K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Kennewick Police are seeking to ID this woman, who is accused of allegedly making a number of purchases at a grocery store using counterfeit bills. Police didn't name the store, or the amount of the purchase, but was definitely fake money. The most commonly counterfeited bill denomination is the \$20, that's why 20's and up are usually examined by clerks in stores but not always all of them. Counterfeiting, by the way, is a Federal crime, so carries more serious consequences. And, Police and LE devote a lot of energy to these issues, because usually where there's one or two fake bills, more will follow.

[TX] LCU hosting Cyber Security Symposium on Wednesday, Sept. 29

Everything Lubbock [9/27/2021 12:40 PM, Staff, 19K, Neutral, Secondary] reports the following is a press release from Lubbock Christian University: Lubbock Christian University (LCU) is partnering with the United States Secret Service (USSS) to present a Cyber Security Symposium on Wednesday, September 29, on the LCU campus. Cyber security is in the news and talked about frequently, but for many companies, health systems, and school districts, it is not a reality until their own security is breached. In this free half-day symposium, presentations and panel discussions will cover topics such as cyber threat prevention, responding to a ransomware event, business email compromise detection, and post event response planning. The symposium will feature keynote speaker Peter Evans, a former Secret Service Agent, who is currently a Principal Security Consultant. Throughout

his more than 20 years of both government and private sector experience, he has conducted and supported hundreds of investigations ranging from ransomware attacks to various means of social engineering.

[OR] Hillsboro man sentenced to prison for mail and identity theft

The Oregonian/Oregon Live [9/27/2021 10:17 PM, Jaimie Ding, Positive, Secondary] reports a Hillsboro man was sentenced Monday to more than seven years in federal prison for stealing hundreds of pieces of mail throughout the Portland metro area and stealing someone's identity to buy a car, federal prosecutors said. Dwayne Leroy Daan, 42, pleaded guilty July 1 to possessing stolen mail and a counterfeit U.S. Postal Service arrow key, bank fraud and aggravated identity theft. He will serve a 90-month sentence followed by three years of probation, according to the Oregon U.S. Attorney's Office. Between February and May 2020, Daan stole more than 800 pieces of mail from homes in Portland, Beaverton, West Linn, Milwaukie and Hillsboro, federal prosecutors said. He used a counterfeit U.S. Postal Service arrow key, a universal key for collection boxes and cluster mailboxes, to steal some of the mail. Portland police first arrested Daan on Feb. 20, 2020 with 41 checks worth \$29,701.37, several altered state identification cards, 28 sheets of counterfeit money, two vehicle titles and 46 credit cards from various people among other identity theft documents, court documents said. He was arrested several other times in the Portland metro area for attempting to cash in fraudulent checks and using a stolen identity to make purchases at Home Depot, according to court documents. He also stole the identity of a local resident to obtain a line of credit and buy a 2018 Audi for \$51,031 from a Milwaukie car dealership, court documents said.

CISA/Cybersecurity

Federal cyber agencies call zero trust 'new normal' of security, partnering to implement

The Federal News Network [9/27/2021 11:36 AM, Amelia Brust, 49K] reports that still wondering what the "new normal" will look like? Federal cyber leaders say it looks an awful lot like zero trust - at least on the IT side of things. President Joe Biden's executive order 14028 in May, "Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity," was the catalyst for three documents to help agencies adopt zero trust cybersecurity principles. The Office of Management and Budget released a draft Federal Zero Trust Strategy, to adapt civilian agencies' enterprise security architecture to zero trust principles. OMB's Eric Mill said that if he had to pick a central theme and umbrella effort for the different security initiatives at the organization, this would be it. Mill is senior advisor to the administrator in the Office of the Federal Chief Information Officer, within the Office of E-Government and IT at OMB. He said the Biden administration is leaning into stronger multi-factor authentication - especially to tackle phishing - and is pushing for stronger encryption. "Not just for externally-facing traffic, but really taking the concept of untrusted networks as seriously as possible and encrypting traffic within federal environments, by only addressing things like encrypted DNS and the like," he said during a webinar hosted by ATARC on Thursday. He also said the administration is emphasizing heavier focus on validating security and practice on application testing, and putting security at the application level wherever possible, "Really proving to ourselves that things are secure by throwing as many public and internal resources at it as possible."

Terrorism Investigations

[TN] Accused gunman in Tennessee grocery store shooting was "asked to leave his job" earlier that day, police say

CBS News [9/27/2021 6:55 PM, Victoria Albert, 2612K] reports the man accused of opening fire at a Tennessee supermarket last Thursday, killing one person and wounding 14 others, had been asked to leave his job the morning of the shooting, police said in a statement Monday. The alleged shooter, 29-year-old UK Thang, died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound. Collierville police said the shooter moved to the town in the summer of 2020 and worked as a third-party vendor inside the Kroger supermarket before he was "asked to leave his job" on Thursday morning. Police did not provide any additional details about why he was asked to leave. Police responded to reports of an active shooter at the Kroger in Collierville on the afternoon of September 23. Police Chief Dale Lane said officers searched every aisle of the store and helped wounded victims leave. The deceased victim was identified as Olivia King, who was a customer at the store. Ten employees and four other customers were wounded. Police said only four victims remain at Regional One Hospital, all of whom are in stable condition. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

National Security News

China, NATO officials discuss Afghanistan, regional tensions

The AP [9/28/2021 3:43 AM, Staff, 302K] reports China's top diplomat has held a virtual meeting with NATO's chief to discuss the situation in Afghanistan, amid longstanding disagreements between Beijing and the U.S.-led alliance over regional policies. The Chinese Foreign Ministry said Tuesday that the discussions had been "positive and constructive". Foreign Minister Wang Yi and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg had spoken the previous day, according to the statement, focusing on "issues of common concern." Chinese officials gave no further details of the talks. Beijing long opposed the presence of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan — with which it shares a narrow border — while benefiting from the relative stability that presence provided. It has been strongly critical of the shambolic U.S. withdrawal that paved the way for the Taliban sweeping to power, calling it hasty and irresponsible. Beijing said the two officials speaking Monday agreed to "raise the standard of dialogue to advance practical cooperation" between China and NATO on issues including counterterrorism, anti-piracy, cyber security and international peacekeeping.

Biden Team Aims to Rival China's Belt and Road in Latin America

Bloomberg [9/27/2021 5:00 AM, Jennifer Jacobs, 6400K] reports that the Biden administration is considering a U.S.-led competitor for China's Belt and Road international trade and public works program, and a top White House official will scout Latin America next week for possible projects. Daleep Singh, the U.S. deputy national security adviser for international economics, is traveling to Colombia, Ecuador and Panama to talk with high-level officials, business leaders and civic activists about infrastructure needs, according to U.S. officials who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity. Colombian President Ivan Duque Marquez, Ecuadorian President Guillermo Lasso and Panamanian Public Works Minister Rafael Sabonge are among the officials Singh plans to meet. The White House wants to engage in projects with higher environmental and labor standards than those China is funding, with full transparency for the financial terms, the officials said. The Belt

and Road initiative has transformed from what was once regarded in the U.S. as a series of unconnected infrastructure projects into a centerpiece of Beijing's foreign policy strategy, aides to President Joe Biden said. China has gained raw materials, trade links and geopolitical leverage from the program, they added. Biden and other Group of Seven leaders earlier this year discussed a coordinated infrastructure initiative for developing countries to counter China's program. In the White House, the new project is known as Build Back Better for the World, echoing one of Biden's key domestic legislative proposals.

Trump administration mulled kidnapping, assassinating Julian Assange: report

The Hill [9/27/2021 9:54 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports that a report from Yahoo News published Sunday says that the Trump administration and CIA considered kidnapping WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in 2017 and even raised the prospect of assassinating him amid concerns he may be planning an escape of his own. Citing conversations with more than 30 former U.S. intelligence and security officials, Yahoo reported that "sketches" and "options" for how an assassination operation could be carried out were requested. One former official told the site that these conversations were taking place "at the highest levels." Though the CIA had been monitoring Assange for many years, the U.S. government reportedly ramped up its campaign against him following the "Vault 7" data leak of CIA hacking tools and Democratic emails during the 2016 presidential race. Assange is currently imprisoned in London after being arrested in April 2019. According to the Yahoo report, former CIA director Mike Pompeo wanted revenge on Assange and was described by one Trump national security official as being "completely detached from reality because they were so embarrassed about Vault 7." "There was an inappropriate level of attention to Assange given the embarrassment, not the threat he posed in context," one official said. "We should never act out of a desire for revenge." U.S. intelligence officials were supposedly provoked by rumors that Assange was planning an escape attempt from the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, where he had taken asylum. Russian intelligence was supposedly present around the embassy to help facilitate an escape. Yahoo noted that WikiLeaks had helped to facilitate U.S. whistleblower Edward Snowden's escape to Russia from Hong Kong. If Russian officials were able to get Assange onto a plane, one official told Yahoo that agents were prepared to block the plane with a car on the runway, shoot out the tires or even crash into a car carrying Assange. When reached for comment by The Hill, the CIA declined to comment on the matter.

[Turkey] U.S. Senators Vow Sanctions If Turkey Buys New Russian Missiles

Bloomberg [9/28/2021 2:11 AM, Selcan Hacaoglu, 6400K] reports U.S. Senators warned NATO ally Turkey that they would trigger new sanctions if it goes ahead with plans to purchase additional Russian missile defense systems. The warning comes ahead of a critical meeting between President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Sochi on Wednesday. Turkey and Russia have been negotiating over technology transfers and local production ahead of a potential purchase of a second S-400 missile defense system. Alexander Mikheyev, the head of Russia's state-run arms exporter Rosoboronexport, said in August that Turkey was in the final stages of negotiating the deal. Erdogan told CBS news in an interview last week that he intends to go ahead with the purchase. The office of Senate Foreign Relations Chair Robert Menendez responded by warning that sanctions were mandated by law for "any entity that does significant business with the Russian military or intelligence sectors." The U.S. has already imposed penalties on Turkey's defense industry over the initial missile purchase, saying the Russian system could be used to gather intelligence on Lockheed Martin Corp.'s F-35 stealth jet. It

previously suspended Turkish defense contractors from the international program to help build the F-35. Turkey has so far refused to jettison the first S-400 battery it acquired in 2019.

[Saudi Arabia] Top Biden aide meeting Saudi crown prince in Yemen: report

The Hill [9/27/2021 7:36 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports that the White House announced on Monday that national security adviser Jake Sullivan will be traveling to the Middle East and meeting with Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to reportedly discuss the civil war in Yemen. National Security Council spokesperson Emily Horne said that Sullivan will be traveling with National Security Council Middle East and North Africa Coordinator Brett McGurk and U.S. Special Envoy for Yemen Tim Lenderking. "Mr. Sullivan will meet with senior leaders on a range of regional and global challenges," Horne said in a statement. One of these issues will be a potential cease fire between Saudi Arabia and Houthi rebels in Yemen, The Associated Press reported. Sullivan will also be speaking with the crown prince's brother, deputy defense minister Khalid bin Salman. Sullivan will travel to Saudi Arabia's capital city of Riyadh on Monday and then travel to the United Arab Emirates. The AP noted that the Biden administration has largely avoided interacting with the prince since a CIA report was publicly released earlier this year stating that he likely approved the 2018 killing of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi. However, a senior administration official told the AP that the White House has decided that helping to end the conflict in Yemen would require direct communication with top officials. Both of President Biden's predecessors in the White House offered military support to Saudi Arabia, which is fighting the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels seeking to take Yemen. However, soon after taking office in January, Biden announced he would be ending "offensive operations in the war in Yemen, including relevant arms sales."

Reported similarly:

Reuters [9/27/2021 5:57 AM, Staff, 5304K]

AP [9/27/2021 8:23 AM, Aamer Madhani, 302K]

[Afghanistan] Taliban Victory in Afghanistan Fuels Terror Attacks in Pakistan

Bloomberg [9/27/2021 11:27 PM, Faseeh Mangi, Khalid Qayum, and Ismail Dilawar, 6400K] reports deadly terrorist attacks in Pakistan have increased to the highest level in over four years as U.S. troops left Afghanistan and the Taliban took power, a sign of growing instability in the region that could hurt business and investments. Pakistan has seen 35 attacks that left at least 52 civilians dead in August, the highest since February 2017, according to data compiled by the South Asia Terrorism Portal. Most of the violence has been attributed to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, an offshoot of the Afghan militant group that has been encouraged by developments next door. The Pakistani militant group "has been emboldened further by what happened in Afghanistan," Umar Karim, a visiting fellow at the London-based Royal United Services Institute, said over the phone. "The terrorist group had already been growing stronger much before the situation in Afghanistan with splinter groups merging over the past year or so." With the Taliban in control of Afghanistan, there are concerns in Islamabad that a spillover in terror activities could affect investments, including China's Belt and Road Initiative that has seen \$25 billion poured into power plants and road projects. Pakistan is already facing pressure from Beijing who called on the government to protect such projects after a bus explosion in July killed 12 workers, including nine Chinese citizens.

[China] The Air Force is moving to confront China's threat to our national security

The [Washington Post](#) [9/27/2021 7:00 AM, Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., 11773K] reports that like many senior officers who entered the military in the 1980s, I have lived through dramatic changes in warfighting focus in support of U.S. national security. We know from detailed war games played out over the past decade that winning any conflict with China or Russia would require marshaling significant new resources. Both strategic competitors have built formidable and advanced defensive systems, are bolstering offensive and defensive capabilities in space and are rapidly developing the next generation of technologies in autonomously operated weapons, precision missiles, artificial intelligence and hypersonic flight. In many ways, this moment is reminiscent of the interwar years of the 1930s, when the horrors of trench warfare from World War I led to innovations such as long-range strategic bombing, carrier aviation and highly maneuverable ground forces. Although some of these emerging concepts were still experimental prior to World War II, we made enough progress so that when the shock of Pearl Harbor and early victories won by the Germans and Japanese were overcome, we were able to successfully prosecute the war with weapons and tactics that had been battle-tested in peacetime drills. Today, given the lethality and accuracy of modern armaments, the Air Force might not have such a cushion if we again have to fight a major conflict alongside our sister services, allies and partners. To ensure success - or head off failure - we must rapidly develop and deliver new capabilities. We must make difficult but necessary choices to retire less relevant capabilities that we know won't contribute to deterring or won't survive in the next big fight. We must change culture: We must sharpen our focus on the "pacing threat" - that is, the leading danger to our security - and acquire a strong sense of urgency that pervades everything we do. Little could have prepared me for what I have learned since then about the comprehensive advancement in fielded capability, technology and tactics that marked the rise of the Chinese armed forces in the Indo-Pacific region. The Air Force has mapped out a path to compete, deter and win in this new strategic environment, and we're moving swiftly to implement change. It will involve rigorous analysis of the problem, difficult choices and close collaboration with Congress, industry and academia.

[North Korea] Cryptocurrency expert pleads guilty in plot to help North Korea evade economic sanctions

The [Washington Post](#) [9/27/2021 6:53 PM, Staff, 11773K] reports crypto expert guilty in plot to aid N. Korea. A cryptocurrency connoisseur admitted Monday that he conspired to coach North Korea on how to evade economic sanctions by using the popular financial technology to conceal illegal transactions. Virgil Griffith, 38, a U.S. citizen, pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Manhattan to a count of conspiring to violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, a charge for which he could face up to two decades in prison. Griffith, who is scheduled to be sentenced in January, made a name for himself as a developer of Ethereum, a digital money purchasing platform. Federal prosecutors say Griffith actively assisted North Korea in efforts to use cryptocurrency and blockchain technology to conceal its activities, including at the Pyongyang Blockchain and Cryptocurrency Conference held in April 2019. The State Department denied Griffith permission to travel to the conference, but he went anyway, traveling to Pyongyang via China, according to court documents filed at the time of his arrest. At the event, he was a presenter and took part in discussions about how to help North Korea, a closely watched U.S. adversary, launder cash and get around commerce restrictions imposed on the country by Washington. Such restrictions have been in place since 2008, amid heightened concerns that North Korea was a national security threat. Griffith was arrested in November 2019 while living in Singapore. CALIFORNIA. Law gives all voters mail ballot option. Every

registered California voter will get a ballot mailed to them in future elections under a bill signed Monday by Gov. Gavin Newsom. The law makes permanent a change adopted during the pandemic for the 2020 election and the recent recall against Newsom. California, the nation's most populous state, joins several other Western states in mailing all voters a ballot, including Utah, Colorado, Washington and Oregon. Under the new law, ballots must go out at least 29 days before the election. Voters still have the option to drop off their ballot or vote in person. Many Californians were already voting by mail. Newsom signed 10 other voting-related bills on Monday, crafting them as part of an effort to expand voting rights and access.

[North Korea] North Korea launches missile as diplomat decries US policy

Politico [9/28/2021 4:00 AM, Hyung-Jin Kim, 1707K] reports North Korea fired a short-range missile into the sea Tuesday at nearly the same moment its U.N. diplomat was decrying the U.S.'s "hostile policy" against it, in an apparent return to its pattern of mixing weapons displays with peace overtures to wrest outside concessions. The launch, its third round of weapons firings this month, came only three days after North Korea repeated its offer for conditional talks with South Korea. Some experts say the latest missile launch was likely meant to test how South Korea would respond as North Korea needs Seoul to persuade Washington to ease economic sanctions and make other concessions. In an emergency National Security Council meeting, the South Korean government expressed regret over what it called "a short-range missile launch" by the North. South Korea's military earlier said the object fired from North Korea's mountainous northern Jagang province flew toward the waters off the North's eastern coast. Further details of the launch were being analyzed. The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said the launch didn't pose an immediate threat but highlighted "the destabilizing impact of (North Korea's) illicit weapons program." Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said North Korea fired "what could be a ballistic missile" and that his government stepped up its vigilance and surveillance.

{End of Report} [RETURN TO TOP](#)



DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

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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.

TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Monday, September 20, 2021 6:00 AM ET

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Top News

US launches mass expulsion of Haitian migrants from Texas

The Washington Post [9/19/2021 8:22 PM, Arelis R. Hernández, 11773K] reports the Biden administration Sunday began deporting people from the makeshift camp where nearly 14,000 migrants have gathered beneath a South Texas bridge amid food shortages and deteriorating sanitary conditions. Three flights carrying 327 Haitian nationals landed in Haiti on Sunday, according to two U.S. officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to release the information. In a midday news conference, Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz said the federal government had moved 3,300 individuals from the camp Sunday to migrant processing facilities. The government enlisted the help of the local school system to transport people on school buses to facilities in Texas in San Antonio, Laredo and Eagle Pass, he said. "We are working around-the-clock to expeditiously move migrants out of the heat, elements and from underneath this bridge to our processing facilities in order to quickly process and remove individuals from the United States consistent with our laws and our policies," said Ortiz, adding it will be done in a "humane and timely manner." The Biden administration is conducting the deportations under Title 42, the Trump-era public health order that President Biden has kept in place to push migrants south of the border during the covid-19 pandemic. The goal is to reduce the number of people waiting to be processed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel and improve conditions on the ground. It's also designed to break the momentum and determination of migrants who have been encouraged by their U.S. relatives to make the journey before the opportunity passes or their individual circumstances worsen. Reuters [9/19/2021 2:57 PM, Daina Beth Solomon, Alexandra Ulmer, 5304K] reports the United States was working with the home countries or countries through which the migrants had transited to get them to accept those who had been awaiting immigration processing under the bridge that links Del Rio with Ciudad Acuña in Mexico. Earlier on Sunday Reuters journalists saw a white bus escorted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents enter the Del Rio airport, then a group boarding a Coast Guard plane. A police source said the people were migrants and a source familiar with airport operations said the aircraft was heading to El Paso, Texas. Alejandro Mayorkas, secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), said during another news conference that expulsion flights to Haiti that started on Sunday will continue daily. He said he could not detail the number of flights or number of Haitians for security reasons. DHS had announced on Saturday that it was accelerating expulsions to Haiti, sending more CBP agents to the area, and taking other steps to address the situation in Del Rio, where conditions under the bridge have grown increasingly squalid. The AP [9/19/2021 8:00 PM, Juan A. Lozano, Eric Gay, Elliot Spagat and Evens Sanon, 49K] reports Mexico said Sunday it would also begin deporting Haitians to their homeland. A government official said the flights would be from towns near the U.S. border and the border with Guatemala, where the largest group remains. Haitians have been migrating to the U.S. in large numbers from South America for several years, many having left their Caribbean nation after a devastating 2010 earthquake. After jobs dried up from the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, many made the dangerous trek by foot, bus and car to the U.S. border, including through the infamous Darien Gap, a Panamanian jungle. Some of the migrants at the Del Rio camp said the recent devastating earthquake in Haiti and the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse make them afraid to return to a country that seems more unstable than when they left. "In Haiti, there is no security," said Fabricio Jean, a 38-year-old Haitian who arrived in Texas with his wife and two daughters.

“The country is in a political crisis.”

Reported similarly:

Reuters [9/19/2021 2:15 AM, Robenson Sanson and Gessika Thomas, 5304K]

Axios [9/19/2021 2:19 PM, Ivana Saric, 526K]

ABC News [9/19/2021 1:51 PM, Quinn Owen, 37K]

Mayorkas warns Haitian migrants not to attempt journey to US, mass expulsion begins

FOX News [9/20/2021 4:25 AM, Edmund DeMarche, 9251K] reports Alejandro Mayorkas, the head of the Department of Homeland Security, warned Haitian migrants against attempting a voyage to the US as more 12,000 migrants were camped around a bridge in Del Rio, Texas. “We are very concerned that Haitians that are taking the irregular migration path are receiving misinformation—that the border is open or that Temporary Protected Status is available to them despite the fact they are arriving long after the date that presents the deadline for TPS eligibility,” Mayorkas told journalists during a conference call, the Miami Herald reported. “This is not the way to come to the United States.” Bruno Lozano, the mayor of Del Rio, Texas, estimated that there were more than 12,000 migrants and asylum-seekers at a border location. The U.S. aims to expel many of the migrants camped around a bridge in Del Rio, a report said. Starting Wednesday, there will be seven expulsion flights daily to Port-au-Prince and to Cap-Haitien, the Associated Press reported, citing a U.S. official who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly. Flights will continue to depart from San Antonio but authorities may add El Paso, the official said. DHS did not immediately respond to an after-hours email from Fox News. Mondesir Sirilien, a returned migrant, told Reuters that he spent about \$15,000 to leave Haiti for the U.S.

Haiti Protests Mass Deportation of Migrants as US Faces Overwhelming Arrivals in Del Rio

The New York Times [9/19/2021 2:19 PM, Harold Isaac and Natalie Kitroeff, 24635K] reports the Haitian government protested plans by the Biden administration to expel migrants from the United States en masse, arguing that Haiti is mired in a deep political and humanitarian crisis and does not have the means to receive thousands of homeless deportees. The head of Haiti’s national migration office, Jean Negot Bonheur Delva, said the authorities expect that 14,000 Haitians would be expelled from the United States over the coming three weeks. Officials said they were preparing to receive three flights of migrants just on Sunday to the country’s capital, Port-au-Prince. “The Haitian state is not really capable to receive these deportees,” said Mr. Bonheur Delva in an interview. Haiti’s president, Jovenel Moïse, was assassinated in July. A month later the country’s impoverished southern peninsula was devastated by a 7.2 magnitude earthquake, forcing the Caribbean nation’s unstable government to confront the fallout of a deadly natural disaster. Traditionally, most Haitian migrants have fled violence and economic deprivation in the capital Port-au-Prince, where about half the country’s population lives. But a more recent wave of immigrants have fled from the quake-stricken areas. Many of the Haitians being deported from the U.S. are likely going to return to southern villages and towns destroyed by the earthquake, in which running water and power have yet to be restored. Mr. Bonheur Delva said “ongoing security issues in the country” made it extremely difficult to resettle thousands of people. He said the country could not adequately provide security or food to the returnees and said the Covid-19 pandemic further complicated the country’s ability to accept so many people at once. “I am asking for a humanitarian moratorium,” he

said. "The situation is very difficult." The Wall Street Journal [9/19/2021 1:21 PM, Alicia A. Caldwell] reports approximately 14,000 migrants, many originally from Haiti, are now in Del Rio, according to officials in the area, overwhelming the resources of local, state and federal authorities. They have formed a makeshift camp under a bridge while they wait to be processed, with a fence on one side and the Rio Grande on the other. All entered the U.S. illegally and are expected to try to claim asylum in the U.S. On Sunday, the first flights removing some from this new wave of migrants took off from Texas to Haiti, said Lewis G. Owens, the top elected official in Val Verde County, which includes Del Rio. Mr. Owens said he was told by Border Patrol leadership Sunday morning that they planned to begin processing 3,000 migrants a day and moving them away from the bridge. They will give priority to deporting single adults, he said, and are still figuring out how to handle families.

Top News (Sunday Talk Shows)

Director of the National Institutes of Health Dr. Francis Collins on Vaccine Boosters, Mandates (FOX News Sunday With Chris Wallace)

FOX News Sunday With Chris Wallace [9/19/2021 9:05 AM, Staff, 1.8M]

Director of the National Institutes of Health Dr. Francis Collins joins FOX to discuss the coronavirus and related vaccines. An FDA advisory panel supported the idea of booster shots for people 65 and older and those most at risk but rejected the idea of booster shots for the general population. "I think the big news is that they actually did approve the initiation of boosters. Remember, they're taking a snapshot of right now. We're going to see what happens in the coming weeks. It would surprise me if it does not become clear over the next few weeks that that administration of boosters may need to be enlarged based upon the data we've already seen both in the US and Israel. It's clear the waning in the effectiveness of those vaccines is the reality, and we need to respond to it," said Collins. "The process is to look at the data, have the experts consider it, and then make their best judgements at that point, recognizing that the judgement may change. If people want an absolutely authoritative statement about here's the right answer, well that's not what our country is all about. Move to China, you'll get it there," said Collins. "The goals here are to try to protect Americans from dying from this disease. 670,000 have already. It does look from the review of the data by people like myself that we are going to need to provide boosters for people at risk in order to keep this surge from beginning to affect even though who are fully vaccinated. We're trying to do the right thing, trying to look at the data as it evolves, recognizing things are changing day by day," said Collins. About 57% of the world has not received a single first dose of COVID vaccine. When asked of the morality of Americans getting boosters when this is the case, Collins said, "I think this is a false choice that's being put forward. We have, of all the countries in the world, done the most to try to get doses to people in low and middle income countries across the world. We've already sent out 140 million doses, committed to another 500 million that are coming, contributed \$4 billion to COVAX so we are very invested in that. Watch and see what happens this week when the President meets with other countries. There may be more information there as well. The most that we may be talking about as far as boosters between now and the end of this year might be 100 million doses. It's a pretty small, modest number compared to what we are already sending out to the rest of the world or have committed to do so." On mandatory vaccines for private businesses, Collins said, "I do know that the law that Congress passed requires OSHA to take action when there is grave danger in the workplace of harm to employees. COVID-19 represents a grave danger so a reasonable person might say that they are not just supposed to act, they have to act in that space, and

that is the justification for this rule." On whether people coming from across the border should be mandated to get vaccines, Collins said, "I know that vaccines are being offered to people in that situation. I guess you're asking why is it not mandated. That would have to be a question for someone else." Collins said from a public health point of view, he wants everybody to be vaccinated, and if a mandate would help, there should be one for illegal immigrants. Children 5 to 11 are set to be examined for vaccines in weeks. Collins appealed to the people who are not vaccinated to urge them to get vaccinated.

Dr. Anthony Fauci on FDA Decision on COVID Vaccine Booster Shots (ABC's This Week With George Stephanopoulos)

ABC's This Week With George Stephanopoulos [9/19/2021 9:05 AM, Staff, 3M]

The President's Chief Medical Advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci joined ABC to discuss the situation with the coronavirus. An FDA panel recently rejected booster shots for the general public. "As you well know, the approval was for people 65 years of age or older, and a considerable number of people who are 18 to 64 who have underlying conditions that put them at a higher risk for severe disease and people from 18 to 64 who are in institutional or occupational situations that would put them at an increased risk to exposure and infection. So that's a pretty good chunk of the people. The decision was made based on the data they examined, but that was always the plan, Martha, to make a proposal to be ready and prepared to do the entire amount right from the beginning with everybody, but if not, to be prepared to do what the advisory committee and the FDA finally authorized, which is fine. So I'm not disappointed. I think the process worked," said Fauci. Fauci said that they hope there will be an effect of stopping the spread when that population gets a booster, but the goal was to prevent people from getting severe disease. "Ultimately, Martha, we hope that enough people will be vaccinated either with the primary regimen or following a third shot booster with Pfizer that we will get that effect of preventing spread," said Fauci. Fauci noted that there will be a continual review of new data and possible changes to the current recommendations. Fauci said boosters based on Moderna and Johnson and Johnson will be examined in the next few weeks. On vaccines for children, Fauci said, "It will certainly be this Fall. When you talk about the rollout for vaccines, again, there will be a bit of a difference in timeframe, maybe by a couple to a few weeks between Pfizer and Moderna and others. So what we're going to almost certainly see is that sometime in the next few weeks as we get into October, we'll be able to see the vaccines for children get enough data to be presented for safety and immunogenicity, but when you get to Moderna, it will probably be a few weeks beyond that, maybe into the end of October, the beginning of November."

Dr. Anthony Fauci: People Shouldn't Get COVID Boosters Without FDA Approval (CNN's State of the Union With Jake Tapper)

CNN's State of the Union With Jake Tapper [9/19/2021 9:02 AM, Staff]

Dr. Anthony Fauci has been a proponent of COVID-19 booster shots for those who have been vaccinated, but the advisory committee to the FDA disagrees. Dr. Fauci says he doesn't view this as a mistake, with the recommendation based on an "evaluation of all of the totality of the data from the United States, from Israel, and any bit of data that we could get by the advisory committee to the FDA." Fauci adds that he supports the recommendation to wait on booster shots for the general public, saying that with the move to vaccinate people 18-64 with underlying conditions or higher risk of exposure, a large portion of the population will still get booster shots. This past Wednesday, Fauci said it would be a mistake not to advise booster shots. "... Just because I look at the data and say

I would do it this way, that's the reason why we have qualified groups of people who together as a committee examine all the data and make a decision," Fauci explains. The committee's decision also does not rule out the future of booster shots for the general public, Fauci adds, and he believes they will be widely recommended as more data is collected. One month ago, President Biden announced that the White House plans for every adult who has been vaccinated to get a booster eight months after their last doses. He said the booster program would be during the week of September 20th once the CDC and FDA approve the boosters. As people get booster shots without waiting for FDA approval, Fauci says it is not recommended they do so, as there is "always a theoretical risk" of people being harmed by getting the booster without sufficient data to show getting it is safe. Dr. Fauci says it should not be long before there is enough information for these booster shots for Pfizer recipients and when people who got other doses will be able to receive boosters.

Dr. Anthony Fauci on Future of COVID-19 Booster Shots (NBC's Meet the Press)

NBC's Meet the Press [9/19/2021 9:03 AM, Staff, 3.1M]

Dr. Anthony Fauci, of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases says President Biden's announcement of the plan to offer booster shots to Americans by September 20th was not getting ahead of the FDA or CDC. "The president and the medical group at the White House said we are planning to be able to roll out boosters essentially for everyone 16 years of age and older. That was a plan that was always... contingent upon the FDA's normal regulatory process, together with their advisors, to make a decision as to exactly what that rollout would look like." The data, Fauci says, led the FDA advisory committee to recommend only people 18-64 years of age with underlying conditions or higher risk of infection through occupational situations get the booster shots. As of now, Fauci says he believes that in the next few months or into the next year, more people will be approved for boosters. Dr. Fauci says the highest priority is still getting vaccines to unvaccinated people. Most of the data allows for approval of Pfizer booster shots, but Dr. Fauci says the data for those who have gotten the Moderna and the Johnson & Johnson vaccines should be "literally a couple to a few weeks away." Right now, there are no conclusive studies that show how long immunity lasts for people who have gotten the coronavirus. What is known is that if someone recovers from COVID-19 and then gets vaccinated, "the level of your immunity is extraordinarily high, surpassing any of the other two-dose vaccines that you get." Fauci says there are still 70 million Americans who are eligible for the vaccine but have not gotten it yet.

Dr. Francis Collins: Wider Approval for Booster Shots Likely to be Announced Soon (CBS' Face the Nation)

CBS' Face the Nation [9/19/2021 10:34 AM, Staff, 5.3M]

Dr. Francis Collins, the director of the National Institutes of Health, predicted earlier this month that booster shots are likely to be recommended for almost everybody, but that did not happen on Friday. Dr. Collins says he finds it "significant" that the FDA advisory committee unanimously voted to offer boosters to people with high risk of exposure and severe illness, such as healthcare workers and people over 65. With data continuously being evaluated, especially the findings from Israel, Dr. Collins says the recommendation to offer boosters for more people will come soon. Dr. Peter Marks, who is on the FDA advisory committee, included teachers in the high-risk category. Collins says teachers "could be seen in that space," especially teachers in classrooms with children 12 and under who cannot be vaccinated. Collins expects the CDC to discuss on Wednesday and Thursday parents of children under 12 and whether that puts them in the high-risk category as well.

Within the next two or three weeks, Dr. Collins says it should be known whether people who have been vaccinated with one vaccine can get boosters of a different formula. He adds that Moderna and Johnson & Johnson have submitted booster data, "so it's likely that the FDA will be able to have a comment on that pretty soon." Collins says the White House's announcement about the booster shots last month saying there should be shots available by this week was a preparedness strategy that Collins compares to hurricane preparedness. Next month is the target for approving vaccines for the 5-11 age group, but Dr. Collins says he does not want to put a specific date on when children five and under might be approved for a vaccine, though the trials for that age group are also ongoing.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Global Vaccination Efforts, US-China Relations (CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS)

CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS [9/19/2021 10:18 AM, Staff, 1M]

On Tuesday, world leaders will converge on the United Nations headquarters in New York for speeches, meetings, conferences and more, all part of the UN General Assembly. Despite the fact that the host country, the United States, asked other nations to keep delegations home to avoid turning the gathering into a COVID super-spreader event, leaders of more than 100 nations are still expected. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres joined CNN to discuss the upcoming summit. On collaboration in the international community, Guterres said, "There are some positive signs. We had the IMF together with World Bank, the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization proposing a program of \$50 billion to allow for an increased vaccination in developing countries. I know President Biden is convening a summit to try to increase substantially the amount of vaccines available to the developing countries, but let's be clear, all of this is too little too late." Guterres noted there are two divides in vaccination efforts. One is a North-South divide in which the North took care of its vaccination of the population and largely forgot about the South, increasing mistrust between the global south and north. The other is the geo-strategic global divide which is now centered in the relationship between China and the US. "Since the beginning, and talking with both sides, I have been saying that there are areas in which a confrontation is inevitable. Human rights is one of these areas. The other some geostatistical questions related, for instance, the South China Sea or Taiwan. There are areas in which there are different positions, and it will not be easy to overcome these differences. There is an area where I believe there should be effective cooperation: climate. Then there are areas in which I believe a negotiation is necessary, a serious negotiation because there are different interests, but at the same time, there are common interests. This is related to trade and technology," said Guterres. Guterres said the future of two large countries with solely conflicting and confrontational relationships would become very dangerous for the world and the world economy. When asked about telling the Chinese government that they should allow a WHO investigation on COVID, Guterres said, "Their response is that the investigation was already done properly. So this is a matter of different opinion."

Senator Bernie Sanders Continues to Push for \$3.5 Trillion Reconciliation Bill (CBS' Face the Nation)

CBS' Face the Nation [9/19/2021 10:40 AM, Staff, 5.3M]

Reports say the U.S. military killed seven children and three civilian adults in a drone strike while targeting individuals believed to have been planning a terrorist attack on the Kabul airport. Senator Bernie Sanders says he hopes the Biden administration understands what happened with the strike and make sure something like it never happens again. The Biden

administration has also announced that it will step up deportations, particularly for the thousands of Haitian migrants that have gathered in southern Texas. Sanders says he hopes the \$3.5 trillion spending plan will include immigration measures. He says there are around 11 million people who are undocumented and “doing the essential work” for the economy and that the White House should work towards immigration reform and paths to citizenship. However, moderates are balking at this and other social policies in the reconciliation bill. Because there is no Republican support for the bill, Sanders says, the bill is being brought under the reconciliation process. Sanders says the reconciliation bill will challenge large corporations and pharmaceutical companies as well as address issues such as healthcare, affordable housing, climate, and immigration. Sanders says major compromises on the bill have already been made with cutting the original \$6 trillion over ten years down to the current \$3.5 trillion.

Rep. Jim Clyburn on Passing Reconciliation, Infrastructure Bills, Raising Debt Limit (CNN’s State of the Union With Jake Tapper and Dana Bush)

CNN’s State of the Union With Jake Tapper and Dana Bush [9/19/2021 10:40 AM, Staff, 1M]

Congressman Jim Clyburn joined CNN to discuss two spending bills making their way through Congress. Dozens of progressives have said they are going to vote no on the bipartisan infrastructure deal on September 27 if a sweeping \$3.5 trillion reconciliation bill isn’t also passed by then. “We are negotiating and of course we have a pretty bit tent in our party. We have progressives that are very, very important not just to the party but to the country, and we have more moderates, and that’s how it should be. We reflect what this country is all about, and we have a pretty evenly divided country these days and all of us are working through that,” said Clyburn. Clyburn noted that even though these bills are expensive, the cost of not doing anything about it outweighs the risk. Clyburn said they are working hard to reach the goal of voting on the infrastructure bill by September 27. “I think that we ought to really focus on the American people and think about what it takes to get us in a good place and then let the numbers take care of themselves,” said Clyburn. Clyburn expressed optimism that the House will be able to pass the infrastructure bill. On raising the debt limit, Clyburn said, “The full faith and credit of the United States of America should not be compromised on the altar of politics, and I will hope that our Republican friends will get beyond politics and do what’s necessary to keep this country moving forward and keep our financial integrity in place.”

Senator John Yarmuth on Debt Ceiling and Controversial \$3.5 Trillion Bill (Fox News Sunday With Chris Wallace)

Fox News Sunday With Chris Wallace [9/19/2021 9:19 AM, Staff, 1.2M]

Congress has a lengthy to-do list by the end of the month, and failure to act could lead to a government shutdown and defaulting on the U.S.’s debt obligations for the first time in history. Meanwhile, the fate of President Biden’s \$3.5 trillion economic agenda is on doubt. John Yarmuth, the chair of the House Budget Committee, says there are “several options for raising the debt ceiling, which is absolutely mandatory.” Yarmuth calls this a “ridiculous position to be in” as the U.S. is the only country to have a debt ceiling of this kind, which has been raised “100 times over the 104 years it’s been in existence.” Senator Mitch McConnell, however, says he and his fellow Republicans oppose raising the debt ceiling, which would cause the U.S. government to default. Meanwhile, Democratic leaders say the House will “consider” the bipartisan infrastructure bill on September 27th, but some left-wing members have said if the bipartisan bill is put up and the \$3.5 trillion spending bill is not passed, they

will vote against the former bill. Yarmuth says the matters in the \$3.5 trillion bill are not “frivolous” and need to be passed in order to fund affordable child care, early childhood education, senior care, and more social infrastructure. Yarmuth says that if the bill passes, it will be less than the \$3.5 trillion being asked for now.

Sen. Bill Cassidy on Raising the Debt Ceiling, Passing Infrastructure Bill (NBC’s Meet the Press)

NBC’s Meet the Press [9/19/2021 9:21 AM, Staff, 2.6M]

Sen. Bill Cassidy joined NBC and talked about the debt ceiling discussion in Congress. “We actually raised on a bipartisan basis the debt ceiling in the last Congress because on a bipartisan basis we agreed on what to spend the money on. This time, Democrats what to increase the debt ceiling for their reconciliation bill, which they’re passing on a party line basis, which is going to fuel inflation, if you speak to Democratic economists like Larry Summers. So, wait a second, we’re supposed to aid and abet party-line spending, which even Democratic economists say will fuel further inflation? No that’s not right. Now, if you want to come back and meet where we can actually find common ground and actually address needs as opposed to a Democratic wishlist, then we’ll help, but not when you’re just trying to tank the economy by fueling inflation to get your kind of who knows, your wishlist,” said Cassidy. Cassidy said the raising of the debt ceiling would be raised adequately to include the \$1.9 trillion package passed on a party-line vote. “Going forward, that’s what they’re hoping to do. They’re hoping to increase the debt ceiling to meet the \$3.5 trillion package which the committee for responsible budget says is actually \$5.5 trillion,” said Cassidy. Power is still out from hurricane damage in parts of Cassidy’s state. On whether the infrastructure bill will make power outages less likely after storms in Louisiana, Cassidy said, “First, hopefully disaster relief will actually address those particular needs, but this bill has billions to promote resiliency for the grid whether it’s a hurricane in Louisiana, an ice storm in Texas or the Northeast or forest fires on the West Coast, so absolutely. Again, billions to address resiliency. We should pass this.”

Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo Discusses Afghanistan Withdrawal Efforts (FOX’s Sunday Morning Futures With Maria Bartiromo)

FOX’s Sunday Morning Futures With Maria Bartiromo [9/19/2021 10:30 AM, Staff]

Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo joined FOX to discuss the Biden administration’s handling of withdrawing US troops from Afghanistan. A drone strike killed civilians during the withdrawal from Afghanistan. “It’s obviously a tragedy that civilians were killed. To those families and those around them, their friends, my apologies. We pray for them. This is just another example. It looks like they were in a rush, they were in a hurry, you could see the political pressure, and if there was one thing that drove this failed evacuation, it was the arbitrary political deadline that President Biden set, the arbitrary cap on the number of troops that could be there so we could secure the American departure and the departure of our equipment and those things. These were all political decisions driven down to the military, and I’m confident the military was under enormous pressure,” said Pompeo. “This is just another piece of an evacuation that was driven by politics and not putting America first and America’s national security.” Secretary Blinken was interrogated in hearings over the last week on the withdrawal. “It’s very difficult to imagine how this administration is going to turn it around because they seem so deeply desirous of just making this go away as if there weren’t still Americans who were being held hostage by the Taliban inside of Afghanistan, as if we still didn’t have promises out to some of the folks who helped us for these past 20 years. They just want it to go away so I’m not sure how the Biden

administration gets back from this space. I hope they'll begin to recognize that their credibility around the world was damaged deeply by how they executed this withdrawal, the failure to work alongside allies to deliver, make sure we got our allies and friends out of the country, and that we have abandoned a partner in a way that didn't deliver for security in the region as well. They need to show, they need to find places they can show real resolve, determination, make clear that we're not going back to what we were doing for the last eight years of the Obama administration which is weaknesses on the world stage," said Pompeo. Pompeo said moral support should be provided to fighters in Afghanistan. "We should make doubly sure that we never recognize the Taliban as the rightful leaders of Afghanistan," said Pompeo. "There's no way we should recognize them. Think about this: I heard Secretary Blinken say there was no plan. No, there was a detailed plan. They just chose to tear it up and put a political constraint where we had a conditions-based security model for how we were approaching the risk from terrorism in Afghanistan," said Pompeo. "They just permitted the Taliban to throw all of that away, to throw normal diplomacy away, the hard work that we were engaged in, and allow terrorists to take over this country. We shouldn't recognize them, and most importantly, Maria, and what I most worry about, is I think there may be American taxpayer dollars that may be headed for the Taliban as well. We will bribe them, we will pay them, we will coerce them through using US taxpayer dollars to convince the Taliban either to allow Americans out or for something else where we have no leverage today because of the decisions that this administration made," said Pompeo. China is supposedly negotiating a deal to occupy Bagram Air Base. There was a tweet from Secretary Antony Blinken which said, "We stand with the people of Hong Kong and continue to support their human rights and fundamental freedoms." A short time after this was posted, the State Department took it down, and said it was a mistake and the tweet was meant for somebody else. A new tweet was put up and that key sentence was taken out. Instead, it was put into the spokesman's tweet, Ned Price. "The statement that Secretary Blinken originally put out is absolutely true. The United States must stand with the people of Hong Kong. Everyday, always. We must demand that their rightful place, that the Chinese Communist Party had itself agreed to for 50 years, be restored. It doesn't appear that's where the Chinese Communist Party is headed, but the United States must continue to stand strongly with them, just as we do with the people of Taiwan. I don't know what happened. I don't know why this tweet was taken down. The original tweet that Secretary Blinken had posted was perfectly in line with what I believe the United States policy should be," Pompeo said. Back on the Afghan withdrawal, a senior State Department official said a unit created by the prior administration to conduct the withdrawal was disbanded. Pompeo said, "We did create a unit. It was really well done. It was an important team that we had put together under amazing leadership." Pompeo said they knew they needed State Department resources to get people out of harm's way at a moment's notice. "As for why the State Department was in charge, it makes sense to put the State Department in charge of getting diplomats and resources out, but more importantly than who is in charge, in the end, the Commander in Chief is in charge. It was President Biden's responsibility to provide the resources and the political freedom and the space for our military and our State Department to make sure we got every American out. Every American diplomat, every American citizen, and every American military personnel, and they simply failed to do that and frankly are failing to do that even as we sit here today," said Pompeo. Pompeo praised the administration on the new submarine deal with Australia, noting he believes it will be good for the Quad and deterring Chinese aggression.

Sen. Ted Cruz on Afghan Withdrawal, Chinese Aggression (FOX's Sunday Morning Futures With Maria Bartiromo)

FOX's Sunday Morning Futures With Maria Bartiromo [9/19/2021 10:40 AM, Staff]
Sen. Ted Cruz joined FOX to discuss the US's withdrawal from Afghanistan and Gen. Milley's alleged phone calls with China. He interrogated Secretary of State Antony Blinken this past week and got him to admit that the State Department did give the Taliban what is akin to a kill list of Americans and allies as they walked out. "When it comes to Afghanistan, Joe Biden and his administration have presided over the worst foreign policy catastrophe in a generation. They put politics in front of everything else, they abandoned Americans behind enemy lines, and it was a disaster," said Cruz, saying Biden surrendered, including surrendering Bagram Air Base. "Our nation is going to pay the price for the President's weakness and incompetence for years to come," said Cruz. General Mark Milley will testify in front of Cruz's committee next week. Chinese military ships have been in the waters off of Alaska and Taiwan. Gen. Milley allegedly spoke to his Chinese counterparts in the final days of the Trump administration. "Milley's conduct in Afghanistan, the disaster of Afghanistan, abandoning Bagram, abandoning Americans behind, there are a lot of reasons that General Milley and Secretary Austin and ultimately President Biden and Kamala Harris need to be held to account, but the report this past week that General Milley called the lead General in China and said that he would prevent President Trump from carrying out any military orders, I very much hope that report is not true. Bob Woodward includes it in a book. I don't know if Woodward's quote is accurate or not. I think General Milley deserves the benefit of the doubt. He deserves the chance to address it and answer is that quote true. Is that what you said? If it isn't, Woodward should be ashamed. If it is, then Milley would've committed a gross dereliction of duty. He would've violated the chain of command. Under our Constitution, there is one commander in chief, and it is not for the military generals to reach out to our enemies and defy the commander in chief. I hope the quote didn't happen. I hope General Milley clearly and unequivocally denies it, but he deserves at least the chance to address whether that charge is true or not," said Cruz. On the threat of China, Cruz said, "I have said for a long time that I think China is the single greatest geopolitical threat facing the United States for the next century. We talked a minute ago about the consequences of Afghanistan, of the disaster, of the failure of Biden's weakness. Every enemy across the globe saw that weakness, and they took the measure of the man. Xi in China is watching how America behaves, and they're taking the measure of the man in the Oval Office, and unfortunately I believe the chances of a Chinese amphibious assault on Taiwan have increased tenfold in the last month because as Xi has looked at Biden, I fear that Xi has made the determination that Biden is too weak and too unable to do anything, that this is now a ripe opportunity for China to move militarily on Taiwan. If that happens, it would be utterly disastrous, but weakness invites aggression. The way you protect Taiwan, and I think we should absolutely protect Taiwan, is you protect it through strength."

Former Joint Chiefs Chairman Mike Mullen Discusses Afghan Drone Strike, Milley Discussions with China (ABC's This Week With George Stephanopoulos)

ABC's This Week With George Stephanopoulos [9/19/2021 9:22 AM, Staff, 3M]

A stunning admission from the Pentagon that a drone strike in Kabul amid the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan killed 10 civilians with no connection to ISIS-K. It comes from the Pentagon already reeling from the revelation that Joint Chiefs Chairman Mark Milley privately conferred with his Chinese counterpart to avert conflict in the final months of the Trump administration. Former Joint Chiefs Chairman Mike Mullen joined ABC to discuss the situation. "I thought what General McKenzie did was right, admit the mistake and apologize, and look, and he also spoke later of possible reparations, and in fact, in the end, Secretary Austin has also committed to a review that hopefully will look at accountability for this," said Mullen. When asked if there should be accountability, he said, "Absolutely I think there

should. This was obviously an incredibly complex, fast-moving situation. We'd lost those 13 military members a couple days before that. There was clear intelligence that additional strikes were on their way. So it was in that environment in which this strike actually took place, as sad as it was." Mullen said, "Clearly they were convinced at the time that it was a good strike, and it takes some time to do that, and this is the same command that has been evacuating Afghanistan and all of that entails. I'm not overly concerned about how long it took" to apologize. Mullen said on over the horizon strikes, there will need to be validation of the intelligence, but the US has done this for years and has had many successful drone strikes. "The over the horizon capability is really there. Doing it in an extremely quick, confused, chaotic environment made this one that much more difficult and problematic," said Mullen. On Milley's communication with China in the final days of the Trump administration, Mullen said, "Having communication with counterparts around the world is routine, and even having them now with China. There was a time when we had no communications with China or if we had a problem with China, they'd cut off all mill-to-mill connections. So I'm encouraged the fact that the line of communication is there. This was routine. I think it was also overseen certainly listened to by many other in the inter-agency process so Milley wasn't out there by himself." Mullen noted he hopes the part about warning China of a strike is not true. "What's a little bit alarming to me, though, is that the Chinese would read the situation as they did as really chaotic and as if we were going to possibly strike. It's very clear, and I don't know this because I haven't talked to Chairman Milley, it's very clear he had good intel that this was the case, but the misread by China is also worrisome and it speaks to the need to have these open communications so that we don't miscalculate," said Mullen. Mullen noted he believes Milley would try to do the best thing for our country in any situation. On the submarine deal that the US made with Australia that caused France to withdraw its ambassadors, Mullen said, "Yeah, it's a big deal. To see the Australians, the US, and UK come together for that technology, and it's going to give that part of the world and Australia significant sustaining capability in undersea warfare that they don't have, and I think, I hope, strengthens the security environment in that part of the world, but it is a big, big change, and I am very much in favor of what's happening."

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Afghanistan (CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS)
CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS [9/19/2021 10:28 AM, Staff, 1M]

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres joined CNN to discuss Afghanistan. Guterres recently said it was a fantasy to imagine that the United Nations would be able to handle the Afghan problem. No governments have currently recognized the Taliban and very few are willing to provide aid to prevent humanitarian disaster in the country. "We have sent to Kabul the emergency relief coordinator and head of our humanitarian affairs sector who was the first personnel at the ministerial level that went to Kabul and spoke with Baradar, with Haqqani, with all those that matter. What I said about the fantasy is that you cannot ask the UN to solve all the problems that many countries with hundreds of thousands of soldiers, with trillion of different currencies and with all the means at their disposal for decades were not able to solve. And to say now the UN goes there and solves everything, they have an inclusive government, they will have full respect of human rights, they will stop all terrorism for all activities. I mean let's be honest, we have not the capacity to do that that all the others failed for decades. What we can do and we are doing is to engage with the Taliban, first of all for humanitarian aid to be distributed and to make them understand that we have solidarity from the international community and to be able to one day have recognition from the international community, they need to deliver on the aspects that are very important for us: the human rights for girls and for women. Women the right to work, girls the right to be

at school at all levels. That it will be very important for them to cooperate at the international community to avoid Afghanistan to be a safe haven for terrorists. These are things we can, naturally, engaging with them, advocate for, but we have no illusion. The situation is unpredictable, and if someone today says that they know exactly how Afghanistan will be in three months' time, I think it is probably a prophet without much credibility," said Guterres. On the international effort to combat the pandemic, Guterres said, "I think there is a conscience that if we don't address quickly the problems of those areas of the world in which the virus is still spreading like wildfire, we risk to have the COVID as a permanent problem, like the flu. This with the impacts that we are seeing in the global economy, this is something we need to avoid at all costs. I think there is a growing conscience that this is the case, and I hope that in the next few weeks, there will be effective progress in relation to the vaccination programs."

Former French Ambassador to US Gerard Araud Discusses Rift Following Announcement of US, UK, Australia Submarine Deal (CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS)
CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS [9/19/2021 10:07 AM, Staff, 1M]

Unacceptable behavior among allies and partners. That is what the French government called the announcement of a new security pact between the US, Australia, and the UK this week. Seen as an effort to counter China, the new deal will help Australia build a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines, among other things. But the French already had a deal to build submarines with their Australian allies. They say this move was a stab in the back. On Friday, France took the exceptional step of recalling its ambassadors to Washington and Canberra. Former French Ambassador to Washington Gerard Araud joined CNN to discuss the situation. "It was a total astonishment. On the 30th of August, the minister of defense and foreign affairs of Australia were reaffirming the commitment to the contract. 30th of August. And suddenly overnight it's denounced. On the top of that, it's denounced after obviously our closest allies plotting in our back to kick us out of the jail. So you have the loss and on top of that, you have the deviousness of our closest allies against our major interests," said Araud. When asked if France could've been part of a new agreement, Araud said, "I think it's the right question. Actually, we, the French ambassador who met the Secretary of State, met with the national security advisor, raised the question saying not only we, as I have said, we lose the contract, but you kick us out of this strategic partnership because Australia was also our strategic partner. Our Navies have been training together, and we consider that Australia was the pillar of our Indo-Pacific strategy." Araud said he does not think that the storm will have major consequences since most Europeans see it as a French problem. "Basically, we have the impression that President Biden doesn't care," Araud said, noting Afghanistan and that there was no proposal of cooperation coming from the American side when Biden traveled to Europe. "Since then, it's very difficult to say that there's a European policy of this administration." On whether or not the US and France will be able to come back together, Araud said, "I think our community has to work together, but there is no love. There is only proof of love. So I think that the administration has to show that, as I have said, that they consider that the Europeans are a real partner in a common endeavor, and we are still waiting for that." Araud also noted that France is headed into a presidential election cycle and this decision will make things more difficult for President Macron.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

[MA] Activists call on jail to stop housing immigration detainees

The [AP](#) [9/19/2021 3:21 PM, Staff, 2701K] reports immigrant rights activists in Massachusetts are planning to rally near historic Plymouth Rock and outside a local jail to call on the facility to stop housing federal immigration detainees. Organizers on Thursday evening will hold a vigil at the waterfront Pilgrim Memorial State Park followed by a march and rally at the Plymouth County Correctional Facility. The jail is the lone remaining facility housing immigration detainees in the state, with some 77 in custody as of late last month, according to federal data. Plymouth County Sheriff Joseph McDonald recently notified U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement that his office was terminating a program that deputizes some of its staff to act as federal immigration agents. But he said the jail would continue to house immigration detainees, as it has since the 1990s, despite calls from activists.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Democrats Dealt a Blow on Immigration Plans

The [New York Times](#) [9/19/2021 8:44 PM, Luke Broadwater, 24635K] reports the Senate parliamentarian dealt a major setback on Sunday to Democrats' plan to use their \$3.5 trillion social policy bill to create a path to citizenship for an estimated 8 million undocumented immigrants. Elizabeth MacDonough, the Senate parliamentarian, who serves as the chamber's arbiter of its own rules, wrote that the "policy changes of this proposal far outweigh the budgetary impact scored to it and it is not appropriate for inclusion in reconciliation," according to a copy of her decision obtained by New York Times. Democrats had been seeking to grant legal status to undocumented people brought to the United States as children, known as Dreamers; immigrants who were granted Temporary Protected Status for humanitarian reasons; close to one million farmworkers; and millions more whom are deemed "essential workers." Immigration advocates had pushed the plan as their best chance this Congress to improve the lives of millions of immigrants, after attempts to reach a bipartisan deal with Republicans fell apart. [Roll Call](#) [9/19/2021 9:20 PM, Suzanne Monyak and Caroline Simon, 119K] reports the consequences of putting millions of people on a path to citizenship would go far beyond the narrow scope of the nation's budget, Elizabeth MacDonough said. Lawful permanent resident "status would give these persons freedom to work, freedom to travel, freedom to live openly in our society in any state in the nation, and to reunite with their families and it would make them eligible, in time, to apply for citizenship – things for which there is no federal fiscal equivalent," she said. "Changing the law to clear the way to LPR status is tremendous and enduring policy change that dwarfs its budgetary impact." The [Los Angeles Times](#) [9/19/2021 6:31 PM, Jennifer Haberkorn, 3710K] reports that Democrats are next expected to pitch a backup plan that would provide a similar pathway to citizenship, but probably not cover as many people, according to sources familiar with the talks. But the ruling released Sunday is an ominous sign for its chances, as it recounted several reasons why a massive expansion of citizenship cannot be included in the bill. Because of the special fast-track procedure Democrats are using to pass their \$3.5-trillion bill, all parts must conform to Senate rules, chiefly that each provision be directly related to the federal budget. The process, called reconciliation, allows Democrats to pass their bill with only 50 votes plus the tie-breaking vote of the vice president. The Senate parliamentarian, Elizabeth MacDonough, advised Senate aides that the proposed pathway to citizenship would not comply, according to a document obtained by the Los Angeles Times on Sunday. [Politico](#) [9/19/2021 8:07 PM, Marianne Levine, 1707K] reports Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said Sunday evening that Democrats are "deeply disappointed in the decision" but plan to meet with the

Senate parliamentarian in the coming days and pursue other options. "Our economy depends more than ever on immigrants," Schumer said. "Despite putting their lives on the line during the pandemic and paying their fair share of taxes, they remain locked out of the federal assistance that served as a lifeline for so many families. We will continue fighting to pursue the best path forward to grant them the ability to obtain lawful status."

Reported similarly:

[Washington Post](#) [9/19/2021 11:40 PM, Maria Sacchetti, 11773K]

[The Hill](#) [9/19/2021 8:25 PM, Jordain Carney, 1776K]

[Reuters](#) [9/19/2021 11:11 PM, David Shepardson, 5304K]

Customs and Border Protection

Deported veterans allowed back into the U.S. to get vaccinated

The [San Diego Union Tribune](#) [9/19/2021 12:40 PM, Alexandra Mendozawriter, 302K] reports a group of deported veterans was allowed back briefly into the country Wednesday to receive the COVID-19 shot as part of a special clinic held by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. One of them was U.S. Marine veteran Milton Tepeyac, 45, who made the trip from Sonora, México. Two days before the clinic, while searching for a house to rent in Hermosillo, he came across a Facebook post informing about the clinic to be held at the San Ysidro border crossing. "The simple fact that they are doing this, is already an incredible achievement", said Tepeyac. The VA in collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security reached out to veterans living on or near the border to inform them of both the vaccine and other benefits for which they are eligible, explained Dr. Jennifer MacDonald, senior advisor for health to the Secretary of VA. In total, 21 people, including some of the veteran's family members, received the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine at this clinic set up at a designated area near the PedEast border crossing.

Deportees land in Port-au-Prince: 'Nobody told us we were going back to Haiti'

The [Washington Post](#) [9/19/2021 7:03 PM, Widlore Merancourt and Anthony Faiola, 11773K] reports he crossed the Mexican border into Texas only two weeks ago, joyous at the prospect of building anew in the United States. Now part of the first wave of deportees rapidly ejected by the Biden administration amid a fresh surge at the border, Johnson Bordes, 23, stepped off a Boeing 737 on Sunday and into the Haitian capital, terrified by a city torn apart by violence in a homeland he could barely remember. Like many deportees arriving on charter flights at the airport in Port-au-Prince, 15 minutes from neighborhoods controlled by brutal armed gangs, Bordes's family left Haiti in the great migration after the 2010 earthquake that killed more than 200,000 people. He was 12 when they left, first for the Dominican Republic, then on to Chile, where he was living with his mother and brother when the coronavirus pandemic hit. Encouraged by relatives in the United States, the family set out on a 4,500-mile trek to the U.S. border — never imagining the road would lead back to the devastated country they left more than a decade ago. He mingled with other confused deportees, many of whom hadn't seen Haiti in years, and now spoke Spanish or Portuguese better than Haitian Creole. Several families told The Washington Post that they were never told they were being deported back to Haiti.

[TX] Part of Texas border closed where thousands of Haitians crossed

The Hill [9/19/2021 3:30 PM, Monique Beals, 1776K] reports the United States closed off a stretch of the Mexican border where thousands of Haitian migrants have been crossing between Ciudad Acuña, Mexico, and Del Rio, Texas, according to The Associated Press. Thousands of migrants are currently living in squalid conditions under a bridge in Del Rio, where temperatures are often near 100 degrees. For three weeks, they had been crossing the river into Mexico for food and other supplies before returning to the camp in Texas. But Texas Department of Public Safety vehicles lined up to block the bridge and river this weekend, and officials taped off a dam that had been used for crossing the river, according to the AP. The Washington Times [9/19/2021 6:24 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports Texas state troopers used cars to erect a wall of metal this weekend, sealing off the U.S.-Mexico border in Del Rio, and the Homeland Security Department said it was rushing agents and officers to the site to process the thousands of migrants who had made it across, as officials moved on what has become an illegal immigrant beachhead inside the country. Homeland Security also vowed more deportation flights and use of expedited removal, a speedy deportation process, to try to oust as many of the migrants, most of them Haitians, from the camp they erected on the banks of the Rio Grande. With the stream of new migrants cut off, authorities whittled down the numbers from a peak of about 16,000 people late last week to fewer than 13,000 Sunday afternoon.

[TX] Border Patrol in Texas discovers 49 undocumented migrants hidden in tractor-trailer

FOX News [9/19/2021 11:25 AM, Stephen Sorace, 9251K] reports border agents in Texas thwarted a human smuggling attempt and discovered 49 undocumented migrants crammed inside a tractor-trailer, officials said Friday. Border Patrol agents in Sierra Blanca encountered the tractor-trailer on Thursday during a traffic check at an immigration checkpoint on I-10, U.S. Customs and Border Protections (CBP) said in a statement. Agents checked the trailer and found 49 migrants from Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru hiding inside, the agency said. The driver, whom authorities said was a visa holder, was turned over to Homeland Security Investigations for prosecution.

[TX] "Trapped": Migrants collecting food try to evade law enforcement at the U.S.-Mexico border

Reuters [9/19/2021 9:19 PM, Daina Beth Solomon, Alberto Fajardo, 5304K] reports a U.S. law enforcement officer on horseback wielded what appeared to be a lariat, whipping it close to the face of a man wading in the Rio Grande carrying a plastic bag of food. It was just one desperate moment in a few hours of such scenes along the Rio Grande on Sunday. Hundreds of Haitian migrants who have been camping under a bridge in the Texas town of Del Rio were trying to bring food and other supplies from Ciudad Acuña in the Mexican state of Coahuila, while U.S. officials have stepped up security at the border and started flying migrants out of the area, some to Haiti. Migrants said their squalid encampment under a bridge on the U.S. side of the river was short of supplies. U.S. officials over the last few days had let migrants cross back and forth at a shallow point of the river. On Sunday, however, they told migrants they would not be able to return to the U.S. side if they ventured into Mexico. "We're trapped," said Joncito Jean, 37, who had spent three days sleeping on a sheet on the ground with his wife and children, ages 3 and 4. He said he regretted the decision to come.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

[CA] More evacuations ordered in California as wildfires threaten giant sequoia trees

ABC News [9/19/2021 1:14 PM, Julia Jacobo, 37K] reports wildfires swirling around California's giant sequoia trees are prompting more evacuations as they spread toward communities surrounding the forests. Residents in Ponderosa and Quaking Aspen in Tulare County have been ordered to evacuate immediately now that the Windy Fire had fanned to more than 18,000 acres surrounding the Sequoia National Forest and was 0% contained on Sunday morning. Other communities in Tulare County, such as Johnsondale and Camp Whitsett, had been ordered to evacuate several days earlier due to the Windy Fire, while the KNP Complex Fire, which is also threatening the historic sequoia forests, prompted evacuations in the Three Rivers community. The KNP Complex Fire had grown to nearly 22,000 acres by Sunday morning and was also 0% contained. The AP [9/19/2021 8:01 PM, Staff, 495K] reports the National Weather Service issued a red flag warning through Sunday, saying gusts and lower humidity could create conditions for rapid wildfire spread. The fires forced the evacuation of the park last week, along with parts of Three Rivers, a foothill town of about 2,500 people. Firefighters using bulldozers expanded a line between the fire and the community, fire spokesperson Rebecca Paterson said Sunday.

Secret Service

[NY] NYC braces for return of in-person attendance at U.N. General Assembly

New York Daily News [9/19/2021 2:13 PM, Shant Shahrigan, Neutral, Secondary] reports tensions inside and gridlock outside are in the forecast for the UN General Assembly's return to deliberations this week. The global COVID crisis, dire warnings about climate change and fallout from the U.S. withdrawal in Afghanistan are expected to predominate at the annual meeting, where more than 100 world leaders will descend upon the United Nations headquarters in Midtown. President Biden plans to make an appeal for greater international partnership on the pandemic, climate change and human rights abuses. He is set to meet with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday and address the assembly on Tuesday. Last year's General Assembly was all-virtual, and Biden is limiting his time at this year's forum over COVID concerns. On Wednesday the commander-in-chief is hosting a virtual summit focusing on the pandemic. He is expected to ask global leaders to boost commitments to sharing vaccines and address oxygen shortages around the world, among other issues. This year's General Assembly is Biden's first as president. After his predecessor Donald Trump aggressively advocated an "America First" stance on the global stage, world leaders welcomed Biden's election as a return to international norms. But chaos during last month's withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan raised questions about Biden's leadership among longstanding allies. Leaders of friendly countries decried the move, which came as the Taliban took over Afghanistan, as a disaster. U.S. officials sounded a message of unity ahead of the General Assembly.

[PA] Pennsylvania Man Pleads Guilty to Providing Material Support to ISIS

Homeland Security Today [9/18/2021 3:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a Pennsylvania man pleaded guilty on September 16 to one count of attempting to provide material support to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS). Mustafa Mousab Alowemer, 23, of Pittsburgh pleaded guilty to one count of attempting to provide material support to ISIS in relation to his plan to attack a church in Pittsburgh. According to court

documents, Alowemer plotted to bomb a church located on the north side of Pittsburgh using an explosive device. His stated motivation to conduct such an attack was to support the cause of ISIS and to inspire other ISIS supporters in the United States to join together and commit similar acts in the name of ISIS. Alowemer also targeted the church to “take revenge for our [ISIS] brothers in Nigeria.” Alowemer was aware that numerous people in the proximity of the church could be killed by the explosion. In furtherance of the plot to bomb the church, in May 2019, Alowemer distributed multiple instructional documents related to the construction and use of explosives and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to an individual Alowemer believed to be a fellow ISIS supporter, but who was in fact an FBI employee. Alowemer distributed these documents with the intent that the information be used in the assembly of a destructive device and in furtherance of conducting an attack in support of ISIS. In or around June 2019, Alowemer purchased several items, including nails and acetone (nail polish remover) with the belief that they were necessary to assemble a destructive device and with the intention they be used to construct the explosives that would be detonated in the vicinity of the church. The FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force members who were directly involved in this investigation include: FBI, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), IRS – Criminal Investigation, U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Pennsylvania State Police, Allegheny County Police Department, Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, Allegheny County Port Authority Police, Allegheny County Probation, University of Pittsburgh Police Department and UPMC Police Security.

[CA] Man Accused Of Manufacturing Guns From Wildomar Home

The [Patch](#) [9/18/2021 5:49 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a felon accused of possessing equipment commonly used to make counterfeit money and manufacturing firearms out of a Wildomar home was arrested and remained behind bars in lieu of \$55,000 bail Saturday. Patrick Kirk, 30, was taken into custody after deputies served a search warrant Friday afternoon at a home in the 21400 block of Apricot Lane, according to the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department. Sheriff’s officials said among the items deputies seized from the residence were body armor and an illegal rifle. Kirk was booked into the Cois Byrd Detention Center on suspicion of various gun crimes, including manufacturing an assault weapon.

Coast Guard

[FL] A group of more than 10 rafters arrive in Miami Beach and fled when they touched the mainland

[Univision](#) [9/19/2021 6:08 PM, Staff, 366K] reports a boat with about 12 rafters washed ashore from Miami Beach this Saturday night. A witness recorded with his cell phone the moment when the boat approached the shore, at the level of 24th street with Collins. helicopter was flying over the boat when the migrants made landfall and took off running. There is no information on the arrest of any of them. The Coast Guard clarified that “they work to prevent, deter and intercept illegal migration,” however Cuban immigrants and rafters who require protection against persecution or torture are not repatriated when requesting the credible fear interview. “Migrants intercepted at sea are detained by the Coast Guard and are provided with food, water, and shelter, while their disposition is decided in coordination with other federal agencies,” the Coast Guard explained in a statement. “This is a longstanding US government policy. All intercepted immigrants have

an opportunity to request and receive protection against persecution or torture, “says the Coast Guard.

National Security News

U.N. General Assembly Expected to Address Climate Change, Covid-19

The [Wall Street Journal](#) [9/19/2021 5:30 AM, William Mauldin] reports world leaders gathering this week for an annual United Nations meeting will confront persisting global problems such as Covid-19 and climate change, while grappling with new tensions and conflicts dividing U.N. members. Diplomats and leaders attending the U.N. General Assembly in New York will also contend with the return to power of the Taliban and the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, as well as the challenge posed by Iran under a new, hard-line president, Ebrahim Raisi. President Biden is scheduled to address the General Assembly for the first time as president on Tuesday, planning to appear in person after last year’s virtual gathering. Under pressure from New York City, the U.N. is requiring that participants be vaccinated, but will rely on the honor system, a U.N. spokeswoman said. Diplomats arriving in the U.S. must submit a negative test for Covid-19, said Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. U.S. officials have asked countries to avoid bringing large delegations. Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, who had the coronavirus but has said he isn’t vaccinated, is scheduled to speak Tuesday, before other leaders. China’s Xi Jinping and Russia’s Vladimir Putin aren’t expected to attend the gathering or address it directly, leaving the job to subordinates. Mr. Raisi is scheduled to speak later than Mr. Biden on Tuesday. In his address, Mr. Biden is expected to address the pandemic and climate change while pressing other governments—including the new Taliban regime and China—on rights issues. Mr. Biden will host a virtual summit Friday of the leaders of Australia, India, Japan and the U.S.—an informal alliance known as the Quad—as he prepares for his own global summit of democracies later this year. As the U.N. gathering approached, some diplomats worried that a focus on governance and rights could complicate ties with authoritarian countries that share some U.S. interests. Iran’s foreign ministry spokesman said on Sunday that Tehran remained open to a meeting in New York and that its foreign minister would in any case hold bilateral talks with his counterparts from the nuclear-deal talks. Iran has so far this year refused direct talks with the U.S. The [AP](#) [9/19/2021 2:07 PM, Edith M. Lederer] reports U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has pointed to many other signs of a more chaotic, insecure and dangerous world: rising poverty and hunger; technology’s advances “without guard rails” like lethal autonomous weapons; the risks of climate breakdown and nuclear war; and growing inequality, discrimination and injustice bringing people into the streets to protest “while conspiracy theories and lies fuel deep divisions within societies.” The U.N. chief keeps repeating that the world is at “a pivotal moment” and must shift gears to “a greener and safer world.” To do that, leaders need to give multilateralism “teeth,” starting with joint action to reverse the global failure to tackle COVID-19 in 2020 and to ensure that 70% of the world’s population is vaccinated in the first half of 2022. But as is often true with the United Nations, it remains to be seen whether the high-level meetings, which start Monday and end Sept. 27, make actual progress.

[Cuba] Biden administration has made little progress in closing Guantanamo Bay prison

[CNN](#) [9/19/2021 8:01 AM, Ellie Kaufman, 4876K] reports President Joe Biden has said he wants to close the Guantanamo Bay detention facility, where 39 detainees still reside, by the end of his term, but his administration is yet to make much progress towards meeting

that goal. The Biden administration first announced it intended to close the facility during a White House press briefing in February 2021. When asked by a reporter if the prison would be closed by the time Biden leaves office, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said, "that's certainly our goal and our intention." But months into Biden's term, 39 detainees remain housed at the prison in Cuba. 10 detainees have been cleared by the Guantanamo Periodic Review Board system and are eligible for release, but they have not been transferred to a different country and out of the prison yet. Aside from the 10 already eligible for release, 17 detainees are eligible for periodic review board hearings, two detainees have been convicted and ten are in the office of military commission process, meaning they are still in the pretrial process in the military court system created for law of war offenses, and they have yet to be proven guilty or innocent.

[France] France's Macron to talk to Biden amid crisis over submarines

The [AP](#) [9/19/2021 12:08 PM, Elaine Ganley] reports French President Emmanuel Macron will speak in the coming days with President Joe Biden in their first contact since a major diplomatic crisis erupted between France and the United States over a submarine deal with Australia, an official said Sunday. The phone call is at the request of Biden, government spokesman Gabriel Attal said, adding that there was "shock" and "anger" at first in France over news of the deal. But now it's time to try to move forward, he said. What the French now call a "grave crisis" erupted over the sudden, surprise end to a 2016 contract worth at least \$66 billion between France and Australia to build 12 conventional diesel-electric submarines. Instead, Australia signed on with the United States and Britain for eight nuclear-powered submarines. France insists it was not informed of the deal in advance. France recalled its ambassadors from the United States and Australia in a sign of the seriousness of the crisis. "What's at play in this affair, this crisis ... are strategic issues before being commercial issues," Attal said in an interview on BFMTV. "The question is ... the forces present, the balance, in the Indo-Pacific where part of our future is at play, and our relations with China." Macron will be seeking explanations from Biden about what led to a "major rupture in confidence," the spokesman added. "There was a moment of shock, of anger ... Now, we must advance."

[France] France cancels defence meeting with UK over submarine row, sources say

[Reuters](#) [9/19/2021 6:42 PM, John Irish and Tim Hether, 5304K] reports France has cancelled a meeting between Armed Forces Minister Florence Parly and her British counterpart planned for this week after Australia scrapped a submarine order with Paris in favour of a deal with Washington and London, two sources familiar with the matter said. Parly personally took the decision to drop the bilateral meeting with British Defence Secretary Ben Wallace, the sources said. The French defence ministry could not be immediately reached. The British defence ministry declined comment. The sources confirmed an earlier report in the Guardian newspaper that the meeting had been cancelled. The scrapping of the multi-billion-dollar submarine contract, struck in 2016, has triggered a diplomatic crisis, with Paris recalling its ambassadors from Washington and Canberra. France claims not to have been consulted by its allies, while Australia says it had made clear to Paris for months its concerns over the contract.

[Australia] Australian prime minister: No regrets over submarine deal with US, UK

[The Hill](#) [9/19/2021 1:26 PM, Monique Beals, 1776K] reports Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Sunday that he stands by his decision to move forward with a new trilateral security deal with the U.K. and U.S. and forgo another deal made with France in

2016. "I don't regret the decision to put Australia's national interest first," Morrison said, according to Reuters. The new deal will allow Australia to build at least eight nuclear-powered submarines with technology from the U.S. and the U.K., a move Morrison said will better serve Canberra against new threats in the Indo-Pacific, Reuters noted. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on Saturday, however, criticized the "duplicity, disdain and lies" surrounding Australia's decision to partner with the U.K. and U.S., according to The Associated Press.

[North Korea] N.Korea warns U.S. risks 'dangerous nuclear arms race' over Australia subs

Reuters [9/20/2021 3:18 AM, Hyonhee Shin, 5304K] reports North Korea warned on Monday that the United States risked a dangerous nuclear arms race by providing submarine technology to Australia, criticising its "double standards" and vowing counter-measures. Last week, the United States clinched a new trilateral security partnership involving Britain to provide technological aid to Australia to build at least eight nuclear-powered submarines. North Korea joined China in decrying the U.S. decision as an "irresponsible one" that destroys regional peace and stability and global non-proliferation efforts. "These are extremely undesirable and dangerous acts which will upset the strategic balance in the Asia-Pacific region and trigger off a chain of nuclear arms race," the North's foreign ministry said in a comment carried by the official KCNA news agency. The North criticised Washington's "double-dealing attitude," singling out White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki's remarks that it does not seek conflict with China but the decision was to shore up regional security. Her comment "amounts to a stand that any country can spread nuclear technology if it is in its interests, and this shows that the U.S. is the chief culprit toppling the international nuclear non-proliferation system," the ministry said.

Reported similarly:

Washington Post [9/20/2021 2:31 AM, Rachel Pannett, 11773K]

Bloomberg [9/19/2021 8:39 PM, Youkyung Lee, 6400K]

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DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

By TechMIS

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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.

TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Saturday, September 25, 2021 8:00 AM ET

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All migrants have been cleared from encampment in Del Rio, Tex., homeland security secretary says

The [Washington Post](#) [9/24/2021 4:03 PM, Felicia Sonmez, 11773K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas announced Friday that all migrants have been cleared from the encampment in Del Rio, Tex. Mayorkas made the announcement at the White House amid widespread criticism of the Biden administration for its handling of the migrants, most of them Haitians, at the U.S.-Mexico border. Earlier in the day, President Biden decried their treatment and took responsibility for the handling of the migrants. "Less than one week ago, there were approximately 15,000 migrants in Del Rio, Texas, the great majority of whom were Haitian nationals," Mayorkas told reporters Friday. "This was the result of an unprecedented movement of a very large number of people traveling to a single point of the border within a matter of a few days. ... As of this morning, there are no longer any migrants in the camp underneath the Del Rio International Bridge." "In the midst of meeting these challenges, we — our entire nation — saw horrifying images that do not reflect who we are, who we aspire to be, or the integrity and values of our truly heroic personnel in the Department of Homeland Security," Mayorkas said Friday. He added: "The investigation into what occurred has not yet concluded. We know that those images painfully conjured up the worst elements of our nation's ongoing battle against systemic racism." Mayorkas said that about 2,000 migrants were expelled to Haiti on a total of 17 flights organized by the Department of Homeland Security. Another 8,000 migrants "decided to return to Mexico voluntarily," Mayorkas said. The remaining 5,000 are being processed by the Department of Homeland Security "to determine whether they will be expelled or placed in immigration removal proceedings," he added. Mayorkas pledged to make public the results of the investigation into the actions of the Border Patrol officers and said the proceedings "will be compelled by the facts that are adduced and nothing less." [Roll Call](#) [9/24/2021 5:22 PM, Suzanne Monyak, 119K] reports that approximately 12,400 [migrants] have been allowed to pursue immigration cases from within the U.S., Mayorkas said — a data point congressional Republicans requested during a pair of hearings earlier this week. Reporters pressed Mayorkas on how his comments calling to reserve judgement until the probe's conclusion could be in tension with remarks President Joe Biden made earlier Friday, when the president pledged "there will be consequences" for the agents' actions. "It was horrible what — to see, as you saw — to see people treated like they did: horses nearly running them over and people being strapped. It's outrageous," Biden said. "I promise you, those people will pay. They will be — an investigation is underway now, and there will be consequences." Mayorkas said that Biden "was echoing the sentiments of the American public in response to the images" and spoke to "the horror that he observed from seeing the images, and what they suggest." "That investigation will have integrity, I can assure you of that," he said.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/24/2021 4:31 PM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K]

[NPR](#) [9/24/2021 4:01 PM, Bill Chappell]

[AP](#) [9/24/2021 4:46 PM, María Verza and Juan Lozano]

[Reuters](#) [9/24/2021 2:05 AM, Adrees Latif, Kristina Cooke, 5304K]

Mayorkas defends Biden policies on migrants in tense White House briefing

[The Hill](#) [9/24/2021 4:13 PM, Brett Samuels and Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas at a tense White House briefing on Friday defended the Biden administration's policies on immigration as moral, arguing its deportations of Haitians and others found to have illegally crossed the border are neither immoral nor unethical. "We do not conduct ourselves in an immoral way," Mayorkas said when asked about the morality of using a Trump-era law known as Title 42 to return Haitians to a nation recovering from an earthquake and plagued by political instability. "We do not conduct ourselves in an unethical way. In fact, we are restoring people by reason of the immorality of the past administration. We are reuniting families that were separated," he said. Mayorkas has frequently defended the need for Title 42 on a public health basis, but gave a new caveat Friday. "Over 600,000 Americans have died. More than 40 U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel have died. Many migrants have gotten sick," he said. "We are doing this out of a public health need. It is not an immigration policy. It is not an immigration policy that we would embrace." "Let me explain something, the reality of the situation. Because we're dealing with a great number of individuals who are encountered at the border in a congregate setting and placed in customs and border protection, border patrol stations. And that can cause the significant spread of a pandemic. And it is in light of the operational realities that the Centers for Disease Control made a determination in its public health expertise that Title 42 authority must be exercised," Mayorkas said. Mayorkas returned to the White House briefing room as reporters spent the week pressing for details on the surge of Haitian migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border. Mayorkas offered updates on the handling of those migrants, thousands of whom have been cleared out of a camp under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas. But he also offered broader defenses of the administration's immigration policies, insisting officials had placed an emphasis on treating migrants in a humane way and restoring credibility after four years of the Trump administration's efforts to restrict immigration. Mayorkas, who pointed out he is also an immigrant, argued asylum claims and Title 42 authority has applied equally to migrants from all countries whether they are fleeing violence in Central America, Haiti or elsewhere. "Title 42 authority has been applied irrespective of the country or origin, irrespective of the race of the individual, irrespective of other criteria that don't belong in our adjudicative process," Mayorkas said. Mayorkas, who spent much of the week condemning the actions of those agents, did so again Friday but reserved judgment on their fate until the completion of an ongoing investigation. "The investigation into what occurred has not yet concluded," Mayorkas said. "We know those images painfully conjured up the worst images of our nation's painful battle against systemic racism."

Mayorkas says Haitian migrants under Del Rio bridge were not tested for COVID-19

[FOX News](#) [9/24/2021 6:23 PM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Friday told reporters that the nearly 15,000 migrants who were camped out under the Del Rio bridge in squalid conditions last week were not tested for COVID-19, and he does not know if anyone got sick with the contagious virus while there.

Mayorkas was asked about the Biden administration's use of Title 42 public health protections that are deployed to quickly expel migrants who have come to the border, using the COVID-19 pandemic as a rationale. Mayorkas stressed that it was a public health measure to protect the population and the migrants themselves and not an immigration measure. He said that the U.S. had surged 150 medical personnel to deal with the health issues the migrants may have had and that medical facilities were set up in the area. Mayorkas said that up to 30,000 people were encountered in Del Rio since Sept. 9 and that as many as 15,000 were concentrated there at one time. Approximately 12,400 individuals are expected to have their cases heard by an immigration judge to decide whether they will be allowed to remain in the U.S. Another 8,000 have chosen to return to Mexico, while an estimated 5,000 migrants are being processed by DHS, which will determine whether they will be deported or placed in an immigration processing center, Mayorkas said. Only 2,000 have been deported.

Biden Condemns Border Patrol Treatment of Haitian Migrants as Expulsions Continue

The New York Times [9/24/2021 10:53 AM, Katie Rogers Michael D. Shear, 24635K] reports that President Biden vowed Friday that Border Patrol agents who mistreated Haitian migrants crossing the Rio Grande "will pay" after an investigation, calling the scene at the border "horrible to see" in his first comments on actions by his administration that have drawn severe condemnation from many of his own supporters. "I promise you, those people will pay. There will be an investigation, underway now, and there will be consequences. There will be consequences." The images of agents on horseback chasing, and in some cases using the reins of their horses to strike at running migrants, came as Mr. Biden's administration moved to forcefully round up and deport more than 2,000 of the 15,000 migrants who gathered in a makeshift camp in Del Rio, Texas. Thousands more have been moved to other parts of the country or have been released with orders to appear in court later. Critics have called the aggressive tactics racist and have urged the president to stop flying the Haitians out of the country. In his remarks Friday, Mr. Biden did not address the broader question of how migrants are being dealt with. He condemned the way border agents treated them. "But beyond an embarrassment is dangerous, it's wrong, it sends the wrong message around the world or sends the wrong message at home. It's simply not who we are." The investigation that Mr. Biden mentioned is being carried out by top officials at the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Reuters [9/24/2021 2:51 PM, Staff, 5304K] reports U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said on Friday an investigation of treatment of Haitian migrants will conclude quickly and will be made public. Politico [9/24/2021 3:08 PM, Nick Niedzwiadek, 1707K] reports the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Professional Responsibility began an inquiry into the episode of agents menacing Haitians to determine possible disciplinary action. A video showed asylum-seeking migrants shielding their heads as agents on horseback appeared to brandish their reins like whips. Mayorkas said that all migrants have been cleared from a squalid camp under a bridge in Del Rio. The department's set up climate-controlled tents to house them instead, he said, and is providing for "basic needs" including water, food and clothing. "The department does not tolerate any mistreatment of any migrant," he said. The investigation of the behavior of the horseback agents is continuing, he said. The Los Angeles Times [9/24/2021 6:35 PM, Cindy Carcamo, Andrea Castillo, Molly Hennessy-Fiske, 3710K] reports that among the Republican legislators who criticized the Biden administration's response to the migrants in Del Rio was Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio), ranking member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

During a hearing Tuesday, Portman took Homeland Security Department Secretary Mayorkas to task for increasingly allowing migrant families with children to stay in the country and pursue asylum as Mexico has accepted fewer expulsions.

Reported similarly:

Los Angeles Times [9/24/2021 3:11 PM, Chris Megerian and Erin B. Logan, 3710K]

Bloomberg [9/24/2021 10:28 AM, Justin Sink, 6400K]

The Hill [9/24/2021 4:20 PM, Morgan Chalfant, 1776K]

Photographer says Border Patrol agents didn't whip Haitian migrants

The Washington Times [9/24/2021 10:40 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports a photographer who took photos of mounted Border Patrol agents in a tense encounter with Haitian migrants earlier this week says he didn't see any whipping, puncturing the outrage that the White House and immigrant-rights activists have aimed at the agents. Paul Ratje told KTSM, an El Paso, Texas, television station, that he saw the migrants running and dodging around the horses that agents were riding, and the agents were swinging their reins but weren't targeting the migrants. "He was swinging it, but I didn't see him actually whip someone with it," the photographer told the station. "That's something that can be misconstrued when you're looking at it." His explanation tracks with what Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz, who has ridden horse patrol himself before, told reporters in Texas on Monday. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, who was with Chief Ortiz at the time, agreed — but has since changed his tone, vehemently denouncing the images in an appearance before Congress on Wednesday. He said those involved from the Border Patrol have been sidelined and are not allowed to do law enforcement duties while an investigation is ongoing. Mr. Mayorkas deployed additional agents to the area to try to contain the camp and prevent new arrivals, leading to the horseback encounters. FOX News [9/24/2021 1:41 PM, David Rutz, 9251K] reports that on Friday, President Joe Biden said the agents in the photos would "pay" for their conduct. Vice President Kamala Harris said this week she was "deeply troubled" by it, and Psaki said the images were "horrific." The Biden administration has halted using horses in Del Rio in response to the outrage. Border Patrol agents who spoke to Fox New Digital this week were angered by the pile-on from the administration, calling it an effort to deflect from their maligned handling of illegal immigration.

Organizations urge restoring due process at the border for Haitians seeking asylum

Univision [9/24/2021 11:53 AM, Jorge Cancino, 366K] reports that "what we are seeing at the border against migrants, especially men, women and children of Haitian descent, is horrible, deplorable, and yet preventable," says Angélica Salas, executive director of the Coalition for Immigrant Rights. The activist's statement summarizes the opinion of dozens of organizations that defend the rights of immigrants after knowing images of Border Patrol agents mounted on horseback charging a group of Haitians crossing a stretch of the Rio Grande in the Del Río sector and they spent the night in a camp under the international bridge. Non-citizens returned from the Mexican side with food for themselves and their families, and continue to wait for an opportunity to request asylum in the United States, a legal resource available, but limited by the severe measures adopted by the pandemic, including the Program for the Protection of the Migrant, Title 42 of the Centers for Disease Control and expedited deportations. The loss of confidence, however, is not only centralized in the treatment that federal agents gave to immigrants, but in the breaking of a campaign promise of President Joe Biden, who assured that his government would treat them with

dignity and humane treatment. And that due process of immigration would be respected. There were between 8,000 and 10,000 people in the camp, according to official projections, but pro-immigrant organizations say the number of refugees was close to 15,000. Despite the fact that the government, through the White House spokeswoman, Jen Psaki, and the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Alejandro Mayorkas, condemned the actions of the Border Patrol and emphasized that this was not the Administration's policy, the damage is done and the consequences continue to be generated.

Justice Department appoints David Neal as director of the nation's immigration courts

CNN [9/24/2021 1:50 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 4876K] reports Attorney General Merrick Garland has announced the appointment of David Neal to lead the Executive Office for Immigration Review, which oversees the nation's immigration courts. "The Justice Department's commitment to a fair and efficient immigration court system, governed by due process and the rule of law, is exemplified by recent policy changes and our pursuit of significant additional resources," Garland said in a statement. "David Neal brings invaluable experience that will help further EOIR's mission."

NY's Letitia James joins group of 17 AGs in letter to Biden decrying lack of 'humanity' toward Haitians

FOX News [9/24/2021 5:36 PM, Andrew Mark Miller, 9251K] reports that New York Attorney General Letitia James joined a group of 17 attorneys general across the country in writing a letter to President Joe Biden expressing concern over the treatment of Haitian nationals attempting to illegally cross the southern border. "I have seen the devastating and disturbing photos of border patrol officers on horseback using whips to corral Haitian refugees seeking asylum, and it's clear that they have not been shown the humanity and concern they are owed," James, a Democrat, said in a statement Friday. "We are a nation built by immigrants, and we cannot be callous and cruel towards individuals fleeing natural disaster, political instability, extreme poverty, and violence in their home country," James added. "I stand with my fellow attorneys general in urging the Biden Administration to end the mistreatment of Haitians at the border and demonstrate the morality and compassion that they deserve." Several prominent Democrats and liberal groups across the country have expressed outrage over photographs of horseback Border Patrol agents rounding up fleeing illegal immigrants from Haiti at the southern border and claimed that the agents were "Whipping" the migrants. "This is beyond repulsive," MSNBC anchor Joy Reid tweeted in response to the viral images. President Biden pledged that the agents responsible would "Pay" for their actions, and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Friday that those involved were contributing to "Systemic racism." Border Patrol officials and the photographer who took the picture have firmly rejected the characterization that agents were "Whipping" the migrants.

Democrats pressure Biden to welcome Afghan refugees

Roll Call [9/24/2021 5:20 PM, Mark Satter, 119K] reports that a group of 16 Democratic lawmakers, led by Rep. Ruben Gallego of Arizona, wants President Joe Biden to create an Afghan Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council that would enlist Afghans already in the United States in assisting federal agencies in resettling their compatriots. In a letter sent to the White House Friday, the lawmakers said that the evacuation of Afghans to the United States was just the first step toward ensuring that the refugees, some of whom worked with

the U.S. military during two decades of war in Afghanistan, are assimilated into American society. "We want to show that Afghans and experts who were on the ground during the withdrawal — not just in Afghanistan but also in the U.S. — have a seat at the table when these Afghans are resettled here," Gallego, a Marine Corps combat veteran who served in Iraq, said. Some 50,000 Afghans are expected to be admitted to the U.S. following the collapse of the Afghanistan government and the chaotic American withdrawal from Kabul last month that left behind U.S. citizens and Afghan allies and exposed U.S. servicemembers and Afghans to a terrorist bombing that killed 13 Americans and scores of Afghans. Tens of thousands of Afghans have already arrived in the U.S., Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told reporters on Sept. 3. Gallego said that the question now is of a "culturally competent resettlement."

[TX] Texas AG moves to force implementation of 'remain in Mexico' policy

Reuters [9/24/2021 2:02 PM, Daniel Wiessner, 5304K] reports that Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's office has told a federal judge that the Biden administration is failing to make efforts to comply with a ruling that revived a Trump-era policy requiring individuals who entered the U.S. illegally to be sent back to Mexico to await legal proceedings. The AG in a filing in Amarillo, Texas, federal court on Thursday said the U.S. Department of Homeland Security should follow the Trump administration's playbook and reimplement the so-called "remain in Mexico" policy in phases instead of waiting to overcome various procedural hurdles. U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk last month in a lawsuit by Texas and Missouri said the Biden administration had unlawfully eliminated the program, known as the Migrant Protection Protocols, without fully considering its benefits. The administration has appealed the decision to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. DHS in subsequent court filings said it cannot revive the MPP until it reaches agreements with Mexico and Central American countries and enters into contracts to build infrastructure for immigration hearings at the border. But Paxton's office in moving to enforce the judge's order on Thursday said those obstacles to fully implementing the MPP should not stop DHS from starting the process. "Defendants could right now be refusing entry to non-Mexican aliens who are claiming asylum from their non-Mexican governments. They aren't," the AG said. "They could be issuing notices of asylum hearings to those claimants while they rebuild the facilities where those proceedings occur. They aren't." DHS and the Department of Justice, which represents the agency, did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The case is *Texas v. Biden*, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, No. 2:21-cv-0067.

[TX] Houston Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee demands Biden halt mass deportations of Haitians

The Houston Chronicle [9/24/2021 1:00 AM, Jeremy Wallace, 183K] reports that U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee is raising the pressure on President Joe Biden and his administration to stop the mass deportations of Haitian migrants who have streamed into the Texas border town of Del Rio. "Mass deportation is not the answer," the *Houston Democrat* said. "A humanitarian response is what Haitian Migrants need. Now." Jackson Lee said she'll be meeting with Haitian migrants in Del Rio on Sunday to see conditions there. Her comments come as the Biden administration continues to face criticism from Republicans for not being more forceful in keeping migrants from crossing into the United States. Biden is also being blasted by Democrats and progressives, including Jackson Lee, over his use of a Trump-era public health order to immediately expel tens of thousands of migrants each month due to coronavirus concerns. Jackson Lee, who has frequently visited Haiti during her 27 years

in Congress, said she is worried that many of the Haitians are not getting a chance to make their case for asylum in the United States. "Haitians have witnessed the assassination of their president and another debilitating earthquake that has affected over 800,000 people and killed thousands," she said. "Many of the individuals that have fled to the U.S. southern border are attempting to escape political oppression, persecution, instability and state failure." Jackson Lee earlier this week made a similar point in an exchange with U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas during a committee hearing in Washington. Mayorkas, who visited Del Rio on Monday, insisted his agency is investigating the treatment of migrants and will not tolerate any abuse by agents.

[NM] FBI investigating alleged assault on Fort Bliss soldier at Afghan refugee camp

The Hill [9/24/2021 8:10 PM, Jordan Williams, 1776K] reports the FBI is investigating an alleged assault on a female service member at an Afghan refugee camp in New Mexico. In a statement to The Hill on Friday, the 1st Armored Division at Fort Bliss, Texas, said that a female service member reported being assaulted by "a small group of male evacuees" while at the Doña Ana Complex in New Mexico on Sunday. "We take the allegation seriously and appropriately referred the matter to the Federal Bureau of Investigation," the statement said. "The safety and well-being of our service members, as well as all of those on our installations, is paramount. We immediately provided appropriate care, counseling and support to the service member." The FBI confirmed to The Hill that its El Paso office is investigating the incident. ABC News [9/24/2021 9:28 PM, Mark Osborne and Benjamin Siu, 37K] reports the woman, who was helping to support the evacuees brought from Afghanistan to the United States in the wake of the Taliban reclaiming the country, reported she was assaulted by a small group at the Doña Ana Complex on Sept. 19, according to Lt. Col. Allie M. Payne, the director of public affairs for Fort Bliss.

Reported similarly:

CBS News [9/24/2021 10:47 PM, Eleanor Watson, 2612K]

FOX News [9/24/2021 5:57 PM, Andrew Mark Miller, 9251K]

[Brazil] U.N. migration body asks Brazil to receive Haitians on U.S.-Mexico border - sources

Reuters [9/24/2021 10:25 AM, Gabriel Stargardter and Lisandra Paraguassu 5304K] reports that the International Organization for Migration has formally asked Brazil to receive some Haitian migrants camped along the U.S.-Mexico border hoping to enter the United States, according to two sources with knowledge of the request. The petition from the IOM, a United Nations agency, comes as U.S. President Joe Biden faces mounting pressure to resolve yet another migration dilemma. Crossings at the U.S.-Mexico border have jumped to their highest levels in 20 years in recent months, sparking political headaches and logistical obstacles for the United States and Mexico. Around 15,000 mostly Haitians were camped just north of the Rio Grande river this month as they attempted to enter the United States, although the numbers have since fallen dramatically. Washington has begun flying some back to Haiti, while Mexico has urged others to give up their U.S. dreams and seek asylum in the south of the country. The IOM asked that Brazil receive Haitians who have a Brazilian child, or who have passed through Brazil before entering Mexico on their journey north, the two sources said. They said the first request was more likely to be approved. One of the sources said the second one would require more analysis. Without mentioning the IOM request, Brazil's foreign ministry said in a statement that "The topic was discussed in conversations between authorities from different countries and is being analyzed in light of

current legislation." The IOM, via its Mexico office, said it has "a voluntary return program, assisting migrants of various nationalities, and the implementation of this program requires an agreement among the countries involved." It gave no further details.

[Afghanistan] Situation becoming 'dire' at US airbase in Germany housing approximately 2,000 pregnant Afghan refugees

CNN [9/24/2021 4:31 PM, Oren Liebermann and Ellie Kaufman, 4876K] reports that the task of accommodating 10,000 Afghan refugees, including approximately 2,000 pregnant women, is putting facilities at Ramstein airbase in Germany under tremendous strain as nighttime temperatures drop toward freezing and what was meant to be a 10-day temporary stay is stretching into weeks, with one US source familiar with the situation describing it as becoming "dire." Already 22 babies have been born to Afghan mothers at Ramstein, and that number will rise very soon with roughly two thirds of the 3,000 women being housed there pregnant, requiring the time and effort of medical personnel from Ramstein and other bases, two US sources familiar with the situation at the base told CNN. Even though it's one of the largest US bases in Europe, Ramstein was never designed to handle such a large transient population especially when there are better equipped and larger facilities in the US. One of the sources called the Afghans at Ramstein "the forgotten 10," as the focus has shifted away from the almost 10,000 who remain stuck in limbo in Germany towards some 53,000 Afghan evacuees already housed at eight military bases across the US. Ramstein called it a "temporary humanitarian city" on social media, built to handle the surge of Afghan evacuees fleeing Kabul. The Afghan families, some with as many as 20 men, women, and children, were only supposed to be at the base for 10 days for screening and processing under an agreement with Germany, the commander of European Command, Gen. Tod Wolters, said on September 1. Now the remaining Afghans have been in Germany for several weeks and are set to stay longer after a confirmed case of measles among the Afghan evacuee population in the US led the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to pause the flights for 21 days. The interruption is scheduled to last until October 9, but the challenges of housing such a large population on an overseas military base have grown exponentially, the sources said.

[Afghanistan] Cruz, GOP senators press Biden on Afghan 'child brides' among refugees

FOX News [9/24/2021 3:34 PM, Houston Keene, 9251K] reports Republican Senator Ted Cruz of Texas led a letter with three of his GOP Senate colleagues pressing President Biden on "child brides" reportedly found among Afghan refugees. Cruz, alongside fellow Republican senators Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, Tom Cotton of Arkansas and Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, demanded answers from the president on the reports that "child brides" had evacuated from Afghanistan to the U.S. "We write regarding credible reports that your administration's withdrawal from Afghanistan facilitated the transport and trafficking of child brides and other Afghan girls subject to sexual abuse by Afghan men," the senators began the letter, exclusively obtained by Fox News. Citing multiple news reports on the matter, the senators pointed out that Secretary of State Antony Blinken told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "there have been cases where administration officials have witnessed and separated over concerns related to such abuse and trafficking." Additionally, the senators asked Biden if the Department of Homeland Security would "commit" to deporting individuals with "smuggling," "marriage fraud" and "child abuse and trafficking" violations.

[Afghanistan] US lawful permanent resident trapped in Afghanistan with family: 'I don't believe I'm getting out safe'

FOX News [9/24/2021 2:52 PM, Brooke Singman, 9251K] reports a former combat interpreter with the U.S. military in Afghanistan, also a permanent resident of the United States, is trapped in the Taliban-controlled country after traveling to Kabul in July to attempt to evacuate his family amid the Biden administration's withdrawal of military assets from the region. Zekria, 31, who has lived in Arizona since 2015 and arrived in Kabul on July 17 to help his family to safety, told Fox News the Biden administration did not have a "clear evacuation plan." Fox News is withholding his last name. "There are a lot of people still left behind. My friends, I know them, they are stuck here. Four of them are American citizens. Two from Arizona and two from California," Zekria said, adding they've been experiencing the same struggle to leave the country. Fox News has not been able to contact the Americans he referenced. Zekria told Fox News he's a permanent resident of the United States with a green card. He shared documents with Fox News, as well as dozens of emails to the State Department and other U.S. embassies efforting an exit from Afghanistan, but said he has not received any response, except for one email with phone numbers for emergency issues from the U.S. Embassy in Doha. Zekria told Fox News he tried to call the State Department but was told its staffers "only help citizens – not green card holders." Zekria said he has filled out repatriation forms and other necessary documents, as instructed, nearly 40 times.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Unaccompanied minors are among the thousands evacuated from Afghanistan

Public Radio International [9/24/2021 4:30 PM, Shirin Jaafari, 79K] reports that there were hugs, smiles and a tight embrace at Toronto airport earlier this month as a 3-year-old Afghan boy reunited with his father. The boy, who was not named because he is a minor, was separated from his family on Aug. 26, when there was a suicide attack at the Kabul airport in Afghanistan. He was put on a plane out of the country and spent two weeks at an orphanage in Qatar, according to Qatari and Canadian media reports. Officials with the UN as well as the Qatari government helped reach his family in Canada, and he was able to reunite with them. In the chaos of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the mass evacuation from Kabul, a number of unaccompanied minors ended up on flights out of the country. Now comes the difficult task of reuniting them with their families or, for those who don't have any relatives, helping them find new homes. There are at least 300 Afghan children who were separated from their families during the evacuation, according to Wendy Young, president of Kids in Need of Defense, an organization that provides support for unaccompanied minors. "We know of children whose parents were killed in the process, and we know of children who were separated and placed on a different flight than their parent or their guardian and the child is in one country and the parents in another." "We know of children whose parents were killed in the process, and we know of children who were separated and placed on a different flight than their parent or their guardian and the child is in one country and the parents in another," she said.

[OK] First Afghan Refugees Arrive In Oklahoma (Public Radio Tulsa)

Public Radio Tulsa [9/24/2021 8:46 AM, Chris Polansky, 10K] reports that the first Afghan refugees arrived in Oklahoma this week, touching down in Oklahoma City late Wednesday. "We are exceedingly proud to welcome some new neighbors!" Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the refugee resettlement agency, wrote on social media

following the arrival of the family of seven. "Families from Afghanistan have begun arriving in Oklahoma to start a new life," Archbishop Paul Coakley said in a statement. "We are privileged to have Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City handling all resettlement for the state and acting on our behalf to care for these parents and children. Let us welcome these men and women who worked alongside our troops and show each family what Oklahoma is about." Adam Soltani, executive director of the Oklahoma chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, or CAIR, said the arrival of the first of roughly 1,800 refugees will benefit both new and current residents. "There's always this talk of the 'Oklahoma Standard,' and I think people at times debate whether or not that's something we've lived up to," Soltani said Thursday. "But I see this as an opportunity that we can really establish that this is the Oklahoma Standard. It doesn't matter who you are, where you came from, what your religion is, but we recognize that you need a home and we are ready to provide it to you." Soltani said the family was greeted at the airport by an interfaith welcome committee, who had prepared welcome bags containing items like prayer rugs, hygiene products, clothes and copies of the Quran. The bags also contained handbooks in the refugees' languages advising them of their civil rights and what to do in the instance of any hate-based incidents.

Customs and Border Protection

Border Patrol stunned as Biden goes to war with his own agents over false 'whipping' allegations

FOX News [9/24/2021 1:39 PM, Adam Shaw, Peter Hasson, Bill Melugin, Griff Jenkins, 9251K] reports President Biden on Friday left Border Patrol agents stunned after repeating debunked claims that Del Rio agents whipped or "strapped" Haitian migrants, while promising to make those agents "pay." Biden weighed in on the controversy over images that emerged Sunday of agents on horseback blocking Haitian migrants from entering the U.S. Claims that agents, who were using long reins to control their horses, were using "whips" were quickly debunked by officials and other agents – but activists and elected Democrats have continued to fuel it. The photographer who took the images said Friday he did not see any agents whipping migrants. DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas had pushed back against the narrative alongside Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz, but a day later – after the White House had called the images "horrific" – went on CNN and said the images "troubled me profoundly" before adding that "one cannot weaponize a horse" against migrants. On Friday, amid an ongoing investigation into the agents – who have now been shifted to desk duty – and a day after the Biden administration barred the use of horses in Del Rio, the president tore into those agents. "To see people treated like they did, horses barely running over, people being strapped – it's outrageous," Biden said, making a whipping motion with his hand. "I promise you, those people will pay. There will be an investigation underway now and there will be consequences. There will be consequences." Border Patrol agents were stunned and angered by the comments, which both claimed without evidence that migrants were run over and whipped, and at the same time cast a shadow over the investigation.

Border Patrol confrontation puts spotlight on use of police mounted units

ABC News [9/24/2021 6:00 AM, Ivan Pereira, 37K] Video: HERE reports the images of Border Patrol agents on horseback confronting Haitian migrants in Del Rio, Texas has put scrutiny on the appropriate use of mounted units by law enforcement agencies. White House press secretary Jen Psaki called the images and videos "horrific" and said that

President Biden felt the same although adding that exactly what happened is unclear and still under investigation. Vice President Kamala Harris called the scene "horrible" and said, "human beings should never be treated that way." Lawmakers from the Congressional Black and Hispanic caucuses expressed their outrage, including Democrat Maxine Waters, of California, who said "what we witnessed was worse than what we witnessed in slavery." The incident comes two years after footage surfaced showing two Galveston, Texas police officers leading a Black man down the street by a rope, sparking outrage. The chief of that department apologized for the incident and said the officers used "poor judgment."

From Haiti to Texas: How migrants arrived to Del Rio and why the wall didn't stop them

USA Today [9/24/2021 9:13 PM, Javier Zarracina and Jim Sergent, 6282K] reports the arrival in recent days of 15,000 Haitian immigrants at the U.S.-Mexico border near Del Rio, Texas, has been a decade in the making. But it's these last three weeks that puzzled some: How were the migrants able to breach the U.S. border and amass so quickly? Just a third of the 2,000-mile border with Mexico has some kind of barrier, and about half of those barriers are designed only to stop vehicles. People on foot can easily circumvent them. It's not known what ultimately brought the refugees to the encampment under a bridge in Del Rio this month, but it's likely trudging across the Rio Grande and along the river's banks was not the most taxing part of their 11-year odyssey. Although the government began using Title 42 to quickly return migrants to Mexico or their country of origin during the pandemic, it is lawful to claim asylum at or between a port of entry. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Friday that the majority of the migrants have returned to Mexico voluntarily.

DHS: CBP Inappropriately Monitored US Citizens During 2018 Migrant Caravan

Telemundo 20 [9/24/2021 8:24 AM, Staff, 20K] reports that a new report from the Department of Homeland Security revealed that Customs and Border Protection did not follow agency policies during the arrival of the migrant caravan to Tijuana in late 2018. According to the 47 pages of the DHS document, CBP agents used inappropriate tactics to inspect and question dozens of people then "involved" with the migrant caravan. Alex Mensing was part of the long list of more than 50 individuals who were categorized in 2018 by the US government as organizers or instigators in relation to the migrant caravan. "I was sent to secondary inspection more than 40 times, almost in a row. I was interrogated several times for several hours," Mensing said. At that time, he worked for the non-profit organization Pueblo Sin Fronteras as a humanitarian defender, but when trying to support the hundreds of migrants in Tijuana, he assured that he began to receive reprisals from the US government. "It was a bit of mockery, the amount they stopped us, the questions they asked us, they put several people in handcuffs, they took away the phones of several people to see their messages and photos and that is something very invasive and they did not have any of evidence that we were involved in some illegal act," he added. The 47-page investigation by the inspector general of the Department of Homeland Security claimed that CBP inappropriately targeted US citizens and placed "Electronic Alerts" on their passports. It was also discovered that CBP asked the Mexican government to block 14 Americans from entering Mexico, including immigration attorney Nora Phillips.

Customs and Border Protection opens processing facility in Laredo

Univision [9/24/2021 4:27 PM, Staff, 366K] reports that US Customs and Border Protection announced Friday the opening of a processing facility in Laredo, Texas. According to the press release, since April 2020, the US Customs and Border Protection Office has

experienced an increase in the arrival of immigrants “due in part to the worsening economic conditions caused by the covid-19 pandemic and the natural disasters that affect the area.” “The intent of the facility is to provide a suitable facility for officers to house and process single adults, units of family members, and unaccompanied non-citizen children arriving at the southwestern border,” the statement read. In addition, it was reported that this facility will have more accommodations and is significantly larger than the average detention area of a Border Patrol station. The projected capacity limit for the Laredo facility is 500 and it will increase the station’s capacity. The 100,000-square-foot facility is located on 30 acres on Highway 83, approximately 15 miles south of Laredo, Texas. The temporary facility will provide additional storage and processing capacity for the Laredo Sector Border Patrol. The announcement of the opening of the center comes at a time when thousands of Haitians were grouped under the Del Rio International Bridge, in southern Texas, seeking an opportunity to seek asylum in the United States. As reported, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) evicted and removed the last 50 Haitian immigrants who were crowded in the place. DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas confirmed that the camp was already empty. Mayorkas affirmed that they were expelled under criteria of security related to public health, specifically Title 42, not applying immigration laws. “Many migrants became ill and it is an imperative public health issue” not to accept them in the US.

Rep. Roy slams Dems for ‘stonewall’ of resolution seeking info from DHS on border crisis

FOX News [9/24/2021 10:31 AM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports that Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, is criticizing House Democrats for moves to “Stonewall” a resolution of inquiry that seeks information from the Department of Homeland Security about the ongoing crisis at the southern border. The resolution, submitted earlier this month, requests that the administration, through the president, submit documents and communications related to the administration’s handling of the border, and comes after complaints by Republicans that the Department of Homeland Security has not been responsive to requests for information. “We filed the resolution of inquiry...because we filed and sent letters asking for information over the course of the year and never heard back,” Roy told Fox News in an interview this week. The resolution includes a request for the number of migrants who have illegally entered the U.S., the breakdown of migrants, the number of migrants removed, the number of Customs and Border Protection agents re-assigned to migrant shelters and information related to how many migrants have tested positive for COVID-19 and were released. “We’re Congress, we fund them and they damn well ought to give us answers,” Roy said. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Congress takes aim at traffickers by blocking imports

The Hill [9/23/2021 6:30 PM, John Cotton Richmond, 1776K] reports Congress stands poised to dramatically change a key legal tool in the fight against human trafficking. Although the name of the law itself focuses on the Uyghur community who are forced to work in Xinjiang, China, it could have global implications. Currently, a 90-year-old law allows Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to issue a Withhold Release Order (WRO) that blocks the importation of goods made by forced laborers abroad. The purpose is to protect American customers from unwittingly purchasing products that enrich traffickers. It is also an attempt to apply pressure through the chain of commercial transactions to discourage, and hopefully, stop traffickers. Over the last five years, CBP has significantly increased the number and scope of WROs, creating new incentives for businesses to ensure their supply chains are free of forced labor. There has been rare bipartisan support for using these

import laws to advance the United States' human rights priorities on the global stage. Presidents Obama, Trump and Biden have all elevated and celebrated their use. The new Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (the Act) will transform the current rules about what goods cannot enter the United States. The Act relieves CBP of the burden of issuing individual WROs against specific companies in Xinjiang, China by creating a presumption of forced labor throughout the region. The Act presumes that any goods from Xinjiang are made by forced laborers and therefore barred from entry. The burden is then shifted to the importers to show that their supply chains are clean. A task made more difficult by a lack of transparency or access to the Xinjiang region.

GOP senators demand ex-Border Patrol chief Rodney Scott testify before Congress

FOX News [9/24/2021 7:46 PM, Jon Brown, 9251K] reports five Republican senators demanded Friday that former U.S. Border Patrol Chief Rodney Scott be allowed to testify before Congress regarding a letter he wrote blistering the Biden administration for the border crisis. Sens. Ron Johnson, R-Wisc., James Lankford, R-Okla., Rand Paul, R-Ky., Josh Hawley, R-Mo., and Rick Scott, R-Fla., urged Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., the chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security, and ranking member Sen. Rob Portman, D-Ohio, to hear from Scott, who retired in June after 30 years in Border Patrol when the Biden administration forced him out. "On Monday, we received a copy of a letter that the former Chief of the U.S. Border Patrol, Rodney Scott, sent to you both as well as Senate Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell," the senators wrote. "This letter, which was dated thirteen days ago, is a scathing first-hand account of this administration's failure to address the crisis at the border." The letter went on to note how Scott alleged in his Sept. 11 missive that the Biden administration's team at the Department of Homeland Security "is laser-focused on expediting the flow of migrants into the U.S. and downplaying the significant vulnerability this creates for terrorists, narcotics smugglers, human traffickers, and even hostile nations to gain access to our homeland." Scott also said he "witnessed a lack of any meaningful effort to secure our borders. Contrary to the current rhetoric, this is not simply another illegal immigration surge. This is a national security threat."

[VT] Court: Vermont pair stopped near border can't be prosecuted

The AP [9/24/2021 4:13 PM, Wilson Ring] reports the state Supreme Court ruled Friday that a Vermont couple cannot be prosecuted in state court for drug violations with evidence seized by a U.S. Border Patrol agent. The court, in a 3-2 decision, said the federal law used by the Border Patrol agent to search the Vermont car after it was stopped during a roving patrol just south of the Canadian border in August 2018 did not comply with the state constitutional guarantee against unreasonable searches. "Evidence obtained in violation of the Vermont Constitution may not be admitted at trial in a state prosecution because such evidence 'eviscerates our most sacred rights, impinges on individual privacy, perverts our judicial process, distorts any notion of fairness, and encourages official misconduct,'" said the majority decision, written by Justice William Cohen, who was citing an earlier case. The decision sends the criminal cases against Brandi-Lena Butterfield and Phillip Walker-Brazie, both of Richford, back to the lower court for reconsideration. Ryan Brissette, a spokesman for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, said Friday the agency was reviewing the decision and would have no comment at this time.

Transportation Security Administration

[PA] Sixth person this month stopped with gun at Pittsburgh airport

Yahoo! News [9/25/2021 12:01 AM, Joe Napsha, 13869K] reports a woman was stopped from taking a handgun aboard a plane at Pittsburgh International Airport on Friday, marking the sixth time this month someone was caught at the airport checkpoint with a weapon, Allegheny County Police said. A 31-year-old woman, who was not identified by police, was stopped by Transportation Security Administration (TSA) at 3:20 p.m. Friday when officers saw a loaded Glock 9 mm handgun in her purse at the airport's main security checkpoint and alerted police. The woman had a valid concealed carry permit and told authorities she inadvertently left the firearm in her bag, police said. The FBI was notified. The passenger was permitted to fly, but her gun was confiscated. County police said they do not anticipate charges will be filed against her. TSA officers also stopped a Homer City man on Thursday from bringing his unloaded .380-caliber handgun onto a flight. When TSA officers spotted the gun in the checkpoint X-ray machine, they informed police who confiscated the weapon and temporarily detained the man for questioning before issuing a court summons. With the two guns that were caught at the airport security checkpoint this week, there have been a total of 24 guns confiscated by authorities this year. There have been six guns caught at the checkpoint this month alone, including on Sept. 7, 8, 10 and 14.

[TX] The number of airplane passengers trying to bring guns through Bush airport security has skyrocketed

The Houston Chronicle [9/24/2021 3:08 PM, Timothy Fanning, Ryan Serpico, San Antonio Express-News, 183K] reports despite a drastic decrease in air travel because of the pandemic, the rate of passengers attempting to pass firearms illegally through airport security in Texas jumped 67 percent from 2019 to 2020, according to the Transportation Security Administration. In 2019, TSA found 0.9 guns per 100,000 passengers at Texas airports. The following year, the agency found 1.9 guns per 100,000 people screened — an 82 percent increase during a time in which passenger traffic in Texas fell 57 percent, from 68 million in 2019 to 29.6 million in 2020. George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston saw the highest-percentage increase in Texas last year at 122 percent. The rate rose from 0.85 guns in 2019 per 100,000 passengers among airports with at least 15 catches to 1.88 guns per 100,000 airline travelers in 2020. San Antonio International Airport saw the second-largest percentage increase in firearms nabbed at TSA checkpoints in the state during that time among airports with at least 15 catches. Mancha said it is unclear why the rate is increasing but noted that there has generally been an increase in gun sales since the start of the pandemic.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Sam rapidly intensifies into hurricane, forecast to become Category 4 by Sunday

The Washington Post [9/24/2021 11:42 AM, Matthew Cappucci, 11773K] reports that Sam was a mere tropical depression Thursday morning, but by early Friday it stood at hurricane strength after a textbook rapid intensification. It's set to make a run at major hurricane status by Saturday, potentially becoming a Category 4 hurricane as it churns across the open Atlantic. No tropical storm or hurricane alerts are in effect for any place yet, since the storm will likely avoid land. There is still plenty of uncertainty in the eventual track of Sam and the northern Leeward Islands and Puerto Rico should keep close tabs on Sam's

progress. Sam is likely to join the ranks of Grace, Ida and Larry, which all attained Category 3 or greater status this year. Category 4 Ida brought devastation to southeast Louisiana with winds topping 150 mph upon landfall. The season to date has been slightly above average, with Accumulated Cyclone Energy, or ACE, running about 12 percent ahead of the norm. ACE is a metric that describes how much energy tropical cyclones expend in their winds and hinges on storm intensity, longevity and size. Because Sam is expected to remain near or at peak strength for several days and likely persist into the first week of October, there is a decent chance it will generate much more ACE than Ida did. There are signs to support an additional slew of tropical systems developing in the coming weeks, which would exhaust 2021's preset list of conventional hurricane names. At present, only three names remain - Teresa, Victor and Wanda.

[LA] In battle to restore power after Ida, a tent city rises

The [AP](#) [9/24/2021 11:39 AM, Rebecca Santana, 302K] reports that when Hurricane Ida was brewing in the Gulf of Mexico, the grass was chest high and the warehouse empty at this lot in southeastern Louisiana. Within days, electric officials transformed it into a bustling "Tent city" with enormous, air-conditioned tents for workers, a gravel parking lot for bucket trucks and a station to resupply crews restoring power to the region. In the wake of hurricanes, one of the most common and comforting sites is the thousands of electric workers who flow into a battered region when the winds die down to restore power and a sense of normalcy. Power providers build tent cities like this to meet those needs. "There's three things a lineman wants: good food, cold bed, hot shower. If you can get those three, you can work," says Matthew Peters, operations manager for South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association, which built the tent city to house a peak of about 1,100 workers helping restore power to the cooperative's customers. When Ida came ashore on Aug. 29, it knocked out power to about 1.1 million customers in the state. The vast majority have seen their power restored, but in a sign of the storm's extent, thousands are still in the dark while downed lines are righted and substations repaired. SLECA provides electricity to about 21,000 customers, including many in the hard-hit bayou regions. Power has been restored to about 81% of their coverage area with the remaining 19% in areas with the most catastrophic damage, said Joe Ticheli, general manager of the cooperative. After initially fearing full restoration of power could take months, estimates are now that it could happen by next week, Ticheli said.

[CA] Suspected arson wildfire forces evacuations in California

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) [9/24/2021 11:57 AM, Staff, 495K] reports that thousands of people were under evacuation orders Friday and many others were on notice to be ready to flee as a destructive wildfire raged in a drought-stricken forest in California's far north. A woman suspected of starting the Fawn Fire was under arrest, authorities said. The fire in the Mountain Gate area north of the city of Redding covered more than 9 square miles and was 10% contained, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire. "Approximately 4,000 Shasta County residents are evacuated at this time with 30,000 residents affected," the Shasta County Sheriff's Office said in a statement Thursday night. Photos and video showed some homes blazing but the number of residences lost was not known. Damage inspection teams were conducting assessments, Cal Fire said. The fire erupted at 4:45 p.m. Wednesday and grew explosively in hot and gusty weather Thursday in the region about 200 miles north of San Francisco. Weather on Friday was expected to remain hot but with light winds. Alexandra Souverneva, 30, of Palo Alto was under arrest on suspicion of starting the fire, Cal Fire said. Workers at a quarry reported

seeing a woman acting strangely and trespassing on Wednesday. Cal Fire said Souverneva later walked out of the brush near the fire line, approached firefighters and told them she was dehydrated and needed medical help. During an interview with Cal Fire and law enforcement, officers came to believe Souverneva was responsible for setting the fire, officials said. It wasn't immediately known if she has an attorney.

[CA] PG&E Charged With Manslaughter Over Zogg Fire in California

Bloomberg [9/24/2021 4:20 PM, Mark Chediak, 6400K] reports PG&E Corp., the California utility that went bankrupt after its equipment sparked deadly wildfires, has been charged with multiple crimes, including involuntary manslaughter, in connection with a 2020 blaze that killed four people. Shasta County District Attorney Stephanie Bridgett on Friday filed 31 charges against the utility related to the Zogg Fire in northern California, about 100 miles from the Oregon border. Eleven were felonies, including four involuntary manslaughter charges. PG&E disputed the allegations. "PG&E has a history of repeatably causing wildfires that is not getting better -- it's getting worse," Bridgett said during a press briefing broadcast online. "Those who lost loved ones need justice. They need to have those who are responsible for killing their loved ones to be held criminally responsible, especially since this fire was completely preventable." The Zogg blaze burned more than 56,000 acres (23,000 hectares) and destroyed 204 buildings. PG&E has accepted the conclusion from California investigators that a tree contacted one of its power lines and started the Zogg fire, PG&E Chief Executive Officer Patti Poppe said in a statement Friday. The utility has resolved many victim claims related to the blaze, she said. "We're putting everything we've got into preventing wildfires and reducing the risk," Poppe said. "Though it may feel satisfying for the company of PG&E to be charged with a crime, what I know is the company of PG&E is people, 40,000 people who get up every day to make it safe and to end catastrophic wildfire and tragedies like this. Let's be clear, my coworkers are not criminals." Bridgett also said Shasta County and four others have opened a joint investigation to determine PG&E's possible criminal liability for starting the Dixie Fire, which began in July and has grown to become the second-largest wildfire in California history.

Reported similarly:

The Hill [9/24/2021 3:32 PM, Jordan Williams, 1776K]

AP [9/24/2021 1:54 PM, Staff]

Secret Service

Kamala Harris' appearance on "The View" delayed by co-hosts' positive COVID-19 tests

CBS News [9/24/2021 2:14 PM, Kathryn Watson, Neutral, secondary] reports Vice President Kamala Harris' appearance on ABC's "The View" Friday morning was delayed when two of the show's co-hosts tested positive for COVID-19 shortly before the interview. "The View's" Joy Behar told viewers Friday that her co-hosts Sunny Hostin and Ana Navarro, both fully vaccinated against COVID-19, contracted "breakthrough" infections. The two women left the stage in the middle of the show, and Harris did the interview remotely from a different room in the studio's building. In the confusion, Behar said the Secret Service was doing things to make the vice president "feel safe." At the beginning of the interview, Behar told Harris they did "everything we could" to make sure the vice president was safe "because we value you so much."

[MD] Credit Card Skimmers Discovered In Northern Accomack County

The [Shore Daily News](#) [9/24/2021 8:00 AM, Staff, Neutral, Secondary] reports according to Sheriff Todd Wessells credit card skimmers have been found at gas pumps in the northern end of Accomack County. These particular devices obtain the customer's credit card information via Bluetooth. You can take precautions at the pump by accessing your phone's Bluetooth while holding it near the pump prior to entering the credit card. If your phone's Bluetooth detects a device do not enter your credit card and notify an employee of that business. If you believe that you've been a victim of skimming contact your local law enforcement.

Coast Guard

Exclusive: U.S. border authorities warn of possible influx of Haitians migrating by boat

[Yahoo! News](#) [9/24/2021 1:25 PM, Caitlin Dickson and Jana Winter, 13869K] reports the Department of Homeland Security is warning of a possible influx of Haitian migrants headed to the United States by boat, according to an intelligence alert obtained by Yahoo News. The alert, which was unclassified and marked "for official use only," was issued on Thursday by U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Intelligence. It states that Border Patrol apprehensions of Haitian migrants in Miami and Puerto Rico have been on the rise since May, "with September likely to be the highest month in fiscal year (FY) 2021." According to the bulletin, the influx in maritime migration is probably being fueled by "an evolving perception amongst the Haitian community that Haitian migrants detained by United States law enforcement agencies will automatically be sent to Miami for further release into Florida." Additionally, the report explains that "Haitian migrants encountered in the maritime environment have identified their desire to migrate to the United States because of economic opportunities, the elevated levels of violence in Haiti, and a perception that they will be allowed to stay in the United States." CBP and the Department of Homeland Security did not respond to requests for comment. Yahoo News reported Thursday that the Biden administration failed to anticipate the latest influx of Haitians at the U.S. border with Mexico, despite tracking Haitian migration for months. Several internal government documents obtained by Yahoo News show that multiple intelligence agencies within the Department of Homeland Security had repeatedly downplayed the potential for mass Haitian migration to the U.S. since as early as March 1. Among those documents was a situational report issued by the Coast Guard's Maritime Intelligence Fusion Center in mid-July, about a week after the assassination of Haitian president Jovenel Moïse. The Coast Guard report noted that maritime encounters with Haitian migrants had increased 7 percent during the month of June, but predicted that Haitian migration to the U.S. would decrease in the aftermath of the president's assassination, concluding that "Haitian maritime mass migration is very unlikely in the near-term." Despite this assessment, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas sought to discourage a possible wave of migrants taking to the sea, warning at the time that anyone seeking to flee Haiti by boat, including those with a credible fear of persecution, would not be eligible for asylum in the United States.

[VA] Cyprus-based firm fined for dumping oily water in Atlantic

The [AP](#) [9/24/2021 8:46 AM, Staff, 11773K] reports that a Cyprus-based company was ordered to pay a \$2 million fine Thursday after pleading guilty to charges that one of its ships dumped oily water into the Atlantic Ocean, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia announced. The crew of a ship operated by Diana Wilhelmsen

Management Limited knowingly failed last year to record in the ship's oil record book the overboard discharge of oily bilge water, prosecutors said in a news release. The M/V Protefs arrived in New Orleans on June 1, 2020, with a knowingly false oil record book, prosecutors said. The crew used an emergency de-watering system to illegally discharge oily water directly into the Atlantic Ocean from the ship's bilge holding tank, duct keel, and bilge wells, and did not record it in the oil record book as required, prosecutors said. The chief engineer pleaded guilty in December 2020 to making a false statement to U.S. Coast Guard inspectors about the existence of a sounding log, which is routinely sought by inspectors in order to determine the accuracy of the oil record book. DWM received four years of probation, a fine of \$2 million and supervision under an environmental compliance plan.

CISA/Cybersecurity

Congress is finally going big on cyber

The Washington Post [9/24/2021 7:14 AM, Joseph Marks, 11773K] reports that after years of minimal effort on major cyber legislation, Congress is suddenly champing at the bit to get big, bold things done. And the government's top cyber officials are cheering them on. Members of the Senate Homeland Security Committee jawboned over two major forthcoming pieces of cyber legislation during a hearing yesterday. A bill requiring companies in critical sectors to promptly alert the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) when they're hacked — CISA would then share that information with other companies that might be in danger And a full rewrite of the major law governing federal information security requirements and procedures They both have a solid chance of becoming law and would be among the most consequential cyber bills to make it through Congress in half a decade. A wave of economy-rattling ransomware attacks has created a greater sense of urgency about cybersecurity in Washington than ever before.

Terrorism Investigations

[TN] Woman who died in Tennessee Kroger shooting identified; gunman was store vendor, police say

USA Today [9/24/2021 8:50 PM, Micaela A Watts, Gina Butkovich, and Lucas Finton, 6282K] reports that police on Friday said the gunman in a shooting at a Kroger grocery store that killed one and injured 14 others was a third-party vendor for Kroger who died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. They also identified the woman who died in the shooting as Olivia King. Friends told the Memphis Commercial Appeal, part of the USA TODAY Network, that King was a longtime resident of the area. "She was just sweet," King's longtime friend David Fraser said. "Kind, polite, thoughtful," added friend Maureen Fraser, standing beside him Thursday on the sidewalk near the blocked-off Kroger grocery store. She was from San Antonio and was widowed with three sons: one in the Navy, one in the Air Force and one who had just earned a doctorate, they said. They said she attended Catholic Mass nearly every day and had previously worked as a financial secretary at a local school. Police Chief Dale Lane said Friday that officials are "Getting a clearer picture of what occurred" but did not confirm the shooter's motive. The suspect, who was found dead at the back of the store, was identified as Uk Thang, 29. Of the 15 people who were shot, 10 were Kroger employees and five were customers, Lane said. "Thankfully, our prayers were answered: We didn't lose anybody overnight," Lane said. "There's still some people battling, so continue to pray

for them, as well." The gunman acted alone and worked as a third-party vendor for Kroger, Lane said. Local and federal law enforcement agencies responded; dozens of patrol cars, two tactical unit vehicles, and ambulances neighboring counties were on scene by 2 p.m. "Our guys did not hesitate one minute," Collierville Fire Department Chief Buddy Billings said. This event marks the second mass shooting in a year at one of the company's stores.

Reported similarly:

Washington Post [9/24/2021 9:09 PM, Jacob Bogage, Danny Freedman, Kim Bellware, and Mark Berman, 11773K]

National Security News

CIA Recalls Vienna Station Chief In Move Related To Handling Of 'Havana Syndrome'
NPR [9/24/2021 12:26 PM, Greg Myre, 4917K] reports the CIA has removed its station chief in Vienna, in part because of his handling of cases involving what's known as "Havana syndrome," according to current and former government officials. A growing number of U.S. intelligence officials in Vienna have reported symptoms in recent months consistent with Havana syndrome, which include dizziness, migraines and memory loss. The CIA's top officer there — the station chief — has been recalled for his overall management of the post, including his handling of the Havana syndrome cases, according to those familiar with the matter. They spoke on condition of anonymity. The Post also reported that the number of cases in Vienna was in the dozens and included diplomats, intelligence officers as well as some children of the U.S. officials.

White House steps up work on what to do about thawing Arctic

The AP [9/24/2021 12:01 PM, Seth Borenstein, 302K] reports that the Biden administration is stepping up its work to figure about what to do about the thawing Arctic, which is warming three times faster than the rest of the world. The White House said Friday it is reactivating the Arctic Executive Steering Committee, which coordinates domestic regulations and works with other Arctic nations. It also is adding six new members to the U.S. Arctic Research Commission, including two Indigenous Alaskans. The steering committee had been moribund for the past four years, not meeting at a high level, said David Balton, appointed to direct it. He said "it will step up and do more in the Arctic." The revamped committee will try to figure out what "Needs to be done to get a better handle on addressing the changes in the Arctic," Balton said. University of Colorado scientist Twila Moon, who is not involved with the committee or commission, praised the developments. She said that because the Arctic is changing so quickly, "Serious issues like national security, stability of buildings and roads, food availability, and much more must be considered and acted on promptly," Moon said. "The U.S. cannot afford to sit back on Arctic issues." Balton, in an interview, said the Arctic is "Opening up in a number of ways. Most of this is bad news." "But there's also increased tourism and increased shipping, potentially other industries coming up into the Arctic that need regulation," he said. "And right now the nations and the peoples of the Arctic are scrambling to keep up with this change." The new efforts emphasize working with Indigenous people.

[Sudan] U.S. envoy to visit Sudan next week, White House says

Reuters [9/24/2021 12:09 PM, Staff, 5304K] reports that U.S. envoy for the Horn of Africa Jeffrey Feltman will visit Sudan next week to reaffirm American support for the country's government days after Sudanese authorities said they had thwarted an attempted coup, the White House said Friday. In a phone call with Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, national security adviser Jake Sullivan "expressed the Biden administration's commitment to support the civilian-led transition to democracy in Sudan and oppose any attempts to derail or disrupt the will of the Sudanese people," the White House National Security Council said in a statement. Sudanese authorities said they had foiled an attempted coup on Tuesday, accusing plotters loyal to ousted President Omar al-Bashir of a failed bid to derail the revolution that removed him from power in 2019 and ushered in a transition to democracy. The U.S. State Department later condemned the coup and, along with the United Nations Security Council, reiterated support for the transitional government. Sullivan on Friday also "underscored that any attempt by military actors to undermine the spirit and agreed benchmarks of Sudan's constitutional declaration would have significant consequences for the U.S.-Sudan bilateral relationship and planned assistance." The thwarted coup points to the difficult path facing Sudan under a fragile power-sharing deal between the military and civilians since the overthrow of Bashir, who presided over Sudan for nearly three decades and was shunned by the West. Sudan's current ruling body, known as the Sovereign Council, has won Western debt relief and taken steps to normalize ties with Israel, while battling a severe economic crisis. Elections are expected in 2024.

[Turkey] Turkey's Erdogan looks to Putin after Biden talks disappoint

The AP [9/24/2021 8:51 AM, Staff, 302K] reports that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Friday that recent talks with U.S. President Joe Biden had proved disappointing, and that his country, a NATO member, would seek closer ties with Russia. Speaking after prayers in Istanbul, Erdogan said he and Biden had failed to bridge their differences at a meeting during his visit to New York for the UN General Assembly this week. "In the discussions with Mr. Biden that I'd been anticipating, there wasn't the desired outcome. ... As two NATO countries, we need to be at a different point," he told journalists. Erdogan went on to criticize U.S. support for Kurdish militants in Syria who were instrumental in fighting the Islamic State group. Ankara considers them terrorists due to their links to the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which has waged a 37-year insurgency against Turkey. Turkey has a large and restive Kurdish ethnic minority. The PKK is listed as a terrorist organization by the U.S. and EU "America is not fighting terrorist organizations enough, it is giving them a lot of weapons and equipment," he said. Erdogan is due to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Black Sea resort of Sochi on Sept. 29, where the leaders will concentrate on the situation in Syria. Russia is the main ally of the Syrian government while Turkey supports groups that have fought to unseat President Bashar Assad. However, Russian and Turkish troops have cooperated in Idlib, the final holdout of rebel forces, and in seeking a political solution in the war-torn country. Erdogan said he would seek to take relations with Moscow "much further" when he meets Putin.

Reported similarly:

CBS News [9/24/2021 7:52 PM, Margaret Brennan, Camilla Schick, 2612K]

[Iran] To help U.S. allies flee Afghanistan, these advocates turned to Iran

The Washington Post [9/24/2021 8:47 AM, kareem Fahim, 11773K] reports that the female lawmakers were moving from house to house, trying to stay one step ahead of the Taliban fighters they feared were stalking former government officials since taking over Afghanistan

last month. The militants controlled Kabul airport, threatening one escape route. At the borders, security was more relaxed, but most neighboring countries had declined to give visas to the women. And no help came from the United States, which had worked with at least one of the lawmakers. “We didn’t see any hope,” said Homaira Ayubi, a lawmaker once hailed as a “success story” by the U.S. Agency for International Development for her anti-corruption work. A convoy to Kabul airport, and faint hopes the gates would swing open. Then, earlier this month, Amed Khan, a New-York based philanthropist who was part of a group of NGO workers and private citizens trying to help the lawmakers, was sitting in a car in Uzbekistan staring at Google Maps when he had a radical idea. “How can we get the Iranians to save the day with regard to U.S. allies stuck in Afghanistan,” he wrote in a text message to a colleague with contacts in Iran’s government — setting off a complex, weeks-long effort to get the women and their families to safety, aided by Afghans who faced significant risk, advocates around the world and Iran, one of America’s most committed adversaries. A few days after he sent the text, according to Khan, an Iranian diplomat said his government had agreed to allow the lawmakers and their families to transit through Iran — adding yet another country to the assortment of governments hastily enlisted in the sprawling, leaderless and ongoing global effort to evacuate vulnerable Afghans after the Taliban takeover.

[Afghanistan] Top Foreign Affairs Republican seeks declassification of Afghan intel
The Hill [9/24/2021 11:18 AM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports that the top Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee is asking the Biden administration to declassify and release its intelligence on Afghanistan after arguing they were caught off guard by the rapid fall of Kabul. Multiple members of the administration have said their intelligence did not predict that the Taliban would complete their takeover of the country so quickly as the U.S. drew down its forces. “It is imperative that Congress be given access to any and all reports and underlying intelligence products that led to the assessments so we may better understand how the situation deteriorated so quickly and why the Administration made the decisions they did regarding the disastrous evacuation,” ranking member Rep. Michael McCaul (R-Texas) wrote in a letter to the State Department, Department of Defense, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). Officials have offered a conflicting picture of the intelligence surrounding Afghanistan — something likely due in part to varying assessments from a number of agencies with differing degrees of confidence. The Wall Street Journal in June reported that intelligence assessments showed the Afghan government could collapse as soon as six months after the U.S. withdrawal. “There was nothing that I or anyone else saw that indicated a collapse of this army and this government in 11 days,” Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Mark Milley told reporters during a Pentagon briefing in August. Milley said that intelligence showed “multiple scenarios were possible,” including a rapid Taliban takeover over the course of weeks or months or years.

Reported similarly:

Washington Times [9/24/2021 8:54 AM, Joseph Clark, 381K]

[China] Huawei CFO leaves Canada after U.S. deal on fraud charges, detained Canadians head home

Reuters [9/24/2021 9:00 AM, Karen Freifeld, Kenneth Li, Moira Warburton, and David Ljunggren, 5304K] reports that Huawei Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou flew home to China on Friday after reaching an agreement with U.S. prosecutors to end the bank fraud case against her, relieving a point of tension between China and the United States. Within

hours of the news of the deal, two Canadians who were arrested shortly after Meng was taken into custody in December 2018 were released from Chinese jails and were on their way back to Canada. Beijing had denied that their arrests were linked. The years-long extradition drama has been a central source of discord in increasingly rocky ties between Beijing and Washington, with Chinese officials signaling that the case needed to be dropped to help end a diplomatic stalemate. The deal also opens U.S. President Joe Biden to criticism from China hawks in Washington who argue his administration is capitulating to China and one of its top companies at the center of a global technology rivalry between the two countries. Meng was arrested here at Vancouver International Airport on a U.S. warrant, and indicted on bank and wire fraud charges for allegedly misleading HSBC in 2013 about the telecommunications equipment giant's business dealings in Iran. In an exclusive here on Friday, Reuters reported that the United States had reached a deferred prosecution agreement with Meng. Nicole Boeckmann, the acting U.S. attorney in Brooklyn, said that in entering into the agreement, "Meng has taken responsibility for her principal role in perpetrating a scheme to defraud a global financial institution." The agreement pertains only to Meng, and the U.S. Justice Department said it is preparing for trial against Huawei and looks forward to proving its case in court. China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the release of Meng or the Canadians. A spokeswoman for Huawei declined to comment.

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DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

By TechMIS

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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.

TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 6:00 AM ET

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Top News

Biden to raise refugee admissions cap to 125,000 in the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1

The [New York Times](#) [9/20/2021 6:11 PM, Michael D. Shear, 24635K] reports that President Biden intends to increase to 125,000 the number of refugees who can enter the United States in the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, the State Department announced on Monday, making good on his campaign pledge to do so. Mr. Biden's decision is unlikely to affect two groups of people most recently in the news: tens of thousands of people from Kabul fleeing the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan and more than 15,000 Haitians in a sprawling, makeshift camp under a bridge at the southern border. The people in those groups are not officially classified as refugees. The move indicates the president's intention to open the country's doors after four years in which the Trump administration sought to prevent refugees from settling here. In May, Mr. Biden raised the refugee admissions cap for the current fiscal year from 15,000 - an historically low level set by former President Donald J. Trump - to 62,500. At the time, Mr. Biden also vowed to make good on his promise to increase the cap to 125,000 for the first full fiscal year of his presidency. Ned Price, the State Department spokesman, said in a statement on Monday that Mr. Biden has sent to Congress a report detailing his intention to do just that in an effort to "address needs generated by humanitarian crises around the globe." "A robust refugee admissions program is critical to U.S. foreign policy interests and national security objectives, and is a reflection of core American values," Mr. Price said in the statement. The [Washington Post](#) [9/20/2021 5:16 PM, Felicia Sonmez and Seung Min Kim, 11773K] reports the administration also cited the expanded resettlement of Central Americans and Myanmar dissidents. According to a report released Monday by the State Department in conjunction with the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, the cap for fiscal 2022 is expected to include 40,000 refugees from Africa, 35,000 from the Near East/South Asia, 15,000 from East Asia, 15,000 from Latin America/the Caribbean, and 10,000 from Europe/Central Asia. An additional 10,000 belong to an unallocated reserve, according to the report. [CBS News](#) [9/20/2021 3:59 PM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 2612K] reports that during fiscal year 2022, the U.S. will give "particular focus" to resettling Central Americans fleeing violence, LGBTQ refugees, Afghans who worked for U.S.-based organizations, at-risk Uyghurs, Hong Kong dissidents and refugees from Burma, including members of the persecuted Rohingya Muslim minority, according to the notification. The administration said it would also unveil a private sponsorship program during the coming fiscal year that will allow non-governmental groups and individuals in the U.S. to finance the resettlement of refugees. The initiative is likely to mirror a program in Canada that has broad support there. Approximately 53,000 Afghans who were determined to be in danger of being harmed in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan are undergoing vaccination and processing at eight military sites across the U.S. mainland, a Department of Homeland Security spokesperson told CBS News on Monday. [The Hill](#) [9/20/2021 6:29 PM, Morgan Calfant, 1776K] reports the Biden

administration will need additional slots in part to accommodate Afghans who are being brought to the United States after the fall of the Afghan government to the Taliban during the U.S. military withdrawal from the country. Some 53,000 Afghans have been brought to the U.S., though a portion of them are applicants for special immigrant visas. Earlier this month, the White House asked Congress for \$6.4 billion in additional funding to help resettle Afghan refugees.

Reported similarly:

[Reuters](#) [9/20/2021 4:34 PM, Mica Rosenberg and Lisa Lambert, 5304K]

[CNN](#) [9/20/2021 1:01 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 4876K]

[FOX News](#) [9/20/2021 6:12 PM, Michael Lee, 9251K]

[Telemundo Washington DC](#) [9/20/2021 1:52 PM, Staff, 4K]

[Washington Times](#) [9/20/2021 12:21 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K]

White House, House Homeland Security chair denounce ‘horrific’ mistreatment of Haitian migrants by Border Patrol officers

The [AP](#) [9/20/2021 4:59 PM, Juan A. Lozano, Eric Gay, Elliot Spagat and Evens Sanon] reports more than 6,000 Haitians and other migrants have been removed from an encampment at a Texas border town, U.S. officials said Monday as they defended a strong response that included immediately expelling migrants to their impoverished Caribbean country and using horse patrols to stop them from entering the town. Calling it a “challenging and heartbreaking situation,” Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas issued a stark warning: “If you come to the United States illegally, you will be returned. Your journey will not succeed, and you will be endangering your life and your family’s life.” Mayorkas and Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz said they would look into agents on horseback using what appeared to be whips and their horses to push back migrants at the river between Ciudad Acuña, Mexico, and Del Rio, Texas, where thousands of migrants remain camped around a bridge. Both officials said they saw nothing apparently wrong based on the widely seen photos and video. Mayorkas said agents use long reins, not whips, to control their horses. Ortiz, the former chief of the Del Rio sector, said it can be confusing to distinguish between migrants and smugglers as people moved back and forth near the river. The chief said he would investigate to make sure there was no “unacceptable” actions by the agents. Mayorkas said 600 Homeland Security employees, including from the Coast Guard, have been brought to Del Rio, a city of about 35,000 people roughly 145 miles (230 kilometers) west of San Antonio. He said he has asked the Defense Department for help in what may be one of the swiftest, large-scale expulsions of migrants and refugees from the United States in decades. He also said the U.S. would increase the pace and capacity of flights to Haiti and other countries in the hemisphere. The number of migrants at the bridge peaked at 14,872 on Saturday, said Brandon Judd, president of the National Border Patrol Council, a labor union that represents agents. Mexico also said it would expel Haitian migrants, and began busing them from Ciudad Acuña Sunday evening, according to Luis Angel Urraza, president of the local chamber of commerce. He said he saw the first two buses leave from in front of his restaurant with about 90 people aboard. But Mayorkas defended his recent decision to grant Haitians temporary legal status due to political and civil strife in their homeland if they were in the United States on July 29, but not to those being sent back now. “We made an assessment based on the country conditions ... that Haiti could in fact receive individuals safely,” he said. The [Washington Post](#) [9/20/2021 4:55 PM, Felicia Sonmez, 11773K] reports the White House and the chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee on Monday voiced concern over photos and reports appearing to show U.S. Border Patrol officers on

horseback mistreating Haitian migrants near the Rio Grande, calling the images “horrific.” One photo by photojournalist Paul Ratje shows a Border Patrol officer on horseback, grabbing the shirt of a Haitian migrant holding bags of food and trying to enter an encampment near the river. Other footage shows mounted Border Patrol officers chasing migrants away. One of the officers can be seen swinging at one of the migrants with what appears to be a strap connected to the horse’s bridle. Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-Miss.), chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, denounced the officers’ behavior in a statement Monday. “Video and photos coming out of Del Rio showing U.S. Border Patrol’s mistreatment of Haitian migrants along the border are horrific and disturbing,” Thompson said. “This mistreatment runs counter to our American values and cannot be tolerated.” He called on Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to “take immediate action to hold those responsible accountable and ensure that all migrants are treated in accordance with the law and basic decency, as this Administration has promised to do since day one.” During a press availability in Del Rio, Tex., Monday, Mayorkas was asked whether the images showed inhumane treatment by the Border Patrol officers. Mayorkas responded that reporters “are assuming facts that have not yet been determined.” White House press secretary Jen Psaki fielded several questions about the images during Monday’s news briefing. Psaki described the footage she has seen as “horrific” but said she is seeking more context and information on the events that took place. [USA Today](#) [9/20/2021 3:51 PM, Chelsey Cox and Mabinty Quarshie, 6282K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told reporters Monday that CBP is coordinating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Coast Guard to move migrants to other processing locations for removal. The agency has moved approximately 3,500 migrants “over the last few days and 3,000 today,” he said. “We are in the midst of a pandemic and a critical migration challenge,” Mayorkas said. “We continue to exercise the Centers for Disease Control (and Prevention’s) title 42 authority.” It is “not an immigration authority, but a public health authority,” Mayorkas said. [CBS News](#) [9/20/2021 7:15 PM, Staff, 2612K] reports The migrants have been dealing with triple-digit temperatures and a lack of food and water, reports CBS San Antonio affiliate KENS-TV. “It’s hot. It’s dry. We’re also prone to weather phenomena here,” Del Rio Mayor Bruno Lozano said. “We are providing food, water, portable toilets, towels. Emergency medical technicians are available first aid if someone needs medical care beyond what our employees can provide,” U.S. Border Patrol Chief Raul L. Ortiz said, according to KENS. “We are working around the clock to expeditiously move migrants out of the heat, elements and from underneath this bridge to our processing facilities in order to quickly process and remove individuals from the United States consistent with our laws and our policies,” Ortiz TOLD A news conference at the Del Rio bridge.

Reported similarly:

[Politico](#) [9/20/2021 2:43 PM, Nick Niedzwiadek, 1707K]

[Bloomberg](#) [9/20/2021 10:50 PM, Jennifer Epstein and John Harney, 6400K]

[Reuters](#) [9/20/2021 5:43 PM, Daina Beth Solomon, 5304K]

[CNN](#) [9/20/2021 10:38 PM, Jason Hoffman, Priscilla Alvarez, et al., 4876K]

[Univision](#) [9/20/2021 6:38 PM, Staff, 366K]

Hundreds of Haitians return to Mexico after expulsions from Texas begin

[The Hill](#) [9/20/2021 3:14 PM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports hundreds of Haitian migrants have gone back to Mexico from the camp under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas, where many were staying in squalor as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) began deportations this week. A steady stream of mostly Haitian migrants made its way back across the Rio

Grande on Monday. Many feared being sent back to their home country, which has been shocked by a presidential assassination and a massive earthquake in recent months. At one point, nearly 12,000 migrants were at the Del Rio camp. U.S. Border Patrol is aiming to deport the majority of these migrants, reportedly prioritizing single adults and families who don't declare asylum. Many Haitian migrants who were in the Del Rio encampment have not been back to Haiti since 2010, having left the country after the 7.0 magnitude earthquake. DHS began deporting Haitian migrants back to Port-au-Prince this week, with more than 300 migrants being sent back on Sunday alone. Beginning on Tuesday, Immigration and Customs Enforcement is expected to fly seven or eight planes to Haiti per day. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas traveled to Del Rio on Monday to address the situation and receive an operational briefing. Haitian officials have sent divided signals on the return of so many migrants, with acting Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry saying the country is prepared to welcome them back and Election Minister Mathias Pierre arguing the country is not prepared for such a large influx of people. [NPR](#) [9/20/2021 3:31 PM, Joel Rose, Scott Neuman] Audio: [HERE](#) reports as the Biden administration moves quickly to expel migrants camped under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas, its plan depends on a controversial Trump-era policy put in place in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic to speed up removals. "Title 42 is not an immigration authority, but a public health authority," Mayorkas said. "To protect the American public. To protect the communities along the border. And to protect the migrants themselves." On Sunday, U.S. Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz said the government had moved 3,300 individuals from the bridge camp to migrant processing facilities in San Antonio, Laredo and Eagle Pass, Texas. Ortiz said the local school system had lent buses to the effort, which he said was being carried out in a "humane and timely manner." Officials said just over 300 have been removed on flights to Haiti. "We are working around-the-clock to expeditiously move migrants out of the heat, elements and from underneath this bridge to our processing facilities in order to quickly process and remove individuals from the United States consistent with our laws and our policies," Ortiz said. [FOX News](#) [9/20/2021 2:59 PM, Ronn Blitzer, 9251K] reports that while the administration is trying to protect illegal immigrants who are already in Del Rio, living in poor conditions during a pandemic, Mayorkas emphatically tried to discourage other migrants from coming to the U.S. "We are very concerned that Haitians who are taking this irregular migration path are receiving false information that the border is open or that Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is available," Mayorkas said. While some Haitians enjoy TPS protection, Mayorkas clarified later that this is only for those currently in the U.S. who arrived before July 29. "I want to make sure that it is known that this is not the way to come to the United States. That is false information," Mayorkas reiterated. "Irregular migration poses a serious security risk to the migrants themselves. Trying to enter the United States illegally is not worth the tragedy, the money or the effort." [USA Today](#) [9/20/2021 4:02 PM, Staff, 6282K] Video: [HERE](#) reports White House Press Secretary says the situation along the southern border is challenging, but defended the administration's immigration policy.

Reported similarly:

[Washington Times](#) [9/20/2021 10:28 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K]

Biden admin prioritizes single adult Haitians, some families for deportation

[Yahoo! News](#) [9/20/2021 8:49 AM, Julia Ainsley, 13869K] reports that the Biden administration will prioritize all single adult Haitians and some Haitian families for deportation, after more than 15,000 mostly Haitian migrants converged on a Texas border bridge, say two senior Department of Homeland Security officials. Unaccompanied children and some families will be allowed to stay in the United States and given dates for asylum

hearings, the senior Homeland Security officials said. Thousands of others will be deported to Haiti, including families who do not claim asylum and all single adults. Many have not seen Haiti since they fled to Latin American countries after the 2010 earthquake or other natural or political crises. Immigration and Customs Enforcement will begin flying six to eight deportation flights per day starting Tuesday, the officials said. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas visited Del Rio on Monday for a briefing and met with state and local officials. Over the weekend, Customs and Border Protection closed the Del Rio International Bridge, diverting traffic to nearby Eagle Pass, Texas, and with the number of agents in the area surging to 400. Texas state troopers began blocking migrants from crossing over the Rio Grande to prevent them congregating under the bridge. Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz said Sunday that the agency had moved 3,300 migrants of the crowd of 15,000 out from under the bridge. The senior Homeland Security officials said multiple women went into labor among the throngs packed under the bridge, but all babies were delivered safe and healthy. A Homeland Security spokeswoman said of the three flights that left Sunday, "All passengers were medically screened prior to boarding the flights. Additionally, migrants and staff were provided with and required to wear personal protective equipment prior to, and during, the flight, and to be cleared for travel were required to have a temperature of less than 100.4 degrees and to not exhibit Covid-related symptoms." The spokeswoman did not comment on who would be prioritized for deportation.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/20/2021 11:54 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K]

Haitian journey to Texas border starts in South America

The [AP](#) [9/21/2021 12:14 AM, Julie Watson, Juan A. Lozano and Elliot Spagat, 11773K] reports Robins Exile downed a traditional meal of plantains and chicken at a restaurant run by Haitian immigrants, just a short walk from the walled border with the United States. He arrived the night before and went there seeking advice: Should he try to get to the U.S., or was it better to settle in Mexico? Messages on WhatsApp and Facebook and YouTube videos from Haitian migrants warned him to avoid crossing in Del Rio, Texas, where thousands of Haitians have converged recently. It was no longer the easy place to cross that it was just a few weeks ago. Discussion Monday at the Tijuana restaurant offered a snapshot of Haitians' diaspora in the Western Hemisphere that picked up steam in 2016 and has shown little sign of easing, demonstrated most recently by the more than 14,000 mostly Haitian migrants assembled around a bridge in Del Rio, a town of only 35,000 people. Of the roughly 1.8 million Haitians living outside their homeland, the United States is home to the largest Haitian immigrant population in the world, numbering 705,000 people from the Western Hemisphere's poorest country. Significant numbers also live in Latin American countries like Chile, which is home to an estimated 69,000 Haitians, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

Haitian migrants in Texas worry as deportations begin: "I'll die in Haiti"

[CBS News](#) [9/20/2021 10:04 AM, Staff, 2612K] reports that mass deportations for more than 12,000 migrants in south Texas are underway, with more than 300 Haitians arrived back in their home country Sunday. More deportation flights are planned this week, as the U.S. government tries to process the more than 12,000 migrants camped out near Del Rio, Texas. Correspondent Manuel Bojorquez reports that most of the migrants, who have been living in a makeshift camp near the border in Del Rio, are Haitians, many of whom who migrated to South and Central America after the devastating earthquake in 2010. They

came to the U.S. border recently after hearing rumors that they would be allowed to cross, hoping for a better life up North, but most will likely end up back in Haiti. More than 300 Haitians arrived back in their home country Sunday, and more deportation flights are planned this week, as the U.S. government tries to process the more than 12,000 migrants camped out near Del Rio, Texas. One migrant says he was in detention for four days in the U.S.: "Four days without brushing our teeth; four days without a shower." With this section of the U.S.-Mexico border closed, many of the migrants tried to cross the Rio Grande over the weekend, but were confronted by Border Patrol agents on horseback. In an interview with CNN, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas said the U.S. government is working to move thousands of the migrants every day to processing centers. "We have sent a very clear message early on, in light of the fact that we are in the midst of a pandemic, that the border is not open, and people should not take the perilous journey here," he said. In that interview, Mayorkas was asked if there's a contradiction because the U.S. is welcoming refugees from Afghanistan, but deporting Haitians in need. He replied that the Afghan nationals are being screened and vetted before being flown to the U.S., and that is different than simply showing up at the border. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Daines demands answers over reports child traffickers among Afghan evacuees

The [Washington Times](#) [9/20/2021 9:30 AM, Haris Alic, 381K] reports Sen. Steve Daines is demanding answers about the Biden administration's Afghan evacuation program over concerns it has been subverted by child traffickers. Mr. Daines, Montana Republican, sent a letter to the Department of Homeland Security on Monday requesting pertinent information on its vetting process for Afghan evacuees. The GOP lawmaker argued that congressional oversight was needed to ensure taxpayer dollars were not spent on resettling "dangerous individuals or child traffickers" within the U.S. "While admitting those who served alongside U.S. forces and those who would face religious persecution is laudable, there is a great deal of public confusion as to the full scope of those who are entering the U.S. following the fall of Afghanistan's government to the Taliban," wrote Mr. Daines in the letter, a copy of which was obtained exclusively by The Washington Times. Given that more than 120,000 individuals have already been evacuated from Afghanistan, Mr. Daines said it was concerning that many lacked "comprehensive records" from which to conduct a proper national security threat screening. In his letter, Mr. Daines requested Homeland Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas detail to Congress what the federal government was doing about the situation. GOP lawmakers are especially interested in whether the Biden administration has a system in place to weed out individuals engaged in "child trafficking or sexual misconduct."

[TX] Texas Gov. Abbott asks Biden for federal emergency declaration amid border crisis

[FOX News](#) [9/20/2021 2:14 PM, Ronn Blitzer, 9251K] reports Texas Gov. Greg Abbott asked President Biden to issue an emergency declaration for his state due to the increasingly difficult border crisis. In a letter to the president, Abbott specifically pointed to Val Verde County, where Haitian migrants have set up an encampment in Del Rio under the International Bridge. The governor said that as of Saturday there were nearly 16,000 migrants in Del Rio. "Families, including infants and children, need food, water and medical supplies that the local government cannot supply," Abbott wrote. "Thousands of families are immobilized in 100-degree heat as their numbers continue to swell as they wait to be processed by the approximately 64 federal agents in the area. Individuals are camping in squalid conditions and bathing in muddy river water, causing great health concerns."

Additionally, the governor said, the coronavirus pandemic makes the situation even more perilous, as he "has been provided no clear information about whether these individuals have received a COVID-19 vaccination or have been tested for the virus, or if they be exposing Texans and Americans to COVID." Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas is on the ground in Texas Monday to address the situation in Del Rio, and the Department of Homeland Security is taking various steps, including ramping up efforts to return migrants to Haiti and other countries. [Telemundo 48 El Paso](#) [9/20/2021 6:20 AM, Staff, 5K] reports Governor Abbott issued a state disaster declaration for multiple counties in South Texas on May 31, 2021, due to the continued flow of undocumented migrants at the border. Additionally, Abbott implemented Operation Lone Star in March to combat human and drug smuggling in Texas, developed a plan to build a wall on the state-Mexico border, and signed HB9 on September 17 to designate \$ 1.8 thousand. millions for border security efforts.

[Afghanistan] C.D.C. mandates measles vaccinations and quarantines for Afghan refugees.

The [New York Times](#) [9/20/2021 6:52 PM, Eileen Sullivan, 24635K] reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is requiring Afghan refugees to get vaccinated against measles and quarantine for 21 days, after some were found to have the highly contagious virus when they arrived in the country this month. As of Monday, the C.D.C. said it knew of 16 confirmed cases of measles among Afghan evacuees and Americans who fled Afghanistan in recent weeks — up from six that the White House confirmed late last week — and four cases of mumps. Evacuees on American military bases in the United States and overseas will have to wait three weeks after getting the MMR vaccine that protects against measles, mumps and rubella before they can leave, the C.D.C. said, to give the vaccine time to take effect. The agency said Monday that some Afghan evacuees had “left bases before measles cases were identified,” prompting a mass vaccination campaign. The new information came in a special advisory that the agency issued to doctors around the country, warning them to be on alert for cases of measles and other infectious diseases among evacuees from Afghanistan. The advisory said the C.D.C. was “also aware of some cases” of tuberculosis, chickenpox, malaria, leishmaniasis, hepatitis A and Covid-19 among evacuees. It warned that the evacuees were at increased risk of gastrointestinal infections as well, including shigellosis, giardiasis and cryptosporidiosis.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

[TX] Conroe sex offender sentenced to 50 years in case involving dozens of victims

The [Houston Chronicle](#) [9/20/2021 2:30 PM, Jose R. Gonzalez, 183K] reports a registered sex offender from Conroe who was paroled in 2018 will be in prison until 2070. The 34-year-old man will not be released until the year 2070 after a plea deal last week where he stood accused of victimizing dozens of children, some as young as 8 years old — making sexual contact with four of them — in a case where he was found in possession of thousands of images of child pornography. On Friday, Jody James Malone Jr. pleaded guilty to the first-degree felony offense of continuous sexual abuse of a child, in presiding Judge Lisa Michalk’s 221st District Court. Michalk sentenced Malone to 50 years in prison with one year jail credit, according to the Montgomery County District Attorney’s Office. “Because of the strength of the investigation, we were able to secure this outcome without requiring his victims to appear publicly in court,” said lead prosecutor Special Victims Division Chief Shana Redwine in a statement. “This was a great relief to those children and their families.

We are grateful for the good work of law enforcement in this case.” According to the District Attorney’s Office, the agency aided in the case against Malone and his apprehension, along with Homeland Security Investigations, the Conroe Police Department and other agencies within the Houston-Metro Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

After Setback, Democrats Vow to Push Ahead on Immigration Overhaul

The New York Times [9/20/2021 6:29 PM, Luke Broadwater and Eileen Sullivan, 24635K] reports Congressional Democrats vowed on Monday to continue their efforts to grant legal status to millions of undocumented immigrants, a centerpiece of President Biden’s immigration plan, after a top Senate official rejected their bid to include it in their \$3.5 trillion social policy bill. Sunday’s decision by the Senate parliamentarian threatened to scuttle what Mr. Biden and Democrats had considered their best chance in decades to enact an initiative that has been stymied amid partisan polarization and procedural obstacles. Roll Call [9/20/2021 5:47 PM, Suzanne Monyak, 119K] reports New Jersey Sen. Bob Menendez, a key player in immigration discussions, told reporters Monday that Democrats “will be going back to the parliamentarian with other options in the coming days.” “She gave her view on only one approach on including a pathway to citizenship in reconciliation,” Menendez said, just hours after Parliamentarian Elizabeth MacDonough shot down efforts to include a path to legal status for certain immigrants in the bill. “I certainly intend to keep working until we get to a yes, and we’re not going to take no for an answer,” Menendez said. Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer also noted in a statement Sunday night that his caucus had “prepared alternate proposals” and would hold additional meetings with MacDonough. The alternative options are part of a back-and-forth likely to ensue with the parliamentarian, as Democrats work to include a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants for the first time in decades before potentially losing their congressional majorities in the 2022 midterm elections. In her decision, MacDonough said she found the proposed provisions, which would have covered millions of undocumented immigrants, including those brought to the U.S. as children, did not comply with Senate procedural rules governing the reconciliation process. Under the so-called Byrd rule, measures included in a reconciliation bill — which can pass with a simple majority — must directly have a budgetary impact. “Changing the law to clear the way to [lawful permanent resident] status is tremendous and enduring policy change that dwarfs its budgetary impact,” she wrote. FOX News [9/20/2021 5:53 AM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports that as part of this bill, Democrats had sought to include a number of immigration provisions, including a pathway to legal permanent residence and citizenship for a number of categories of illegal immigrants. Those eligible included recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, those who are protected by Temporary Protected Status, farmworkers, and those deemed “essential workers.” It was seen as Democrats’ best chance of passing pathways to citizenship for illegal immigrants, after efforts to pass a sweeping immigration reform bill earlier in the year stalled in the face of Republican opposition. Given the 50/50 split in the Senate, Democrats would have needed to get 10 Republican votes to overcome a filibuster, and Republicans have largely snubbed efforts to grant legal status to illegal immigrants — citing the effect they believe it would have on the already surging crisis at the southern border. But in a preliminary ruling, MacDonough ruled that such language was inappropriate for a budget reconciliation bill.

Reported similarly:

AP [9/20/2021 6:05 PM, Alan Fram, 495K]

Reuters [9/20/2021 4:01 PM, Susan Cornwell, 5304K]

Telemundo [9/20/2021 1:31 PM, Staff, 346K]

Proposed Rule Protecting ‘Dreamers’ Nears Public Release

Bloomberg [9/20/2021 9:07 AM, Lydia O’Neal, 18K] reports that the White House has completed its review of a proposed rule to preserve and beef up deportation protections for individuals brought to the U.S. as children, often called “dreamers.” The White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs sent the proposal to the Department of Homeland Security on Sept. 17, signaling that it could be released any day now. The rulemaking could potentially put the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program on better footing, if the rule is finalized. A Brownsville, Texas, federal judge on July 16 halted Homeland Security Department approvals of new applications, characterizing the program’s 2012 implementation as unlawful, but leaving current participants unscathed pending a further court order. President Joe Biden said his administration plans to appeal the decision. The administration included the proposed rule in its regulatory agenda June 11.

Customs and Border Protection

US extends land border restrictions with Canada, Mexico through Oct. 21

USA Today [9/20/2021 7:25 PM, Bailey Schulz, 6282K] reports that it’s been more than a month since Canada reopened its land borders to travelers from the United States, but the U.S. has no plans to return the favor any time soon. Border restrictions on nonessential travel have been extended again, this time through Oct. 21, White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator Jeff Zients said Monday. The restrictions were first implemented in March 2020 and have since been extended on a monthly basis. While the White House announced a new international air travel system that will open travel for all vaccinated foreign nationals in early November, it has not revealed when land border restrictions will ease. The land border restrictions, implemented by the DHS and its Canadian and Mexican counterparts, prohibits non-U.S. residents in Mexico and Canada from crossing for nonessential travel. Travelers from the U.S. can fly into Mexico and Canada and vice versa, although the Canadian government will soon require all air travelers, cruise ship passengers and passengers on interprovincial trains to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Health Canada, a department of the Canadian government, said Monday that the country’s current entry requirements would remain in place until at least Nov. 21. The Department of Homeland Security says it continues to enforce U.S. immigration laws at all U.S. borders, including between ports of entry.

Health and treatment violations discovered in Otay Mesa Detention Center

Telemundo 20 [9/20/2021 9:59 AM, Staff, 20K] reports that several violations of health regulations to prevent COVID-19 came to light by Core Civic, the agency that manages the Detention Center in Otay Mesa, as announced by the Office of Inspection General of the Department of Homeland Security. Reveals a statement from the Office of the Inspector General. "It's not surprising at all," those were the words of a migrant whose name we will not share to protect her identity, and who spent time at the Otay Mesa Detention Center last year. She was there from January 2020 to August of that same year. "They did not give us what was necessary to take precautions: antibacterial gel, masks, disinfectants, no, none of that," said the migrant. The Office of Inspection General of the Department of Homeland

Security recently revealed that after an unannounced visit they discovered several violations of the standards set by the government that compromised the health, safety and rights of the detainees. "Being there one is afraid of being infected, of getting sick, many things happen there," said the ex-prisoner. Among the breaches, mention was made of the failure to force the use of precautions such as face masks and social distancing, the failure to provide required services to segregated detainees, as well as access to recreational areas, to legal calls, to laundry, to change of sheets, correspondence, legal materials, cafeteria and law library. In addition, they found that inmates' requests were not adequately responded to and visiting hours were not specified, among other complaints. An ICE associate executive director is now in charge of making sure these oversights are not repeated.

Dozens of Republican governors call for meeting with Biden on border surge

The Hill [9/20/2021 9:53 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports that a group of 26 Republican governors led by Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott on Monday issued an open letter to President Biden requesting a meeting to discuss the surge in illegal border crossings. "The months-long surge in illegal crossings has instigated an international humanitarian crisis, spurred a spike in international criminal activity, and opened the floodgates to human traffickers and drug smugglers endangering public health and safety in our states," the governors wrote. According to the governors' letter, border apprehensions have risen by nearly 500 percent when compared to last year, accounting for around 1.3 million people. The state leaders appeared to take a shot at the "lack of federal action" on the issue and called on Biden to "take action to protect America, restore security, and end the crisis now." The letter from the GOP governors comes on the same day the U.S. government began deporting hundreds of Haitian migrants who had been camped under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas. More than 320 migrants landed in Haiti's capital city of Port-au-Prince on three flights from the U.S. on Sunday. Border Patrol officials have said that they are aiming to deport the majority of the estimated 12,000 migrants who have been living under a bridge in Texas. "We must end the current crisis and return to border operations that respect the laws of our land and the lives of all people, including those in our states looking to the federal government to enforce and protect our nation's borders," the governors added in their letter. They have requested a meeting with Biden within the next 15 days. The letter was also signed by Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey, Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan and South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem.

Reported similarly:

FOX News [9/20/2021 11:08 AM, Jessica Chasmar, 9251K]

[TX] DHS asks Pentagon to help move migrants from Del Rio, Texas

The Hill [9/20/2021 6:25 PM, Ellen Mitchell, 1776K] reports the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has asked the Pentagon to help move migrants awaiting asylum processing in Del Rio, Texas, to other facilities, the Department of Defense's (DOD) top spokesman said Monday. Press secretary John Kirby said the Pentagon has "received a request for transportation support" from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to help "efforts moving non-U.S. citizen migrants from Del Rio, Texas, to other CBP processing facilities." The DOD support, which will be on a reimbursable, temporary basis, will conclude on or before Oct. 20 and can "be provided at minimal risk to current DOD missions," Kirby said. The Pentagon, should it approve the plan, would lend some of its contracted air support —

not military aircraft — to the mission, Kirby added. He said he did not have further details on the DHS request as the Pentagon is “examining it, reviewing it and determining the best way forward.”

[TX] Texas Border Patrol discovers hotel room packed with illegals in suspected human smuggling operation

FOX News [9/20/2021 9:39 PM, Bradford Betz, 9251K] reports Texas Border Patrol agents discovered a hotel room in which 10 illegal immigrants were staying while they waited to be smuggled deeper into the U.S. Rio Grande Valley Sector Border Patrol agents received a tip Friday afternoon about a hotel in Edinburg being used to harbor illegal immigrants. The city is located in the southern tip of Texas, near the Mexico border. Agents went to investigate the hotel and witnessed two individuals enter the suspected room with several jugs of water and groceries. They continued to surveil the hotel room and determined it was being used to harbor illegal immigrants, U.S. Customs and Border Protection said. The Hidalgo County Sheriff’s Office conducted a welfare check and discovered more than 10 people in the room. CBP said the people were citizens from El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico. The migrants reportedly told the officers that they had been waiting to be transported further into the U.S. for nearly 30 days. The next morning, McAllen Border Patrol Station agents in Hidalgo discovered more illegal immigrants – including an unaccompanied child – using a storm drain to illegally enter the U.S. From early that morning until late in the evening, MCS agents and the Hidalgo Police Department set up a perimeter and arrested about 10 people using the storm drain to illegally enter the U.S. All subjects were citizens of Mexico and Honduras. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Transportation Security Administration

U.S. to lift covid ban for air travel from Europe and others, but land border restrictions remain

The Washington Post [9/20/2021 12:32 PM, Adam Taylor and Marisa Iati, 11773K] reports the White House announced on Monday that it would be lifting blanket travel restrictions on visitors from Europe, Britain and other countries that had been imposed at the start of the pandemic. Under rules to take effect in early November, fully vaccinated travelers from anywhere in the world would be able to fly to the United States, though they would also be subject to new testing and contact-tracing procedures, Jeff Zients, the White House coronavirus response coordinator, said in a call with reporters. Zients said the new system “follows the science” to keep Americans and international travel safe and would be “relying on individuals, rather than a country-based approach, so it’s a stronger system.” The travel ban — though a low-profile issue in the United States — had been particularly galling to Europeans, with one British newspaper dubbing it “Kafkaesque.” In total, the travel restrictions had impacted 33 nations, including Britain, India and China. “Travel ban lifted!” tweeted Stavros Lambrinidis, the European Union’s Ambassador to Washington, who only hours earlier had said that E.U. member states had been “working diligently” to help get the ban lifted. It is unclear if heightened political tensions in the U.S.-EU relationship ultimately pushed the United States to drop the ban. Secretary of State Antony Blinken had a long discussion about the travel ban on Friday with French ambassador to Washington, Philippe Etienne, just before Etienne was ordered to return to Paris due to France’s anger over a U.S.-UK-Australia submarine deal, said a senior State Department official familiar with the matter. When asked if the decision to lift the ban was aimed at restoring relations with Europe after recent such setbacks, Erica Barks-Ruggles, a State Department official at the

Bureau of International Organizations, said the decision was “driven by the science.” [USA Today](#) [9/20/2021 1:42 PM, Bailey Schulz, 6282K] reports that while the White House announced the new air travel system, it has not revealed when land border restrictions will ease. The land border restrictions, implemented by the DHS and its Canadian and Mexican counterparts, prohibits non-U.S. residents in Mexico and Canada from crossing for nonessential travel. Travelers from the U.S. can fly into Mexico and Canada and vice versa, although the Canadian government will soon require all air travelers, cruise ship passengers and passengers on interprovincial trains to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The mandate does not prevent U.S. citizens from returning home. The restriction applies to land and ferry travel. [Axios](#) [9/20/2021 10:20 AM, Oriana Gonzalez, 526K] reports "This new international travel system follows the science to keep Americans and international air travel safe," Zients said. "By requiring foreign nationals to be fully vaccinated in order to fly into the United States, and implementing additional strict safety protocols, we will protect Americans here at home and enhance the safety of international travel," he added. EU Home Commissioner Ylva Johansson told Axios earlier this month that she had received no explanation on why the ban remained from U.S. officials, and that Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas simply told her it was "very complicated."

Reported similarly:

[Politico](#) [9/20/2021 12:22 PM, Oriana Pawlyk, 1707K]

[AP](#) [9/20/2021 11:55 AM, Zeke Miller, 2701K]

[CNN](#) [9/20/2021 11:11 AM, Kevin Liptak, Arlette Saenz, and Betsy Klein, 4876K]

Flight bookings plummet amid delta variant fears

[The Hill](#) [9/20/2021 9:00 AM, Karl Evers-Hillstrom, 1776K] reports that flight bookings rapidly declined in August and early September amid a surge in COVID-19 cases fueled by the highly transmissible delta variant. Online customers spent \$4 billion on flights within the U.S. in August, down 24 percent from July and 35 percent below pre-pandemic levels, according to an analysis from Adobe Digital Insights. Through the first 10 days of September, flight bookings remained weak, down 39 percent from the same period in 2019. “Historically, July and August have similar consumer spending levels when it comes to domestic flight bookings,” says Vivek Pandya, lead analyst at Adobe Digital Insights. “The fact that August came in over \$1.2 billion under July is striking when you consider the historical benchmark, and it shows how much the delta variant has shaped what consumers feel about air travel.” The analysis found that holiday reservations have also taken a hit, with Thanksgiving flight bookings down 18 percent from the same period in 2019. Airlines have indicated that the delta variant’s continued spread has caused travelers to cancel their flights. The recent decline in air travel has forced carriers to lower their expectations for the rest of the year after strong summer travel sparked optimism of a robust comeback. Figures from the Transportation Security Administration confirms that air travel hasn’t picked back up in recent weeks. The agency screened roughly 1.9 million travelers on Friday, down from around 2.6 million people on the same day in 2019.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Biden launches plan to address ‘silent killer’: extreme heat

The [AP](#) [9/20/2021 10:27 AM, Matthew Daly, 495K] reports that the Biden administration is moving to protect workers and communities from extreme heat after a dangerously hot summer that spurred an onslaught of drought-worsened wildfires and caused hundreds of

deaths from the Pacific Northwest to hurricane-ravaged Louisiana. Under a plan announced Monday, the U.S. Departments of Labor and of Health and Human Services as well as other federal agencies are launching actions intended to reduce heat-related illness and protect public health. "White House climate adviser Gina McCarthy called heat stress a "silent killer" that disproportionately affects the poor, elderly and minority groups. While not as dramatic as wildfires or hurricanes, "heat stress is a significant, real threat that has deadly consequences," McCarthy said in an interview. "Many people don't recognize that heat stress is a real physical problem until it's too late for them," she said." The effort to address heat stress comes as President Joe Biden is working with world leaders to hammer out next steps against rapidly worsening climate change. A June heat wave in the Pacific Northwest, exacerbated by climate change, caused hundreds of deaths and thousands of emergency room visits for heat-related illnesses, In Louisiana, more than a million people, including the entire city of New Orleans, lost power when Hurricane Ida struck on Aug. 29. At least 12 of the 28 Ida-related deaths in Louisiana were caused by heat, according to the Louisiana Health Department. As part of the administration's plan, the Labor Department is launching a program to protect outdoor workers, including agricultural, construction and delivery workers, as well as those working indoors in warehouses, factories and kitchens. The Department of Homeland Security is launching a series of prize competitions focused on strengthening the nation's resilience to climate change. The first competition will focus on new ways to protect people at risk of heat-related illness or death during extreme heat events or in connection with other disasters.

Reported similarly:

USA Today [9/20/2021 1:13 PM, Maureen Groppe, 6282K]

Hurricane season continues to buzz with activity as Tropical Storms Peter and Rose spin in the Atlantic

USA Today [9/20/2021 3:13 PM, Doyle Rice, 6282K] reports that the 2021 hurricane season continues to buzz with activity as two tropical storms and two other disturbances were all in action Monday across the Atlantic basin. Tropical Storm Peter, which formed Sunday, could bring heavy rain to portions of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the northern Leeward Islands, the National Hurricane Center said. The rain could lead to "areas of urban and small stream flooding through Tuesday." In addition to the rain threat, swells generated by Peter are expected to affect the northern Leeward Islands early this week, then reach the Bahamas by midweek. "These swells could cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions," according to the Hurricane Center. As of 11 a.m. EDT Monday, the center of Peter was about 170 miles east-northeast of the northern Leeward Islands, the center said. Peter moved west-northwest at 15 mph with top winds of 50 mph. Looking at the future of the storm, AccuWeather meteorologist Randy Adkins said, "Peter is not anticipated to intensify past a low-end tropical storm as it encounters a combination of wind shear and drier air, which will prevent the storm from strengthening over the coming days." The hurricane center's forecast track shows Peter potentially approaching Bermuda by the weekend. Tropical Storm Rose, which formed in the eastern Atlantic Ocean on Sunday, poses no threat to any land areas, the hurricane center said. As of 11 a.m. EDT Monday, the center of Rose was about 620 miles west-northwest of the Cabo Verde Islands, moving northwest at 16 mph. It had winds of 40 mph. Rose is expected to continue to spin across the central Atlantic over the next few days and is likely to weaken into a depression by midweek, forecasters said.

[VT] Vermont urged to extend emergency motel housing for homeless

The [AP](#) [9/20/2021 10:22 AM, Lisa Rathke, 495K] reports that as hundreds of homeless Vermonters are expected to lose access to motel rooms paid for by the state during the pandemic, advocates urged officials on Monday to extend the benefit even longer. In July, the state extended the hotel voucher program 84 days for families with children, the disabled, pregnant women and other vulnerable people, and gave \$2,500 checks to those no longer eligible. About 543 of the 881 households in motel rooms will reach their 84-day limit on Wednesday, advocates said at a Montpelier press conference. "My clients are terrified that losing shelter will mean they'll start to experience mental health declines, that gains that they've made in their recovery will be lost. Many of them have conditions that put them at high risk for serious COVID-related complications if they are to be infected," said Mairead O'Reilly, an attorney with Vermont Legal Aid. Advocates say the extension is needed due to a lack of shelter beds and housing and a surge in COVID-19 cases with the spread of the delta variant. A 30-day extension is available to families who are intensely engaged in case management, who can show a housing plan and for people who have the most severe disabilities, said O'Reilly. "We don't think that practically many of the folks who are currently sheltered will be able to take advantage of these," she said. The groups sent a letter to the commissioner of the Vermont Department for Children and Families last week asking for the benefit to be extended as long as possible. Commissioner Sean Brown did not respond to an email seeking comment. The state is investing \$120 million to create more permanent and shared-housing arrangements while also encouraging shelters to expand, officials have said.

[NH] Sununu asks for 2nd disaster declaration after more storms

The [AP](#) [9/20/2021 4:32 PM, Staff] reports Gov. Chris Sununu on Monday requested a federal disaster declaration for New Hampshire as a result of storms and flooding that happened July 29-Aug. 2, a week after he asked for one covering storms from mid-July. Sununu's letter to Paul Ford, the acting regional administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in Boston, said roads and infrastructure were washed out in 35 communities across the state and forced some evacuations. Sununu's letter said the first round of rainfall was preceded by four weeks of above-average precipitation in southwestern New Hampshire, which had already experienced record rainfall that exceeded 10 inches. The southwest part of the state typically sees around 4 to 5 inches of rain throughout the entire month of July. The state estimated damages at \$3.2 million, but that doesn't represent the full scope of damages and costs communities and state agencies will have to spend to return to pre-disaster condition, the letter said. The costs are expected to be much higher.

[AL] Second Alabama man dies in floodwaters after heavy rain

The [AP](#) [9/20/2021 2:52 PM, Staff] reports a man who was kayaking with his children following heavy rains saved the kids when the current became too strong but couldn't get himself out of the water and drowned, officials said Monday. Johnny Henderson III, 35, of Hazel Green was pronounced dead after emergency workers located his body in flood waters on Sunday, Coroner Tyler Berryhill said. Henderson was the second person from Alabama to die in weekend flooding. "He was kayaking with his children near their home when the water current became very strong pulling them near a drainage pipe. He was able to get his children to safety from the kayak before later succumbing to the current of the dangerous waters," Berryhill said in a statement. Also on Sunday, searchers in Tuscaloosa found the body of a man whose sports-utility vehicle was overwhelmed by water during flash

flooding on Saturday. The body of Kelvin Watford, 40, was found about a quarter-mile downstream from where his vehicle was found, news outlets reported. Flood watches and warnings covered northern sections of Alabama and Mississippi, most of Tennessee and northwest Georgia. The rains are associated with remnants of Hurricane Nicholas, which made landfall on the Gulf Coast last week.

[LA] Louisiana colleges already reeling from the pandemic now struggle to recover from Ida

Politico [9/20/2021 5:35 PM, Jessica Calefati, 1707K] reports that only a third of Nicholls State University students were vaccinated against the coronavirus when they returned to campus last month, so the Louisiana school embarked on a campaign to press inoculations — and it seemed to be working. Hundreds of reluctant students got jabs in the first few days of the semester. Then Hurricane Ida made landfall just 70 miles south. The Category 4 storm not only threatened lives and left a million or so homes and businesses across Louisiana without power. It also battered 21 state colleges and universities, stalling campus vaccination efforts in a state with one of the lowest vaccination rates in the country. After months of strategizing how to ease students back to campus as the highly contagious Delta variant surged, college administrators shifted their priorities overnight as Ida scattered everyone. Now they're busy making sure students have food, water and shelter, and wondering how to counsel many of them through this semester. "Until recently, all we talked about was Covid. Now all we talk about is the hurricane," Nicholls President Jay Clune said in an interview. President Joe Biden approved a major disaster declaration for Louisiana the day Ida struck, authorizing individual and public assistance for hard-hit parishes. He also deployed FEMA teams to distribute grants for temporary housing, emergency home repairs and medical expenses linked to the hurricane. Ida made landfall three weeks ago but it wasn't until Monday that Nicholls was able to resume online classes.

Federal Protective Service

Federal officer arrested at Capitol rally won't be charged

The AP [9/20/2021 2:02 PM, Michael Balsamo, Eric Tucker and Colleen Long] reports a federal law enforcement officer was arrested carrying a gun at Saturday's rally at the U.S. Capitol billed to support the suspects charged in January's insurrection but will not be prosecuted. The 27-year-old New Jersey man is an officer with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. He was arrested by Capitol Police for illegally possessing a gun on the grounds of the Capitol after people in the crowd reported seeing him with a handgun and notified nearby officers. A spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office in Washington said prosecutors were "not moving forward with charges" but did not provide additional information about the decision. Two law enforcement officials said the officer was not at the rally in any official capacity. The officials could not discuss the matter publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity. The Department of Homeland Security's inspector general was also notified of his arrest. U.S. Customs and Border Protection said it was aware of the arrest and was "fully cooperating with the investigation." "CBP stresses honor and integrity in every aspect of our mission and expects officers to adhere to the oath they take to uphold the laws of this country," the agency said in a statement. The Hill [9/20/2021 5:19 PM, Monique Beals, 1776K] reports law enforcement in D.C. had taken extra steps to ensure safety at Saturday's event including a return of the fence that surrounded the Capitol and having the National Guard on standby. While federal law generally permits law enforcement officers to carry their guns in other states, regardless of their gun laws, that's not the case

on federal property where it's illegal to carry a gun, including the U.S. Capitol. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer was one of just four people who were arrested at the event, the AP said.

Reported similarly:

Washington Times [9/20/2021 11:17 AM, Emily Zantow, 381K]

Secret Service

[NY] Man charged with drug possession, forgery after deputies search Schaghticoke home

CBS6 [9/20/2021 12:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office say they have arrested a Schaghticoke man, on drug and counterfeit money charges. Investigators say deputies searched a home on Richfield Street, then arrested 38 year old Charles McIntyre. He's charged with multiple counts of possession of a forged instrument, forgery, criminal possession of a controlled substance, and criminal possession of a controlled substance with intent to sell. McIntyre was arraigned and remanded to the Rensselaer County Jail due to three prior felony convictions.

[NJ] New Jersey Man Admits Stealing more than \$450,000 in Unemployment Insurance Benefits

The United States Department of Justice [9/20/2021 12:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a Union, New Jersey, man today admitted that he illegally obtained more than \$450,000 in unemployment insurance benefits, Acting U.S. Attorney Rachael A. Honig announced. Maurice Mills, 29, of Union, New Jersey, pleaded guilty by videoconference before U.S. District Judge Brian Martinotti to an information charging him with wire fraud. On March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) was signed into law. The CARES Act created a new temporary federal unemployment insurance program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), which provides unemployment insurance benefits (UIB) for individuals who were not eligible for other types of unemployment (e.g., the self-employed, independent contractors, gig economy workers). The CARES Act also created a new temporary federal program called Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation that provides additional benefits to those eligible for PUA and regular UIB. The New York State Department of Labor administers and manages the regular unemployment and PUA programs in the State of New York. Between August and September of 2020, Mills submitted fraudulent UIB applications to the State of New York using the names of other individuals. As a result, the State of New York approved and provided, and Mills falsely obtained, more than \$450,000 in UIB. The charge of wire fraud is punishable by a maximum potential penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000, or twice the gross profits to Mills or loss suffered by the victims, whichever is greatest. Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 3, 2022. Acting U.S. Attorney Honig credited special agents of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jonathan Mellone in Manhattan; special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge George M. Crouch Jr., in Newark; postal inspectors of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Acting Inspector in Charge Raimundo Marrero in Newark; and special agents of the U.S. Secret Service, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Mark McKeivitt in Newark, with the investigation leading to today's arrest. She also thanked the New York State Department of Labor, Office of Special Investigations for its assistance in the investigation. The government is represented

by Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew Kogan of the U.S. Attorney's Office Cybercrime Unit in Newark.

[SC] South Carolina municipalities facing nonstop cyberattacks, working from home a potential threat

WBTW News13 [9/20/2021 2:22 PM, Braley Dodson, 24K, Neutral, Secondary] reports South Carolina municipalities can be an easy target for cyberattacks, highlighting the need for safety infrastructure months after high-profile hacks have shone a spotlight on the issue. "It is important for organizations to protect themselves from these attacks because everything now involves computers," said Ryan Truskey, the deputy chief information security officer for the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division. "It is something that every organization needs to protect." Truskey said that there is "a high level" of incidents in the state, with government, health care, and financial institutions the biggest targets for cybercriminals. What makes these attacks even more common, he said, is that municipalities can be seen as easy prey. "Cyberattacks are something that happen all day, every day, all night, and when we are protecting cyberattacks," Truskey said, also noting that security apps on networks block a lot of low-level attacks. The South Carolina Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity task force, or SC CIC, started under former Gov. Nikki Haley and was formed by Gov. Henry McMaster in an attempt to create a working group to investigate the state's infrastructure. The task force is made up of agencies such as the Office of Homeland Security, the FBI, the U.S. Secret Service, the National Guard, the state emergency management, and the election commission, among others. Truskey said it's a high-priority topic for SLED. With how fast technology changes, he said, it's hard to stay up to date. Systems need to be functional, but also secure. More recent attacks have targeted supply chains and shown that agencies can no longer inherently trust software to block cybercriminals. "User education is extremely important, and that is one of the things that we provide in the SC CIC is training in that space," Truskey said.

[KY] Police Warn Princeton Businesses To Check For Counterfeit Bills

WPKY [9/20/2021 3:00 PM, Tammy Hancock, Neutral, Secondary] reports officials with the Princeton Police Department are warning local businesses about counterfeit bills being used in the area to make purchases. On Monday, Princeton Police say they received a report from a local bank stating four local businesses have received fake \$20 bills over the weekend. In addition, they indicate Lyon County has also received counterfeit \$20 bills over the weekend. According to Princeton Police, they posted the alert to their social media page to warn all businesses to check their money. If you suspect someone is trying to pass counterfeit currency, call the Princeton Police Department.

[GA] Georgia police department warns about fake cash floating around city

WSBTv [9/20/2021 9:31 AM, Staff, 139K, Neutral, Secondary] reports there is some funny money floating around a Georgia county and a police department wants people to be aware. The Hazlehurst Police Department posted on its Facebook Monday about the fake bills. The department said that phony 100 dollar bills were shot out of a cannon during a recent homecoming celebration. The bills look real on the surface, but on closer inspection, the words "For Motion Picture Use Only" is printed on the front of the bill. The phrase is also posted on the back of the bill instead of "United State of America." The police department said it wants word to be spread about the fake money. This isn't the first Georgia city to have an issue of phony bills floating around. Last month, the Rabun County sheriff's office warned about fake \$100 bills floating around the county. The alleged fake bills were posted

on the Facebook page with the title: "FAKE CURRENCY ALERT." Two of the bills has the word "copy" on the lower left hand corner of the bill.

[FL] South Florida Man Charged with Defrauding After-School Program for Underprivileged Immigrant Children Appears in Federal Court

The United States Department of Justice [9/20/2021 11:00 AM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports that Friday, Miami resident Ramon Caridad Rodriguez, 28, made his first appearance in South Florida federal court to face a grand jury indictment charging him with defrauding his former employer, a religious charity organization that runs after-school programs for underprivileged immigrant children to help them avoid gangs and gang violence. According to the indictment, Rodriguez abused the company's trust by using a company credit card to make thousands of dollars' worth of personal purchases and then attempted to conceal those purchases through lies and altered bank statements. Some of these purchases included items like lawn chairs, bug spray, tiki torches, and personal groceries. He used over \$160,000 of the company's money for his personal gain, says the indictment. The indictment charges Rodriguez with nine counts of wire fraud. If convicted, Rodriguez faces up to 20 years in federal prison on each charge. Juan Antonio Gonzalez, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Brian Swain, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service (USSS), Miami Field Office, and Art Acevedo, Chief, City of Miami Police Department made the announcement.

[KS] A circulation of counterfeit money reported in southeast Kansas

KODE TV [9/20/2021 7:50 PM, Jake Kaufman, 5K, Neutral, Secondary] reports a circulation of fake money is being reported in southeast Kansas. Reports are coming in to law enforcement about counterfeit one hundred dollar bills. Many of them that say "for motion picture copy money." Cherokee County Sheriff David Groves says it's important for cashiers or anyone in retail to be able to identify a fake bill. "It's always an ongoing issue, and we try and visit with the business community from time to time just to remind them and new staff of the security measures they can take to help safeguard themselves from this fake money or fictitious money," David Groves – Cherokee County Sheriff Groves adds some signs for fake money is the texture, a security strip and a hologram that can be seen under a light. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[CO] Fake \$50 bill reported in Kearney area

The North Platte Bulletin [9/20/2021 5:50 PM, Staff, Neutral, Secondary] reports a Kearney business received a counterfeit \$50 bill Monday, and it was difficult to tell it from a real bill. Kearney chamber of Commerce President Derek Rusher said the counterfeiters bleached a \$1 bill before printing on it, so the \$50 felt and looked like the real thing. Rusher sent an email to Kearney businesses telling them to be alert. A bank caught the \$50 as a \$1 bill when it went through their currency counter, Rusher said. When held to the light, the fake \$50 did not have the President watermark like an authentic bill, Rusher said. Counterfeit bills sometimes turn up in North Platte too, often in connection with drug arrests.

[CA] Counterfeit Money, Illegal Weapons: Police Suspect Wildomar Man

The Patch [9/20/2021 12:43 PM, Toni McAllister, 2117K, Positive, Secondary] reports a man suspected of manufacturing firearms and counterfeit money in Wildomar was arrested Friday but has since been released from jail on \$55,000 bail. Patrick Kirk, 30, of Wildomar was taken into custody by Riverside County Sheriff's deputies around 5 p.m. in the 21400 block of Apricot Lane following a search warrant service at the address. Kirk was booked

into Southwest Detention Center on suspicion of possessing a ghost gun, being a felon in possession of a firearm, being a felon in possession of ammunition, manufacturing an assault weapon, possession of an assault weapon, and being in possession of body armor, according to jail records. Kirk was released from custody Sunday in lieu of \$55,000 and is due to appear in court in December, jail records show.

Coast Guard

[FL] Florida doctor discovers empty raft likely from Cuba, shows what people are 'willing to sacrifice for freedom'

FOX News [9/19/2021 10:07 PM, Bradford Betz, 9251K] reports that a Miami-based doctor discovered an empty raft with drinking water still on board a few miles off the coast of Florida on Saturday. Writing in Spanish, Ernesto Cardenas, a gynecologist and obstetrician, said he found a "rustic boat" while out sailing. "It was empty but still had some drinking water and that gives me hope that someone rescued them," Cardenas wrote. "This is the reality and despair that those who do not have freedom live under the dirty leg of socialism and communism #sosocuba #sosvenezuela #communismsucks #uscoastguard." In a video, Cardenas noted that "This is what people are willing to sacrifice for freedom." The U.S. Coast Guard could not be reached for comment, but it routinely urges potential migrants from Cuba "Don't take to the seas."

[MI] Pair of Michigan kayakers die amid rough Lake Superior waters, gale-force winds

FOX News [9/20/2021 11:54 AM, Stephen Sorace, 9251K] reports that the bodies of two kayakers in Michigan were recovered Friday along the coast of Lake Superior after the pair went missing amid gale-force winds and waves as high as 7 feet, officials said Sunday. The victims have been identified as Kimberly Aiello of Troy, Michigan, and David Delegato of Shelby Township, Michigan, the National Park Service said in a statement. Aiello and Delegato were reported missing on Thursday as Lake Superior was experiencing gale-force gusts of up to 35 knots and waves 3 to 5 feet high, with some reaching 7 feet, the NPS said. Following a search by the NPS and other state and federal agencies, the U.S. Coast Guard recovered the bodies Friday afternoon. The weather conditions were believed to be contributing factors in the pair's deaths, according to officials. "Specifically, the United States Coast Guard aviation and water borne assets who worked tirelessly to complete their mission in support of the National Park Service." The NPS website has an extensive safety guide about kayaking at Pictured Rocks.

CISA/Cybersecurity

Biden wants to make it harder to pay ransomware hackers

The Washington Post [9/20/2021 7:33 AM, Joseph Marks, 11773K] reports the Biden administration is making swift progress on its master strategy to combat ransomware. But any reduction in attacks may still be far off. The administration plans to move as early as this week to place sanctions on financial exchanges that facilitate ransomware payments, as Ellen Nakashima reports. The big goal: To disrupt the current ecosystem in which it's exceptionally easy for victims to pay ransoms to hackers that lock up their computers — and exceedingly difficult to track those payments once they're made. The government has been pushing for such improvements for roughly the past decade. But during that time, hacks have only become more damaging. The Biden administration mandated minimum

cyber protections for pipelines in July, and officials have openly speculated about imposing such standards for other critical industries. But even White House officials warn any changes will be a long time coming. "This is a problem that's built up over a number of years and it's not something that will be solved in a moment," an official said when announcing the strategy. The most damaging and prolific criminal ransomware gangs operate on Russian territory and with the Kremlin's tacit approval, U.S. officials say. Russia has joined the United States and other nations in agreeing to abide by a series of cybersecurity rules of the road over the years but done little to change its actual behavior.

[IA] Iowa-Based Grain Cooperative Hit With Ransomware Attack

Bloomberg [9/20/2021 11:21 AM, William Turton, 6400K] reports that Iowa-based grain cooperative New Cooperative Inc. was struck by ransomware in recent days and has shut down its computer systems as it tries to mitigate the attack. The attack occurred on or around Friday, according to Allan Liska, senior threat analyst at the cybersecurity firm Recorded Future Inc. The ransomware gang, which goes by the name BlackMatter, is demanding a \$5.9 million ransom, Liska said. New Cooperative confirmed that they had been attacked and said they had contacted law enforcement and were working with data security experts to investigate and remediate the situation. "New Cooperative recently identified a cybersecurity incident that is impacting some of our company's devices and systems," according to a statement from the cooperative. "Out of an abundance of caution, we have proactively taken our systems offline to contain the threat, and we can confirm it has been successfully contained." New Cooperative has communicated with its feed customers and is working to create workarounds to get feed to animals while its systems are down, a person familiar with the matter said. The U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. It is unclear to what extent New Cooperative's systems have been affected. BlackMatter is believed to be linked to the ransomware group DarkSide, which attacked Colonial Pipeline Inc. earlier this year, triggering fuel shortages along on the East Coast. The Hill [9/20/2021 7:20 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports "Please know that NEW Cooperative is treating this matter with the utmost seriousness, and we are using every available tool and resource to quickly restore our systems," the company spokesperson told The Hill. "We appreciate the patience of our valued customers as we investigate this matter and work to restore functionality and will share additional information directly with our customers as we learn it." In what are thought to be screenshots of a negotiation between a spokesperson for New Cooperative and the hackers tweeted out by security researchers, New Cooperative noted that 40 percent of the nation's grain production runs through its software, and that the ransomware attack would "break the supply chain very shortly" if the hackers did not relent. A spokesperson for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the key federal agency tasked with securing critical U.S. infrastructure, declined to comment in favor of comments from New Cooperative.

Reported similarly:

Reuters [9/20/2021 4:27 PM, Karl Plume and Christopher Bing, 5304K]

[AK] Alaskan health department still struggling to recover after 'nation-state sponsored' cyberattack

CNN [9/20/2021 7:09 PM, Sean Lyngaas, 4876K] reports some computer networks at the Alaskan health department are still offline after foreign government-backed hackers breached the department in May, a spokesperson told CNN on Monday. News of the

breach first emerged in May, but Alaskan officials now say that "nation-state sponsored" hackers exploited a vulnerability in the health department's website to gain further access to department data. The hackers may have accessed Alaskans' Social Security numbers and health and financial information, officials said. "There is still no timeline for when all services that are currently offline will be back online," Clinton Bennett, a spokesperson for the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, told CNN. He pointed to the department's large and complex IT infrastructure in explaining the long recovery time. Bennett declined to comment when asked which foreign government was behind the intrusions, or what the attacker's motives were. The news underscores the arduous process that organizations face in fully recovering from a complex breach. The Alaskan health department didn't restore its electronic system for processing birth, death and marriage certificates until July 26, according to the department's statement. The FBI and US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency declined to comment on the breach. Mandiant, a cybersecurity firm hired to investigate the breach, declined to comment.

Terrorism Investigations

[NY] N.Y. man arrested over threat to kill Dominican president during to city

The Washington Post [9/20/2021 7:54 PM, Shayna Jacobs and Samantha Schmidt, 11773K] reports a self-proclaimed QAnon supporter was arrested for threatening to kill the president of the Dominican Republic after he tracked down the official in New York City where he is staying for the United Nations General Assembly, federal authorities said Monday. Enrique Figueroa, 47, made repeated threats on social media in recent weeks, depicting a growing violent obsession with President Luis Abinader and landing himself on the radar of law enforcement officials in New York who are in a state of heightened alert because of the events at the U.N. which began last week, the Jewish high holidays and the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. In a recent post that set off alarms for federal agents who were monitoring him, Figueroa uploaded photos of Abinader's motorcade in New York City, putting himself in proximity to the Caribbean dignitary. Assistant U.S. Attorney Alexander Li, without naming the targeted official, said in court that Figueroa "appears to have tracked" Abinader's whereabouts in New York City, further escalating concerns over menacing messages he posted to Instagram and Facebook accounts — aimed at the foreign leader. Figueroa's attorney, Amy Gallicchio, argued his words were "hollow" and that he was not a true threat. "There's nothing to suggest there is any intent to carry out these words," she added. In a video taken by a Dominican news network on Monday, Abinader said he didn't have any details about the threats against him. Reached after Figueroa's court appearance, a spokesman for Abinader said he only recently learned of the development and did not provide further comment. U.S. Magistrate Judge James L. Cott ordered Figueroa held without the option of posting bond, after Li said that the suspect is a public danger and a flight risk. He recently tried to travel to the Dominican Republic to try to find Abinader but was stopped at Newark International Airport because his passport had expired.

[DC] US Capitol rioter who stormed Senate floor reports to prison while trying to undo his felony guilty plea

CNN [9/20/2021 7:56 PM, Marshall Cohen, 4876K] reports that the first January 6 rioter to be sentenced for a felony reported to prison on Monday to serve his eight-month sentence, while mounting a longshot legal bid to undo his guilty plea. Paul Hodgkins of Florida stormed the US Capitol during the pro-Trump insurrection and was one of the few dozen

rioters who breached the Senate floor shortly after it was evacuated. He pleaded guilty to obstructing the congressional certification of Joe Biden's victory and was sentenced to eight months in prison. But as his surrender date drew closer, Hodgkins fired his veteran attorney, hired a new one who only passed the bar last year and launched an effort to unwind his guilty plea and reduce his prison term -- even though the judge's eight-month sentence was far less than the Justice Department's 1.5-year recommendation. The about-face from Hodgkins comes as other rioters grapple with accepting responsibility and amid increasing efforts by Republicans to rewrite the history of January 6. Protesters returned to Capitol grounds on Saturday in support of the few dozen rioters who are in jail before trial. And prominent right-wing figures are still flooding the zone with disinformation about the insurrection. Hodgkins, 38, turned himself in on Monday and is now in prison, his attorney said. The lawyer refused to say where Hodgkins is serving his sentence, citing fears for his safety. The Bureau of Prisons website that lists all federal inmates hasn't been updated yet with Hodgkins' information. "The circling blood-thirsty sharks can feast," Hodgkins' defense attorney Carolyn Stewart told CNN in an email Monday. "The haters can rejoice, while the prayers of all others are welcome."

[CA] California militia member pleads guilty to conspiracy charge

The [AP](#) [9/20/2021 8:40 PM, Staff, 2701K] reports an alleged member of a California right-wing militia group pleaded guilty Monday to charges stemming from the fatal shooting of a federal guard in Oakland more than a year ago. Kenny Miksch, 21, became the fourth member of the so-called Grizzly Scouts to plead guilty to conspiring to obstruct justice, KTVU-TV reported. He faces 20 years in prison when sentenced. The men are accused of conspiring to destroy communications and other records about the May 29, 2020, killing of federal security officer David Patrick Underwood and attempted murder of his partner as they guarded the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building in Oakland. The officers were shot while a large demonstration over the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis was underway nearby. Prosecutors said Air Force Staff Sgt. Steven Carrillo, 32, fatally shot Underwood and wounded his partner. They said Carrillo used the protest as cover for the crime and for his escape. Carrillo has pleaded not guilty. The Grizzly Scouts identified with the decentralized "boogaloo" movement, which calls for armed conflict against the government, federal prosecutors said. Miksch was responsible for the group's training and firearms instruction, prosecutors said.

Reported similarly:

[San Francisco Chronicle](#) [9/20/2021 8:41 PM, Bob Egelko, 495K]

National Security News

Amidst global criticism, Biden faces big week at UN General Assembly

The [New York Times](#) [9/20/2021 3:00 AM, Rick Gladstone, 24635K] reports the United Nations convenes its annual speeches by world leaders on Tuesday against a backdrop of seemingly irreversible planet warming, polarized superpower relations and a tenacious pandemic that has worsened the global rich-poor divide. President Joe Biden will be making his debut speech as president amid strong new doubts about his ability to vault the United States back into a position of global leadership. Unlike 2020, when the session was conducted almost entirely virtually because of the pandemic, more than 100 leaders and other high-ranking representatives intend to deliver their speeches in person. But access to the 16-acre U.N. complex in Manhattan remains strictly limited, with mandatory mask-

wearing and other Covid-prevention measures. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield of the United States told reporters that the measures were meant to ensure that the General Assembly “does not become a superspreader event.” The Los Angeles Times [9/20/2021 1:27 PM, Tracy Wilkinson, 3710K] reports that Biden administration officials insist that partnerships have not suffered permanent damage despite recent setbacks. But several NATO nations said the U.S. failed to give them proper warning of the withdrawal from Afghanistan, a charge the Biden administration denies. Another blow to U.S. credibility came Friday when the Pentagon acknowledged a drone-controlled air strike in Kabul, Afghanistan, killed not an Islamist terrorist as it first claimed but 10 civilians. And in the same week, the Biden administration ignited a huge row with the United States’ oldest ally, France when the president announced the U.S. was sharing sensitive technology to help Australia build nuclear-powered submarines, which scuttled Canberra’s sub deal with France. Claiming it was blindsided, France recalled its ambassadors to Washington and to Australia, and accused Biden of betrayal and of being almost as bad as Trump. So Biden, and Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, may not find as much of a warm and welcoming reception at the U.N. this week as they may have at one time expected. “France is our longest ally, our longest friend and partner, and continues to be an extremely valuable ally across a huge range of issues,” the State Department’s senior official for dealing with international organizations, Erica Barks-Ruggles, said Monday. Axios [9/20/2021 1:53 PM, Zachary Basu, 526K] reports Biden will also use his address to lay out his vision for an era of “intensive diplomacy” with allies and “vigorous competition” with great powers — without a Cold War with China. UN Secretary-General António Guterres made headlines this morning when he urged the U.S. and China to repair their “completely dysfunctional” relationship for the sake of solving global challenges. Biden will stress in his remarks on Tuesday that he “does not believe in the notion of a new Cold War, with the world divided into blocs,” an administration official said. “He believes in vigorous, intensive, principled competition that does not tip over into conflict.” Biden will also hold a major COVID summit on Wednesday on the sidelines of the General Assembly at which he’ll lobby countries to donate vaccines for the developing world.

[France] UK, Australia confident in relations with France, but French ambassador says they ‘absolutely weren’t informed’ of new submarine deal

The AP [9/20/2021 5:18 AM, Staff] reports Prime Minister Boris Johnson has insisted that Britain’s relationship with France is “ineradicable,” despite fury in Paris over a U.S.-U.K.-Australia submarine deal. A meeting between French Defense Minister Florence Parly and her British counterpart, Ben Wallace, has been postponed as the agreement roils relations between France and major allies. The French government appears to have been blindsided by the submarine deal reached last week between the U.S., U.K. and Australia, which canceled its own previously made agreement. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian called it a “stab in the back,” and France recalled its ambassadors from Washington and Canberra, a highly unusual move among allies. Johnson said U.K.-France relations were “very friendly” despite the diplomatic turmoil. “Our love of France is ineradicable,” Johnson told reporters traveling with him to New York for the U.N. General Assembly. “AUKUS is not in any way meant to be zero-sum, it’s not meant to be exclusionary. It’s not something that anybody needs to worry about and particularly not our French friends.” Reuters [9/20/2021 9:41 AM, Colin Packham and Philip Blenkinsop, 5304K] reports Australia’s trade minister said on Monday he would seek a meeting with France to ease tensions over Canberra’s decision to scrap the \$40 billion submarine deal, and was confident it would not cloud EU-Australia trade talks. Australian minister Dan Tehan told Australian Broadcasting Corporation radio on Monday he would be “very keen” to meet his French counterpart when

he is in Paris in October. And he told Sky News Australia: "It's just very much business as usual when it comes to our negotiations on that free trade agreement." French European Affairs Minister Clement Beaune told France 24 television on Friday that he could not see how Australia could now be trusted in trade negotiations. Lange said the willingness of EU countries to compromise was likely to be "quite limited," particularly for France and notably on agriculture. He also said a future deal might now contain more penalties for non-compliance. [CNN](#) [9/20/2021 5:07 AM, Joseph Ataman and Ben Westcott, 4876K] reports France's ambassador to the United States reiterated in an interview Monday that the breakdown of the French-Australian submarine deal last week came as a surprise to Paris. Speaking on French radio station RTL, Ambassador Philippe Etienne said French Cabinet ministers were not given any indication the agreement would be canceled when they met with their Australian counterparts just days before the new deal was announced. "We absolutely weren't informed of the new course," Etienne said. He said senior members of the Macron administration were still discussing what to do next. "As soon as we learned Wednesday morning (of the new deal), I demanded to be seen, I was seen," by the White House, Etienne said. "(But) it was a little late." Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said that while he understood France's disappointment, "Australia's national interest comes first."

[North Korea] North Korea warns submarine deal with Australia could lead to nuclear arms race

[The Hill](#) [9/20/2021 10:34 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports that North Korea on Monday joined the international feud over the trilateral agreement between the U.S., U.K. and Australia to share nuclear submarine technology, warning that the move would trigger a nuclear arms race. "These are extremely undesirable and dangerous acts which will upset the strategic balance in the Asia-Pacific region and trigger off a chain of nuclear arms race," a North Korean Foreign Ministry official was quoted as saying on state media, according to [The Washington Post](#). "It is quite natural that neighboring countries including China condemned these actions as irresponsible ones of destroying the peace and stability of the region and the international nuclear nonproliferation system and of catalyzing the arms race," said the official. Almost immediately after the deal was announced last week, China said the three western countries should "shake off their Cold-War mentality and ideological prejudice." North Korea's condemnation comes less than a week after it launched multiple test missiles, heightening tensions on the Korean peninsula. The same day that North Korea launched its test missiles, South Korea also tested missiles from a submerged 3,700-ton submarine. South Korean President Moon Jae-in condemned the North Korea's missile tests as a provocation while Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said the missile tests were a "threat to the peace and security" in the region. The agreement between the three countries will give Australia at least eight nuclear submarines and abandons a prior \$40 billion agreement Canberra signed with France for diesel-electric submarines.

{End of Report} [RETURN TO TOP](#)

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS**

MARY DOE, individually and as next friend of Jane Doe,
John Doe and Kyle Doe,
NANCY DOE, individually and as next friend of Jane Doe,
John Doe and Kyle Doe,
JANE DOE, individually and as mother and next friend of
John Doe and Kyle Doe,
JOHN DOE,
KYLE DOE,

Plaintiffs,

v.

ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS, Secretary of Homeland
Security,
TROY A. MILLER, Acting Commissioner of U.S.
Customs and Border Protection,
WILLIAM A. FERRARA, Executive Assistant
Commissioner of CBP Office of Field Operations,
RAUL L. ORTIZ, Chief of U.S. Border Patrol,
TAE D. JOHNSON, Acting Director of U.S. Immigration
and Customs Enforcement,
XAVIER BECERRA, Secretary of Health and Human
Services,
ROCHELLE P. WALENSKY, Director of Centers for
Disease Control and Prevention,
MERRICK GARLAND, Attorney General,

Defendants.

Civ. No.

**PETITION FOR A WRIT
OF MANDAMUS AND
COMPLAINT FOR
DECLARATORY AND
INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

Introduction

1. This case seeks to stop the imminent expulsion of a Haitian mother and her two, 10-year-old twin sons seeking protection from persecution and torture under U.S. and international law who are currently being summarily expelled from the United States without any chance to seek protection under U.S. law. They are being expelled (rather than “removed” with the legal protections that process affords) as part of the government’s unlawful application of 42 U.S.C. § 265, a public health provision. Fulfilling its goal of shuttering the asylum system, the Trump administration seized upon the Covid-19 pandemic to claim that Title 42 gave it the unprecedented power to expel noncitizens without following U.S. immigration laws. President Biden’s Administration continues to expel thousands of asylum seekers in violation of U.S. and international law under the same provision. However, as a federal district court has already ruled, Title 42 provides no such authority and its application in this manner is unlawful. It does not override immigration law, and it authorizes quarantines, not expulsions. With their Massachusetts family members, these Plaintiffs ask the Court to enjoin the application of Title 42 to them and to require the Department of Homeland Security to process their claims for protection under immigration law, 8 U.S.C. §§ 1101 *et seq.*

2. Plaintiff Jane Doe is Haitian mother who crossed the border into the United States in Del Rio, Texas with her two sons, John Doe and Kyle Doe and who requested asylum from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”).

3. Instead of providing the process prescribed by Title 8 (the Immigration and Nationality Act), CBP simply placed the Plaintiffs on a bus to San Antonio, where Title 42 expulsion flights are regularly departing to Haiti. The family’s expulsion is occurring shortly after their presenting themselves to CBP today, September 22, 2021, and without any

opportunity to assert claims for protection and without the procedures required by immigration law.

4. U.S. immigration law provides a comprehensive scheme balancing the protection of asylum seekers—including Jane Doe and her children—with the expeditious enforcement of immigration law and the protection of national security and public health.

5. The Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”) permits the expedited removal of noncitizens who enter the United States unlawfully and without entry documents, if, after an opportunity to be screened by an immigration judge, they are found *not* to have a “significant possibility” of establishing asylum eligibility. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b). But noncitizens may not be sent to countries where they will face persecution, and those seeking asylum may not be removed without either an asylum screening for “credible fear” or a full proceeding before an immigration judge.

6. U.S. immigration law also makes express provision for public health. It has long provided procedures for removing individuals believed to be infected with communicable diseases, and for detaining and examining noncitizens “coming from a country . . . where any of such diseases are prevalent or epidemic.” 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(1)(A)(i), 1222(a).

7. Former President Trump personally directed his administration to stop lawful asylum seekers at the southern border by any and all means. In response, in January 2019—under a program it called the “Migrant Protection Protocols” (MPP)—DHS began expelling asylum seekers into dangerous Mexican border cities to await their U.S. immigration hearings.

8. According to reporting in the Wall Street Journal¹ and the New York Times,² President Trump’s immigration advisor Stephen Miller recommended the “Title 42” expulsion policy as a pretext to prevent immigrants from entering the U.S. in 2019, first when an outbreak of mumps spread through immigration detention facilities in six states and again later that year when Border Patrol stations had outbreaks of the flu. On both those occasions, Mr. Miller’s pretextual use of the Title 42 policy was overruled internally.

9. However, in March 2020, Mr. Miller’s pretextual Title 42 policy was adopted by the White House, which used the coronavirus pandemic as a means of augmenting this effort to end asylum at the southern border. Purporting to act under the “inspection and quarantine” provisions of 42 U.S.C. § 265, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) enacted regulations and issued a sweeping order purporting to authorize not inspection and quarantine, but expulsion. Whereas migrants processed through the MPP are in removal proceedings in the United States, and can apply for asylum, migrants expelled under Title 42 are not placed in any U.S. legal proceedings. Instead, often without any paperwork, they are simply expelled into Mexico, or detained for days or weeks and then put on planes to their home countries. Title 42 expulsions are driven by immigration policy goals, not public health imperatives, and have already been found to be illegal. *See P.J.E.S. v. Wolf*, 502 F. Supp. 3d 492 (D.D.C. 2020), appeal pending, D.C. Cir. No. 20-5357.

10. In subsequent litigation, the court certified a class and entered a Classwide

¹ See Michelle Hackman, Andrew Restuccia & Stephanie Armour, *CDC Officials Objected to Order Turning Away Migrants at Border*, The Wall Street Journal (October 3, 2020), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/cdc-officials-objected-to-order-turning-away-migrants-at-border-11601733601>.

² See Caitlin Dickerson & Michael D. Shear, *Before Covid-19, Trump Aide Sought to Use Disease to Close Borders*, N.Y. TIMES (May 3, 2020), [nytimes.com/2020/05/03/us/coronavirus-immigration-stephen-miller-public-health.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/03/us/coronavirus-immigration-stephen-miller-public-health.html).

Preliminary Injunction of Title 42 to asylum-seeking families *See Huisha-Huisha v. Mayorkas*, 2021 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 175980 (D.D.C. September 16, 2021). The Biden administration is appealing the injunction, the enforcement of which is stayed until September 30, 2021.

11. While the Presidential administration has changed, unfortunately, the discriminatory treatment of Black, Indigenous and Latino asylum seekers and unlawful use Title 42 expulsion policy has not. In images that shocked the nation and were evocative of slavery, journalists documented the deployment of CBP agents on horseback against Haitian migrants on September 19, 2021. The horrifying treatment of asylum-seeking families is the result of abusive and racially discriminatory immigration policies by the Biden administration.

12. On September 18, 2021, the Department of Homeland Security announced a six-step “strategy to address the increase of migrants in [the Texas border city of] Del Rio” (where Plaintiffs were held) that included a “surge” of agents to “improve control of the area” and new expulsion flights to Haiti.

13. The newly scheduled flights, which, on information and belief, are to include Plaintiffs, are the most recent in a series of expulsions the administration has carried out to Haiti, despite leaked documents showing that Homeland Security staff specifically warned that migrants and asylum seekers returned to Haiti “may face harm,” including violent crime, kidnapping, political crisis and civil unrest.

14. On September 23, 2021, Daniel Lewis Foote, the U.S. Special Envoy for Haiti, resigned in protest, saying he will “*not be associated with the United States inhumane, counterproductive decision to deport thousands of Haitian refugees*” from the US-Mexico border.

15. As recently as May, the U.S. government recognized that political unrest and

human rights abuses had made it impossible for Haitians to safely return to their country, which prompted DHS to designate Haitians in the United States as of May for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Under U.S. law, that status does not apply to new arrivals.

16. Since the announcement of the six-step strategy, DHS has reportedly expelled Haitians from Del Rio on five to eight flights a day, and has interdicted people fleeing Haiti by sea. These procedures echo abusive policies in past years, when Haitian asylum seekers were interdicted and summarily returned, though eventually some were detained at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba or on ships and screened for asylum. The Biden administration's actions violate U.S. and international law if it results in denying Haitians the right to challenge their removal to a country where they may face harm.

17. On September 23, 2021, Plaintiffs informed their counsel that that they were being removed from the bridge at Del Rio, Texas and taken by bus to San Antonio by the government. Counsel has been unable to reach Plaintiffs since that time. Counsel for Plaintiffs contacted U.S. Customs and Border Protection Deputy Assistant Chief Counsel Eric J. Drootman at the end of and after business hours by e-mail and telephone and was ultimately informed that Plaintiffs were not in the system and the government could provide no information at that time. *See Exhibit A*, Declaration of Amy Maldonado.

18. On September 24, 2021, at 10:52 a.m., in response to a subsequent e-mail, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Deputy Assistant Chief Counsel Eric J. Drootman confirmed via e-mail to Counsel for Plaintiffs that Plaintiffs are in CBP custody, and that he could provide no further information regarding their processing. On information and belief, Plaintiffs' expulsion under Title 42 is imminent.

19. Jane Doe and her children are, at this moment, in the process of being unlawfully

expelled by DHS under the CDC's Title 42 order without the legally required inquiry into whether they would face persecution. These expulsions violate immigration law, Title 42, the Administrative Procedure Act, and the Constitution, as well of the duty of the United States to avoid *refoulement*. Plaintiffs seek a writ of mandamus ordering the Defendants to provide them with the legal process to which they are entitled under Title 8, and declaratory and injunctive enjoining their expulsion and providing them the opportunity to have their requests for protection considered in accordance with the INA.

Parties

20. Plaintiff Mary Doe is a United States citizen and resides in Massachusetts. She brings suit on her own behalf and as next friend to her sister, Jane Doe and to her 10-year-old nephews, John Doe and Kyle Doe.³

21. Plaintiff Nancy Doe is a United States citizen and resides in Massachusetts. She brings suit on her own behalf and as next friend to her aunt, Jane Doe and to her 10-year-old cousins, John Doe and Kyle Doe.⁴

22. Plaintiff Jane Doe fled Haiti to seek asylum in the United States, and was one of thousands of Haitians forced to remain for days under the bridge in Del Rio, Texas. She is the mother of John Doe and Kyle Doe. She appears individually and as next friend to her sons John Doe and Kyle Doe, and, alternatively, by and through her sister, Mary Doe, and her niece, Nancy Doe.

³A motion for leave to proceed under pseudonym is forthcoming, pending an opportunity to confer with the United States Attorney's Office under Local Rule 7.1.

⁴ Due to the danger faced by the Plaintiffs who are in the process of expulsion from the United States and the uncertainty regarding their ability to maintain contact with counsel while outside the United States, each appears here both personally and by and through a next friend who is a family member and citizen of the United States.

23. Plaintiff John Doe is the 10-year-old son of Jane Doe and twin brother of Kyle Doe. He appears individually and, alternatively, by and through his mother, Jane Doe, his aunt Mary Doe, and his cousin, Nancy Doe.

24. Plaintiff Kyle Doe is the 10-year-old son of Jane Doe and twin brother of John Doe. He appears individually and, alternatively, by and through his mother, Jane Doe, his aunt Mary Doe, and his cousin, Nancy Doe.

25. Defendant Alejandro Mayorkas is the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Cabinet-level officer responsible for the administration of U.S. immigration law, including implementing the Title 42 Process. He is sued in his official capacity.

26. Defendant Troy A. Miller is the Acting Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”), the DHS component responsible for the initial processing of migrants at the border, including implementing the Title 42 Process. He is sued in his official capacity.

27. Defendant William A. Ferrara is the Executive Assistant Commissioner of CBP Office of Field Operations (“OFO”), the component of CBP responsible for border security, including immigration and travel through U.S. ports of entry. Mr. Ferrara is a supervisory official responsible for implementing the Title 42 process at ports of entry. He is sued in his official capacity.

28. Defendant Raul L. Ortiz is the Chief of the Border Patrol. Border Patrol is responsible for border security between ports of entry. Mr. Ortiz is a supervisory official responsible for implementing the Title 42 process between ports of entry. He is sued in his official capacity.

29. Defendant Tae D. Johnson is the Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and

Customs Enforcement (“ICE”). ICE is the DHS component that oversees immigration detention and carries out removals, including carrying out expulsions under Title 42 involving air travel.

Mr. Johnson is sued in his official capacity.

30. Defendant Xavier Becerra is the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”), a Cabinet-level department of the U.S. Government that includes the CDC. He is sued in his official capacity.

31. Defendant Rochelle P. Walensky is the Director of the CDC. Dr. Walensky has authority over the Title 42 Process at issue in this case. She is sued in her official capacity.

32. Defendant Merrick Garland is the Attorney General of the United States and shares responsibility for implementing asylum and other immigration laws, including protecting noncitizens from being sent to countries where they face persecution or torture. He is sued in his official capacity.

Jurisdiction and Venue

33. This Court has jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1361 (mandamus), 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201-2202 (declaratory judgment) and 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question), as Plaintiffs’ claims arise under the APA, 5 U.S.C. § 701 *et seq.*, immigration laws, international law, and the U.S. Constitution.

34. Venue is proper in the District of Massachusetts because Defendants are officers of the United States and Plaintiffs Mary Doe and Nancy Doe reside in this district. 28 U.S.C. § 1391.

Facts

35. Plaintiffs Jane Doe and her children all fled persecution and threats in Haiti and crossed the U.S.-Mexico border to seek safety in the United States. After entering the United

States, they were apprehended, and transported to San Antonio, Texas to be processed under Title 42, and expelled without any inquiry into their fear of persecution. The government’s conduct left the Massachusetts Plaintiffs—Mary Doe and Nancy Doe—with the financial responsibility of supporting their relatives are being expelled under Title 42 and the knowledge that their family members are unsafe.

Background

36. U.S. immigration law provides the “sole and exclusive” procedures for admitting or removing noncitizens from the United States. 8 U.S.C. § 1229a(a)(3). Its comprehensive scheme provides detailed procedures for considering asylum claims, preventing the spread of disease, and, where appropriate, summarily removing noncitizens. 8 U.S.C. §§ 1158, 1225, 1229a, 1231(b)(3). The INA even addresses the powers of immigration officers during an “epidemic” and the removal of those with communicable diseases. *Id.* §§ 1182(a)(1); 1222(a).

37. The executive branch now claims the authority to set aside each provision of U.S. immigration law whenever it deems necessary for public health. It does so based on a few words in an 1893 “quarantine and inspection” statute that authorizes public health officials to “prohibit

. . . the introduction of persons” into the United States in order to prevent the “introduction” of a communicable disease. 42 U.S.C. § 265. In an unprecedented regulation and series of orders, the government has claimed the implied authority under this statute not only to “expel” noncitizens whenever it sees fit, but to send noncitizens into countries where they will be persecuted. Nothing in the plain language of 42 U.S.C. § 265 provides the sweeping authority to ignore the INA’s specific requirements for the protection of asylum seekers.

I. United States law requires the government to protect asylum seekers from persecution and return to harm.

38. United States law protects asylum seekers like Plaintiffs. It forbids sending people to countries where they will be persecuted, and it provides procedures for considering the claims of those who seek safety on U.S. soil.

A. U.S. law makes humanitarian protection available to noncitizens who face persecution abroad.

39. U.S. law protects those who face persecution. Two key international agreements—the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees—arose from a commitment to protect refugees after a global failure to do so during the Holocaust and World War II. The United States acceded to the Protocol in 1968, thereby binding itself to the substantive provisions of the Convention.

40. The principle of non-*refoulement* is at the core of these agreements. Under Article 33 of the Convention, the United States may not “expel or return (*‘refouler’*) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.” The duty of non-*refoulement* is also a *jus cogens*—that is, a universal, and obligatory norm of customary international law from which the United States cannot derogate, and which U.S. courts are bound to enforce.

41. The United States also signed the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (“CAT”) in 1988, pledging not to “expel, return

. . . or extradite a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture.”

42. U.S. statutes and regulations implement these international commitments by creating three forms of humanitarian protection— asylum, withholding of removal, and protection under CAT.

43. First, the INA permits a noncitizen to apply for asylum who is “physically present in the United States or who arrives in the United States (whether or not at a designated port of arrival . . .), irrespective of such alien’s status” 8 U.S.C. § 1158(a)(1). To qualify for asylum, the noncitizen must show a “well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” 8 U.S.C. §§ 1101(a)(42)(A), 1158. The asylum statute carves out criminal and other exceptions to eligibility but does not impose the public health exceptions that apply to other immigration benefits. *See id.* § 1158(a)(2), (b)(2); 1182(a)(1).⁵

44. Second, withholding of removal is a nondiscretionary form of protection that must be granted to noncitizens who demonstrate it is more likely than not that their “life or freedom would be threatened” on account of a protected ground in the country to which they face removal, subject to certain exceptions such as for noncitizens convicted of “particularly serious crime[s].” *See* 8 C.F.R. § 208.16. This mandatory form of relief is designed to implement the U.S.’s duty of non-*refoulement*. *See* 8 U.S.C § 1231(b)(3).

45. Third, protection under CAT is also nondiscretionary and must be granted to noncitizens who demonstrate that they are more likely than not to be tortured in the country to which they face removal. 8 C.F.R. §§ 208.16-208-18.

B. U.S. law creates procedures that must be followed before an asylum seeker can be removed, including the opportunity to appear before an immigration

⁵ Asylum is a discretionary form of protection that “may” be granted to those who satisfy its requirements. 8 U.S.C. § 1158(b)(1)(A).

judge.

46. U.S. immigration law also sets out the specific procedures that the government must follow before noncitizens may be sent to countries in which they fear persecution, including the opportunity to see an immigration judge.

47. The default means of removing a noncitizen from the United States is through full, formal removal proceedings before an immigration judge. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1229a. Noncitizens placed in removal proceedings may apply for asylum, withholding of removal, and CAT protection, along with any other available defense to removal. “Unless otherwise specified” in immigration law, a § 1229a proceeding “shall be the sole and exclusive procedure for determining whether an alien may be . . . removed from the United States.” *Id.* § 1229a(a)(3).

48. In 1996, Congress created the expedited removal process. That process provides for the prompt removal of noncitizens who arrive at a port of entry—or who have recently entered the country illegally—without valid entry documents.⁶

49. But even those who are subject to expedited removal are still entitled to protection from persecution and torture. Thus, noncitizens who qualify for expedited removal, but express a fear of persecution or intent to seek asylum, must be provided a fear assessment interview conducted by an asylum officer. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(ii). If the officer determines that the noncitizen has a “credible fear of persecution or torture”—defined as a “significant possibility” that the noncitizen can establish eligibility for asylum or CAT relief—the noncitizen

⁶ Expedited removal is available when noncitizens are inadmissible for one of two reasons—they lack an entry document or have committed a misrepresentation. *See* 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(6)(C), 1182(a)(7), 1225(b)(1)(A)(i). To be subject to expedited removal, a noncitizen who falls under one of these two inadmissibility grounds must be either arriving at a port of entry or must be apprehended within two years of unlawfully entering the United States. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(iii)(II); 84 Fed. Reg. 35,409 (July 23, 2019). Until recently, expedited removal was limited to individuals encountered within 100 air miles of a U.S. land border and within 14 days of entry. *See* 69 Fed. Reg. 48,877 (Aug. 11, 2004).

is placed in full removal proceedings before an immigration judge where these forms of relief can be considered. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(v). A noncitizen may only be removed if at the end of the proceeding the immigration judge orders removal. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii); 8 C.F.R. §§ 208.30(e)–(f), 235.6.⁷ If an asylum officer does not find a credible fear, the noncitizen is entitled to review by an immigration judge. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(iii)(III).

50. Even in the few instances where the law does not provide for either full removal proceedings or a credible fear screening, it prohibits the removal of those who fear persecution unless there is first an inquiry into that fear. For example, where a noncitizen has been legally removed from the United States and unlawfully re-enters, the prior removal order may be reinstated. 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(5). But even then, a noncitizen who expresses a fear of persecution *cannot* be removed without a fear screening, including the opportunity for review by an immigration judge. 8 C.F.R. § 208.31. That screening takes place under a higher, “reasonable fear” standard, defined as a “reasonable possibility” that a noncitizen will be persecuted on account of a protected ground, or tortured, if removed to that country. *Id.* § 208.31(c). Screenings under this standard are intended to satisfy the U.S.’s non-*refoulement* obligations. 64 Fed. Reg. 8478, 8493 (Feb. 19, 1999). Noncitizens found to have a “reasonable fear” of persecution or torture are referred to an immigration judge for “withholding-only” proceedings, despite being ineligible for asylum due to the prior removal. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 208.31(e).

51. When noncitizens express a fear of persecution or torture about a particular country, DHS cannot send them to that country without conducting an inquiry into their fear and

⁷ Under regulations enacted by the Trump administration on December 11, 2020, an individual who passes a credible fear screening would be referred to an immigration judge for an “asylum-and-withholding-only” procedure rather than a full removal proceeding under 8 U.S.C. § 1229a.85 Fed. Reg. 80274, 80276, 80392 (Dec. 11, 2020). These regulations have been preliminarily enjoined. *Pangea Legal Servs. v. U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Sec.*, No. 20-cv-09253, 2021 WL 75756, at *7 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 8, 2021).

providing for review of that assessment by an immigration judge.

C. U.S. immigration law contains specific provisions to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

52. The INA includes provisions governing “health-related” grounds of inadmissibility under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(1). The statute renders “ineligible for visas or admission” noncitizens who have “a communicable disease of public health significance,” those who have not been vaccinated against certain diseases, and those who have “physical or mental disorder[s]” that may present “a threat to the property, safety, or welfare” of themselves or others. *Id.* § 1182(a)(1)(A).

53. The INA also contains a detention provision that applies to certain noncitizens “arriving at ports of the United States” who may be inadmissible on the health-related grounds, or who come “from a country or have embarked at a place where any . . . diseases [of public health significance] are prevalent or epidemic.” 8 U.S.C. § 1222(a). Such noncitizens may be detained “for a sufficient time to . . . subject [them] to observation and an examination,” *id.*, but may not be removed without the screening for persecution or torture that is required by the immigration statutes.

II. As a consequence of President Trump’s animus, the government acted to undermine and destroy the asylum process and keep out asylum seekers at all costs.

54. Despite the duty of the executive to carry out the laws of the United States under the Constitution, the Trump administration sought to undermine the laws affording protections to people seeking asylum and was especially hostile to asylum protections for people of color.

55. This hostility was due in substantial part to animus toward immigrants and people of color held by President Trump and others in his administration. On information and

belief, President Trump's eagerness to harm asylum seekers was driven by his view that scapegoating migrants was politically advantageous as well as to placate the anti-immigrant sentiments of his supporters.

56. Mr. Trump's animus toward asylum seekers who came to the southern border of the U.S. seeking protection was so strong that, while President, he repeatedly voiced a desire to physically harm them. President Trump reportedly suggested electrifying the border wall, fortifying it with an alligator moat, installing spikes on top to pierce human flesh, and having soldiers shoot migrants' legs to slow them down.⁸

57. As President, Mr. Trump asked why the United States would want more people from Haiti (the Plaintiffs' country of origin), El Salvador, and other nations he called "shithole countries," rather than people from countries like Norway,⁹ which is predominantly white.

58. This animus caused the Trump administration to seek out ways to undermine the laws that protect asylum seekers. President Trump and former USCIS head Kenneth Cuccinelli repeatedly described laws that preserve access to the asylum process as creating a "loophole"; President Trump also called asylum a "scam" and a "hoax," and argued that most asylum requests are a fraudulent ploy to enter the country illegally.¹⁰ Indeed, President Trump repeatedly denounced the very existence of immigration courts or due process for asylum claims, suggesting that "[w]hen somebody comes in, we must immediately, with no Judges or Court Cases, bring them back from where they came from."¹⁰

⁸ Michael D. Shear & Julie Hirschfeld Davis, *Shoot Migrants' Legs, Build Alligator Moat: Behind Trump's Ideas for Border*, N.Y. TIMES (Oct. 2, 2019), [nytimes.com/2019/10/01/us/politics/trump-border-wars.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/01/us/politics/trump-border-wars.html).

⁹ Ryan Teague Beckwith, *President Trump Called El Salvador, Haiti 'Shithole Countries': Report*, TIME (Jan. 11, 2018), time.com/5100058/donald-trump-shithole-countries/n

¹⁰ Jake Nevins, *Seth Meyers: 'Trump's One Political Skill Is His Inability to Feel Shame'*, THE GUARDIAN (June 26, 2018), [theguardian.com/culture/2018/jun/26/late-night-roundup-seth-meyers-trump-political-skill](https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2018/jun/26/late-night-roundup-seth-meyers-trump-political-skill).

59. Driven by this animus, the Trump administration implemented a series of measures aimed at destroying the asylum system through punishing and dissuading asylum seekers. One official described his strategy as “presenting aliens with multiple unsolvable dilemmas to impact their calculus for choosing to make the arduous journey to begin with.”¹¹

60. The Trump administration punished asylum seekers by separating them from their children, and impeded their access to protection through an onslaught of measures including closing the ports of entry to asylum seekers, imposing new fees, limiting work authorization, reducing procedural protections, and redefining asylum eligibility through a series of regulations that created categorical bars to asylum and expanded the grounds for discretionary denials.¹²

61. As noted above, the Trump administration long contemplated using Title 42 to keep out asylum seekers on multiple occasions well before the Covid-19 pandemic.

62. With the emergence of Covid-19, the Trump administration seized their opportunity. The administration forced public health officials—on threat of firing—to issue orders requiring the systematic expulsion of asylum seekers at the southern border.¹³ In forcing the CDC to implement the measure, the White House “overrul[ed] the agency’s scientists who said there was no evidence the action would slow the coronavirus” and no valid public health

¹¹ Julia Ainsley, *Stephen Miller Wants Border Patrol, Not Asylum Officers, to Determine Asylum Claims*, ABC NEWS (July 29, 2019), [nbcnews.com/politics/immigration/stephen-miller-wants-use-border-agents-screen-migrants-cut-number-n1035831](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/immigration/stephen-miller-wants-use-border-agents-screen-migrants-cut-number-n1035831).

¹² See Bill Frelick, *The Trump Administration’s Final Insult and Injury to Refugees*, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH (Dec. 11, 2020), [hrw.org/news/2020/12/11/trump-administrations-final-insult-and-injury-refugees](https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/12/11/trump-administrations-final-insult-and-injury-refugees); Priyanka Boghani, *A Guide to Some Major Trump Administration Immigration Policies*, PBS FRONTLINE (Oct. 22, 2019), [pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/a-guide-to-some-major-trump-administration-immigration-policies](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/a-guide-to-some-major-trump-administration-immigration-policies).

¹³ See Jason Dearen & Garance Burke, *Pence Ordered Borders Closed After CDC Experts Refused*, AP NEWS (Oct. 3, 2020), [apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-pandemics-public-health-new-york-health-4ef0c6c5263815a26f8aa17f6ea490ae](https://www.apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-pandemics-public-health-new-york-health-4ef0c6c5263815a26f8aa17f6ea490ae).

reason to issue it.

III. The Title 42 expulsion program dismantled protections for asylum seekers under the pretext of a public health measure.

63. On March 20, 2020, the Trump administration announced that, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the CDC would be acting under Title 42 to bar asylum seekers at the U.S. border. Under the CDC's order, DHS began turning away undocumented migrants without any legal process or asylum screening.

A. The Public Health Service Act's "quarantine and inspection" provisions.

64. The CDC relied on 42 U.S.C. § 265, which generally authorizes the Surgeon General to "prohibit, in whole or in part, the introduction of persons" from countries in which a communicable disease is present, as necessary to decrease the "serious danger of the introduction of such disease into the United States." The statute provides in full:

Whenever the Surgeon General determines that by reason of the existence of any communicable disease in a foreign country there is serious danger of the introduction of such disease into the United States, and that this danger is so increased by the introduction of persons or property from such country that a suspension of the right to introduce such persons and property is required in the interest of the public health, the Surgeon General, in accordance with regulations approved by the President, shall have the power to prohibit, in whole or in part, the introduction of persons and property from such countries or places as he shall designate in order to avert such danger, and for such period of time as he may deem necessary for such purpose.

The CDC director now exercises this authority through delegation.¹⁴

65. Section 265 was enacted in its current form in 1944. It is part of a set of provisions of the Public Health Service Act ("PHSA") that define HHS's authority pertaining to

¹⁴ In 1966, the Surgeon General's § 265 authority was transferred to what is now HHS. In 2001, HHS delegated this authority to the CDC. The President's functions under § 265 were assigned to the Secretary of HHS in a 2003 executive order.

“quarantine and inspection.” *See* 42 U.S. Code Part G, 42 U.S.C. §§ 264-72.

66. HHS’s authority to make rules to implement these provisions of the PHSA is described in 8 U.S.C. § 264. Section 264 authorizes the CDC director to “make and enforce such regulations as in his judgment are necessary to prevent the introduction, transmission, or spread of communicable disease from foreign countries into the States.” 42 U.S.C. § 264(a).

67. Section 264 of Title 42 also limits the scope of HHS’s rulemaking authority to control the spread of communicable disease. It provides, “[r]egulations prescribed under this section shall not provide for the apprehension, detention, or conditional release of individuals except for the purpose of preventing the introduction, transmission, or spread of such communicable diseases.” 42 U.S.C. § 264(b). Further limits on apprehension and detention apply where an individual is moving from one state to another, as opposed to “coming into a State or possession from a foreign country or a possession.” 42 U.S.C. § 264(c)-(d). Nowhere does the PHSA reference any authority to expel individuals out of a state or out of the United States.

68. The PHSA does provide for the assistance of immigration officers, again, mentioning nothing about expulsion. Under Section 268, “[i]t shall be the duty of the customs officers . . . to aid in the enforcement of quarantine rules and regulations.....” 42 U.S.C. § 268(b).

69. Finally, the PHSA sets out the penalties for individuals who violate its provisions or any regulations issued under its authority—a fine or imprisonment for up to one year. 42 U.S.C. § 271. The Act does not provide for expulsion or deportation as a penalty.

B. The CDC’s regulation regarding expulsion.

70. On March 24, 2020, citing the authority conferred under §§ 264, 265, and other

provisions of Title 42, the CDC issued an interim final rule that purported to authorize immigration agents to expel individuals from the United States without regard for the protections and procedures provided by immigration law—including removal proceedings, asylum law and credible fear screenings. *See* 85 Fed. Reg. 16,559, 16,563 (Mar. 24, 2020) (effective date Mar. 20, 2020). The final version of the rule was published on September 11, 2020. 85 Fed. Reg. 56,424 (Sept. 11, 2020) (effective date Oct. 13, 2020).

71. These regulations enacted a new provision, 42 C.F.R. § 71.40.

72. Paragraph (a) of the new regulation contains language similar to 42 U.S.C. § 265, providing that the CDC director “may ***prohibit, in whole or in part, the introduction into the United States of persons*** from designated foreign countries” if he determines that “(1) By reason of the existence of any quarantinable communicable disease in a foreign country . . . there is ***serious danger of the introduction of such quarantinable communicable disease*** into the United States; and (2) This danger is so increased by the introduction of persons from such country . . . that a ***suspension of the right to introduce*** such persons into the United States is required in the interest of public health.” 42 C.F.R. § 71.40(a) (2020) (emphasis added).

73. In paragraph (b), the regulation adds a series of definitions that purport to grant the CDC authority to take actions not provided for in Title 42 itself, including the authority to expel noncitizens from the United States. Paragraph (b) states in relevant part:

(1) ***Introduction into the United States*** means the movement of a person from a foreign country . . . into the United States so as to bring the person into contact with persons or property in the United States, in a manner that the Director determines to present a risk of transmission of a quarantinable communicable disease . . . even if the quarantinable communicable disease has already been introduced, transmitted, or is spreading within the United States;

(2) ***Prohibit, in whole or in part, the introduction into the United States of persons*** means to prevent the introduction of persons into the United States by suspending any right to introduce into the United States, physically stopping or

restricting movement into the United States, or physically expelling from the United States some or all of the persons;

(3) *Serious danger of the introduction of such quarantinable communicable disease into the United States* means the probable introduction of one or more persons capable of transmitting the quarantinable communicable disease into the United States, even if persons or property in the United States are already infected or contaminated with the quarantinable communicable disease; . . .

(5) *Suspension of the right to introduce* means to cause the temporary cessation of the effect of any law, rule, decree, or order pursuant to which a person might otherwise have the right to be introduced or seek introduction into the United States.

8 C.F.R. § 71.40(b) (2020).

74. The regulation also provides that, if an order suspending the introduction of persons “will be implemented in whole or in part” by CBP, “then the [CDC] Director shall, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security or other applicable Federal department or agency head, explain in the order the procedures and standards by which any authorities or officers or agents are expected to aid in the enforcement of the order.....” 85 Fed. Reg. at 56,459; *see* 42 C.F.R. § 71.40(d)(2) (2020).

75. The regulation exempts U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents from its provisions. 42 C.F.R. § 71.40(f) (2020).

C. The CDC’s expulsion order

76. On March 26, relying on its new regulatory authority, the CDC issued a 30-day order, effective March 20, 2020, “suspending the introduction” into the United States of “covered aliens.” 85 Fed. Reg. 17,060 (Mar. 26, 2020) (effective date Mar. 20, 2020). The March order was extended for an additional 30 days on April 20, 2020. 85 Fed. Reg. 22,424 (Apr. 22, 2020) (effective date Apr. 20, 2020). On May 21, 2020, the CDC extended the order indefinitely, with modifications not relevant here. 85 Fed. Reg. 31,503 (May 26, 2020) (effective date May 21, 2020). On October 16, 2020, after its final regulations became effective,

the Trump administration issued a new order replacing the prior orders, effective October 13, 2020. 85 Fed.Reg. 65,806 (Oct. 16, 2020) (effective date Oct. 13, 2020).

77. The October order, similar to those that preceded it, “suspend[s] the introduction of all covered aliens into the United States.” 85 Fed. Reg. at 65,807. It defines “covered aliens” as persons traveling from Canada or Mexico (regardless of their country of origin) who would otherwise be introduced into a congregate setting in a land or coastal Port of Entry (POE) or Border Patrol station at or near the United States borders with Canada or Mexico, subject to the exceptions including U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, people arriving at a port of entry with valid travel documents, members of the armed forces, and certain others. *Id.*

78. The order asserts that “[t]he continued suspension of the right to introduce covered aliens requires the movement of all such aliens to the country from which they entered the United States, their country of origin, or another practicable location outside the United States, as rapidly as possible, with as little time spent in congregate settings as practicable under the circumstances.” 85 Fed. Reg. at 65,812.

79. Relying on 42 C.F.R. § 71.40, the CDC reiterated that the “[s]uspension of the right to introduce” covered noncitizens includes the “temporary cessation of the effect of any law “. . . pursuant to which a person might otherwise have the right to be introduced or seek introduction into the United States.” 85 Fed. Reg. at 65,808 n.6. The order is effective until it is no longer deemed “necessary to protect the publichealth,” with a review to occur every 30 days. 85 Fed. Reg. at 65,812.

80. Like the regulation, the order is silent on its application to people seeking asylum, withholding of removal, or CAT protection.

81. The CDC order delegates implementation of the Title 42 Process to DHS. 85 Fed. Reg. at 65,812.

D. DHS’s Implementation of the Title 42 Process

82. On April 2, 2020, a CBP memorandum (“CBP Memo”) describing the agency’s implementation of the Title 42 Process, an effort it calls “Operation Capiro,” was made public.¹⁵

83. Under Operation Capiro, CBP officers implementing the CDC order are instructed that they are not “operating pursuant to [their] authorities under Titles 8 and 19 [immigration and customs, respectively]” at any point during Title 42 expulsions. CBP Memo at 1.

84. To determine whether a noncitizen is “subject to the CDC Order,” the CBP Memo instructs officers to use “experience” and “physical observation” to determine whether they “believe[] that it is more likely than not” that the person whom they encounter anywhere “within the area of operation of a Border Patrol station or [port of entry]” is “seeking to enter” without proper travel documents. *Id.*

85. The memo provides that a noncitizen who is subject to the CDC order “will be transported to the nearest [port of entry] and immediately returned to Mexico or Canada, depending on their point of transit.” *Id.* at 3. Those who are “not amenable to immediate expulsion to Mexico or Canada, will be transported to a dedicated facility for limited holding prior to expulsion” to their home country. *Id.*

¹⁵ Internal Memo, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, *COVID-19 CAPIO* (2020), documentcloud.org/documents/6824221-COVID-19-CAPIO.html. The CBP Memo was reportedly leaked to Pro Publica, which published it on April 2, 2020. See Dara Lind, *Leaked Border Patrol Memo Tells Agents to Send Migrants Back Immediately – Ignoring Asylum Law*, PROPUBLICA, Apr. 2, 2020, propublica.org/article/leaked-border-patrol-memo-tells-agents-to-send-migrants-back-immediately-ignoring-asylum-law. On information and belief, DHS has not otherwise made public any guidance on the implementation of Title 42.

86. On information and belief, Mexico has agreed to allow nationals from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras to be immediately expelled into Mexico, but does not give them permission to remain there. The United States expels nationals of other countries under Title 42 by detaining them for days or weeks and flying them to their countries of origin.¹⁶

87. Under the CBP Memo, an officer may process an individual who is eligible for Title 42 under the immigration law provisions of Title 8 “only for extenuating circumstances” and upon a decision by the Chief Patrol Agent. *Id.*

88. The CBP Memo provides no instructions on medical screenings or other procedures for determining whether a covered noncitizen may have Covid-19.

89. Nor does it instruct on the treatment of individuals who state a claim for asylum or express a fear of persecution. The exclusive “process” available to noncitizens subject to Title 42 is the possibility of a torture screening. *Id.* at 4. But the government does not provide notice that this procedure is available, instead providing a screening only if a noncitizen being processed under Title 42 makes “an affirmative, spontaneous and reasonably believable claim that they fear being tortured in the country they are being sent back to.” *Id.* On information and belief, CBP routinely fails to offer such screening to asylum seekers expelled under Title 42, even when they express a fear of harm that amounts to torture.

90. Public health experts have criticized the Title 42 policy because it singles out asylum seekers without any basis in public health.¹⁷

¹⁶ The CDC order states that “DHS will continue to use repatriation flights as necessary to move covered aliens on a space-available basis.....” 85 Fed. Reg. at 65,812.

¹⁷ See Letter from leaders of public health schools, medical schools, hospitals, and other U.S. institutions to Alex Azar, HHS Secretary, and Robert Redfield, CDC Director, (May 18, 2020) (“The rule is thus being used to target certain classes of noncitizens rather than to protect public health.”), publichealth.columbia.edu/public-health-now/news/public-health-experts-urge-us-officials-withdraw-order-enabling-mass-expulsion-asylum-seekers; Physicians for Human Rights, Comment Letter on

Claims for Relief

**Count 1
Writ of Mandamus
(28 U.S.C. § 1361)**

91. The foregoing allegations are repeated and incorporated herein.

92. As set forth above, Defendants are currently transporting Plaintiffs to San Antonio to subject them to immediate expulsion to Haiti in violation of their obligation to provide Plaintiffs with an appropriate asylum process including but not limited to a fear and torture screening pursuant to Title 8 and in violation of Defendants' mandatory, non-delegable duties of non-*refoulement* under federal statutes and regulations and the U.S. Constitution as well as international law.

93. Plaintiffs accordingly seek a writ of mandamus to require the Defendants to provide them with an appropriate asylum process under Title 8.

**Count 2
Violation of immigration law and the APA
(8 U.S.C. § 1101 *et seq.*; 8 C.F.R. § 1.1 *et seq.*; international law; 5 U.S.C. § 706(2))**

94. The foregoing allegations are repeated and incorporated herein.

95. U.S. immigration law is a comprehensive scheme addressing the removal of noncitizens, the consideration of asylum claims, and the threat of communicable disease. It is codified in the INA and U.S. regulations, and it also includes certain mandates of international law, including the duty of non-*refoulement*.

96. U.S. immigration law bars removing noncitizens to countries where it is more

Proposed Rule 42 CFR 71 (April 23, 2020), [phr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Physicians-for-Human-Rights-Public-Comment-on-Border-Closure-April-23-2020.pdf](https://www.phr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Physicians-for-Human-Rights-Public-Comment-on-Border-Closure-April-23-2020.pdf) (asserting that Title 42 lacks a basis in public health).

likely than not that they will face persecution or torture, and protects the right of “[a]ny alien who is physically present . . . or who arrives in the United States” to seek asylum, with exceptions not applicable here. 8 U.S.C. §§ 1158, 1231(b)(3); 8 C.F.R. § 208.16.

97. The INA also provides the “the sole and exclusive procedure[s]” for determining the admission or removal of noncitizens at the border. 8 U.S.C. § 1229a(a)(3). As relevant here, those procedures are a full removal proceeding before an immigration judge under 8 U.S.C. § 1229a, or an expedited removal proceeding involving the opportunity for a credible fear screening and immigration judge review, under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1).

98. The INA’s comprehensive scheme also provides “health-related” grounds for inadmissibility and a limited detention authority applicable to certain noncitizens “arriving at ports of the United States” who come “from a country or have embarked at a place where any of such diseases are prevalent or epidemic.” 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(1), 1222(a). The INA permits noncitizens subject to these provisions to seek asylum.

99. Jane Doe and her children are currently being expelled from the United States without the procedures of U.S. immigration law.

100. The expulsions of Jane Doe and her children violate the INA and its regulations, and the duty of non-*refoulement*. The APA thus requires this Court to “compel” the legal procedures that were “unlawfully withheld” and to “hold unlawful and set aside” these expulsions, which were “not in accordance with law” and are being undertaken “without observance of procedure required by law.” *See* 5 U.S.C. § 706.

Count 3
Violation of Public Health Service Act and APA
(42 U.S.C. § 265; 5 U.S.C. § 706(2))

101. The foregoing allegations are repeated and incorporated herein.

102. Although Defendants claim to be acting under Title 42 of the U.S. Code, that statute does not authorize the expulsion of noncitizens from the United States.

103. Title 42 also does not authorize the expulsion of individuals seeking asylum in the United States without affording them the statutory protections afforded under the INA, or the expulsion of noncitizens into countries where they face persecution.

104. Even if that were not the case, Title 42 cannot be read to authorize the ongoing expulsion of asylum seekers on the basis of a disease already being widely transmitted in the United States.

105. The imminent expulsion of Jane Doe and her children under this *ultra vires* authority violates the PHSA. The APA thus requires this Court to “hold unlawful and set aside” these expulsions, which are “not in accordance with law” and “in excess of statutory . . . authority.” *See* 5 U.S.C. § 706(2).

Count 4
Violation of the APA – Arbitrary, Capricious, and Unlawful Agency Action
(5 U.S.C. § 706)

106. The foregoing allegations are repeated and incorporated herein.

107. The APA requires courts to “compel agency action unlawfully withheld” and to “hold unlawful and set aside agency action” that is “arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law,” “contrary to constitutional right, power, privilege, or immunity,” “in excess of statutory jurisdiction, authority, or limitations, or short of statutory right,” or “without observance of procedure required by law.” 5 U.S.C. § 706.

108. Defendants’ actions unlawfully deprived plaintiffs Jane Doe and her children of the procedures required by U.S. immigration law for consideration of their potential removal and claims for protection. Defendants’ actions also deprived plaintiffs of due process and the

equal protection of our laws.

109. Moreover, the Title 42 process created by the CDC's 2020 regulations and orders was *ultra vires*, was designed to curtail asylum rather than protect public health, and was implemented without consideration of measures that could protect public health while maintaining mechanisms for humanitarian relief. It is arbitrary, capricious, and otherwise unlawful. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 706.

Count 5
Violation of Equal Protection
(U.S. Constitution, amend. V)

110. The foregoing allegations are repeated and incorporated herein.

111. Plaintiffs have a right under the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to equal protection of the laws.

112. President Trump and others in his administration harbored racial and other animus against immigrants from Haiti, Central America and other predominantly non-white countries— including Jane Doe and her children John Doe and Kyle Doe. As a result of that animus, he directed that Central American asylum seekers be kept out and repeatedly proposed to harm them by shooting their legs or building a border wall that would impale people. His administration acted on that animus and grievously harmed asylum seekers through policies that included family separation, the MPP, and the Title 42 expulsion process.

113. President Biden's administration has, inexplicably, chosen to continue the Title 42 expulsion policy, enforcing it against black immigrants from Haiti, Cameroon, and other countries. Most recently, the world was shocked by the treatment primarily Haitian immigrants in or near Del Rio, Texas (where Plaintiffs were held until yesterday in deplorable conditions without medicine or food) when CBP officers on horseback appeared to charging and whipping

migrants including families with children.

114. Because a “discriminatory purpose” was “a motivating factor” for the regulations and orders requiring the expulsion of asylum seekers during the Covid-19 pandemic, these expulsions violated the Equal Protection Clause. *See Village of Arlington Heights v. Metropolitan Housing Development Corp.*, 429 U.S. 252, 265-66 (1977).

Count 6
Violation of Procedural Due Process
(U.S. Constitution, amend. V)

115. The foregoing allegations are repeated and incorporated herein.

116. Noncitizens in the United States are entitled to due process of law, including adherence to the procedures provided by Congress for the fair adjudication of applications for relief and benefits made available under the immigration laws.

117. Plaintiffs Jane Doe and her children are currently in the process of being expelled without any of the procedures required by law for removing noncitizens from the United States, and without any opportunity to assert claims to relief, in violation of due process.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Plaintiffs ask that this court grant the following relief:

1. Issue a writ of mandamus requiring Defendants to provide Plaintiffs the appropriate legal process to them under Title 8 of the United States Code;
2. Declare that the Title 42 Process is unlawful, and that Jane Doe, John Doe and Kyle Doe’s inclusion in the Title 42 process was and is unlawful;
3. Enjoin defendants from applying Title 42 to Plaintiffs Jane Doe, John Doe and Kyle Doe, and order that their claims for protection be processed in the United States in accordance with U.S. immigration law;

4. Order that Jane Doe, John Doe and Kyle Doe be paroled into the United States while the government considers their immigration cases;

5. Award attorney's fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2412(d) and 5 U.S.C. § 504, if applicable; and,

6. Order any further relief this Court deems just and proper.

Respectfully submitted this 24th day of September, 2021.

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**Motions for pro hac vice admission forthcoming*



DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

By TechMIS

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Mobile User Copy

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.

TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Thursday, September 23, 2021 6:00 AM ET

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Top News

Even as the Biden administration deports some Haitian migrants, it is letting in others.

The New York Times [9/22/2021 2:58 PM, Eileen Sullivan, 24635K] reports that even as more than 1,000 Haitian migrants were deported between Sunday and Tuesday, thousands of others are being allowed into the United States, sometimes to request asylum - and are being released with instructions to report to immigration officials at a future date. Faced with an unusually high number of Haitians who began crossing the border into Del Rio, Texas, late last week, the Biden administration responded with high-profile repatriation flights, which officials hope will deter others from making the trip here. There were five flights planned for Wednesday, according to an official familiar with the plans, who was not authorized to discuss the matter and thus spoke on condition of anonymity. The sudden appearance of thousands of Haitian migrants overwhelmed Border Patrol agents in Del Rio last week. At one point, some 15,000 crammed under and around a bridge in squalid conditions while they waited to be briefly interviewed by border officials. To relieve the overcrowding, the administration has flown many of the migrants to less crowded spots on the southern border; most are being released from Border Patrol custody with a "Notice to Appear" order, which formally enters them into the immigration court system for a deportation hearing - often years away. A new security concern emerged on Tuesday when some Haitian migrants on a deportation flight "Caused two separate disruptions on the tarmac" when they deplaned in Port-au-Prince, said Marsha Espinosa, spokeswoman for the Homeland Security Department. She said three Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and an unspecified number of members of the flight crew suffered non-life-threatening injuries. Eduardo Maia Silva, a Homeland Security spokesman, said the migrants who are not deported under the public health rule and do not have a legal reason to stay, "are placed in expedited or full removal proceedings." He said, "individuals who are not immediately repatriated are either placed in 'Alternatives to Detention,' detained in an ICE facility, or released with a legal document," referring to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Neither the Homeland Security Department nor Customs and Border Protection answered a question on Wednesday about how many of the migrants arriving in Del Rio are being allowed into the country and how many are being deported. The AP [9/22/2021 6:02 PM, Elliot Spagat, Maria Verza and Juan A. Lozano] reports U.S. authorities have declined to say how many have been released in the U.S. in recent days. The Homeland Security Department has been busing Haitians from Del Rio, a town of 35,000 people, to El Paso, Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley along the Texas border, and this week added flights to Tucson, Arizona, the official said. They are processed by the Border Patrol at those locations. Accounts of wide-scale releases — some observed at the Del Rio bus station by Associated Press journalists -- are at odds with statements Monday by Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, who traveled to Del Rio to promise swift action. "If you come to the United States illegally, you will be returned, your journey will not succeed, and you will be endangering your life and your family's life," he said at a news conference. Homeland Security, asked to comment on releases in the United States, said Wednesday that migrants who are not immediately expelled to Haiti may be detained or released with a notice to appear in immigration court or report to an immigration office, depending on available custody space. "The Biden Administration has reiterated that our borders are not open, and people should not make the dangerous journey," the department said in a statement. "Individuals and families are subject to border restrictions, including expulsion." Meanwhile, Mexico has begun busing and flying Haitian migrants away from the

U.S. border, signaling a new level of support for the United States as the camp presented President Joe Biden with a humanitarian and increasingly political challenge. [Reuters](#) [9/22/2021 11:47 AM, Daina Beth Solomon, 4947K] reports that a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) spokesperson said those who cannot be expelled under a sweeping Trump-era public health order known as Title 42 will be placed in immigration hearings, without specifying who would qualify for those exemptions. Biden ended the expulsion of unaccompanied children under Title 42 but has continued to expel some families. The spokesperson said people who are not expelled are either detained or released with a notice to appear in immigration court, adding that everyone passes background checks and has their biometric information collected. Democrats have expressed anger over an incident over the weekend in which mounted U.S. border agents used reins like whips to intimidate migrants trying to cross the river. DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said the agents involved had been pulled from front-line duties. On Wednesday, Vice President Kamala Harris said she "raised her grave concerns" about the incident in a call with Mayorkas and stressed the need for all border agents "to treat people with dignity, humanely and consistent with our laws and our values." She said Mayorkas shared her concerns.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/22/2021 7:40 AM, Cameron Jenkins, 1776K]

[CNN](#) [9/22/2021 9:18 AM, Priscilla Alvarez and Rosa Flores, 4876K]

[FOX News](#) [9/22/2021 3:53 PM, Adam Shaw, Griff Jenkins, Bill Melugin, 9251K]

[Univision](#) [9/22/2021 1:06 PM, Staff, 366K]

[Telemundo 47](#) [9/22/2021 10:34 AM, Staff, 32K]

Biden administration scrambles to contain fallout from another border crisis

[CNN](#) [9/22/2021 2:47 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 4876K] reports the Biden administration is ramping up deportation flights of migrants to as many as seven a day and talking to Brazil and Chile to possibly repatriate Haitians who previously resided in those countries as they scramble to contain the fallout amid bipartisan criticism. But even as the Department of Homeland Security tries to draw a hard line, more than 1,000 migrants who had been under the Del Rio International Bridge have been allowed into the US, according to an area organization that has helped those released. Senior Biden officials, meanwhile, have been called to answer to the images of migrants in squalid conditions and aggressive confrontations with authorities. On Wednesday, the Congressional Black Caucus met with top officials at the White House. In a briefing with congressional staff Tuesday, DHS said they it been tracking the steady flow of Haitians but smugglers suddenly dropped them off in one location, when asked why they were caught off guard, a congressional aide who was briefed told CNN. Wednesday, the White House released a readout between Harris and Mayorkas, in which the Vice President raised "grave concerns" about the treatment of Haitian migrants -- a rare move and indication the White House is looking to highlight Harris' engagement on the issue. But the migrants who converged in Del Rio, Texas, over the past week aren't from Northern Triangle countries; rather they are primarily from Haiti and had been living in South America for several years. Harris sidestepped answering whether she will expand her role to include Haitian migrants when asked Tuesday. There are up to 30,000 Haitians in Colombia who may be seeking to travel north, CNN has learned. The department is tracking between 40,000 to 60,000 Haitians in the hemisphere, though they are not necessarily seeking to come to the US, according to the congressional aide. Recently, Mexico also stopped some buses of Haitians coming north, DHS said, according to the aide. More than 97% of Haitians migrating irregularly do not come directly from Haiti, but rather were residents of countries in South America, such as Chile and Brazil, according

to the Panamanian government. Panama expects to receive at least 150,000 migrants crossing the country on the way to the US by end of this year. As of early September, more than 70,000 migrants arrived in Panama in 2021, more than 30,000 of whom are from Haiti.

House Democrats demand answers by Friday about the Border Patrol's treatment of Haitian migrants.

The Hill [9/22/2021 3:57 PM, Jordan Williams, 1776K] reports the House Oversight and Reform Committee is demanding answers on Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) treatment of Haitian migrants after agents on horseback were seen on video grabbing individuals trying to enter the U.S. Members of the Oversight panel, led by Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), sent a letter to acting CBP Commissioner Troy Miller demanding a briefing by Friday on what CBP knew about the incident, including the conduct of the agents and their supervisors. The lawmakers are also seeking answers on what disciplinary steps have been taken regarding the agents and supervisors involved as well as what other actions are being taken to protect migrants. The New York Times [9/22/2021 2:49 PM, Luke Broadwater and Eileen Sullivan, 24635K] reports "We were alarmed to see footage of the inhumane treatment of Haitian and other migrants in Del Rio, Texas, by Border Patrol agents on horseback," Representative Carolyn B. Maloney, Democrat of New York and the chairwoman of the oversight committee, wrote in a letter Wednesday to Troy A. Miller, the acting commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The letter noted that images and videos showed border agents "Charging at women, men, and children; menacing them with bridle reins; and making derogatory comments towards the migrants. Such abusive conduct is unacceptable and raises troubling questions about culture, training, and discipline within C.B.P.". The committee also is seeking information about actions that are being taken to protect migrants at the Del Rio border; the use of a health regulation known as Title 42 to expel migrants; and unredacted copies of any internal investigations into the incidents. Vice President Kamala Harris on Tuesday called the treatment "Horrible" and said she planned to discuss the issue with Alejandro N. Mayorkas, the secretary of the Homeland Security Department, which has started an investigation. [Editorial note: consult video at source link] Reuters [9/22/2021 1:58 PM, Mica Rosenberg and Kristina Cooke, 4947K] reports that on Tuesday, DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Title 42 was being applied to the fullest extent possible, while at the same time condemning the actions of the agents on horseback saying the incident was being investigated and those involved had been assigned administrative duties.

Reported similarly:

The Hill [9/22/2021 6:10 PM, Rebecca Beitsch, Morgan Chalfant, Rafael Bernal, 1776K]

DHS chief Mayorkas sidelines agents during investigation into images of rough treatment of migrants

The Washington Times [9/22/2021 5:50 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports that Border Patrol agents who were involved in a rough encounter with migrants this week in Texas have been sidelined from law enforcement duties during an investigation into their behavior, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told lawmakers Wednesday. Mr. Mayorkas announced the move after a call Tuesday from Vice President Kamala Harris, his partner in the border czar business, whose office said she expressed "grave concerns" over "mistreatment" of Haitians. The images of agents on horseback seemingly berating and lashing their reins on migrants who breached the border have drawn a feverish reaction from Democrats, who demanded discipline. Mr. Mayorkas told the House Homeland Security Committee he shared their outrage and vowed to "pull no punches" in punishing

anyone found to have acted outside the rules. He didn't say how many agents are being probed, but said they have been moved off their regular duties. "The individuals, during the pendency of the investigation, are not conducting law enforcement duties to interact with migrants, but rather are conducting administrative duties," Mr. Mayorkas said. It's a different tone than he took two days ago at the border when asked about the images. While promising an investigation, he said it seemed agents were trying "to ensure control of the horse." [USA Today](#) [9/22/2021 5:01 PM, Kevin Johnson, 6282K] reports the secretary said the examination would be handled by DHS' Office of Professional Responsibility and that the agency's inspector general also had been notified. "The investigation will be all encompassing; we will not cut a single corner," Mayorkas said. "It will be a sweeping investigation." Mayorkas' testimony has not so far quieted the criticism.

Reported similarly:

[FOX News](#) [9/22/2021 11:11 AM, Adam Shaw, 9251K]

Biden admin missed red flags before Haitian migrant surge

[ABC News](#) [9/22/2021 2:18 PM, Quinn Owen, 37K] reports that months before the Haitian migrant surge at the southern border, Border Patrol agents on the front lines in Texas sounded alarms that Del Rio was vulnerable and resources could become overwhelmed, according to email messages reviewed by ABC News. Despite the warnings, officials say preparations for the migrant surge only began when large waves started showing up this week. Now the Biden administration is scrambling to track, process and remove those gathered under an international bridge in the South Texas town of Del Rio that at one point ballooned to more than 14,000. In one email to Del Rio sector management dated June 1, 2021, members of the National Border Patrol Council expressed the need for additional measures to process migrants in the field in the event that facilities became overwhelmed. Agents offered specific suggestions including the use of digital tablets to allow for early initiation of the migrant intake process immediately after encounters with Customs and Border Protection. In a second email days later, the Del Rio agents went so far as to ensure the tablets had wireless data capabilities with the right network provider so they could be used along the international boundary line. The emails were sent to Del Rio Sector Border Patrol management, an arm of the Department of Homeland Security. Asked by Republican Rep. Michael McCaul on Wednesday about the emails, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said his Department does track migration in Central and South America but that the rate at which this group came together at the border was unprecedented. "We have not seen before such a rapid migration - irregular migration - of individuals as we have observed and experienced with respect to the Haitians who have crossed the border in Del Rio Texas," Mayorkas said. "That has been an unprecedented speed." The Department of Homeland Security did not respond to a request to comment on the email exchange. U.S. Customs and Border Protection declined to comment. [FOX News](#) [9/22/2021 1:06 PM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports "They were warned that this bridge where these people are crossing, at this exact spot there was an uptick in traffic and the traffic continued to go up, and they were warned they needed to prepare, they needed to put operations in place to deal with a large influx of people, and they didn't," Brandon Judd, head of the National Border Patrol Council said. Mayorkas did not say specifically if he had been pre-warned, and said the surge had been "unprecedented." "We haven't seen before such a rapid irregular migration of individuals as we have observed and experienced with respect to the Haitians who've crossed the border in Del Rio, Texas," Mayorkas said.

Reported similarly:

FOX News [9/22/2021 2:50 PM, Jessica Chasmar, 9251K]

Mayorkas tells House panel: Border is 'no less secure' than it was under Trump

The Washington Times [9/22/2021 7:42 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports that Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas insisted Wednesday that the border has not deteriorated under President Biden, and shot down claims by the former Border Patrol chief who said things are worse than he's seen in nearly 30 years of service. "It is no less secure than it was previously," Mr. Mayorkas told the House Homeland Security Committee. He was challenged by the words of Rodney Scott, who served as Border Patrol chief at the end of the Trump era and into the Biden era, but who was ushered into retirement by the new administration. "Contrary to the current rhetoric, this is not simply another illegal immigration surge. This is a national security threat," Mr. Scott wrote in a letter to Congress. In particular, he said, known or suspected terrorists are pouring across the international boundary at a rate never seen before. He urged lawmakers to demand the actual numbers from Mr. Mayorkas. In hearings Tuesday and Wednesday, Mr. Mayorkas said he would provide the number, but said it was secret and had to be delivered in a classified setting. But he rejected Mr. Scott's claims. "I respectfully disagree with Mr. Scott's assertion," he told lawmakers. The Biden administration shut down a series of Trump policies that had deeply cut into illegal immigration, and a record surge of illegal immigration has followed. Mr. Mayorkas has acknowledged it is "unprecedented." The surge of Haitians into Del Rio, Texas, last week epitomized the difficulties Mr. Mayorkas and his department have faced. Mr. Mayorkas said his department has made progress in reducing the numbers in the camp — but he also found himself having to explain images of Border Patrol agents who were involved in a rough encounter with some of the Haitian migrants earlier this week.

Sen. Johnson letter demands DHS Sec. Mayorkas reveal how many migrants released into the US

FOX News [9/22/2021 9:23 PM, Kyle Morris, 9251K] reports Sen. Ron Johnson penned a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas demanding that he reveal by the end of the week how many migrants who were apprehended were released into the United States. "At yesterday's Senate hearing you failed to answer my questions about basic information on apprehensions at the U.S. border," the Wisconsin Republican wrote to Mayorkas Wednesday. "Of the approximately 1.3 million apprehensions, how many people have been returned, how many people have been detained, and how many people have been dispersed into the U.S.?" Johnson's figure is a reference to the approximate number of apprehensions to date this year. "When asked for the same information at a House hearing today, you still could not provide the data," Johnson noted. "As the crisis at the border worsens each week, it is unacceptable that you chose to appear before the American people at multiple hearings unprepared to provide such crucial information." In concluding his letter, Johnson said that if Mayorkas cannot give an answer by the end of the week he must "provide a written response explaining why" he cannot answer the question. "It's hard, if not impossible to believe, that the administration cannot provide this basic information," Johnson told Fox News. "DHS has 240,000 employees and Secretary Mayorkas hasn't tasked anyone with keeping track of this Biden made border crisis? It is a travesty that should outrage all Americans."

Human rights leaders decry U.S.' treatment of Haitian migrants

The [Los Angeles Times](#) [9/22/2021 4:06 PM, Erin B. Logan, 3710K] reports civil and human rights groups on Wednesday criticized the White House's immigration policies for inflicting "cruelty on Black, Brown and Indigenous immigrant communities," according to a letter sent by the organizations to President Biden. "We fear that commitments made on the campaign trail ... are being shredded before our eyes," said the letter, which was signed by the leaders of more than 30 civil and human rights groups, including Sherrilyn Ifill, the president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Anthony Romero, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union; and Francisca Lucien, executive director of the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti. [Bloomberg](#) [9/22/2021 4:16 PM, Ellen M. Gilmer, 9K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas is struggling to persuade lawmakers that his department is fulfilling the Biden administration's pledge to make the immigration system more humane as the U.S. forces Haitians back to their Caribbean nation in turmoil. Several Democrats on the House Homeland Security Committee and across Capitol Hill condemned the Department of Homeland Security on Wednesday for its decision to ramp up repatriation flights to Haiti in recent days and continue using a public health order to expel many Haitians and other migrants at the border. "Isn't there some way for us to reexamine this? This is an appeal, Mr. Secretary," Rep. Al Green (D-Texas) told Mayorkas. "Maybe there's something we missed. Can you give me some hope?" Mayorkas' appearance on Capitol Hill comes as criticism of the administration's border policies hits a fever pitch among liberal allies and Republican detractors alike. The arrival of more than 10,000 Haitian migrants near Del Rio, Texas, sparked outrage among conservatives who blame the situation on the White House's elimination of some Trump-era policies, including construction of a wall between the U.S. and Mexico.

Charges of racism swirl as Haitian Americans and black lawmakers as allies unite to protest Biden's border crisis

The [Washington Post](#) [9/22/2021 9:27 PM, Tim Craig, Sean Sullivan and Silvia Foster-Frau, 11773K] reports the viral images of border agents on horseback rounding up migrants on the Texas line over the weekend triggered disturbing memories for Marleine Bastien. As an immigrant from Haiti in the early 1980s, she had watched similar encounters with law enforcement at the Miami federal detention center, where she protested fellow Haitian immigrants being locked up or deported while Cuban refugees were released. Miami police would show up "on big horses trying to trample" demonstrators to break up the crowds. Now, 40 years later, "history is repeating itself," she said. Uproar over treatment of thousands of Haitian immigrants who have encamped at the U.S.-Mexico border is echoing from the streets of U.S. cities to the halls of the Capitol as people mobilize over what they believe is a racist and unequal U.S. immigration system. While the outcry was sparked by the current border crisis, it is a culmination of years of frustration over what is perceived as harsher treatment and extra hurdles faced by Black immigrants coming to the United States vs. lighter-skinned counterparts. On Tuesday, about 200 Haitian Americans shut down a major thoroughfare in Miami as they demonstrated in front of a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services field office. Demonstrators held signs that read "End Racism at the Border" and "Treat All the People the Same" while chanting "Let them breathe," an effort to link the squalid conditions migrants are facing to George Floyd's infamous final words before he was killed by a Minneapolis police officer last year. [Roll Call](#) [9/22/2021 4:00 PM, Caroline Simon, 119K] reports members of the Congressional Black Caucus met with White House officials on Wednesday to urge better treatment of Haitian migrants, adding their voice to a growing number of Democrats condemning the actions of border agents depicted in now-viral images. The lawmakers signaled deep concern with recent photos and videos,

which appeared to show Border Patrol agents on horseback using the ends of reins to control crowds of mostly Haitian migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border near Del Rio, Texas. "I articulated the legal rights of the Haitian migrants and made it emphatically clear that those seeking asylum are not to be struck by those on Horses and that other legal rights must be protected!" tweeted Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas, after the meeting. In addition to Jackson Lee, others at the White House meeting were CBC Chairwoman Joyce Beatty, D-Ohio; Foreign Affairs Chairman Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y.; House Democratic Caucus Chair Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y.; and four other lawmakers. "This week, we've witnessed some of the most deplorable, unspeakable abuses of Haitian migrants seeking asylum at our border," Beatty said in a tweet after the meeting. "@TheBlackCaucus is demanding answers & policy changes to ensure America remains a beacon of hope for refugees. Asylum is and always will be a human right."

Haitians and South Florida activists protest Texas border crisis

Telemundo 51 [9/22/2021 7:15 AM, Staff, 14K] reports that "what is happening is inhumane, cruel and unacceptable," says a call issued by activists and human rights defenders in South Florida, who protested this Wednesday about what happened on the Texas border with hundreds of Haitians trying to reach USA. At a rally in front of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Haitians and local advocates demand respect as they set out to raise awareness of the crisis at the border and call for deportations to stop. Mounted on horseback, the federals tried to stop the advance of the Haitian migrants. The images of migrants at the border have been difficult to see given the cruelty of whipping and persecution on horseback. Parents who carry their children of only months on their shoulders and who cross the river guided by a rope cry out to the Joe Biden government for fair treatment and a possible immigration solution for their cases. The White House faces harsh condemnation from Democrats for its handling of the influx of Haitian migrants on the southern border of the United States. Democrats are calling on the Biden administration to end its use of a pandemic-era authority to deport migrants without giving them a chance to seek asylum in this country. In a statement, a spokesman for the Department of Homeland Security said: "On Tuesday, September 21, some adult migrants caused two separate disruptions to the runway after disembarking in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Haitian crowd control officers responded to both incidents. and they solved the situations. " Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told a Senate hearing Tuesday that the crowd in Del Rio will dissipate in the next few days. "Expect to see dramatic results within the next 48 to 96 hours."

Black Caucus meets with White House over treatment of Haitian migrants

The Hill [9/22/2021 3:23 PM, Marty Johnson, 1776K] reports that members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) met with senior White House officials on Wednesday and called for the suspension of border patrol agents photographed on horseback rounding up Haitian migrants near the southern border town of Del Rio, Texas. CBC Chairwoman Joyce Beatty (D-Ohio) told reporters after the meeting at the White House with senior adviser and former CBC member Cedric Richmond and domestic policy adviser and former ambassador Susan Rice that the group immediately highlighted the now-viral pictures that to many observers looked like they were from another era. "We were very concerned, as we looked at the process, we want those [agents] that were identified suspended; we want to halt that process," Beatty said. "The nation saw that," Beatty added. "There is no one who has contacted me that did not feel that this was not horrific. It's deplorable, it's insulting, it makes me too emotional to even talk about that you would treat people like that." Beatty was joined at the White House by Reps. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas), Barbara Lee (D-

Calif.), Gregory Meeks (D-N.Y.), Troy Carter (D-La.), Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.), Yvette Clark (D-N.Y.), Ritchie Torres (D-N.Y.) and Steven Horsford (D-Nev.). Beatty also noted that caucus members Reps. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) and Gregory Meeks (D-N.Y.) — chairs of the House Homeland Security Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee, respectively — were sending a letter to the administration on the issue. The letter asks the Department of Homeland Security and the State Department to supply the committees with a laundry list of documents regarding the situation by Oct. 1. Additionally, the letter notes that four months ago — prior to the earthquake and assassination — Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas announced an 18-month temporary protected status designation for Haiti, allowing eligible Haitian nationals residing in the U.S. as of May 21 to begin the process and stay in the country. On Tuesday, Mayorkas condemned the actions of border agents, but confirmed that the deportations of Haitian migrants will continue. “We are increasing the frequency and number of the repatriation flights each day,” Mayorkas said. “We’re hoping that what we are doing now serves as a deterrent because it backs up the words that we have spoken since the very outset: that irregular migration is not the way to enter the United States. It will not work.”

Top UN refugee official: US expulsions of Haitian migrants may violate international law

The Hill [9/22/2021 8:29 AM, Mychael Schnell, 1776K] reports that the United Nations’ top refugee official on Tuesday said the United States’ expulsions of Haitian migrants who are camped out under a bridge in Texas may violate international law. Filippo Grandi, the U.N.’s high commissioner for refugees, encouraged the U.S. to scale back its Title 42 health-related restrictions that were enacted in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, saying that such regulations “deny most people arriving at the southwest U.S. land border any opportunity to request asylum.” “The summary, mass expulsions of individuals currently underway under the Title 42 authority, without screening for protection needs, is inconsistent with international norms and may constitute refoulement,” Grandi said, according to Reuters. The U.S. started expelling Haitian migrants from the southern border in Texas last weekend. More than 10,000 migrants who are looking to seek asylum are camped out under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas, which spans the U.S. and Mexico border. Several hundred people have been removed since Sunday and sent to Haiti, according to Reuters, and thousands of others have been transferred into U.S. detention for processing. Photos and videos have since circulated of border agents on horseback chasing down and reining in migrants, which has sparked national attention on the developing situation. The White House is now receiving pushback from Democrats and other allies against the removal of migrants, urging the administration to halt the expulsions.

VP Harris Raises Concerns About Mistreatment of Haitian Migrants With DHS Secretary Mayorkas

Reuters [9/22/2021 2:06 PM, Staff, 4947K] reports that U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris raised concerns about mistreatment of Haitian migrants by border patrol agents during a call with Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Tuesday, her spokesperson said. The White House has criticized the use of horse reins to threaten Haitian migrants after images circulated of a U.S. border guard on horseback charging at migrants near a riverside camp in Texas. “Secretary Mayorkas shared the Vice President’s concern and noted that he looks forward to updating her on the investigation by the Office of Professional Responsibility once it concludes,” Harris’s chief spokesperson Symone Sanders said.

Harris unveils \$250M commitment to new global health fund

The Hill [9/22/2021 1:32 PM, Morgan Chalfant, 1776K] reports that Vice President Harris on Wednesday called for a new global health security fund at the World Bank to focus on pandemic preparedness, with the Biden administration planning to contribute \$250 million in seed funding, a White House official said. Harris, who made the announcement while leading a session of a global COVID-19 virtual summit, also revealed that the administration is requesting \$850 million from Congress for the financial intermediary fund (FIF). The Biden administration is setting a goal of reaching \$10 billion for the fund at the outset. "The truth is the work to end this pandemic and prepare for the next is a strategic imperative. It is essential to our security and our shared prosperity and it will save countless lives," Harris said in prepared remarks at the outset of the meeting. Without a new mechanism providing "predictable" funding on top of emergency systems in place, she said, the globe "will never be fully prepared" for the next biological crisis. The vice president described the goal of \$10 billion for the financial intermediary fund as "ambitious" but "achievable" as she urged other nations and private organizations to contribute. "That is a fraction of a percent of global GDP," she noted. Such funds typically leverage public and private investments to support global initiatives. Both Harris and President Biden have previously called for a financial intermediary fund to address global health security. In timing with the summit, the White House announced plans to purchase an additional 500 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine to donate to the global population through COVAX, the World Health Organization-backed vaccine initiative. Administration officials said that, with the new announcement, the U.S. has committed to shipping 1.1 billion vaccine doses abroad.

[FL] Federal judge: Florida immigration law racially motivated

The AP [9/22/2021 2:55 PM, Brendan Farrington, 2701K] reports that a federal judge has struck down portions of a Florida immigration enforcement law that was a priority of the state's Republican governor, saying in her ruling that the measure was racially motivated. U.S. Judge Beth Bloom on Tuesday rejected sections of the law that ban local government sanctuary policies and require local law enforcement to make their best effort to work with federal immigration enforcement authorities. The office of Gov. Ron DeSantis, who signed the bill into law with much fanfare in 2019 as a priority of his administration, said Wednesday that it would appeal. Bloom repeatedly said that the law was racially motivated and that its supporters showed no evidence as to why it was needed to lower crime. She said that the sponsor of the bill - SB 168 - was guided by anti-immigrant hate groups such as Floridians for Immigration Enforcement. "Allowing anti-immigrant hate groups that overtly promote xenophobic, nationalist, racist ideologies to be intimately involved in a bill's legislative process is a significant departure from procedural norms," Bloom wrote. "This involvement strongly suggests that the Legislature enacted SB 168 to promote and ratify the racist views of these advocacy groups." Bloom cited numerous communication between Floridians for Immigration Enforcement and state Sen. Joe Gruters' staff. Gruters sponsored the bill and also serves as chairman of the state Republican Party.

[CA] Alleged Sinaloa cartel boss indicted in San Diego

The San Diego Union Tribune [9/22/2021 4:10 PM, Kristina Davis, 302K] reports an alleged boss for Mexico's Sinaloa cartel has been charged by a San Diego federal grand jury on accusations of overseeing drug-trafficking operations at the Arizona border, according to an indictment unsealed Wednesday. Sergio Valenzuela Valenzuela, 52, who goes by the nicknames "Gigio" and "Yiyo," was indicted in 2018 and remains a fugitive. His organization is accused of smuggling multi-ton loads of fentanyl, methamphetamine, heroin and other drugs from Mexico into the United States, according to the Treasury. The brief indictment

charges him specifically with cocaine and marijuana conspiracies in San Diego or Imperial counties and elsewhere. The Treasury on Wednesday also designated seven alleged members of Valenzuela's organization — right-hand man Leonardo Pineda Armenta and six cartel lieutenants — as well as two businesses in Mexico.

[Mexico] Feeling trapped, migrants' fears grow in Mexican border city

The AP [9/22/2021 6:06 PM, María Verza] reports without the sort of overwhelming show of force deployed by the United States and Texas on the north side of the border, Mexico has been ramping up efforts to relieve migrant numbers at this segment of the border. National Guard troops accompanied immigration agents on operations during recent nights. Sometimes they picked up migrants from the street and loaded them into vans. In other cases they raided hotels. On Tuesday, Mexico flew the first planeload of migrants from the border city of Piedras Negras — just downstream from Ciudad Acuña — to the southern city of Villahermosa. More flights were expected, including to Tapachula, near the Guatemala border. At the same time, Mexico was trying to keep more migrants from reaching the northern border. Bus lines were reminded not to sell tickets to migrants without proper documentation. On Monday, immigration agents in the northern city of Monterrey, a key transportation hub for travel to the border, detained about 100 migrants at the bus station who were then flown to Tapachula. In Monterrey, the number of Haitian migrants arriving at a local shelter had grown exponentially since Sunday. Some 1,500 Haitian migrants had arrived to the shelter since Sunday. The shelter, which has a capacity of 700, has expanded outside with tents for the overflow. Mexico also plans to begin direct flights to Haiti, which would initially target Haitian migrants already in Mexico's detention centers who have not applied for asylum. Those with open asylum cases would be flown or bused to Tapachula, according to a federal official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

[Mexico] Amid U.S. border crackdown, some Haitian migrants seek asylum in Mexico

Reuters [9/22/2021 9:31 PM, Josue Gonzalez and Jorge Lopez, 5304K] reports hundreds of Haitian asylum seekers congregated outside Mexico's refugee agency in the capital and in shelters in the northern city of Monterrey on Wednesday, as migrants deterred by a crackdown at the U.S. border sought legal status in Mexico. Nearly 10,000 migrants, mainly Haitian, remain in worsening conditions in an impromptu camp that sprang up under a bridge spanning the Rio Grande from the Texas town Del Rio to Mexico's Ciudad Acuña. In recent days, U.S. authorities have removed at least 4,000 people from the site for processing in detention centers. Some 523 Haitians have been deported to their homeland on four flights, with repatriations set to continue on a regular basis, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said. Filippo Grandi, the head of the U.N refugee agency, has warned that U.S. expulsions to such a volatile situation might violate international law.

[Mexico] Haitians Who Fled The US Border Are Now Facing Nights Of Raids And Terror In Mexico

BuzzFeed [9/22/2021 8:19 PM, Adolfo Flores, 5962K] reports Mexican authorities carrying rifles and flashlights combed through this city's downtown early Wednesday, searching for the Haitians who were in hiding after being pushed to flee the US just days ago. "If you send me to Haiti, I have no one there to help me," said a father, holding a shard of glass to keep Mexican authorities from entering a hotel room holding his family. "I can't go back." Returning to Mexico was a last resort for the Haitians after crossing the Rio Grande and setting up camp under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas. Food, water, and medicine were lacking. Border Patrol agents on horseback chased them. Children were getting sick. There was no

avoiding COVID-19. President Joe Biden's administration started loading people onto planes and flying them back to Haiti, a place many of the immigrants haven't lived in for years. Though Mexico has easier access to supplies and shelter (under the bridge, people slept on rocks, dirt, and cardboard), authorities there inflict nights of terror on those hiding from deportation. It's the largely unseen impact of the Biden administration's hardline handling of the Haitian immigration to the United States and years of Mexico being pressured by the US to stop immigrants from ever reaching the border. They came to the Hotel Coahuila around 2 a.m. National Guard and Mexican immigration agents marched in wearing bulletproof vests and helmets and holding long guns. The quiet street below was suddenly filled with smashing sounds, then the crack of shattered glass and the shrieks of a Haitian family.

[Haiti] Chaos on tarmac at Haiti's main airport after US deports migrants

CNN [9/22/2021 12:46 PM, Valentina DiDonato and Priscilla Alvarez, 4876K] reports that chaotic scenes broke out at Haiti's main airport on Tuesday after migrants who had been deported from the United States were flown back home. Thousands of Haitians have fled the country due to a combination of political instability following the assassination of the president in August and an earthquake in the same month that left more than 1,200 people dead. Democratic lawmakers have urged the Biden administration to stop deporting those who've fled Haiti for the US, but the White House remains committed to returning them. Furious Haitians crowded the tarmac at Port-au-Prince airport after being dropped off by a deportation flight they say they were given little prior notice of, a journalist at the scene told CNN. A group of men rushed back toward a plane after they disembarked, with one man attempting to get back on board, witnesses told Reuters. "I am angry at the government. We were told in prison that the Haitian government had signed to send us back to Haiti. They are all bad people, these authorities," said Yranese Melidor, 45, who arrived on an earlier flight, Reuters reported. "We didn't see any US presence except for the aircraft. From what I observed, it basically looked like they were flown there and left," journalist Erlen Ofte Arntsen told CNN of the people he spoke with at the airport in Port-au-Prince on Tuesday. The US Department of Homeland Security acknowledge the "disruptions on the tarmac" in Port-au-Prince saying Haitian crowd control officers resolved the situation. "On Tuesday, Sept. 21, some adult migrants caused two separate disruptions on the tarmac after deplaning in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Haitian crowd control officers responded to both incidents and resolved the situations. ICE fully respects the rights of all people to peacefully express their opinions, while continuing to perform its immigration enforcement mission consistent with our priorities, federal law and agency policy," a DHS spokesperson told CNN. Northern Public Radio [9/22/2021 12:12 PM, Bill Chappell, 3K] reports that migrants whom the U.S. is forcibly returning to Haiti are expressing anger, frustration and desperation when they arrive at Toussaint Louverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince. The situation devolved into chaos Tuesday when a group of migrants rushed to try to get on a plane heading back to the United States. Adult migrants who had just been deported from the U.S. "Caused two separate disruptions on the tarmac," a Department of Homeland Security spokesperson told NPR. In one incident, a group of migrants tried to force their way onto another plane, assaulting the aircraft's pilots, according to a report by NBC News. Some of those who recently returned threw shoes at a plane as a security guard rushed to close its door, The Associated Press reported. One Haitian who tried to get on the plane is Maxine Orélien, who told the AP that he and other migrants have no future in Haiti. "What can we provide for our family?" he told the news outlet. "We can't do anything for our family here. There is nothing in this country." Three U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers were injured in the fracas, a source who is familiar with the situation but who was

not authorized to speak about it publicly told NPR. The officers' injuries were not life-threatening, the source said. "The returnees are angry," Jacqueline Charles of the Miami Herald told NPR's All Things Considered. "They are insisting that the border was open. They don't understand why they were detained. They are complaining about the conditions in detention. They are blaming the Haitian government for 'signing deportation papers' against them."

[Haiti] Expelled Haitian migrants try to get back on plane returning to US

FOX News [9/22/2021 5:49 AM, Brie Stimson, 9251K] reports a tense situation in Port-au-Prince occurred Tuesday when many deported Haitian migrants expressed anger and some even tried unsuccessfully to get back on a plane returning to the U.S. The Department of Homeland Security confirmed to Fox News Tuesday that three U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers were injured after "two separate disruptions" by Haitian migrants when they deplaned on the tarmac at Port-au-Prince. The injuries were not life-threatening. The expulsion flights back to Haiti started on Sunday and more than 500 Haitians have been removed from the country, according to Reuters. Filippo Grandi, the head of the U.N refugee agency, said the expulsions might violate international law by sending refugees back to life-threatening situations and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said the deportations "defy common sense," Reuters reported. President Biden faced a backlash this week over the administration's deportations of Haitian migrants camped along the U.S. border in Texas seeking asylum, according to reports. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[Afghanistan] Mayorkas reveals just 3% of Afghan evacuees had special immigrant visas

FOX News [9/22/2021 3:57 PM, Michael Lee, 9251K] reports Department of Homeland Security secretary Alejandro Mayorkas revealed that only three percent of the over 60,000 Afghan evacuees brought to the United States following the end of the war in Afghanistan have been special immigrant visa recipients. "Approximately 6 percent have been lawful permanent residents. Approximately 3 percent have been individuals who are in receipt of the special immigrant visas," Mayorkas said during congressional testimony Tuesday. Mayorkas also said that about 7 percent of those evacuated from Afghanistan were American citizens, while also noting that some of those who were not SIV holders could qualify for the visa but have not yet applied. The comments came on the same day Mayorkas had a heated exchange with Sen. Ron Johnson over the situation at the southern border. "Of the 1.3 million people that we've apprehended, how many have been returned, how many people are being detained, and how many people have been dispersed? And I want some numbers here," Johnson asked Mayorkas while pressing him on whether the administration had an open border policy.

[Afghanistan] US lawmakers stormed out of classified Afghanistan briefing

CNN [9/22/2021 11:33 PM, Kylie Atwood, 4876K] reports multiple lawmakers angrily stormed out of a classified briefing with members of the Biden administration on Afghanistan on Wednesday morning, according to three sources familiar with the briefing. The Republican and Democratic lawmakers grew frustrated after State Department, Pentagon, Department of Homeland Security, and Office of the Director of National Security officials failed to answer their basic questions during the briefing for members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the sources told CNN. State Department officials -- both privately and publicly -- continue to say that about 100 Americans are still in Afghanistan

who want to get out. Some lawmakers have told CNN they do not understand that accounting, given the department has said that they evacuated more than 75 Americans from Afghanistan through evacuation efforts in the last few weeks. State Department officials have said that the dynamic situation on the ground is the reason they cannot give a more precise figure. A State Department spokesperson told CNN on Wednesday that "as a general matter, we do not comment on communications with Congress, especially those conducted in a classified setting."

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Haitian deportees assaulted US pilots, ICE agents

The Hill [9/22/2021 11:28 AM, Jordan Williams, 1776K] reports that Haitian deportees assaulted U.S. pilots and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents on deportation flights arriving in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on Tuesday, according to a report from NBC News. NBC News reported the incident began after a flight of single adult men arrived on the tarmac, citing a source familiar with internal reports. Several of the men then stormed to another flight that recently arrived and was carrying families. On the second flight, the men allegedly attacked pilots of the plane and three ICE officers. The officers suffered non-life threatening injuries, NBC reported. A spokesperson for DHS told The Hill in a statement that some adult migrants caused "two separate disruptions" on the tarmac after deplaning in Port-au-Prince. Haitian crowd control officers responded to both incidents and "resolved the situation." "ICE fully respects the rights of all people to peacefully express their opinions, while continuing to perform its immigration enforcement mission consistent with our priorities, federal law and agency policy," the spokesperson said. The spokesperson did not give further detail about the "disruptions." The incident comes as the U.S. has ramped up deportation flights to Haiti after over 10,000 migrants crowded under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas. Despite the backlash, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told a Senate panel on Tuesday that there were no plans to cease flights. "We are increasing the frequency and number of the repatriation flights each day," Mayorkas said. "And we're hoping that what we are doing now serves as a deterrent because it backs up the words that we have spoken since the very outset: that irregular migration is not the way to enter the United States. It will not work."

[FL] Federal judge: Florida ban on sanctuary cities racially motivated

Axios [9/22/2021 9:55 PM, Fadel Allassan, 526K] reports a federal judge on Tuesday struck down parts of a Florida law aimed at banning local governments from establishing sanctuary city policies, arguing in part that the law is racially motivated and that it has the support of hate groups. In a 110-page ruling issued Tuesday, U.S. District Judge Beth Bloom said the law — signed and championed by Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) — violates the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause because it was adopted with discriminatory motives. Republicans in states across the country have prioritized banning sanctuary cities — municipalities that refuse to hold undocumented immigrants in criminal custody, block immigration agents from working in county jails or deny federal authorities access to immigrants' records. At least 11 states have adopted policies banning such cities, per Reuters. The state had pushed the law — SB 168 — as a public safety measure. But Bloom rejected that argument, saying it was not supported by crime statistics or other evidence. The judge also objected to advocacy groups that she said had an influence in crafting the law, like Floridians for Immigration Enforcement, which she said "has been labeled as an anti-immigrant racist group."

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Feds: 3 charged in Mexican migrant worker conspiracy

The AP [9/22/2021 8:24 PM, Staff, 11773K] reports three people have been indicted in a multi-state conspiracy involving the forced labor of Mexican agricultural immigrants, federal authorities announced Wednesday. A federal grand jury in Tampa formally charged Bladimir Moreno, Christina Gamez and Guadalupe Mendes Mendoza under a six-count indictment last week. Moreno, a Mexican citizen and permanent U.S. resident who owned and managed Los Villatoros Harvesting, and Gamez, a U.S. citizen who worked for the company as a bookkeeper, manager and supervisor, face charges of conspiracy under the RICO Act, conspiracy to commit forced labor, forced labor and conspiracy to obstruct proceedings before departments, agencies and committees. Mendes Mendoza, a Mexican citizen who worked as a manager and supervisor for the company, was charged with conspiracy to obstruct proceedings before agencies. According to the indictment, Moreno, Gamez and Mendes Mendoza ran a labor contracting company for migrant workers with temporary agricultural visas from 2015 through 2017. Los Villatoros Harvesting subjected multiple Mexican agricultural workers employed in Florida, Kentucky, Indiana, Georgia and North Carolina to forced labor, investigators said. The company also harbored migrant workers in the U.S. after their H-2A visas had expired for financial gain and committed visa fraud and fraud in foreign labor contracting, officials said.

[IL] Flight with dozens of unaccompanied Afghan minors arrives in Chicago

FOX News [9/22/2021 10:11 PM, Thomas Barrabi, 9251K] reports a flight carrying about 75 unaccompanied Afghan children who fled the country during the U.S. withdrawal arrived in Chicago on Wednesday, according to city officials and local media reports. The Department of Homeland Security confirmed the flight's arrival from Qatar, where many Afghan refugees have been held prior to their resettlement, the Chicago Sun-Times reported. A Chicago city official said about 75 unaccompanied minors were on board the flight. A spokesman for Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot said city officials would work to "ensure the well-being of these children." "Chicago will always be a welcoming home to those displaced and we will work with our State and federal partners to ensure we support the Afghanistan minors who arrived this morning," the spokesman said. The unaccompanied children will either be released into the custody of a vetted relative or remain with the Office of Refugee Resettlement until they can be resettled, a DHS spokesperson told the Sun-Times.

[WI] Pentagon 'aware' of reports Wisconsin military base's struggle to feed, heat Afghan refugees

The Hill [9/22/2021 6:15 PM, Ellen Mitchell, 1776K] reports Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is aware of reports that Fort McCoy, Wis., personnel are struggling to feed and provide clean clothes and heat for Afghan refugees at the base, according to the Pentagon's top spokesman. "We're certainly aware of these reports . . . and we take it very, very seriously," press secretary John Kirby told reporters on Wednesday, but did not offer details on solutions to the matter. The Wisconsin State Journal last week reported a host of problems at the military base, located nearly 40 miles east of La Crosse in rural Wisconsin, where some 12,500 Afghans are awaiting processing before being allowed to begin a life in the United States. Included in the issues is a lack of food, heat in several buildings where Afghans are living, and no access to clean clothing, with some wearing the same garments they have had on since arriving in the United States weeks ago. In addition, women reported being harassed by former Afghan soldiers that had been trained by U.S. forces.

One woman recounted how many Afghans had to wait hours in line for food, sometimes up to six, before reaching the front and finding none left. A lack of heat in some buildings is also troubling as temperatures dip with fall approaching. U.S. Northern Command, which oversees the eight U.S. military bases that are housing 53,000 Afghan refugees, "is very mindful of the needs of the weather and the climate and making sure that the evacuees have a safe, clean, warm living environment while they continue this processing," Kirby said.

[Afghanistan] Almost 150 from the American University of Afghanistan were evacuated, but thousands still want to leave

CBS News [9/22/2021 6:00 AM, Paulina Smolinski, 2612K] reports that nearly 150 students and staff from the American University of Afghanistan were evacuated before the U.S. completed its withdrawal at the end of August. That was short of the AUAF administration's goal to get 1,200 out of the country, and now the university is working to move out the remainder as the Taliban government takes hold. In secondary schools, the Taliban has ordered boys back to the classroom - but not girls - prompting fears that girls and women will be denied an education, as they were the last time the Taliban was in power two decades ago. "It's still our commitment to relocate any of our students and personnel who request it," said Ian Bickford, president of the university. "We're advocating at every level of government. We are paying close attention to conditions to look for any opportunity to continue the resettlement of people. The fact is most movement out of Afghanistan is paused right now." Established in 2006 as the nation's first private university, with a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development, the university was founded with the aim of establishing a form of higher education built on the American model. A U.S. State Department spokesperson said the department is in communication with school administrators. As many as 4,000 students, current and former employees, alumni and their families are still in the country. Many of those left in Afghanistan fear for their safety.

[Afghanistan] US soldier wins long fight to get Afghan translator asylum

The AP [9/22/2021 6:22 PM, Julie Watson, 2701K] reports Army combat veteran Spencer Sullivan has never felt more victorious. Sullivan spent years fighting to get his Afghan translator asylum after his former platoon's other interpreter was denied a U.S. visa before being killed by the Taliban in 2017. On Wednesday, Abdulhaq Sodais was finally granted asylum by a court in Germany, where he was forced to flee after being denied a U.S. visa repeatedly despite facing death threats for aiding U.S. troops during its 20-year war in Afghanistan. Sullivan, who now lives in Virginia, said he dropped his phone when he saw the text message from Sodais. "I just started crying," Sullivan said. The decision marked the end of an eight-year journey between the two men who risked their lives together trying to eliminate the Taliban, bonding in a way that can only be forged in war. Sullivan dedicated himself to helping Sodais after losing another translator, Sayed Masoud, who was killed by the Taliban in 2017 while waiting for a U.S. visa. The former soldier is among scores of U.S. combat veterans who have been working on their own to rescue the Afghans who served alongside them. "It's ultimately just cathartic relief," said Sullivan, adding that he was overwhelmed with emotion Wednesday in part because it also opened the war wound that he couldn't help Masoud. "This long journey is over but Sayed didn't make it."

Customs and Border Protection

Closure of border with Mexico extended until Oct. 21

The Hill [9/22/2021 9:32 AM, Jordan Williams, 1776K] reports that the closure of the United States' border with Mexico for nonessential travel has been extended to Oct. 21. In a Federal Register notice published Wednesday, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said it would continue to limit travel from Mexico to "essential travel," including for educational, medical purposes, and for work. DHS said it "continues to monitor and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic," noting that there have been more than 40.3 million coronavirus cases in the U.S., 1.5 million cases in Canada, and more than 3.4 million cases in Mexico as of the week of Sept. 5. "DHS also notes that the Delta variant continues to drive an increase in cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in the United States," the notice read. "Canada and Mexico are also seeing increased case counts and deaths." The restrictions were first put in place in March 2020, and had been extended monthly since then. Wednesday's announcement comes after the most recent extension in August, which also applied to Canada, was due to expire on Tuesday. But Wednesday's announcement also comes days after the Biden administration unveiled plans to ease restrictions on fully vaccinated international travelers. Starting in early November, foreign visitors must be vaccinated against COVID-19 and show proof before boarding a U.S.-bound flight. Visitors would also have to take a COVID-19 test up to 72 hours prior to flying. The U.S.'s land border with Canada is still closed. Canada reopened its border to some American tourists in early August.

Reported similarly:

San Diego Union Tribune [9/22/2021 3:23 PM, Alexandra Mendoza, 302K]

Biden Pushes Deterrent Border Policy After Promising 'Humane' Approach

The New York Times [9/23/2021 12:07 AM, Michael D. Shear, Natalie Kitroeff, Zolan Kanno-Youngs and Eileen Sullivan, 24635K] reports the images could have come straight from former President Donald J. Trump's immigration playbook: mounted Border Patrol agents rounding up desperate Haitian families at the southwestern border for rapid deportation from the United States. In fact, the aggressive effort to quickly clear a makeshift camp in Del Rio, Texas, of more than 15,000 Haitian migrants was part of a Biden administration response that included "surging" agents to the overrun area using a public health immigration rule invoked by Mr. Trump to send many people home. President Biden's spokeswoman said the scenes of agents on horseback were "horrific" and not "acceptable or appropriate." Vice President Kamala Harris said "human beings should never be treated that way." The Department of Homeland Security said it was investigating. Still, the deportations are a stark example of how Mr. Biden — who declared on Feb. 2 that his goal was to "undo the moral and national shame of the previous administration" — is deploying some of the most aggressive approaches to immigration put in place by Mr. Trump over the past four years.

Response to Haitian migrant surge leaves other parts of border unsecured: 'We're unguarded'

FOX News [9/22/2021 5:12 PM, Adam Shaw, Griff Jenkins, 9251K] reports as officials scramble to cope with the flood of Haitian migrants to the Del Rio bridge, multiple sources say that the response -- including a surge in agents to the bridge from elsewhere in the sector -- has left other parts of the border wide open. As more than 14,000 migrants camped out under the international bridge in Del Rio, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) last week surged hundreds of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) law enforcement to the bridge to process migrants as part of a strategy that included increasing deportation flights. That move included closing the port of entry, as well as other border

checkpoints in Del Rio – checkpoints that allow CBP to apprehend illicit cargo and illegal migrants -- in order to try and regain control at the bridge. CBP sources told Fox News this week that 224 miles of the Rio Grande river border have been left unpatrolled as a consequence. A Border Patrol source told Fox that the surge in resources meant not only fewer boats along the border, but also fewer agents patrolling the border on horseback. Meanwhile, local law enforcement have been taking matters into their own hands. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott announced on Tuesday that Texas Department of Public Safety had created a barrier of vehicles to turn back migrants. "They have created a steel barrier preventing people from being able to cross the border," Abbott said at a press conference. "One day there were countless people coming across the border, then the very same day the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) put up all these DPS vehicles, and suddenly, in an instant, people stopped crossing the border in this location. That strategy is working."

Following the illegal immigrant journey from the border to inside the US

FOX News [9/22/2021 7:59 AM, Matt Wall and Matt Leach, 9251K] reports that the small town of La Joya lies 20 minutes from the bus station in downtown McAllen, Texas. Home to just over 4,000 residents, La Joya and similar border towns along the Rio Grande Valley have been overwhelmed by illegal border crossings in recent months. Encounters with illegal migrants are up more than 500% in 2021, according to the U.S. Border Patrol. Fox News witnessed the journey for migrants who cross the border into La Joya, typically beginning in the cab of a Border Patrol pickup truck. Most crossed the border and waited along the dirt road to be picked up by Border Patrol agents. On their way to be processed, the illegal border crossers get their first glimpse of American life as they pass by single-family homes and tree-lined streets that back up to the frontier. Once in the custody of the U.S. government, they are taken to a field processing center where they are given water and cover from the sun. The processing center in La Joya is located on the corner of a public park. When Fox News arrived at the site, Border Patrol officers surrounded a group of approximately 20 migrants huddled under a plastic awning-like structure. As migrants drank water and spoke with Border Patrol, two teenagers played football just a few yards away. One Border Patrol officer told Fox News the same scene had played out daily for months. Border Patrol officers directed the migrants to form two lines: one for single men and another for families. One by one, each walked from the sun shelter, past a dumpster and onto the bus. Another Border Patrol officer, who did not have permission to speak on camera, told Fox News the migrants would be sent to a government facility a few miles away for formal processing.

WhatsApp, social posts helped lead Haitian migrants to Texas

The AP [9/23/2021 12:16 AM, Juan A. Lozano, Maria Verza and Julie Watson, 495K] reports that for the final leg of his journey from Chile to the United States, Haitian migrant Fabricio Jean followed detailed instructions sent to him via WhatsApp from his brother in New Jersey who had recently taken the route to the Texas border. His brother wired him money for the trip, then meticulously mapped it out, warning him of areas heavy with Mexican immigration officials. "You will need about 20,000 pesos (about \$1,000 U.S. dollars) for the buses. You need to take this bus to this location and then take another bus," recounted Jean, who spoke to The Associated Press after reaching the border town of Del Rio. What Jean didn't expect was to find thousands of Haitian migrants like himself crossing at the same remote spot. The 38-year-old, his wife and two young children earlier this month joined as many as 14,000 mostly Haitian migrants camped under a Del Rio bridge. A confluence of factors caused the sudden sharp increase at the Texas town of about 35,000 residents. Interviews with dozens of Haitian migrants, immigration attorneys and advocates

reveal a phenomenon produced partly by confusion over the Biden administration's policies after authorities recently extended protections for the more than 100,000 Haitians living in the United States. It also reflects the power of Facebook, YouTube and platforms like WhatsApp, which migrants use to share information that can get distorted as it speeds through immigrant communities, directing migration flows. That's especially true for tight-knit groups like the Creole-and-French-speaking Haitians, many of whom left their homeland after its devastating 2010 earthquake and have been living in Latin America, drawn by Brazil and Chile's once-booming economies. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said the temporary protections were limited to those residing in the U.S. before July 29 — but that condition was often missing in posts, leading Haitians outside the United States to believe they, too, were eligible. Mayorkas acknowledged that this week, saying "we are very concerned that Haitians who are taking the irregular migration path are receiving misinformation that the border is open," or that they qualify for protected status despite the expired deadline. "I want to make sure it is known that this is not the way to come to the United States," he said.

Psaki says Border Patrol agents guilty of 'brutal and inappropriate' behavior

FOX News [9/22/2021 3:27 PM, Jessica Chasmar, 9251K] reports White House press secretary Jen Psaki on Wednesday slammed what she called "brutal and inappropriate" behavior by Border Patrol agents seen on horseback blocking migrants from entering the United States. "We understand and agree that this has been an incredibly heart-wrenching issue," Psaki responded. "We've watched the photos of Haitians gathering under a bridge, many with families, and the horrific video of the CBP officers on horses using brutal and inappropriate measures against innocent people." Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz both said on Monday that they did not see anything wrong with the images, and Mayorkas pointed out agents use long reins to control their horses, not whips, in difficult terrain. Mayorkas changed his perspective the next day, telling CNN he was "horrified" by the images. "I would also reiterate that there is an investigation that will be completed by next week, which the secretary confirmed, that will determine the next steps on both policy and personnel," she said. "And in the interim, those individuals were placed on administrative leave and will not be interacting with any migrants. "So as it relates to those photos and that horrific video, we're not going to stand for that kind of inhumane treatment and obviously we want this investigation to be completed rapidly," she added.

Parents of 303 migrant children separated at border under Trump have still not been found, court filing says

CNN [9/22/2021 9:30 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 4876K] reports attorneys are still trying to reach the parents of 303 migrant children who were separated at the US-Mexico border under the Trump administration, down from 337 in August, according to a federal court filing Wednesday. The filing from the Justice Department and the American Civil Liberties Union is part of an effort to identify and reunite families three years after the so-called zero tolerance policy was created. Since August, the parents of 34 of those children whose whereabouts had been previously unknown have been found, according to Wednesday's filing. The Biden administration has committed to helping reunite families as part of a family reunification task force. Officials have said they're combing through thousands of records to determine how many families remain separated. Since the creation of the task force, 50 children have been reunified with their parents in the United States, according to the filing. As part of the effort, the Department of Homeland Security has established a process for accepting parole requests, the Department of Health and Human Services is working on

facilitating services to support families and the State Department is developing a streamlined system for processing in-country travel document requests. The Justice Department is involved in related settlement negotiation efforts. The Biden administration also launched a new website earlier this month to help reunite families who were separated at the US southern border under Trump.

HHS documents reveal incidents of sexual and physical abuse of unaccompanied migrant children

FOX News [9/22/2021 12:27 PM, Staff, 9251K] reports that recently released documents from the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement reveal incidents of physical and sexual abuse of unaccompanied migrant children intercepted at the southern border. Fox News exclusively obtained 41 pages of documents from watchdog group Judicial Watch revealing 33 instances of "Sexual abuse" against unaccompanied minors tied to voluntary agencies contracting with the federal government. The sexual abuse incidents all occurred during a one-month period between Jan. 21 and Feb. 25 of this year - during the time President Biden dismantled his predecessor's immigration policies. "These documents show that not only are there shocking reports of sexual abuse occurring in shelters for unaccompanied children, but that there is violence among the UACs themselves," Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton said in a statement to Fox News. "It is no surprise that Biden administration's enabling of human trafficking has resulted in violence and the abuse of children," Fitton continued. Ten of the instances recorded involved both "staff" and "non-staff" sexually abusing unaccompanied children while 21 of the sexual abuse instances were between minors. Two sexual abuse reports were filed between an unaccompanied child and "other." The sexual abuse was widespread across the country in shelters housing migrant children who crossed the border alone, and illustrates a dark reality facing migrant children as the border crisis rages on. HHS withheld details on the identities of the alleged perpetrators and victims in the reports and did not provide Judicial Watch with incident reports on the abuse.

[TX] Texas Gov. Abbott creates 'steel barrier' of vehicles to block migrants from entering US

FOX News [9/22/2021 11:54 AM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports that Texas Gov. Greg Abbott on Tuesday described how law enforcement had created a "Steel barrier" of vehicles to block migrants from entering the United States - as the Lone Star State works to shut down a wave of illegal migration. "They have created a steel barrier preventing people from being able to cross the border," Abbott said at a press conference discussing the migrant crisis in Del Rio, where thousands of Haitian migrants have surged in the last week. "One day there were countless people coming across the border, then the very same day the Texas Department of Public Safety put up all these DPS vehicles, and suddenly, in an instant, people stopped crossing the border in this location. That strategy is working." He said the vehicles go on for miles and is one of a number of "Unprecedented" steps he said are being taken by Texas to stop the border crisis - including a \$3 billion investment by the legislature to address the challenge. Abbott said Texas was stepping up, as the Biden administration was "Promoting and allowing open border policies." "The only thing they've shown is an incapability of dealing with this crisis, candidly in a way where they pretend it doesn't even exist," the Republican governor said at a press conference. The Department of Homeland Security has surged resources and agents to the area in response, and the numbers on the bridge have reduced to about 8,000. The Biden administration has blamed "root causes" like poverty and violence in Central America, as well as the Trump administration for shutting down legal asylum pathways.

Reported similarly:

[Washington Post](#) [9/22/2021 6:42 AM, Adela Suliman, 11773K]

[The Hill](#) [9/22/2021 10:57 AM, Monique Beals, 1776K]

[Axios](#) [9/22/2021 4:57 PM, Ivana Saric, 526K]

[Univision](#) [9/22/2021 11:59 AM, Staff, 366K]

[TX] For Haitians, color-coded tickets are key to escape from Border Patrol camp

The [Los Angeles Times](#) [9/22/2021 11:30 PM, Molly Hennessy-Fiske, Andrea Castillo, 3710K] reports along with his 10-year-old daughter, Reyna, the Haitian migrant, who had spent the last six days in a chaotic and squalid encampment on the banks of the Rio Grande, was simply handed a numbered blue ticket by Border Patrol agents, bused into the border town of Del Rio, given a notice to report to immigration authorities and the opportunity to stay in the United States legally. "It's a very difficult process for all of us," said Fisime, 24, a slim graphic designer wearing a T-shirt, shorts and green high-tops. "I had faith and I made it to the U.S. You have to try." For the thousands of Haitian migrants at the U.S. border, news of the release of some into the U.S. by the Biden administration only added to their confusion in an escalating crisis. Some were flown back to Haiti. Others were still in the camp under a bridge. Still others, trying to avoid being sent back, crossed the treacherous river to stay in Mexico for the time being, some with blue and yellow tickets they were unaware would entitle them to enter the U.S. legally. Then there were those like Fisime who were plucked from the camp by U.S. authorities based on their color-coded tickets. Those with blue tickets, issued to families, would be allowed in. So would those with yellow tickets — pregnant women. Red tickets for single men and green tickets for single women meant they were likely to be sent back to Haiti. In Del Rio, hundreds of Haitian migrants climbed out of U.S. Customs and Border Protection vans Wednesday, clutching children, backpacks and federal paperwork that allowed them to leave the massive camp on the U.S. banks of the Rio Grande and remain in the country legally.

[TX] Al Sharpton to tour Haitian migrant encampment in Del Rio, Texas

[FOX News](#) [9/22/2021 4:58 PM, Jon Brown, 9251K] reports Al Sharpton and a group of faith and civil rights leaders will tour the Haitian immigrant camp Thursday on the southern U.S. border in Del Rio, Texas. Mayor Bruno Lozano, a Democrat, is slated to accompany the group and participate in a press conference with them at approximately 1:30 p.m. local time near the International Bridge, according to a press release from the Sharpton-founded National Action Network (NAN). Explaining that he and his group intend to get to the bottom of the recent photos that journalists and some Democratic lawmakers claim show Border Patrol agents using whips against Haitian migrants, Sharpton continued, "And then, what we did see, why are they on horses? Why are they treating people this way, and what is the difference between how others have come in this country, and Haitians come in the country? Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz maintained in a Monday statement that border officials do not use whips.

[Mexico] Mexico reports people-smuggling surge amid jump in migration

[Reuters](#) [9/22/2021 5:50 PM, Jake Kincaid, 4947K] reports people-smuggling crimes in Mexico this year have more than tripled since 2020, the government said on Wednesday, as the country battles to cope with a sharp increase in illegal immigration at the U.S. border. Between January and August, Mexico registered 1,232 people-smuggling crimes, a jump of nearly 228% from the 376 logged during the same period in 2020, Security Minister Rosa

Icela Rodriguez told a regular government news conference. Mexico and the United States on Wednesday were preparing to fly more Haitian migrants away from U.S.-Mexico border camps, even as pressure mounted on Biden to put a stop to expulsions of Haitians to their impoverished, struggling homeland.

Transportation Security Administration

[OH] TSA finds more guns at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport security checkpoints

Cleveland19 [9/22/2021 8:23 PM, Sara Goldenberg] reports TSA agents recently stopped two guns from being carried onto planes at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport in a span of five days. 19 Investigates found this year is on pace to pass last year when it comes to the number of guns TSA agents have tracked down. "It's extremely dangerous and TSA really wants people to take this issue seriously," said TSA spokesperson Jessica Mayle. The first firearm found was a 9mm Glock, loaded with nine rounds in the magazine. TS agents found it in a woman's carry-on purse during screening on September 16. Four days later, TSA agents made another discovery. They found a Cobra CB 38 in another passenger's carry-on bag. It was unloaded with the safety on. In both cases, the passengers had concealed carry permits. They said they forgot their guns were in their bags. "In most of these cases, we think overwhelmingly these are accidents. People do not mean to carry these guns in their bags, they forget they had them in their bags. They are law abiding gun owners. But that is not an excuse and you cannot bring a gun to an airport checkpoint ever," Mayle said.

[TX] DFW Airport Tests Free 'Fast Pass' Program Allowing Travelers To Skip To Front Of TSA Checkpoint

21CBS Dallas Ft. Worth [9/22/2021 5:35 PM, Jason Allen] reports DFW Airport is testing a pilot program to let passengers skip to the front of the TSA checkpoint line. The Fast Pass lets travelers go online and reserve a specific time to go through security. They still have to have scan their bags, and take off their shoes and belts, but it advances them past any long waits on busy days. The Fast Pass is free, but only at the Terminal D, gate 18 checkpoint for now. There's no end date on the trial and it's possible it could be expanded to other checkpoints if it works. The pass is part of a series of improvements at the airport to make the travel experience more hassle-free. Travelers can pre-book parking at discounted rates, check-in and pay for bags in advance, but the security wait can be unpredictable. There are other programs that allow travelers to save time. For \$85 and a background check, the TSA PreCheck will get passengers through and allow them to skip some protocols like removing shoes. The DFW program recommends people just book a time slot online, up to seven days before their flight. Wednesday the site showed availability for most of the 15-minute time slots, into next week. Up to 10 people can reserve a time period to advance to the front of the line. The airport is offering a \$5 food or retail incentive as well right now for those who use the program.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

FEMA's New Director Prepares Agency for a Hot, Chaotic Future

Bloomberg [9/22/2021 7:30 AM, Leslie Kaufman, 6400K] reports that Deanne Criswell, the first woman to lead the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in April took over a

20,000-person operation exhausted by managing responses to disasters linked to global warming: wildfires and the 2020 hurricane season, the most active on record. As if that weren't enough, President Joe Biden asked FEMA to create and staff sites for Covid vaccinations, and to run shelters for undocumented migrant children along the southern border. Then came Hurricane Ida, which caused catastrophic flooding across the Northeast and at least 96 confirmed deaths in the U.S. Before taking over the agency, Criswell was commissioner of New York's Emergency Management Department and led a FEMA team that responded to major disasters. She also worked for the consultant Cadmus Group on homeland security matters, and spent 21 years as a Colorado National Guard firefighter. Criswell, who has called climate change "the crisis of our generation," recently spoke with Bloomberg Green about new tools and funding to better prepare the agency and nation for increasingly perilous times.

Tropical Depression 18 forms in Atlantic, could become Hurricane Sam this weekend, forecasters say

USA Today [9/23/2021 12:14 AM, Christal Hayes, 6282K] reports Tropical Depression 18 formed in the Atlantic Ocean on Wednesday, with tracking models showing it could venture toward islands in the Caribbean Sea and potentially veer close to the U.S. The depression is more than 2,000 miles from the Northern Leeward Islands. Current tracking models from the National Hurricane Center show the storm is forecast to travel toward Puerto Rico and the British Virgin Islands but could veer north by next week. The storm is carrying maximum sustained winds of 35 mph and moving about 15 mph. The National Hurricane Center said the depression is forecast to strengthen over the next several days and become a tropical storm by Thursday. The storm could be near hurricane strength by this weekend, the Center said. If the storm does strengthen, it would be called Sam. The only remaining names on the list for the 2021 Atlantic hurricane season are Sam, Teresa, Victor, and Wanda. If those names are used, there is a supplemental list approved by the World Meteorological Organization which replaced the Greek alphabet used during last year's record-breaking season. Two other storms are swirling in the Atlantic: Tropical Depression Rose and Tropical Depression Peter, which dissipated late Wednesday. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[NJ] NJ to hold virtual forum with FEMA and members of the Government for people affected by Ida: how to register here

Telemundo [9/22/2021 8:03 PM, Staff, 32K] reports Gov. Phil Murphy announced Wednesday during his press conference that a virtual forum on recovery resources for those affected by Tropical Storm Ida will be held this Friday, Sept. 24. "We will hold the virtual forum on Friday morning for anyone who was impacted by the recent flooding or other damage due to Tropical Storm Ida," the governor said. The virtual event will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on September 24 and will feature representatives from FEMA and different members of New Jersey government, including Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn LaTourette, Department of Banking and Insurance Commissioner Marlene Caride, Department of Human Services Acting Commissioner Sarah Aldeman, and state Office of Disaster Recovery Executive Director Dan Kelly. Those interested in participating should register at this website. During the forum, questions will be taken from participants to help answer any questions related to assistance and programs offered by the state and federal government to those affected by the storm. Once registered, the governor said, people will receive the information to participate through the Zoom application.

[LA] New Orleans City Council Launches Investigation Into Mass Power Failure During Ida

NPR [9/22/2021 4:29 PM, Tegan Wendland] Audio: HERE reports the New Orleans City Council is grilling power company Entergy about the catastrophic failure of its grid after Hurricane Ida. Mass power outages contributed to at least 11 deaths related to heat.

[CA] Fire breaks out near Sonoma, huge cloud of smoke seen across Wine Country

The SFGate [9/22/2021 4:11 PM, Amy Graff, 2701K] reports a fire broke out in the grass and oak woodlands of Sonoma County Wednesday afternoon, sending a huge cloud of smoke into the sky above California's Wine Country. The Fremont Fire broke out in the 4200 block of Napa Road near Fremont Drive in Schellville, officials said. That's just five miles from the Sonoma Square near Nicholson Ranch winery. "If traveling in the area use caution," Cal Fire warned. Shortly before 3:30 p.m. Cal Fire said the fire was at 40 acres with zero containment. The Sonoma County Sheriff said there were no evacuations at this time. Aircraft responded to the scene to drop fire retardant. Sarah Stierch, an independent journalist who posts wildfire news on Twitter, shared that the fire started within the 2017 Nuns Fire burn scar. The Nuns Fire started Oct. 8, 2017, tore through brush to the east and north of Sonoma, combining with other nearby fires to burn a total of 54,000 acres.

Federal Protective Service

[NC] North Carolina man pleads not guilty to making Capitol bomb threat

Axios [9/22/2021 12:44 PM, Jacob Knutson, 526K] reports that North Carolinian Floyd Ray Roseberry pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to charges of threatening to use a weapon of mass destruction and explosive materials after he allegedly claimed to possess an armed bomb near the U.S. Capitol on Aug. 19, according to Reuters. Why it matters: A federal judge declared Wednesday that Roseberry is mentally competent to stand trial after he was ordered to undergo a competency evaluation in August because of his history of mental illness. The big picture: Roseberry livestreamed his threat to detonate a bomb inside his truck near the Library of Congress on Facebook. During the stream, he expressed multiple anti-government views and said he was starting a revolution and was "Ready to die for the cause." Police did not find an explosive device in Roseberry's truck after he surrendered but said it contained undisclosed bomb-making materials. A competency test was ordered after Roseberry said he was unable to take his "Mind medicine" and that his memory "Isn't that well." He was deemed competent to stand trial after new medication stabilized his symptoms, according to Reuters.

Secret Service

[NH] Peterborough designates \$1.8M to help replace stolen funds

The Keene Sentinel [9/22/2021 11:30 AM, Caleb Symons, 10K, Neutral, Secondary] reports local officials Tuesday night approved spending up to \$1.8 million from a municipal reserve fund to help replace the money that cybercriminals stole from the town this summer. Many residents voiced their outrage over the scam, in which Peterborough lost \$2.3 million before recovering a portion of that recently. Selectboard members then voted 3-0 to tap the town's unrestricted fund balance to help make up the remaining budget gap. That account comprises public funds held from when the town has spent less than initially planned or when it collected more taxes than it needed, Town Administrator Nicole MacStay said at the

selectboard meeting. It can be used to offset future taxes, cover day-to-day expenses or resolve emergencies, she said. MacStay told attendees — many of whom voiced their displeasure with Peterborough officials and staff over the scam — that with construction on the Main Street bridge reaching a “critical phase,” the extra cash is needed before more tax revenue and public grants are available next year. Even though New Hampshire’s transportation department is footing most of that \$8 million project, she said Peterborough pays the contractors in full before getting reimbursed later. “That’s really where the complication is with regard to tax flows,” she said. “We’ve got a lot of money going out over the next few months, but it takes time for the money to come back in.” The U.S. Secret Service’s Cyber Fraud Task Force is still investigating the scams, and Peterborough officials are reviewing security protocols, according to MacStay. The town has also canceled all non-essential ACH payments, has started an audit of all transactions from this fiscal year and is requiring town employees to attend cybersecurity training sessions, she said.

[NJ] Killer Paroled After Only Three Years Charged With Shooting Paterson Dad Of 10 Dead

The Daily Voice [9/22/2021 2:22 PM, Jerry DeMarco, 119K, Positive, Secondary] reports a convicted killer from Paterson who was paroled after only three years in state prison was captured in Brooklyn and charged with shooting and killing a Silk City father of 10 last month, authorities said. Rondell Gray, 40, originally wasn’t even eligible for parole until Wednesday -- the day his arrest was announced -- after taking a plea bargain three years earlier for shooting and killing Myesha Montgomery, 28, with whom he once lived, in 2015, state records show. The state freed Gray, who’s also a registered sex offender, on Oct. 8, 2020, however, amid a wave of early state prison paroles due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Authorities said Gray ran up and shot Anthony McNeal, 35, in the head at close range in front of what used to be a restaurant on Union Avenue, near Jasper Street, shortly before 8 p.m. on Aug. 31. McNeal -- who had five sisters, including a twin -- was pronounced dead at the scene minutes later, they said. Gray, who carjacked another victim right after that, was arrested without incident in Brooklyn on Sept. 13 “following an intense search by members of the Paterson Police Department, the Passaic County Prosecutor’s Office, the United States Secret Service, and the United States Marshal’s Fugitive Task Force,” Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes and Paterson Police Chief Ibrahim Baycora said in a joint statement. He waived extradition and was brought from Rikers Island to the Passaic County Jail on Tuesday, they said.

[DC] Oregon man pleads guilty to confronting Swiss ambassador inside D.C. residence

The Washington Post [9/22/2021 4:10 PM, Spencer S. Hsu, 11773K, Positive, Primary] reports an Oregon man pleaded guilty Wednesday to breaking into the Northwest Washington residence of Switzerland’s ambassador and fighting him, an embassy employee and a uniformed U.S. Secret Service police officer who tried to stop him on March 29. Christian David Mandeville, 31, of Portland, pleaded guilty to misdemeanor federal counts of assaulting, resisting, or impeding an officer and intimidating a foreign official, and a District charge of unlawful entry. The first charge is punishable by up to one year and the latter two by up to six months in prison. Sentencing is expected to be Dec. 9. In a plea agreement, Mandeville acknowledged pushing away an employee who tried to stop him inside the residence, which is adjacent to the Swiss embassy in Woodley Park. When Swiss Ambassador Jacques Pitteloud accompanied U.S. Secret Service officers inside, Mandeville forcefully pushed past the ambassador and fought with officer Jacob Pina before

the officers subdued him, Mandeville admitted in plea papers. Mandeville's mother, Dawn Schwab, who lives in Arizona, told reporters after his arrest that her son had been experiencing mental health issues and was apparently "looking for help" and "a better place to live." Mandeville on Wednesday told U.S. District Judge Rudolph Contreras that he has been diagnosed with schizophrenia and anxiety disorder.

[GA] Dalton Police investigate after trio passes counterfeit money

WRCB [9/22/2021 6:02 PM, Jordan Rudzinski, Neutral, Secondary] reports the Dalton Police Department is asking for the public's help to identify three people who recently used counterfeit money to buy merchandise in at least three stores in the Dalton area. The suspects all wore COVID masks, however, investigators believe that they can still be recognized by visible facial features or their distinctive clothing. The incident happened in August 2021. The three suspects, a white male, and two Black females arrived together at the Dollar General store at 1004 Riverburch Parkway within a few minutes of each other. The white male first used a counterfeit \$50 bill to buy some items and receive change. A few minutes after he left, a Black female wearing a light blue/gray cap and a red shirt used a fake \$100 bill to make a purchase and receive change before leaving. After she left, a Black female wearing a cap with a logo for the fourth-place New York Yankees used two fake \$50 bills to make a purchase. After the three suspects left the store, they showed up together at two other Dollar General locations along Cleveland Highway in Whitfield County where they passed more fake bills and also returned some of the items they bought at the Riverburch Parkway location for refunds.

[AL] 2 former Chick-fil-A employees pled guilty to defrauding the company of half a million dollars to pay for luxury cars, vacations, and a house

The Business Insider [9/22/2021 3:00 PM, Mary Meisenzahl, Positive, Secondary] reports a former Chick-fil-A manager pled guilty to charges of defrauding the company and customers of nearly \$500,000, according to a release from the US Department of Justice. Larry James Black Jr., a former hospitality director at an Alabama Chick-fil-A, pled guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and bank fraud, the release said. His codefendant, former manager Joshua Daniel Powell, of the same Chick-fil-A restaurant, previously pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud. The crimes were investigated by US Secret Service Cyber Fraud Task Force and prosecuted by Assistant US Attorney Edward J. Canter. Chick-fil-A declined to comment on the cases. The fraud charges were part of a scheme to move \$492,000 in customer payments to Powell and Black's own bank accounts, where they were paid out from customer credit cards, including large catering orders, according to the US attorney's office. The DOJ says the defendants set up fraudulent email and payment accounts designed to look like official Chick-fil-A accounts. Black also used the money to pay for luxury vehicles and vacations, prosecutors said. He admitted to using a fake social security number and applying for a mortgage using falsified payroll and income reports, which were used to obtain a mortgage for \$159,948, he said in the plea agreement.

[OH] Dayton Police identify officer, suspect injured in overnight shooting

NBC4 Columbus [9/22/2021 6:54 PM, Schalischa Petit-De, Josh Goad, 54K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Officer Thadeu Holloway, an 8-year veteran of the Dayton Police Department, is recovering from non-life threatening injuries following a shooting in Dayton on Tuesday. Holloway was sent to look into possible fraud at a Dollar General on S. Gettysburg Avenue around 6:44 p.m. Tuesday night. About 20 minutes later he located 39-year-old Antwaine Deon Lowe in a parking lot on Ingram Street. The officer asked Lowe to

come and talk with him about using counterfeit bills at Dollar General, but when Holloway approached him the suspect punched him in the face. Holloway immediately discharged his taser, bringing Lowe to the ground and ordered him to put his hands behind his back. While the suspect was on the ground, he reached into his pocket and pulled out a .380 caliber handgun and shot once at Holloway. The bullet struck the officer on the left side of his head, tearing his left temporal artery — this would later be fixed in surgery. As Holloway fell to the ground he shot five times at Lowe, striking the suspect multiple times and leaving him in critical condition. Lowe is now in serious condition but is currently stable. Officers and emergency medical services were on the scene within minutes of Holloway reporting he was shot in the head. Another officer took Holloway in his cruiser to Miami Valley Hospital — where dozens of law enforcement cruisers were waiting to pay their respects to the injured officer. The Dayton Police Department plans to file the following charges against Lowe: Two counts felonious assault on a police officer. Carrying a concealed weapon. Weapons under disability. Counterfeiting.

[TX] Shreveport woman sentenced in Bullard elder fraud case

Jacksonville Daily Progress [9/22/2021 8:00 AM, Staff, 1K, Positive, Secondary] reports a Shreveport, La. woman has been sentenced to federal prison for her role in an elder fraud scheme in the Eastern District of Texas, announced Acting U.S. Attorney Nicholas J. Ganjei. Monica Ruiz, 45, pleaded guilty on March 24, 2021, to wire fraud and was sentenced Sept. 14 to 97 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Jeremy D. Kernodle. “Fraud against the elderly is particularly devastating given that the victim will typically not have the ability to work their way towards financial recovery,” said Acting U.S. Attorney Nicholas J. Ganjei. “While the Department of Justice will work tirelessly to ferret out elder fraud and punish the perpetrator, our seniors’ best defense against such fraud is, and remains, education, vigilance and a healthy dose of skepticism.” “The Secret Service remains committed to bringing to justice those criminals who seek to exploit our most vulnerable citizens,” said William Mack, U.S. Secret Service Resident Agent in Charge of the Tyler Resident Office. “In conjunction with the Department of Justice, as well as our state and local partners, the Secret Service will identify, pursue and seek prosecution of those that prey upon the elderly.” Ruiz was indicted by a federal grand jury on Nov. 19, 2020. This case was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service with the assistance of the Tyler Police Department and the Louisiana State Police – Gaming Enforcement Division and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nathaniel C. Kummerfeld.

CISA/Cybersecurity

Federal agencies warn companies to be on guard against prolific ransomware strain

The Hill [9/22/2021 4:11 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports the FBI, the National Security Agency (NSA), and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) on Wednesday issued a warning to U.S. organizations to be aware of a specific type of ransomware that has already wreaked havoc on hundreds of groups. The agencies issued a joint alert specifically warning groups to be on guard against the Conti ransomware variant, with the agencies noting that 400 U.S. and international groups had already fallen victim to Conti. “The cyber criminals now running the Conti ransomware-as-a-service have historically targeted critical infrastructure, such as the Defense Industrial Base (DIB), prior to Conti campaigns, and the advisory highlights actions organizations can take right now to counter the threat,” Rob Joyce, director of Cybersecurity at NSA, said in a statement Wednesday. “We highly recommend using the mitigations outlined in this advisory to protect

against Conti malware and mitigate your risk against any ransomware attack.” “Americans are routinely experiencing real-world consequences of the ransomware epidemic as malicious cyber actors continue to target large and small businesses, organizations, and governments,” Eric Goldstein, executive assistant director for Cybersecurity at CISA, said in a separate statement. “CISA, FBI, and NSA work tirelessly to assess cyber threats and advise our domestic and international partners on how they can reduce the risk and strengthen their own capabilities.” “The FBI, along with our partners at CISA and NSA, is committed to providing resources in an effort to assist public and private sector entities protect their systems against ransomware attacks,” Bryan Vorndran, assistant director of the FBI’s Cyber Division added. The Federal News Network [9/22/2021 11:56 AM, Eric White, 49K] reports that the Department of Homeland Security is in the middle of a 60-day “cyber sprint” to improve the cybersecurity of the U.S. transportation system. DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told a Senate committee that the new effort will build on lessons learned from May’s Colonial Pipeline ransomware attack and subsequent security directives issued by the Transportation Security Administration. It’s the fourth cyber sprint DHS has undertaken this year, with previous efforts focused on issues like workforce development and ransomware. [Editorial note: consult audio at source link]

Reported similarly:

CNN [9/22/2021 4:44 PM, Sean Lyngaas, 4876K]

Lawmakers call for civilian reserve corps to bolster federal cyber defense

The Washington Times [9/22/2021 12:55 PM, Joseph Clark, 381K] reports a bipartisan group of lawmakers is proposing a civilian reserve corps to serve as a backstop against cyber and ransomware attacks targeting federal agencies. The bill, which is led by Reps. Tony Gonzales, Texas Republican, and Robin Kelly, Illinois Democrat, would stand up a National Digital Reserve Corps of civilian cyber experts under the General Services Administration. It would provide a pool of expertise for the federal government to tap into for select projects. “As we have seen from multiple cyber and ransomware attacks this year, the United States government currently lacks access to digital expertise,” said Mr. Gonzales, who served as a senior ranking cryptologist in the Navy before being elected to Congress. “The organization of the National Digital Reserve Corps strives to fill that void with civilian industry experts working in service to our federal government and our national security.” A recent wave of high-profile cyber and ransomware attacks on critical infrastructure has raised alarms in Congress and across the federal government. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee this week that cyber threats “remain one of the most prominent threats facing our nation.” “The federal government and our private sector partners must be prepared to respond to and recover from a cyber incident, sustain critical functions even under degraded conditions, and, in some cases, quickly restart critical functionality after disruption,” Mr. Mayorkas said.

U.S. Agriculture Chief Urges Farm Co-Ops to Toughen Cyber Defenses

BNN Bloomberg [9/22/2021 12:46 PM, Mike Dorning, 257K] reports that Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack urged U.S. agricultural cooperatives to “harden” defenses against cyber attacks after Iowa’s New Cooperative Inc. was targeted in a ransomware attack last week. “We want to make sure during this harvest that we don’t have any additional disruptions as a result of systems being hacked,” Vilsack said Wednesday in a speech to the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture’s annual meeting. A spokeswoman for Vilsack didn’t immediately respond to a request for further information on

the threat posed. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation “are in close contact with New Cooperative and have offered assistance in supporting the company’s response and recovery,” CISA Executive Assistant Director for Cybersecurity Eric Goldstein said in an emailed statement. “The company is engaging proactively with CISA as the investigation progresses.”

Zoom may face delay on key Five9 deal after DOJ review-analysts

Reuters [9/22/2021 12:16 PM, Tiyashi Datta, 5304K] reports that Zoom Video Communications Inc’s proposed \$15 billion deal for cloud-based call center operator Five9 Inc may be delayed by a U.S. Justice Department-led committee review but is unlikely to be scrapped, analysts said on Wednesday. The committee is reviewing the deal to see if it “poses a risk to the national security or law enforcement interests”, according to a letter filed with U.S. regulators. Zoom agreed in July to buy Five9, its biggest deal yet, to diversify from its core video conferencing services that helped power its meteoric growth at the start of the pandemic. Competition has also intensified from Cisco, Microsoft’s Teams and Salesforce’s Slack. Zoom’s shares tumbled last month after the company signaled a faster-than-expected drop in demand, with some industry experts also questioning its future plans as people returned to office. Analysts do not expect the government to block the deal. Benchmark analyst Matthew Harrigan said it could imperil the expected closure in the first half of next year. “We retain ardent conviction that the Zoom Five9 transaction makes strategic sense in fostering the development of a full stack collaboration platform,” Harrigan said. A Zoom spokesperson said the company has “Made filings with the various applicable regulatory agencies, and these approval processes are proceeding as expected.” “We continue to anticipate receiving the required regulatory approvals to close the transaction in the first half of 2022.” Last year, U.S. prosecutors charged a former China-based Zoom executive with disrupting video meetings commemorating the 31st anniversary of the Tiananmen Square crackdown at the request of the Chinese government. “Zoom has dealt with scrutiny towards its China ties in 2019 and 2020 and that scrutiny may have been included in their expectation that the deal would not close until the 1st half of 2022,” said Joe McCormack, senior analyst at Third Bridge. Zoom’s shares edged lower to \$278.01, while Five9’s stock was down 0.4% at \$169.43.

UCSD cyber sleuth earns award for exposing how hackers can take control of cars

The San Diego Union Tribune [9/22/2021 8:44 PM, Gary Robbins, 302K] reports it’s not possible for hackers to remotely take control of moving automobiles like they did in the 2017 movie “The Fate of the Furious.” That’s just Hollywood magic, right? Actually, UC San Diego computer scientist Stefan Savage and his collaborators pulled off the feat years earlier, and they disabled the car’s brakes to boot. It was part of a groundbreaking series of experiments that revealed a little-understood truth — cars and trucks are susceptible to potentially dangerous cyberattacks. The automotive industry responded with quick, but not fool-proof, design changes. The American Association for the Advancement of Science recognized the importance of the discovery on Wednesday, giving Savage and three of his collaborators a Golden Goose Award — a coveted honor that goes to federally funded research that broadly benefits society. AAAS — the nation’s largest scientific society — also gave the award to two researchers who helped pioneer mRNA-based vaccines, and to a scholar who is known as the “father” of the anti-cancer drug tamoxifen. The honor conferred on Savage is the latest in a variety of major awards and prizes that have gone to San Diego researchers, reflecting the region’s long and deep involvement in science, medicine and technology.

[China] Republican lawmakers raise security, privacy concerns over Huawei cloud services

The Hill [9/22/2021 5:35 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) and Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-Wis.) are raising concerns around U.S. and foreign governments' potential use of Chinese telecommunications group Huawei's cloud services, warning of security and privacy issues. Cotton and Gallagher sent a letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday detailing their concerns around the use of Huawei cloud services in over 40 countries due to the access it gives the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to systems, and urging Blinken to ensure that the use of these services does not expand any further. "Huawei Cloud's e-Government services promise to help countries streamline document digitization, tax services, national ID systems, elections, and more," the lawmakers wrote. "However, they also expose Huawei's clients to the prying eyes of the CCP. When Huawei's client is a private firm, every one of its customers is at risk." They also pressed Blinken on efforts undertaken by the Biden administration to prevent the use of Huawei cloud products by other governments, and whether the administration was offering alternatives. The Biden administration is still weighing how it will approach Huawei, though Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo told reporters in April that she had "no reason to believe" that Huawei would be removed from the entity list.

Terrorism Investigations

[CA] Fourth Bay Area militia member pleads guilty to conspiracy

The SFGate [9/22/2021 3:00 AM, Staff, 2701K] reports that a fourth member of a far-right, anti-government militia group pleaded guilty Monday, joining three others who admitted to conspiring to obstruct justice by destroying records connected to the investigation of the murder of one federal officer and the attempted murder of another officer at the Oakland federal building May 29, 2020. With his guilty plea, Kenny Miksch, 21, of San Lorenzo, joins his three fellow members of the Grizzly Scouts militia group: Jessie Rush, 29, of Turlock; Robert Blancas, 33, a transient resident of the Bay Area; and Simon Ybarra, 23, of Los Gatos. Prosecutors say the group is connected to the "Boogaloo" movement, a term used by some militia extremists to describe a loose-knit movement advocating for an impending politically-motivated civil war or uprising against the government. In their plea agreements filed with the court, each man admitted that in April 2020 they joined an armed, anti-government militia group named the "1st Detachment, 1st California Grizzly Scouts." Each acknowledged in their plea agreements that they learned a Grizzly Scouts member was allegedly involved in the May 29, 2020, murder of a federal security officer and the attempted murder of another officer in Oakland. Each defendant also admitted that this same scouts member claimed to be involved in an attack and shootout with Santa Cruz County Sheriff's deputies in Ben Lomond on June 6, 2020.

[Afghanistan] FBI director says Afghanistan withdrawal raises concern of terror groups rebuilding

The Washington Post [9/22/2021 1:57 PM, Devlin Barrett, 11773K] reports that FBI Director Christopher A. Wray said Wednesday that the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan raises concerns that the country will become a magnet for terrorism groups to plot and direct attacks. "We are, of course, concerned that there will be an opportunity for a safe haven to be re-created there, which is something we've seen in the past," Wray said in testimony to the House Homeland Security Committee. The hearing was called to discuss security risks to the United States around the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, but most of the

discussion centered around lawmakers' questions about migrants at the southern border, cyberattacks or the rising threat posed by domestic terrorism. U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan last month, nearly 20 years after undertaking a mission to destroy the al-Qaeda organization that launched the 9/11 hijacking plot and to prevent that country from fostering any further attacks. Some U.S. national security officials worry that the absence of an American military presence there will allow al-Qaeda or other groups such as Islamic State-Khorasan to strengthen and rebuild. Wray mentioned that concern, as well as the possibility that the United States' messy retreat "Can serve as a catalyst of inspiration for terrorists" around the world. He said, the FBI is concerned that foreign terror groups "Will have an opportunity to reconstitute, plot, inspire, in a space that's much harder for us to collect intelligence and operate against than was the case previously." The Biden administration has said it can conduct surveillance and strikes in Afghanistan from "Over the horizon" - a euphemism for military or covert bases in other countries outside the immediate region.

Reported similarly:

[Axios](#) [9/22/2021 7:01 PM, Noah Garfinkel, 526K]

National Security News

Biden heading back to Europe this fall

[Axios](#) [9/22/2021 8:54 PM, Hans Nichols, 526K] reports President Biden plans to attend the G20 summit in Rome late next month before heading to the COP26 climate meeting in Glasgow, Scotland, people familiar with the matter tell Axios. Biden's European travels come at the time of some political strain. They'll also include his first Group of 20 summit with world leaders as president, with a host of thorny issues ranging from countering China's rise to coordinating a global response to COVID-19. In June, Biden participated in a G7 summit in Cornwall, England, where he worked to convince other countries to adopt a unified approach to countering China's rising global influence. He has since angered France by secretly negotiating a nuclear submarine deal with the United Kingdom and Australia that led to the cancellation of a French contract for the vessels. A G20 gathering also includes the leaders of countries not necessarily allied with the United States — or Biden — on a range of issues, including China, Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Brazil.

Pentagon removes top nuclear policy official from post

The [Washington Post](#) [9/22/2021 12:47 PM, Paul Sonne, 11773K] reports that the Department of Defense has removed a top political appointee in charge of nuclear policy from her position, prompting concern among disarmament advocates that the Pentagon is sidelining those with less hawkish views as the Biden administration develops its official policy on nuclear weapons. Top Pentagon officials asked Leonor Tomero, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for nuclear and missile defense, to resign from her post in recent days, according to people familiar with the matter, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive personnel matter. The shake-up comes as the Biden administration hammers out the details of its Nuclear Posture Review, a document that each administration has released since the 1990s to set out its nuclear weapons policy and strategy, and which the administration is expected to release early next year. One of those lawmakers, House Armed Services Committee Chairman Adam Smith, served as Tomero's boss in Congress for a decade before she joined the Pentagon. Tomero's departure was first reported by Politico. Pentagon officials have characterized Tomero's departure as the product of a broader reorganization of the policymaking apparatus at the Defense

Department. "As a matter of policy, we won't comment on personnel matters," Pentagon spokesman Eric Pahon said in a statement. He said a "wide ranging team of experts" continued to work on the Biden administration's Nuclear Posture Review. Nuclear disarmament advocates expressed concern that the Pentagon ousted Tomero from the post after just eight months in the job because her views challenge current nuclear policy that is entrenched in the building and across the military.

Scoop: Jake Sullivan plans to visit Saudi Arabia, Egypt and UAE next week

Axios [9/22/2021 11:58 AM, Barak Ravid, 526K] reports that White House National Security adviser Jake Sullivan is planning to travel to the Middle East next week, including a stop in Saudi Arabia. He would be the most senior Biden administration official to visit the kingdom. Why it matters: Sullivan's first trip to the region since taking office is expected to include stops in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt, sources briefed on the plans tell Axios. All three countries are longtime U.S. partners who have faced some early tensions with Biden. Relations between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia are particularly difficult after Biden vowed on the campaign trail to "Make them the pariah that they are." Biden published a CIA report which held Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman responsible for the murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi and stopped arms deals with the Saudis over human rights violations in Yemen. More recently, the U.S. pulled a Patriot missile defense system out of Saudi Arabia. Secretary of defense Austin cancelled a recent trip to Saudi Arabia last minute citing "scheduling issues." U.S. relations with Egypt are also strained, particularly after the State Department froze \$130 million of the annual U.S. military aid to Egypt over President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi's human rights record. The U.S. did allow \$170 million in military aid to go through and has been working with Egypt to prevent another flare-up between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. The Egyptians are also seeking U.S. support in their dispute with Ethiopia over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, a project which Egypt views as an existential threat to its water supply. Secretary of State Tony Blinken is also expected to meet his Egyptian counterpart on Thursday in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

[Cuba] DHS seeks operator for Guantánamo Bay migrant detention facility amid Del Rio surge

Axios [9/22/2021 7:20 PM, Shawna Chen, 526K] reports the Biden administration is looking for a private contractor to oversee a migrant detention facility at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, according to a recent government listing. A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson said in an email on Wednesday night that the DHS "is not and will not send Haitian nationals being encountered at the southwest border to the Migrant Operations Center (MOC) in Guantanamo Bay." "The MOC has been used for decades to process migrants interdicted at sea for third-country resettlement," the spokesperson said. The move comes as the administration struggles to manage thousands of Haitian migrants crowded in an encampment in the border town Del Rio. The immigrant holding facility has the capacity to hold 120 people and will have an "estimated daily population" of 20 people, says the listing, which the DHS quietly posted on Sept. 17. "The service provider shall be responsible to maintain on site the necessary equipment to erect temporary housing facilities for populations that exceed 120 and up to 400 migrants in a surge event." At least 10% of personnel must be fluent in Spanish and Haitian Creole. It's unclear whether the administration plans to transfer migrants from the southern border to Guantánamo Bay, where migrants detained at sea have been housed, per NBC News.

Reported similarly:

The Hill [9/22/2021 10:59 PM, Caroline Vakil, 1776K]

[France] Biden, Macron vow to mend alliance after feud; plan to meet in October

The New York Times [9/22/2021 1:20 PM, David E. Sanger and Roger Cohen, 24635K] reports President Biden spoke with President Emmanuel Macron of France on Wednesday for the first time since the United States and Britain entered into a broad new defense arrangement with Australia that scuttled a \$60 billion French project to build submarines, and led France to declare its oldest ally had delivered a “knife to the back.” The White House described the conversation as “friendly,” just days after Mr. Macron recalled the French ambassador to the United States and suggested that Mr. Biden had done grave harm to the alliance. While the United States has not apologized for the effort to keep France in the dark, the statement from the United States and France said that “the two leaders agreed that the situation would have benefited from open consultations among allies on matters of strategic interest to France and our European partners.” American officials were belatedly searching for special projects they could announce to reaffirm the relationship with France, including new projects in the Indo-Pacific, though some senior officials said they are concerned that anything they put together might look like a transparent, face-saving effort, especially when compared to the scope of the Australian, American and British partnership. A statement before the meeting from the Élysée Palace said Macron had agreed to hold the conversation at Biden’s request, and that he expected “clarifications on the American decision to keep an ally out of exchanges establishing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.” The statement added: “We expect from our allies that they recognize that the discussions and consultations that should have taken place did not, and that this poses a question of confidence whose consequences must be reviewed together.” American officials insisted that Biden was not seeking to deceive the French, but instead was said relying on Australia to break the news to Mr. Macron. It was not up to the United States, they insisted, to disentangle Australia from its contract with France. The Washington Post [9/22/2021 12:40 PM, Anne Gearan, Rick Noack, John Hudson and Adam Taylor, 11773K] reports Macron will send Ambassador Philippe Etienne back to Washington next week. Thierry Breton, a close ally of the French president who has served as European commissioner for internal market since 2019 after being nominated by Macron, used a trip to Washington this week to excoriate the Biden administration. “We should be frank and honest,” Breton said during an interview Monday. “I regret it, but there is a growing feeling that something is broken in European and U.S. relations ... It didn’t start because of this story of last week in Australia. It was much before.” The E.U. commissioner said that Europe would continue to work with the United States on large issues such as the coronavirus and climate change, but other areas may need to be reassessed. At the U.N., a planned meeting among European nations and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken was canceled. It had been viewed as the first opportunity for Blinken and Le Drian to meet each other this week. The United States blamed scheduling issues, but Le Drian had already told reporters he had no plans to see Blinken. The Wall Street Journal [9/22/2021 3:03 PM, Vivian Salama and Laurence Norman] reports Blinken, a francophone, has been in touch with French and British counterparts to ease tensions and find a path forward. Privately, U.S. and British officials played down the severity of the dispute, noting that the shared benefits of the relationship far outweighed any damage the submarine deal may have done. Bloomberg [9/22/2021 3:01 PM, Jenny Leonard and Ania Nussbaum, 6400K] reports that while Biden sought to sooth ties with France, U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson told France to get over it. “I just think it’s time for some of our dearest friends around the world to prenez un grip about this and donnez-moi un break,” Johnson told reporters in Washington on

Wednesday. White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki described the tone of the Biden-Macron call as “friendly” and declined to characterize Biden’s comments as an apology. “He acknowledged there could have been greater consultation,” she told reporters in a briefing. Biden and Macron plan to meet in Europe in October. Biden is already scheduled to attend the Group of 20 summit in Rome and the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow at the end of October and beginning of November. Psaki said the White House and Macron’s government are “still finalizing” details of the meeting.

[Israel] House Democrats introduce stand-alone bill to fund Iron Dome

The *Washington Times* [9/22/2021 5:49 PM, Haris Alic and Joseph Clark, 381K] reports House Democrats introduced a stand-alone bill Wednesday that would fund Israel’s Iron Dome missile defense system after progressives pulled the funding from Tuesday’s stopgap bill to fund the government. The measure introduced Wednesday by Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Connecticut Democrat and House Appropriations Committee chairwoman, provides \$1 billion to replenish the missile defense system that was taxed during 11 days of fighting between Israel and Hamas in May. The Islamist terror group fired an estimated 4,360 rockets at Israel during the conflict, and the Iron Dome shot down 90% of those that came within range of the system, according to Israeli officials. “The United States’ commitment to the security of our friend and ally Israel is ironclad,” Ms. DeLauro said in a statement Wednesday. “Replenishing interceptors used to protect Israel from attacks is our legal and moral responsibility.” Far-left Democrats, including members of the “Squad,” successfully pressured House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Tuesday into stripping military aid to Israel from a bill to keep the federal government open past Sept. 30.

[Russia] Top US general: Meeting with Russian counterpart ‘productive’

The Hill [9/22/2021 10:52 AM, Mychael Schnell, 1776K] reports that Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said his meeting with his Russian counterpart was “productive” as the U.S. and its allies look into strategies for fighting terrorism following the U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. Milley met with Gen. Valery Gerasimov, chief of the Russian General Staff, on Wednesday for six hours in Helsinki. Milley after his conversation said the meeting was “productive,” adding, “When military leaders of great powers communicate, the world is a safer place,” according to The Associated Press. According to a readout of the meeting from Joint Staff spokesperson Col. David Butler, the gathering was “a continuation of talks aimed at improving military leadership communication between the two nations for the purposes of risk reduction and operational de-confliction.” Butler said that in line with past practice, both officials agreed to have the details of their conversation remain private. The conversation between the two generals comes after the U.S. completed its troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. Milley, who has been traveling through Europe this week, has been focusing on terrorism and reflecting on violent extremism in the region, according to The Wall Street Journal. Since its withdrawal from Afghanistan, the U.S. has said it will respond to the possible existence of militant groups in the region through “over the horizon” capabilities, which refers to drones or manned aircraft that fly hundreds of miles from bases in the Gulf region, the Journal noted. That strategy, however, deprives the U.S. military of on-the-ground coverage of Afghanistan. President Biden, upon announcing his decision to pull troops in April, had said he sought to create a presence in Central Asia, potentially in Uzbekistan, to help with counterterrorism operations.

[Taiwan] Taiwan flags China ‘risk’ to Pacific trade pact bid

Reuters [9/23/2021 4:58 AM, Ben Blanchard and Yimou Lee, 5304K] reports there is a "risk" to Taiwan's application to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) if China joins first, Taiwan's government said on Thursday, flagging a potential political roadblock. Taiwan formally applied to join on Wednesday, less than a week after China, the world's second-largest economy. Taiwan is excluded from many international bodies because of China's insistence that it is part of "one-China" rather than a separate country. Taiwan's chief trade negotiator John Deng told reporters that China always tries to obstruct Taiwan's participation internationally. "So if China joins first, Taiwan's membership case should be quite risky. This is quite obvious," he said. Underscoring the pressure Taiwan faces from China, the island's defence ministry reported 19 Chinese air force planes flew into Taiwan's air defence zone on Thursday, including two nuclear-capable H-4 bombers. Taiwan's air force scrambled to intercept and warn them away.

{End of Report} RETURN TO TOP



DHS MORNING BRIEFING

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U.S. Department of Homeland Security

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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.

TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Friday, September 24, 2021 6:00 AM ET

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Top News

Biden administration directs border officials to suspend horse patrols in Del Rio migrant camp

The Washington Post [9/23/2021 2:31 PM, Nick Miroff, 11773K] reports that the Biden administration has directed U.S. border officials to suspend patrols by agents on horseback in the Del Rio, Tex., migrant camp, White House press secretary Jen Psaki told reporters Thursday. Psaki said Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told civil rights leaders Thursday morning "We would no longer be using horses in Del Rio." "So that is something, a policy change that has been made in response," she said, describing the administration's reaction to anger from Democratic lawmakers, rights groups and others after images circulated widely of U.S. agents on horseback charging at migrants, including families, in an attempt to drive them back to Mexico, while cursing and swinging reins in the

air. DHS had previously announced that the incident was under investigation and the agents recorded in video footage have been placed on administrative duties. DHS officials told reporters during a separate briefing Thursday the measure was temporary. "We'll prioritize other methods for identifying individuals who might be in medical distress," one official said during a conference call. Reporters were allowed to participate on the condition that none of the speakers could be named. Border Patrol union representatives did not immediately respond to requests for comment, but they have defended the agents' conduct, which they say was consistent with their training as federal law enforcement officers. DHS officials told reporters only about 4,000 migrants remain in the Del Rio camp Thursday morning, down from a peak of nearly 15,000 on Sept. 18. More than 1,400 migrants have been returned to Haiti so far, and 3,200 have been transferred to other areas of the border with more capacity to process them. The DHS officials said that migrants who cannot be expelled to Haiti under Title 42 of the U.S. public health code would be subject to standard immigration proceedings. Mayorkas told reporters Monday the Biden administration intends to empty the camp by the end of the month. [The Hill](#) [9/23/2021 1:43 PM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports "We are increasing the frequency and number of the repatriation flights each day," DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told lawmakers Tuesday, when the department had expelled roughly 500 Haitians. "We are still under Title 42 because we are in a global pandemic, so we are still operationalizing that," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said Thursday. [CBS News](#) [9/23/2021 2:33 PM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 2612K] reports the compilation of videos and photos sparked outrage among advocates for immigrants, Democratic lawmakers and top officials in the Biden administration, including Vice President Kamala Harris and DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, both of whom called the footage horrifying. Mayorkas told lawmakers on Wednesday the internal investigation should conclude by the end of next week and that he plans to make its findings public. [ABC News](#) [9/23/2021 2:34 PM, Quinn Owen, 37K] reports that while many were disturbed by what appeared to be aggressive behavior by the agents on horseback, Border Patrol agents who spoke to ABC News said their colleagues in the controversial photographs were following procedures. They said it's common practice for agents on horseback to use "long reins" to control the horse, apparently leading a photojournalist at the scene in Del Rio to describe them as "whips" being used by the agents.

Reported similarly:

[NPR](#) [9/23/2021 5:27 PM, Joe Hernandez]

[Axios](#) [9/23/2021 3:46 PM, Erin Doherty, 526K]

[FOX News](#) [9/23/2021 1:16 PM, Adam Shaw, 9251K]

[Univision](#) [9/23/2021 1:15 PM, Staff, 366K]

DHS Secretary Mayorkas On Border Conditions And Next Steps For Surge Of Migrants

[NPR](#) [9/23/2021 4:10 PM, Audie Cornish, Elena Burnett, Justine Kenin, 4917K] Audio:

[HERE](#) reports NPR's Audie Cornish speaks with Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas about the government's handling of refugees at the U.S.- Mexico border.

Biden administration defends handling of Haitians amid uproar

[The Hill](#) [9/23/2021 5:04 PM, Morgan Chalfant and Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports the Biden administration on Thursday defended its handling of Haitian migrants at the U.S. southern border amid growing uproar among Democrats over the decision to expel Haitian

nationals. The Department of Homeland Security said it has temporarily suspended the use of horse patrols in Del Rio, Texas, amid an investigation into border agents aggressively chasing Haitian migrants on horseback. The White House insists that they are working to implement an “orderly and humane process” at the border and have pushed back against the notion that Haitian migrants are being treated differently than others at the border. “Our policy process has continued to be the same with Haiti as it is for anybody coming through an irregular migration across our border,” White House press secretary Jen Psaki told reporters during a briefing, noting that those who are not expelled under Title 42 are placed in detention or an alternative, including being released into the country with a notice to appear or register with authorities. The special envoy for Haiti resigned over what he described as “inhumane treatment” of Haitian migrants, claiming that his policy recommendations had been ignored or dismissed by the administration. The State Department vigorously pushed back on his assertions, saying that the envoy, Daniel Foote, had ample opportunity to raise concerns about migration but never did so. With Foote now out of his post, the administration says they have diplomatic officials focused on Haiti to address the ongoing situation. Psaki pointed to the recent confirmation of Brian Nichols as Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs. Career diplomat Michele Sison is also the ambassador to Haiti, though Biden has nominated her for a different role at the State Department. Numbers from Del Rio show the Biden administration is continuing to rapidly process the Haitian migrants, following a pledge from DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to increase “the frequency and number of the repatriation flights each day.” A DHS official told reporters Thursday that 1,400 people have been returned to Haiti, while a population of an estimated 14,000 Haitians living under the bridge in Del Rio has dwindled to just over 4,000. Also unclear is how the U.S. is handling the treatment of Haitians who already have residency in other countries, with many making the journey to the U.S. after living in Brazil and Chile.

Migrant camp shrinks on US border as more Haitians removed

The AP [9/24/2021 12:41 AM, María Verza and Juan Lozano, 302K] reports Haitian migrants waited to learn their fate at a Texas border encampment whose size was dramatically diminished from the almost 15,000 who gathered there just days ago in an effort to seek humanitarian protection in the U.S. but now face expulsion. Families milled around makeshift shelters held up with giant reeds under a bridge between Del Rio, Texas, and Ciudad Acuña, Mexico, as wind blew dust through the camp littered with plastic bottles and overflowing trash bags. Some migrants sat on plastic paint cans or the ground while others hung clothes to dry on the bamboo-like carrizo cane. About 3,000 remained late Thursday, the Department of Homeland Security said. The number peaked Saturday as migrants driven by confusion over the Biden administration’s policies and misinformation on social media converged at the border crossing trying to seek asylum. The administration recently extended protections for more than 100,000 Haitians already in the U.S. — many of whom left their homeland after its devastating 2010 earthquake — citing security concerns and social unrest in the Western Hemisphere’s poorest country. But it doesn’t apply to new arrivals. The United States and Mexico appeared eager to end the increasingly politicized humanitarian situation at the border that prompted the resignation of the U.S. special envoy to Haiti and condemnation from civil rights leader Rev. Al Sharpton and UNICEF after images spread widely this week of border agents maneuvering their horses to forcibly block and move migrants. Homeland Security said nearly 2,000 Haitians have been rapidly expelled on flights since Sunday under pandemic powers that deny people the chance to seek asylum. About 3,900 were being processed for possible return to Haiti or placement in U.S. immigration court proceedings. Others have been released in the U.S. with notices to

appear in court or report to immigration authorities. Thousands have returned to Mexico. Authorities expect the camp will be empty in about two days, according to a U.S. official with direct knowledge who was not authorized to speak publicly. [FOX News](#) [9/23/2021 11:07 AM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports that on Wednesday, DHS confirmed that some migrants are being released into the interior, if they are not being removed under Title 42 public health protections. The Biden administration has been removing most single adults under the Center for Disease Control order, but only a sliver of migrant families - about 19% in August. A DHS spokesperson told Fox that those who were not being removed are either placed in "alternatives to detention," detained at an ICE facility, or released into the U.S. with either a notice to appear in court or a notice to report to an ICE office. "The document an individual receives is dependent on facility space and resources available to process," the spokesperson said. The DHS statement noted that Border Patrol will collect information such as fingerprints, phone numbers and an address, while also running background checks.

Reported similarly:

[Univision](#) [9/23/2021 12:22 PM, Jorge Cancino, 366K]

Many Haitian Migrants Are Staying In The U.S. Even As Expulsion Flights Rise

The [AP](#) [9/23/2021 6:12 AM, Elliot Spagat, Maria Verza, Juan A. Lozano and Sarah Blake Morgan, 4917K] reports Three hours after being freed from a giant migrant camp under an international bridge, Mackenson Veillard stood outside a gas station and took stock of his sudden good fortune as he and his pregnant wife waited for a Greyhound bus to take them to a cousin in San Antonio. The couple camped with thousands for a week under the bridge in Del Rio, Texas, sleeping on concrete and getting by on bread and bottled water. "I felt so stressed," Veillard, 25, said this week. "But now, I feel better. It's like I'm starting a new life." Many Haitian migrants in Del Rio are being released in the United States, according to two U.S. officials, undercutting the Biden administration's public statements that the thousands in the camp faced immediate expulsion to Haiti. Haitians have been freed on a "very, very large scale" in recent days, one official said Tuesday. The official, who was not authorized to discuss the matter and thus spoke on condition of anonymity, put the figure in the thousands. Many have been released with notices to appear at an immigration office within 60 days, an outcome that requires less processing time from Border Patrol agents than ordering an appearance in immigration court and points to the speed at which authorities are moving. The releases come despite a massive effort to expel Haitians on flights under pandemic-related authority that denies migrants a chance to seek asylum. A third U.S. official not authorized to discuss operations said there were seven daily flights to Haiti planned starting Wednesday.

A senior U.S. diplomat to Haiti resigns, citing the Biden administration's 'inhumane' deportation policy

The [New York Times](#) [9/23/2021 10:25 AM, Lara Jakes and Eileen Sullivan, 24635K] reports the diplomat, Daniel Foote, was appointed special envoy to Haiti in July, just weeks after President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated. The senior American envoy for Haiti policy has resigned, two U.S. officials said Thursday, in a letter that excoriated the Biden administration's "inhumane, counterproductive decision" to send Haitian migrants back to a country that has been racked this summer by a deadly earthquake and political turmoil. The diplomat, Daniel Foote, was appointed special envoy to Haiti in July, just weeks after President Jovenel Moïse was killed in his bedroom during a nighttime raid on his residence.

Thousands of Haitians have since flocked to the Texas border, particularly in the past week, where they have crossed the Rio Grande into the United States and confronted Border Patrol agents on horseback before being deported. "I will not be associated with the United States' inhumane, counterproductive decision to deport thousands of Haitian refugees and illegal immigrants to Haiti, a country where American officials are confined to secure compounds because of the danger posed by armed gangs in control of daily life," Mr. Foote wrote in his stinging resignation letter to Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, dated Wednesday. He also blasted a "cycle of international political interventions in Haiti" that "has consistently produced catastrophic results," and he warned that the number of desperate people traveling to American borders "will only grow as we add to Haiti's unacceptable misery." The [Wall Street Journal](#) [9/23/2021 8:30 PM, Courtney McBride and Michelle Hackman] reports he characterized U.S. policy toward Haiti, the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, as flawed, accusing administration officials of distorting or ignoring his recommendations. Citing poverty, gang violence and government corruption, Mr. Foote wrote that the Haitian people "simply cannot support the forced infusion of thousands of returned migrants lacking food, shelter and money without additional, avoidable human tragedy." At a press conference Thursday, Secretary of State Antony Blinken thanked Mr. Foote for his service, while acknowledging policy disagreements. "I think we actually see eye to eye on the fundamental need to support the Haitian people, to buttress Haiti's democracy," the secretary said. "I very much respect him, respect his service, respect his passion," Mr. Blinken said of Mr. Foote. "But that doesn't mean that we can't and won't disagree on the right approach to take, the right policy to follow." State Department spokesman Ned Price on Thursday disputed Mr. Foote's characterization of events, saying administration officials had held "multiple senior-level policy conversations on Haiti, where all proposals, including those led by Special Envoy Foote, were fully considered in a rigorous and transparent policy process." He described Mr. Foote's claim that his recommendations were ignored as false, and said the administration conducts policy debates on an array of issues. "It is unfortunate that, instead of participating in a solutions-oriented policy process, Special Envoy Foote has both resigned and mischaracterized the circumstances of his resignation," Mr. Price said. "He failed to take advantage of ample opportunity to raise concerns about migration during his tenure and chose to resign instead." Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman said that Mr. Foote's ideas had included U.S. military intervention in Haiti, a move she said "was a bad idea" and wouldn't solve the country's problems.

Reported similarly:

[Politico](#) [9/23/2021 9:34 AM, Nick Niedzwiadek and Jonathan Custodio, 1707K]

[Bloomberg](#) [9/23/2021 12:55 PM, Nick Wadhams and Justin Sink, 6400K]

[NPR](#) [9/23/2021 1:35 PM, L. Carol Ritchie, Michele Kelemen]

[AP](#) [9/23/2021 12:18 PM, Joshua Goodman, Matthew Lee, Danica Coto, Elliot Spagat, 49K]

[Reuters](#) [9/23/2021 7:06 AM, Daina Beth Solomon and Humeyra Pamuk, 5304K]

[The Hill](#) [9/23/2021 12:28 PM, Morgan Chalfant, 1776K]

White House Says It Is Not Sending Haiti Migrants at Border to Guantanamo

[Reuters](#) [9/23/2021 1:17 PM, Staff, 4947K] reports that the Biden administration has no plans to send any of the thousands of Haitian migrants caught crossing the U.S.-Mexico border to a special holding facility at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, U.S. officials said on Thursday. The officials threw cold water on the idea of using the longtime facility for some of the Haitians gathered at the Texas border. The statement is a response to media speculation stirred by a U.S. government advertisement of a new contract to run

the migrant center. U.S. authorities, on and off for decades, have temporarily housed and processed migrants apprehended at sea trying to get to the United States at the Migrant Operations Center at Guantanamo. The facility is located on the same military base where the United States operates a prison for foreign terrorism suspects captured after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on New York and Washington. The Guantanamo jail came to symbolize the excesses of the U.S. "war on terror" because of harsh interrogation methods in earlier years that critics say amounted to torture. The lesser-known migrants center once held thousands of Haitian "boat people" in the early 1990s but has been little used in recent years, though the U.S. government has continued to maintain it. Asked whether any Haitian migrants would be sent there from the U.S.-Mexico border, White House press secretary Jen Psaki told reporters: "There's never been a plan to do that." A bid solicitation from the Department of Homeland Security last week that asked private companies to apply to operate the migrant facility was a "typical, routine first step in a contract renewal, and unrelated to the Southwest Border," tweeted Marsha Espinosa, DHS assistant secretary of public affairs.

House Republicans push for vote on bill to restrict illegal immigration

The [Washington Times](#) [9/22/2021 8:00 PM, Mica Soellner, 381K] reports that House Republicans are seeking to force a vote on a bill that would curb illegal immigration by reinstating border security rules set forth by the Trump administration. Reps. Andy Biggs of Arizona and Matt Rosendale of Montana introduced a resolution on Wednesday that aims to gather support for consideration of Mr. Rosendale's bill, which would implement the border controls. The bill, dubbed the Remain in Mexico Act, would require the Department of Homeland Security to put migrant protection protocols in place. Those controls would allow the U.S. government to return some migrants to Mexico as they await their immigration proceedings. "MPP was one of the most effective tools in our arsenal to curb illegal immigration under the Trump administration," Mr. Rosendale said in a statement. "The Biden administration worked to undermine this policy since the moment he took office, and the result has been an unprecedented border crisis." The lawmakers must obtain the signatures of 218 members in order to force a vote on the resolution. If the resolution were to pass, it would then force a vote on the bill. The Republicans are likely to garner support from members of their party, but are expected to encounter Democratic opposition. However, a handful of Democrats including Reps. Henry Cuellar of Texas and Frederica Wilson of Florida, have broken with their party on the need to better secure the border and immigration. In a court filing on Monday, the Biden administration urged a federal appeals court to let it nix the Trump-era policy that requires some asylum seekers to return to Mexico as their cases are processed. If successful, the administration's move would lift an injunction ordered by U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk of Texas, who ruled that the policy should remain in place until border patrol has enough capacity to detain illegal immigrants at the border, as well as those already in the country unlawfully.

EPA completes rule to phase out gases used as refrigerants

The [AP](#) [2/23/2019 8:00 AM, Matthew Daly, 530k] reports that in what officials call a key step to combat climate change, the Environmental Protection Agency is sharply limiting domestic production and use of hydrofluorocarbons, highly potent greenhouse gases commonly used in refrigerators and air conditioners. The new rule, which follows through on a law Congress passed last year, is intended to decrease U.S. production and use of HFCs by 85% over the next 15 years, part of a global phaseout designed to slow global warming. HFCs are greenhouse gases that are thousands of times more powerful than carbon

dioxide. They often leak through pipes or appliances that use compressed refrigerants and are considered a major driver of global warming. President Joe Biden has pledged to embrace a 2016 global agreement to greatly reduce HFCs by 2036. White House climate adviser Gina McCarthy, a former EPA administrator, said the new rule was “a win on climate and a win on jobs and American competitiveness.” The rule is expected to reduce harmful emissions by the equivalent of 4.5 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide by 2050, McCarthy said, a total similar to three years of emissions from the U.S. power sector. EPA Administrator Michael Regan said the phasedown is backed by a coalition of industry groups that see it as an opportunity to “supercharge” American leadership on domestic manufacturing and production of alternative refrigerants. The industry has long been shifting to the use of alternative refrigerants and pushed for a federal standard to avoid a patchwork of state laws and regulations. “This action reaffirms what President Biden always says — that when he thinks about climate, he thinks about jobs,” Regan said, echoing a Biden refrain about climate change. Transitioning to safer alternatives and more energy-efficient cooling technologies is expected to generate more than \$270 billion in cost savings and public health benefits over the next 30 years, Regan said. A pandemic relief and spending bill passed by Congress last December directs the EPA to sharply reduce production and use of HFCs. The measure won wide support and was hailed as the most significant climate change law in at least a decade. Besides targeting HFCs, the American Innovation and Manufacturing, or AIM, Act also promotes technologies to capture and store carbon dioxide produced by power and manufacturing plants and calls for reductions in diesel emissions by buses and other vehicles. The HFC provision was supported by an unusual coalition that included major environmental and business groups, including the National Association of Manufacturers, American Chemistry Council and the Air-Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute. The chemistry council represents major companies including Dow, DuPont, Honeywell, Chemours and Arkema. The administration said it also is taking other steps to ensure reductions in HFCs, including creation of an interagency task force to prevent illegal trade, production, use or sale of the climate-damaging gases. The task force will be led by the Department of Homeland Security, and EPA’s offices of Air and Radiation and Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. Working with the departments of Justice, State and Defense, the task force will “detect, deter and disrupt any attempt to illegally import or produce HFCs in the United States,” the White House said in a fact sheet. [CNN](#) [9/23/2021 10:49 AM, Ella Nilsen and Veronica Stracqualursi, 4876K] reports “It’s frankly, folks, a very big deal,” White House national climate adviser Gina McCarthy said. “HFCs are found in a range of appliances and other products, and they are thousands of times more potent than carbon dioxide is in terms of how intensely they warm the climate.” On a call with reporters, McCarthy and EPA chief Michael Regan likened the HFC reductions to cutting 4.5 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent by 2050, totaling nearly three years of US power sector emissions.

CISA, NIST Issue Critical Infrastructure Control Systems Cybersecurity Performance Goals

[HS Today](#) [9/23/2021 11:38 AM, Staff, 12K] reports that on Wednesday, July 28, 2021, the President signed a National Security Memorandum on Improving Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure Control Systems. The National Security Memorandum establishes a voluntary initiative intended to drive collaboration between the Federal Government and the critical infrastructure community to improve cybersecurity of control systems. It instructs the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to lead the development of preliminary cross-sector control system cybersecurity performance goals as well as sector-specific performance goals within one year of the date of the National Security Memorandum. These

goals are intended to provide a common understanding of the baseline security practices that critical infrastructure owners and operators should follow to protect national and economic security, as well as public health and safety. "Today, we are delivering on the first step of the President's National Security Memorandum (NSM) objectives to strengthen the cybersecurity of our Nation's critical infrastructure control systems," Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas and Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo said a joint statement. "DHS's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), in coordination with the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), developed preliminary cybersecurity performance goals based on nine categories of best practices.

Biden Cyber Officials Back Breach Incident Reporting Mandates

Bloomberg [9/23/2021 12:42 PM, Rebecca Kern and Sophia Cai, 6400K] reports that the head of the U.S. cybersecurity enforcement agency "is a huge supporter" of bipartisan legislation to mandate that operators of critical infrastructure report data breaches to the government. Jen Easterly, director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, said she backs draft legislation from the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to require certain private companies, federal agencies and government contractors to report cyberattacks to the agency. The proposed legislation is partly in response to a surge of major cyberattacks that targeted government agencies and critical industries, including Colonial Pipeline Co. and meat producer JBS SA. The hacks increased pressure on the Biden administration to bolster U.S. cyber defenses and fueled calls for federal legislation to require companies to share incidents with the federal government to assist in response and recovery. The panel's chairman, Michigan Democrat Gary Peters, told Bloomberg that he hopes to incorporate feedback from the hearing and introduce the bill in the coming weeks. Meanwhile, similar legislation has been added to the must-pass defense authorization measure scheduled to pass the House this week. "The earlier that CISA, the federal lead for asset response, receives information about a cyber incident, the faster we can conduct urgent analysis and share information to protect other potential victims," Easterly said in written testimony for the committee's Thursday hearing. An increase in cyberattacks, particularly from ransomware, has hit the private sector particularly hard, which owns and operates 85% of critical infrastructure. Cyber incident reporting should be timely, Easterly said, "ideally within 24 hours of detection." A draft bill from Peters and top Republican Rob Portman, from Ohio, proposed a 72-hour time frame for reporting.

Lindsey Graham calls for 'incompetent' Mayorkas to resign amid border crisis

FOX News [9/24/2021 1:56 AM, Staff, 9251K] reports U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham told Martha MacCallum on "The Story" on Thursday night that the "most inhumane thing going on right now in America, is the men and women of the Border Patrol have been completely abandoned." GRAHAM: So, all I can say is what Biden has done is he surrendered the border to drug cartels, coyotes, and human smugglers, he's surrendered Afghanistan to the terrorists, the Taliban and Al Qaeda, and a major attack is going to come our way. Because the combination of allowing Afghanistan to fall back in terrorist's hands and having a completely open and broken border here in the United States, it's a matter of time that the terrorists come through the border to kill us. Here's what I want to say to the American people. The man on horseback is there to protect your family. The people rushing our border have put us all under siege. And I think the most inhumane thing going on right now in America is the men and women of the Border Patrol have been completely abandoned,

demagogued, scapegoated and treated like dirt by elected officials and the Democratic Party and this administration. So, I'm not unhappy, I'm p---ed. Secretary Mayorkas needs to resign. He's completely incompetent. The border is not closed. It's been surrendered.
[Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[TX] Texas Republicans back effort to impeach Biden over border policy, Afghanistan

The [Houston Chronicle](#) [9/23/2021 1:00 AM, Benjamin Wermund, 183K] reports that two Texas Republicans have joined a House GOP effort to impeach President Joe Biden over his handling of the border, the withdrawal from Afghanistan and for extending the national eviction moratorium. It's more of a political exercise than anything, as Democrats control both the House and Senate and Republican leaders including Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell have made clear Biden won't be impeached. The impeachment resolution has drawn the support of just four members of Congress so far, two of whom are Texans: U.S. Reps. Brian Babin of Woodville and Randy Weber of Friendswood - both of whom criticized the two impeachments of former President Donald Trump as political stunts. The resolution, led by U.S. Rep. Bob Gibbs of Ohio, accuses Biden of breaking his oath of office and says the president has "Failed to secure the border," "Extended the moratorium on evictions despite publicly acknowledging it would 'not pass constitutional muster,'" and "Failed to act responsibly as Commander-in-Chief with regard to the withdrawal of United States forces from Afghanistan." "Since January 20, 2021, Joe Biden has done nothing but launch our nation into a state of retrograde and increased vulnerability while thwarting the rule of law at every turn," Babin said. "He has failed miserably at his duties as Commander-in-Chief and violated his oath of office to defend the U.S. Constitution." Babin and Weber both voted against former President Donald Trump's two impeachments and both Texans accused Democrats at the time of playing politics.

[TX] Texas asks judge to rule DHS is violating 'Remain in Mexico' ruling

The [Washington Times](#) [9/23/2021 4:16 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton went back to court Thursday to ask a judge to order Homeland Security to reinstate the "Remain in Mexico" border policy, saying Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas appears to be slow-walking the court's order restoring the policy. Judge Matthew Kacsmayk ruled more than a month ago that Mr. Mayorkas's attempt to phase out the policy, officially known as the Migrant Protection Protocols, was done in defiance of the law. He ordered Mr. Mayorkas to work in good faith to restore the policy. Mr. Paxton said the intervening weeks have seen no progress, and he said it's time the judge gets involved in making it happen. "I have already sued this administration and won - yet they still think they are above the law and can continue shirking their responsibilities," the Republican state attorney general said. MPP was one of the key policies the Trump team used to solve the 2019 border surge. The policy allowed the Border Patrol to immediately push newly arrived illegal immigrants back across the border into Mexico to await their immigration court proceedings.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

[SC] SC authorities arrest one of Interpol's most wanted suspects

The [AP](#) [9/23/2021 5:10 PM, Staff] reports a man suspected of murder in El Salvador was arrested Thursday in South Carolina. The Bluffton Police Department, with help from other agencies, arrested Erick Salvador Hernandez Bonilla, 23, on Lady's Island, WSAV-TV

reported. Bonilla, wanted by the International Criminal Police Organization — also known as Interpol, faces six counts of murder and terrorist threat. Authorities said the charges are linked to Bonilla's MS13 gang-related activities in El Salvador. Details of the murder case were not released. Bluffton Police, working with the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office, the U.S. Marshal Service and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement apprehended Bonilla after a month-long investigation with help from an anonymous source, police said. "I am proud and grateful of the anonymous source who contacted the Bluffton Police Department and whose efforts resulted in a successful arrest of this dangerous suspect," Bluffton Police Chief Stephenie Price said.

[GA] 21 Savage Turned Himself In To Police And Was Released On Bond. His Attorneys Claim There's An ICE Connection.

BuzzFeed [9/23/2021 11:29 PM, Hamed Aleaziz, 5962K] reports Atlanta-based rapper 21 Savage turned himself in to local authorities Thursday night to face allegations of drug and weapons possession from a well-publicized incident in early 2019 when immigration officials arrested him in an operation with Georgia authorities. He was released on bond Thursday evening. The rapper, whose real name is She'ya Bin Abraham-Joseph, was taken into the custody of Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers on Feb. 3, 2019. He was later released on bond following international attention over the arrest. At the time, ICE officials told local media that the rapper had been convicted of felony drug charges in 2014. His attorneys have said that the information was false, pointing out that the conviction was later vacated. ICE officials later dropped an aggravated felony charge against him in immigration court. Earlier this month, a local magistrate court judge signed a warrant authorizing his arrest on suspicion of felony drug possession and weapons possession in DeKalb County, where the rapper turned himself in on Thursday evening. His tour, which he is headlining along with J Cole, begins Friday in Miami. His attorneys claim that he was not aware of the warrant, which was sought by DeKalb County authorities on Sep. 7, until Thursday. The warrant cites allegations that, during a stop the evening of the ICE arrest, the rapper threw out a bottle that had liquid in it which later tested positive for codeine and that a handgun was found inside the car. Since the night of the arrest, the government has pursued his deportation only on the grounds that he had come from the UK at the age of 7 and overstayed a visa, according to Charles Kuck, managing partner of Kuck Baxter Immigration, who represents the rapper.

[Iraq] Ancient tablet acquired by Hobby Lobby going back to Iraq

The AP [9/23/2021 8:27 AM, Colleen Long, 2701K]

A 3,500-year-old clay tablet discovered in the ruins of the library of an ancient Mesopotamian king, then looted from an Iraqi museum 30 years ago, is finally headed back to Iraq. The \$1.7 million cuneiform clay tablet was found in 1853 as part of a 12-tablet collection in the rubble of the library of Assyrian King Assur Banipal. Officials believe it was illegally imported into the United States in 2003, then sold to Hobby Lobby and eventually put on display in its Museum of the Bible in the nation's capital. Federal agents with Homeland Security Investigations seized the tablet — known as the Gilgamesh Dream tablet — from the museum in September 2019. Months later, federal prosecutors in Brooklyn, New York, began a civil forfeiture court proceeding that resulted in the repatriation, which is scheduled for Thursday afternoon at a ceremony at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian that will include officials from Iraq. It's part of an increasing effort by authorities in the U.S. and around the world to return antiquities pilfered from their home countries. In years past, such items probably would never have made it

back. The black market for these relics is vast, as are criminal networks and smugglers dealing in stolen items and falsifying ownership data. “By returning these illegally acquired objects, the authorities here in the United States and in Iraq are allowing the Iraqi people to reconnect with a page in their history,” said Audrey Azoulay, director general of the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. “This exceptional restitution is a major victory over those who mutilate heritage and then traffic it to finance violence and terrorism.” For the acting head of Homeland Security Investigations which found and investigated the origins of the tablet, the repatriation is personal. Steve Francis’ parents were born in Iraq, part of a small sect known as Chaldean Iraqis who are Christian, and he was assigned to a U.S. Customs unit in 2003 that was sent to Iraq to help protect looted artifacts. “It’s really special to me. I’m a Chaldean Iraqi and leading the agency that did this work,” Francis said. “It is really something.” Authorities are also repatriating a Sumerian Ram sculpture that was seized during a separate case.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/23/2021 8:53 AM, Rachel Scully, 1776K]

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Tech firms’ nightmare: Vanishing green cards

[Axios](#) [9/23/2021 5:45 AM, Margaret Harding McGill, 526K]

Thousands of green cards are about to go to waste, leaving Google, Microsoft and other tech companies fuming — and pushing the Biden administration to ensure it doesn’t happen again. Tech workers have waited years for green cards that will grant them permanent legal status in the U.S. — but because of pandemic-related processing delays, they will have to wait even longer. The U.S. makes a certain number of family-based and employment-based green cards available each fiscal year. 260,000 employment visas were available this year, rather than the typical 140,000, thanks to a pandemic-related drop in applications for family-based visas in 2020. Unused family cards from one year are added to the next year’s count of employment cards. The catch: Processing those extra applications has gone slowly. An administration official this summer warned of a 100,000-application backlog that would not be filled by the Sept. 30 fiscal year end. Extra green cards that haven’t been granted in one year don’t carry over to the next. Google and Microsoft are among the companies that have been urging federal officials to find a way to save the roughly 80,000 remaining employment-based green cards set to expire Sept. 30.

[NY] Undocumented Workers Who Power New York’s Economy Finally Get Pandemic Aid

[Bloomberg](#) [9/23/2021 8:53 AM, Amy Yee, 6400K] reports that thousands of undocumented immigrants who lost their jobs working as cooks, delivery workers, day laborers, nannies and in other essential jobs are finally getting pandemic unemployment aid. New York state has approved applications for nearly half of a \$2.1 billion fund — the biggest of its kind — to help workers excluded from government aid during the pandemic. The state is starting to disburse \$550 million this week from the landmark Excluded Workers Fund (EWF). Since opening on August 1, it has received more than 163,000 applications, mostly from undocumented immigrants. New York is hoping that supporting these workers can help revive the state’s battered economy. Forty-two percent of New York City small businesses shuttered as of April, and unemployment was at 10.2% in August, about double the national average of 5.2%. Tourism, which isn’t expected to fully recover for another three to four

years, lost billions last year. More than 500,000 undocumented people live in New York City, followed by Long Island, Hudson Valley and other parts of New York. The Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI) estimates that giving \$850 million of the EWF — the amount approved earlier this month — to excluded workers would boost New York City's economy by \$600 million, Long Island by \$70 million and Westchester by \$35 million.

[IN] Officials Refute Wild Rumors About Situation At Camp Atterbury

Northeast Indiana Public Radio [9/23/2021 5:25 PM, Mitch Legan] reports the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is denying rumors circulating about happenings at Camp Atterbury. Earlier this week, WIBC radio host Jason Hammer made shocking claims on air about the situation at Camp Atterbury, where roughly 7,000 Afghan evacuees are undergoing final health and safety checks before being settled across the country. Hammer said Monday he received a text from a National Guard member at the camp who said the FBI had been called in to deport members of the Taliban who had been caught in the vetting process. He went on to say the people at the camp were routinely engaging in violence, and that 47 were unaccounted for. DHS spokesperson Lorie Dankers said the claims were false, and that the only people who have left the base are those who have completed their health and safety checks. As of last week, that number was 25. Dankers did not provide an updated figure. "Some individuals (who have completed the vetting process) have decided to continue [the] resettlement process outside of Camp Atterbury," Dankers wrote in an email. "Intelligence, law enforcement and counterterrorism professionals conduct screening and security vetting before the Afghan guests are allowed into the United States. This includes reviews of both biographic and biometric data." "There is some confusion regarding the number of Afghan guests who arrived with government-issued identification," Dankers said. "The vast majority of arrivals present some form of identification or documentation demonstrating their identity. Approximately 76 percent of guests at Camp Atterbury have presented some form of documentation or identification. It is important to note more than 22 percent of our guests are age nine and younger, suggesting that many of those may not have a government-issued IDs."

[IL] Dozens of Afghan children arrive in Chicago after evacuation

The AP [9/23/2021 10:43 AM, Staff, 495K] reports that dozens of Afghan children have arrived in Chicago as refugees evacuated from Afghanistan during the U.S. withdrawal continue to reach American cities, officials said. The unaccompanied Afghan minors - children who traveled without a parent or legal guardian - arrived Wednesday at Chicago O'Hare International Airport, weeks after the U.S. ended its longest war. Nubia Willman, director of the city's Office of New Americans, said 75 Afghan minors had been expected to arrive in Chicago. She said at least 500 Afghans are expected to be resettled in the city, the Chicago Sun-Times reported. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security confirmed that a flight of Afghan children from Qatar had arrived Wednesday in Chicago. An agency spokesperson said the minors will be reunited with a vetted relative or will remain in the custody of the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement. The children will receive COVID-19 vaccines if they are eligible for it, according to DHS. A spokesman for Mayor Lori Lightfoot said the city's Office of Emergency Management and Communications along with the Department of Aviation were working with state and federal officials to assist the children. "They have given up their homes, their families, their lives as they know them for a chance to survive," Lightfoot spokesman Cesar Rodriguez said in the statement posted on Twitter.

[WI] Afghan evacuees at U.S. military base charged with domestic violence, sexual abuse of minors

The [Washington Times](#) [9/23/2021 12:26 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports one Afghan evacuee being held at an American military base in Wisconsin tried to coerce two young boys into having sex with him, while another tried to strangle his wife, federal officials said in charging documents unsealed this week. The men, Bahrullah Noori and Mohammad Haroon Imaad, were arraigned Thursday and entered pleas of "not guilty." Both boys said Mr. Noori had been "doing this kind of thing for the last couple of weeks," and they'd been told not to say anything or he would beat them, an FBI agent said in an affidavit. Mr. Noori was indicted on multiple charges of attempted sex with a juvenile between 12 and 15, including one by force. In separate charges, Mr. Imaad, 32, is accused of assaulting his wife by trying to strangle or suffocate her. More broadly, security experts have complained about the massive numbers involved in the airlift, warning that there's little chance to do significant vetting.

Customs and Border Protection

Watchdog: CBP improperly targeted Americans as caravans approached border

[Politico](#) [9/23/2021 9:05 AM, Daniel Lippman, 1707K] reports that U.S. Customs and Border Protection improperly targeted American citizens that the agency suspected were involved with a 2018-19 migrant caravan with intrusive additional inspections, according to a new Department of Homeland Security inspector general's report. The inspector general also found that a Customs and Border Protection official asked the Mexican government in December 2018 to block 14 U.S. citizens from entering Mexico as the caravan approached the U.S. border even though it had "no genuine basis" to do so. The report, dated Sept. 20 but not yet publicly released, documents one instance where CBP officials placed "lookouts" — electronic alerts that lead to more intrusive inspections when crossing the U.S. border — on 15 Americans who had previously crossed the border with or were connected via social media to someone who CBP suspected might be planning violence at the border. But CBP didn't have any information that those 15 Americans were involved in planning any of the violence or were present at an intrusion into the U.S. CBP officials also improperly shared the "sensitive information" of other U.S. citizens with the Mexican government, according to the DHS watchdog. The CBP officials involved, the inspector general said, "were not forthcoming about the disclosures, did not follow CPB policies on sharing information with foreign entities and did not retain communication records." It noted that CBP's only written guidance on when to place lookouts hasn't been updated since 1990, 13 years before the Department of Homeland Security was established. Spokespeople for DHS and CBP didn't immediately respond to requests for comment on if any employees will be subject to disciplinary action. [CNN](#) [9/23/2021 6:38 PM, Geneva Sands, 4876K] reports the report looks back at 2018 when thousands of migrants gathered and traveled from Central America through Mexico seeking to enter the US, a migration movement known as the "migrant caravan." CBP was concerned that members of the migrant caravan could overwhelm CBP's resources and hinder its ability to process the legitimate flow of trade and travel. At the time, there was heated political rhetoric around the issue with then-President Donald Trump claiming in a series of tweets, just weeks ahead of the 2018 midterm elections, that he would declare a "national emergency" over migrant caravans moving north toward the US. To coordinate its response to the caravan, CBP implemented "Operation Secure Line" from October 2018 through February 2019, which included an intelligence section that gathered information about the number and travel patterns of

migrants moving toward the border and researched social media and news articles to identify potential migrant caravan organizers, according to the inspector general. In early 2019, journalists, attorneys and migrant caravan supporters raised concerns that CBP was harassing people over their work on the migrant caravan, prompting the inspector general investigation.

Reported similarly:

Washington Times [9/23/2021 5:00 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K]

Driver of a van carrying immigrants dies after eluding Border Patrol and crashing
Univision [9/23/2021 4:57 AM, Staff, 366K] reports that an Ecuadorian citizen was killed and nine other immigrants were injured when the truck in which they were traveling crashed down a highway in New Mexico, after evading a Border Patrol checkpoint and trying to escape from the authorities. According to the official account, the truck that the Ecuadorian was driving, a black SUV, circumvented the checkpoint after which several Border Patrol vehicles came out in pursuit. Officers located the Acura approximately six miles north of the checkpoint and attempted to bring the vehicle to a stop near the mile marker 19, but the driver did not stop and "continued for approximately half a mile until it lost control and crashed." Several of the occupants of the truck were "expelled from the vehicle", which ended up catching fire. Border Patrol agents immediately called for emergency medical services, removed the remaining four occupants from the burning vehicle and provided assistance, the CBP bulletin indicates. A forensic doctor arrived at the scene and declared the driver dead. So far her identity is unknown. Two of the injured were airlifted to University Medical Center in El Paso, Texas, and seven people were taken to Mimbres Memorial Hospital in Deming, New Mexico. A few hours later, five of the people who were taken to Mimbres Memorial Hospital were airlifted to University Medical Center for further medical care. CBP said the incident is being investigated by Homeland Security Investigations and the New Mexico State Police and reviewed by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Professional Responsibility and the New Mexico Office of the Medical Investigator.

Thousands Of Migrants Are Weighing Whether To Crossing Into The U.S.

NPR [9/23/2021 4:06 PM, Carrie Kahn, 4917K] Audio: HERE reports Haitian migrants camped on the Mexican side of the U.S. border are debating making the crossing north to face possible deportation to Haiti — or release into the U.S. for immigration hearings.

Border Patrol union chief says Biden using 'whip' furor to deflect from handling of migrant crisis

FOX News [9/23/2021 2:55 PM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports the head of the Border Patrol union is accusing the Biden administration of using a controversy over agents on horseback blocking Haitian migrants to "deflect" from its own handling of the crisis at the border, while saying the furor is "completely and totally demoralizing" for agents. "They know that what is taking place under the bridge is very embarrassing to them so they are trying to deflect," Brandon Judd, head of the National Border Patrol Council, told Fox News in an interview. "That's the administration trying to deflect off themselves for their failures which led to the catastrophe that's taking place under the bridge." Agents were surged to the area to tackle the wave, which saw more than 14,000 migrants camped under the bridge last week, and led to the administration increasing deportation flights. Judd has said previously that Border Patrol warned the administration about the potential crisis months ago, but no action was taken. DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas appeared to initially refute the claims being

made by some in the media on Monday as she stood alongside Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz – who noted the use of long reins and how they are necessary to control the horse. But by Tuesday, after the White House weighed in, Mayorkas said the images "troubled me profoundly." The agents involved have since been shifted to desk duty as the investigation continues. Judd said he was not surprised by Mayorkas' change in attitude. Later, on Thursday afternoon, the White House announced that Mayorkas had told civil rights leaders that Border Patrol use of horses was being suspended in the Del Rio Sector.

[TX] Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signs bill easing prosecution of human smuggling suspects

FOX News [9/23/2021 11:45 AM, Ronn Blitzer, 9251K] reports that Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed a bill that broadens the scope of who can be charged with human smuggling, while raising the stakes for offenses covered under the previous law. The bill, SB 576, removes the requirement for an offender to be seeking monetary gain when transporting another person for the purpose of hiding from or fleeing an officer. It also adds ways that a person can violate the statute. "This all makes it easier to arrest and to prosecute human smugglers. This law also increases criminal penalties for human smuggling, especially when payment is involved in that process," Abbott said at a Wednesday news conference. The new law amends a previous statute by making it a third-degree felony to help or direct more than one person "To enter or remain on agricultural land without the effective consent of the owner." It also bumps smuggling a person "For pecuniary benefit" up from a third-degree felony to second degree. This raises the maximum jail time for the offense from 10 years to 20. "Any operation that imposes stiffer fines or jail time for individuals is a deterrent, and we appreciate the assistance that we can get," Border Patrol agent Jesse Moreno told BorderReport.com. Moreno said he has seen 30 or more people living in quarters meant for four or five. The Department of Homeland Security said that as of Wednesday they had deported 1,719 people back to Haiti. Border Patrol agents have told Fox News that those being removed are generally single men and women, while family units and women claiming to be pregnant are being released.

[TX] Texas lawmakers sound the alarm on immigration crisis in Del Rio: The problem will 'spiral out of control'

FOX News [9/23/2021 12:45 PM, Amy Nelson, 9251K] reports that Tony Gonzales and August Pfluger shared their firsthand accounts of the ongoing crisis in Del Rio as thousands of migrants are waiting to get into the United States. On "America's Newsroom," Gonzales said it's like a hurricane has hit the community. Gonzales, who represents Del Rio, said Border Patrol and law enforcement are doing everything they can to mitigate the crisis. He said the latest numbers as of Thursday morning show roughly 4,400 migrants waiting under the International Bridge and another 2,000 still waiting in Mexico to cross into the U.S. He told Fox News' Dana Perino that the crisis is continuing to get worse and noted that Del Rio isn't the only community being impacted. "These are the type of things that are happening every single day throughout, not only in Del Rio, but other sectors as well," Gonzales said. "Meanwhile, the El Paso agents caught \$2 million worth of narcotics." "This is a problem that is continuing to grow, continuing to spiral out of control, and expelling migrants that do not qualify for asylum is part of that solution." President Biden pledged Tuesday to get the situation "Under control," but critics maintain that the crisis continues to threaten Americans' safety. Pfluger visited the Del Rio border Saturday and reported seeing 15,000 migrants waiting to enter the country. "It's clear that it's a crisis," Pflueger said.

[TX] How Haitian migrants are flooding the border in Texas with Big Tech's help

FOX News [9/23/2021 9:00 AM, Staff, 9251K] reports that for the final leg of his journey from Chile to the United States, Haitian migrant Fabricio Jean followed detailed instructions sent to him via WhatsApp from his brother in New Jersey who had recently taken the route to the Texas border. His brother wired him 20,000 pesos for the trip, then meticulously mapped it out, warning him of areas heavy with Mexican immigration officials. What Jean didn't expect was to find thousands of Haitian migrants like himself crossing at the same remote spot. Migrants use platforms like Facebook, YouTube WhatsApp to share information, with the latter being the most popular. Online messages touting the Mexican town of Ciudad Acuña, across from Del Rio, started after President Joe Biden took office and began reversing some of the Trump administration's immigration policies. Facebook Inc., which owns WhatsApp, allows people to exchange information about crossing borders, even illegally, but its policy bars posts that ask for money for services that facilitate human smuggling. Haitians began crossing there this year, but their numbers ballooned after a Biden administration program that briefly opened the door to some asylum seekers ended, said Nicole Phillips, of the San Diego-based Haitian Bridge Alliance, which advocates for Haitian migrants. Once it ceased in August, people panicked, and the messages recommending Ciudad Acuña "went viral," Phillips said. Interviews with dozens of Haitian migrants, immigration attorneys and advocates reveal a phenomenon produced partly by confusion over the Biden administration's policies after authorities recently extended protections for the more than 100,000 Haitians living in the United States. In extending protections for Haitians this spring, the Biden administration cited security concerns and social unrest in the Western Hemisphere's poorest country. Despite Biden's announcement to turn Haitian immigrants around, many families continue to be released into the US. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said the temporary protections were limited to those residing in the U.S. before July 29 - but that condition was often missing in posts, leading Haitians outside the United States to believe they, too, were eligible. "I want to make sure it is known that this is not the way to come to the United States," he said.

[TX] "We have to cross 14 countries": this was the journey of a Haitian immigrant from Chile to Austin

Univision Austin [9/23/2021 10:54 AM, Staff, 366K] reports that many Haitian immigrants who have been camping since last week under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas, are being released in the United States, according to two government officials. One of them is living in the Austin area and spoke about his journey across borders. The Haitian immigrant, who did not want to be identified, said that he left Haiti 4 years ago and was living in Chile. However, a few weeks ago he made the decision to cross the border with his pregnant wife. "To get here it was very hard because we have to cross 14 countries, from Chile to Mexico," said the man. According to him told Univision 62, the man has a brother in Round Rock and that is why he came to this area. Likewise, he indicated that he has an appointment with an immigration agent in about 2 months and after that he hopes to apply for asylum in order to remain in this country. "Everyone wants to come to the United States and when the president says that migrants can now cross, one says now you have to come. In Chile we work, but there is a chaos of papers. Many people do not have paper to do their paperwork. If you have a boy or a girl in Haiti, you cannot bring them to live together with their family," he explained. All this occurs at the same time that dozens of Haitians are being deported back to their country of origin, at a time of economic and social instability in that country due to an earthquake in August and the assassination of its president in July. With the large number of Haitians under the international bridge in Del Rio, Texas, the Biden administration announced the repatriation of hundreds of these immigrants. The

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) confirmed late Wednesday that 1,401 Haitian migrants who were in a makeshift camp at the border crossing have been deported.

[Mexico] Surge of Haitian migrants at the U.S. border challenges Mexico, too

The Washington Post [9/23/2021 7:04 PM, Kevin Sieff and Paulina Villegas, 11773K] reports as the United States denies entry to thousands of Haitians who have arrived at the southern border, Mexico is reckoning with its own dilemma over what to do with the migrants massing on its side of the Rio Grande. Its response reflects the continuous pressure applied by the United States to keep migrants far away from U.S. soil and the country's own increasingly conservative immigration policy. Francisco Garduño Yáñez, commissioner of Mexico's National Immigration Institute, said this week that Mexican authorities will ferry Haitians "by air and ground" back to the country's southern border, so that migrants who have claimed asylum can "continue their process" in the states where they first filed their cases. Mexican authorities will also "support them with their safe return to their country of origin," he said. He did not offer details. On Thursday morning, the crowd of Haitians in Ciudad Acuña, across the Rio Grande from Del Rio, Tex., had dwindled from several thousand to a few hundred. Mexican police and national guard members rounded up Haitians staying in area motels and plazas. After authorities had done little to stop Haitian migrants as they transited north through Mexico this month, it appeared they were now attempting to prove — above all to the United States — that they would not tolerate the arrival of undocumented immigrants at Mexico's northern border. The country's immigration agency boasted of its new enforcement operations. In Mexico, unlike in the United States, migration is rarely politically divisive. In 2016, thousands of Haitians arrived at Mexico's northern border and were mostly permitted to stay there. Many lived in an area that was renamed "Little Haiti." Their arrival prompted little antagonism. Reuters [9/24/2021 2:05 AM, Daina Beth Solomon, 5304K] reports Mexican officials are urging Haitians on the Texas border trying to reach the United States to give up and return to Mexico's frontier with Guatemala to request asylum, even as discontent grows over the treatment meted out to the beleaguered migrants. Up to 14,000 mostly Haitians were camped just north of the Rio Grande river this month as they attempted to enter the United States, but hundreds retreated to Mexico after U.S. officials began sending planes of people back to Haiti. Pressure is growing on U.S. President Joe Biden to tighten the border, and Mexico's National Migration Institute (INM) is starting to return migrants to the southern Mexican city of Tapachula so they can file asylum applications there.

Transportation Security Administration

Unruly airplane behavior prompted harsher penalties and more enforcement. People are still acting out.

The Washington Post [9/23/2021 7:10 PM, Lori Aratani, 11773K] reports that high-profile incidents involving airline passengers insulting and attacking crew members or refusing to wear masks in defiance of federal requirements risk eroding public confidence in air travel, witnesses and lawmakers said Thursday during a hearing to examine the effects of unruly passengers on the aviation system. Federal agencies have stepped up efforts to quash such behavior, but even as the Federal Aviation Administration said Thursday that the rate of reported incidents has declined since the start of this year, it conceded that such occurrences remain unacceptably high. The hearing before the House subcommittee on aviation is Washington's latest response to a sharp rise in mask-related incidents and bad behavior on airplanes. It comes after stepped-up enforcement and increased fines, with

lawmakers this week questioning whether changes have deterred conflicts. On Thursday, Rep. Rick Larsen (D-Wash.), chairman of the subcommittee, said incidents have put the safety of front-line workers, passengers and the aviation system at risk. "As the nation works to get to the other side of the covid-19 pandemic, the surge in public air rage incidents has exacerbated the already-tenuous workforce situation in our aviation sector and eroded confidence in air travel," he said. Added Rep. Garret Graves (La.), the top Republican on the subcommittee: "It needs to be a civil experience for everyone on the plane, and obviously there are additional safety considerations for being tens of thousands of feet up in the air in a metal airplane when thinking about this." The FAA said this week it has received 4,385 reports of unruly passenger incidents, most of which involve masks. The numbers have prompted both chambers on Capitol Hill to voice concerns about airplane behavior. Earlier this month, the Transportation Security Administration — which enforces a mask mandate in transportation settings — doubled fines for those who refuse to comply.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/23/2021 10:53 AM, Mychael Schnell, 1776K]

Delta has banned more than 1,600 unruly passengers. Now, it wants airlines to share ban lists.

[CBS News](#) [9/23/2021 7:49 PM, Kathryn Krupnik, Allison Elyse Gualtieri, 2612K] reports that more than 1,600 people have been banned by Delta Airlines since the federal government has required airplane passengers to wear masks — and now, the company wants other airlines to share their ban lists. The number of people on those internal lists, separate from the federal no-fly list, topped 4,000 as of May, though the figure has likely increased since. That number does not include passengers banned by American and Southwest airlines, as those companies do not release their data. "We've also asked other airlines to share their "no fly" list to further protect airline employees across the industry — something we know is top of mind for you as well. A list of banned customers doesn't work as well if that customer can fly with another airline," said a memo reviewed by CBS News that was sent to flight attendants Wednesday. Delta also said they've submitted more than 600 banned names to the Federal Aviation Administration. The agency said earlier this week that it had received 4,385 reports from airlines this year about unruly passengers, including 3,199 reports involving passengers refusing to comply with federal mask requirements. Those requirements will be in place until January, the Transportation Security Administration announced last month. Representatives of the FAA met this week with representatives of the airlines to discuss ways to reduce unruly behavior, and asked the airlines to commit to more action. The FAA had earlier asked airports to work with local law enforcement on criminal prosecutions. The airlines started enforcing federal mask mandates in June 2020, and the FAA implemented its zero-tolerance policy regarding unruly behavior in January. The agency has initiated 789 investigations into passengers so far in 2021, a sharp spike from the 183 investigations it initiated in 2020.

'Airports are terrifying': How TSA Cares helps people who need extra support at security

[USA Today](#) [9/23/2021 6:01 AM, Melissa Yeager, 6282K]

When Jim Macklin last flew through Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport in June, he booked a flight with Southwest Airlines. Needing help to navigate the airport, he highlighted one word on his reservation: blind. It was Macklin's first time traveling since his diagnosis of Stargardt disease, a rare genetic condition that causes macular degeneration. He hasn't

completely lost his vision but his eyesight has deteriorated to the point where he cannot navigate the labyrinth of an airport without assistance. Unsure how he would find his gate, he flagged down someone in a uniform when he arrived curbside at Sky Harbor. The person helped him get where he needed to go, but Macklin is one of many travelers who might have felt less anxiety if they had known of a Transportation Security Administration program designed to make trips through airport security less stressful. The TSA screening process can induce anxiety in even the most seasoned travelers. Remembering what's allowed, what's not. Taking off shoes. Taking out laptops. Separating 3-ounce liquids into a plastic bag. Getting hands swabbed. Standing in an X-ray machine. Navigating crowds of people in a noisy, packed environment. A medical condition or sensory issue could make the process even more taxing. Recognizing that, the Transportation Security Administration launched TSA Cares in 2012. People who might need extra support through security, whether due to a disability, medical condition or other circumstance, can call in advance to let the agency know. The program is generally open to any passenger who believes they would benefit from extra support navigating security and is available nationwide. Some of the most common requests are from people with autism, those who use a wheelchair or scooter, travelers with cognitive disabilities and passengers with diabetes.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Tropical Storm Sam forms, forecast to become major Atlantic hurricane by Sunday

The [Washington Post](#) [9/23/2021 11:59 AM, Matthew Cappucci, 11773K] reports that newly formed Tropical Storm Sam has all the makings of an eventual monster as it rolls through the central tropical Atlantic. Forecast to become a major hurricane, it comes barely a week after the historic peak of Atlantic hurricane season, with roughly half the season left to go. There are some models that suggest that Sam could cruise well into Category 4 territory, whipping up winds in excess of 130 mph as it swings west toward the Leeward Islands. Most forecast simulations project the storm to make a right-hand turn and curve northward over the open Atlantic before reaching the Lesser Antilles, but it will be an extremely close call. A few models do show the possibility of it becoming a threat in the northern Caribbean. Meteorologists are also tracking multiple additional systems in the Atlantic, including the remnants of Odette, which have been swirling around the North Atlantic for nearly a week now. There are some signs it could regenerate and acquire tropical or subtropical characteristics. Another tropical wave soon to emerge off the coast of Africa could gradually develop as well, becoming something to watch in the next week or so. The season so far has featured 18 named storms, including six hurricanes and three major hurricanes. If three more storms form, the National Hurricane Center's list of storm names will be exhausted, and it will be forced to use a supplementary list developed by the World Meteorological Organization for any additional storms. [USA Today](#) [9/23/2021 11:47 PM, Susan Miller, 6282K] reports Tropical Storm Sam was expected to take a west to west-northwest track across the central Atlantic over the weekend, Accuweather said. Whether it makes landfall is still uncertain, but forecasters urged Bermuda, the Bahamas and the U.S. East Coast to stay vigilant. "Sam could approach the northern Leeward Islands by Tuesday of next week as a major hurricane," Miller said, noting the storm's maximum sustained winds could be at least 111 mph, the threshold for a Category 3 hurricane. Sam is the 13th named storm to form in the Atlantic since Aug. 11, according to Colorado State University hurricane researcher Phil Klotzbach. Only one other hurricane season on record has had 18 named storms by Sept. 23, he said: 2020 had 23 named storms by that date. So far this year there have been six hurricanes and three major hurricanes: Grace, Ida and Larry.

Reported similarly:
[Reuters](#) [9/23/2021 11:13 AM, Staff, 5304K]

[NY] New York City braces for new round of flooding after summer of wild rains

The [Washington Post](#) [9/23/2021 2:06 PM, Matthew Cappucci, 11773K] reports that on the night of Sept. 1, a dire flash flood emergency was issued for New York, with scores of water rescues occurring as rising floodwaters killed at least 50 people in the Northeast. The top-tier flooding event, due to the remnants of Hurricane Ida, dropped staggering rain totals approaching the double digits in spots. It capped off a summer punctuated by relentless rounds of flooding. Similar scenes unfolded in July when back-to-back deluges flooded the New York subway. A National Weather Service balloon launch found record atmospheric moisture during that event. Now residents in the Big Apple are preparing for yet another potential flood event, with flash flood watches up for the city of 8 million. The heaviest rains will accompany a band of thunderstorms along a cold front that will sweep through the region Thursday night into Friday morning. The downpours will not be as extreme as those three weeks ago but could still drop one to two inches of rain in a short time. "The rainfall combined with wet antecedent conditions in a short period of time will lead to increased potential for flash flooding," the National Weather Service wrote. A ribbon of high PWATs, or precipitable water values, is aiming toward New York like a fire hose. PWATs describe how much moisture is present in a column of atmosphere and is available for clouds to tap into to produce rainfall. PWATs exceeding two inches are moving into the region. The atmosphere is like a soggy sponge, and it won't take much to squeeze that moisture out of the sky. The bulk of the rain is expected through early Friday.

Reported similarly:
[Univision](#) [9/23/2021 10:22 AM, Staff, 366K]

[CA] Fawn Fire in Northern California quickly spreads, prompting evacuation

[FOX News](#) [9/23/2021 3:45 PM, Bradford Betz, 9251K] reports northern California authorities have ordered evacuations in response to a new wildfire spreading in the area. The Shasta County Sheriff's Office issued a mandatory evacuation order because of the Fawn Fire burning in the unincorporated Mountain Gate area north of the city of Redding at the far north end of the Central Valley. The fire has grown to more than 1 square mile since it started Wednesday afternoon and was just 5% contained. Statewide, more than 9,000 firefighters remained assigned to 10 large, active wildfires, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. California fires have burned 3,671 square miles this year, destroying more than 3,200 homes, commercial properties and other structures.

[CA] Woman arrested on suspicion of starting California blaze

The [AP](#) [9/23/2021 8:20 PM, Staff, 49K] reports a woman has been arrested on suspicion of starting a Northern California wildfire that spread rapidly, burning homes and prompting evacuation orders Thursday in a rural community, authorities said. Workers at a nearby quarry reported seeing a woman acting strangely and trespassing in the area in Shasta County where the Fawn Fire was sparked Wednesday afternoon, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said in a statement. Later Wednesday, Alexandra Souverneva walked out of the brush near the fire line and approached firefighters and told them she was dehydrated and needed medical help, Cal Fire said. Souverneva, 30, was taken out of the area for evaluation and treatment. During an interview with Cal Fire and law

enforcement, officers came to believe Souverneva, of Palo Alto, was responsible for setting the fire, officials said. She was arrested and booked into the Shasta County Jail. It wasn't immediately known if she has an attorney.

Reported similarly:

San Francisco Chronicle [9/23/2021 6:29 PM, Andres Picon, Dominic Fracassa, 495K]

Federal Protective Service

Senators introduce bill to incentivize agencies to lease space they don't need

The Federal News Network [9/23/2021 1:44 PM, Jory Heckman, 49K] reports that a bipartisan group of members from the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee is introducing a bill to incentivize agencies to lease space they don't need. The Saving Money and Accelerating Repairs Through Leasing Act would create a pilot program that would allow agencies to sublease underutilized real estate to "any person or entity at fair market value," including another federal, state or local government agency. The bill allows agencies to use rent payments to help fund capital projects and facilities maintenance. The legislation would give agencies more options to deal with underutilized space across more than 130,000 civilian federal buildings in the United States. The SMART Leasing Act would require the General Services Administration to certify that subleases conducted through the pilot would not have any negative impact on the mission of agencies leasing the space, and that the terms of the sublease protect the interests of the country. The pilot outlined in the bill would cap the number of agency subleases to six per year, and would run through 2024. At that point, GSA would advise Congress on whether to extend or expand the program. Senators modeled the bill after a similar program used by NASA, which has generated millions of dollars in revenue for the agency to use on capital projects and facilities maintenance.

[CA] 4 California militia members plead guilty to conspiracy

The AP [9/23/2021 3:48 PM, Staff] reports four members of an alleged California militia group have pleaded guilty to conspiring to obstruct justice in the case of a federal guard who was fatally shot in Oakland more than a year ago, federal prosecutors said. The men — followers of the "boogaloo" movement, a concept embraced by a loose network of gun enthusiasts and militia-style extremists — are accused of conspiring to destroy communications and other records about the May 29, 2020, killing of federal security officer David Patrick Underwood and attempted murder of his partner by one of their members. In April, a federal grand jury indicted Jessie Alexander Rush, 29, of Turlock; Robert Jesus Blancas, 33, of Castro Valley; Simon Sage Ybarra, 23, of Los Gatos; and Kenny Matthew Miksch, 21, of San Lorenzo, on charges of conspiracy to obstruct justice. Miksch on Monday became the fourth member of the so-called Grizzly Scouts to plead guilty to conspiring to obstruct justice. Rush and Ybarra pleaded guilty to a single charge of conspiracy to obstruct justice last week and Blancas last month, according to recent plea agreements with the Northern District of California U.S. Attorney's Office that were announced Monday.

Secret Service

Former military intelligence analyst: Biden admin buying Chinese drones ‘poses national security threat’

FOX News [9/23/2021 3:03 PM, Joshua Q. Nelson, 9251K, Neutral, Primary] Video: [HERE](#) reports former military intelligence analyst Brett Velicovich said on Thursday that the report of federal agencies buying Chinese drones "poses a national security risk." Federal law enforcement agencies in the Biden administration are reportedly purchasing surveillance drones from China that have previously been labeled a potential national security threat by the Pentagon. The U.S. Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have recently acquired surveillance drones from the Shenzhen-based company DJI, around the same time the Defense Department deemed products from the Chinese company to be a potential national security threat, according to an Axios report. "The American people especially need to look at what this administration does, and not what they say, because they are clearly full of it if they don't stop this illegal activity immediately," Velicovich told "Fox & Friends." Velicovich argued that the purchase of Chinese-made drones is not only hypocritical to the Biden administration's stance on reducing America's reliance on technology, but it was also made illegal by the Department of Justice in 2019 when specific legislation was passed banning the purchase of drones and components made in China. The former military intelligence analyst added that there is "no denying at this point that this technology poses a national security risk." "I mean, the cybersecurity vulnerabilities are very, very well documented. The Biden administration has even come out and made dramatic unprecedented statements saying that the tech poses a national security risk," he said.

[AL] Woman uses counterfeit bills at CVS in Prattville, police say

ABC3340 [9/23/2021 11:00 AM, Jeff Wyatt, Neutral, Secondary] reports the Prattville Police Department is looking for a woman they say is passing counterfeit money. According to a news release, the woman in the photo used two fake \$100 bills at the CVS on Cobbs Ford Road in Prattville to purchase a PayPal card. This happened just after 5:30 P.M. on August 26, 2021.

[FL] 2 Tampa men defrauded government of \$1 million in unemployment benefits

The Tampa Bay Times [9/23/2021 10:32 AM, Josh Fiallo, 346K, Positive, Secondary] reports two Tampa men pleaded guilty Wednesday to making fraudulent unemployment claims that netted them over \$1 million in benefits during 2020. Kary Stevenson, 47, and Corey Quinn, 35, conspired to commit access device fraud and aggravated identity theft, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Tampa said in a news release. Each man could receive up to seven years in federal prison — five years for the conspiracy charge and two years for identity theft. Plea agreements describe how the pair collected the money, obtaining the personal information of strangers and making unemployment claims in the strangers' names. They had the benefits deposited into bank accounts and used debit cards to withdraw money from ATMs or to make purchases at stores. The U.S. Department of Labor estimated that Stevenson and Quinn defrauded the U.S. government of at least \$1.01 million. Helping in the investigation were the Department of Labor, the U.S. Secret Service and the Tampa Police Department. The U.S. Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force in May 2020 to help prevent pandemic-related fraud but it was not clear whether the task force was involved in this case.

[FL] Credit card fraudster sentenced to eight years in prison

My Sun Coast [9/23/2021 10:28 AM, Staff, 23K, Positive, Secondary] reports a Miami man was sentenced to eight years in federal prison Wednesday for credit card fraud that victimized stores in four states, including Sarasota County. Andre Moore, 37, pleaded guilty June 8 to credit card fraud and aggravated identity theft. The judge in U.S District Court in Tampa also ordered Moore to pay \$650,145.03 in restitution and to forfeit \$3,110.55, related to the counts on which he was convicted. According to court documents, Moore stole the identities of more than 100 individuals. Between September 2019 and May 2020, Moore used those stolen identities to make more than \$650,000 in purchases at retail stores in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas. Moore used fraudulent driver licenses and ID cards to open store credit card accounts under the stolen identities and to re-open dormant store credit card accounts. Moore made thousands of dollars in purchases during the COVID-19 pandemic, including using the stolen accounts to purchase items that were scarce early on in the pandemic. Further, Moore committed the fraud while living under a fake identity and, upon his federal arrest, lied about his name and identity to both federal agents and the Court. This case was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service, the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office, and the Winter Park Police Department.

[OH] Dayton police officer released from hospital after being shot in line of duty

WDTN [9/23/2021 5:05 PM, Josh Goad, 10K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Officer Thadeu Holloway has been released from the hospital after being shot in the left side of his head by a suspect Tuesday. Dozens of law enforcement cruisers lined Main Street outside of Miami Valley Hospital to wish the injured officer well as he continues his recovery. Holloway was shot Tuesday after stopping a Antwaine Deon Lowe for possibly using a counterfeit bill at a Dollar General in Dayton. The encounter escalated when Lowe punched the officer, Holloway then tased the suspect, who fell and pulled a gun shooting one round at Holloway's head. The officer shoot back five times, striking Lowe and leaving him in critical condition. During a news conference Wednesday the department said that the suspect was in serious condition but was stable. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[OH] Police investigate counterfeit bills used during local pizza delivery

WKBN 27 First News [9/23/2021 3:32 PM, Patty Coller, 20K, Neutral, Secondary] reports police in Warren are investigating after someone gave a pizza delivery driver counterfeit money. According to a police report, officers were called Tuesday to the Pizza Hut on Market Street where the manager said a driver delivered a pizza to an address on the 2000 block of N. Feederlee SE at about 8 p.m. and the person gave him two \$20 bills. When the driver returned to the restaurant, it was discovered that the money was fake. The bills were taken as evidence. The investigation is ongoing.

[MN] Olivia officials say counterfeit currency becoming more prevalent

KEYC [9/23/2021 8:46 PM, Staff, 9K, Neutral, Secondary] reports the Olivia Police Department says counterfeit money is becoming a huge issue in the city. The department says it has taken a handful of reports regarding counterfeit currency being passed at local businesses over the past few weeks. So far, \$20 worth of fake bills have been confiscated, and the department is asking local area businesses to be vigilant in checking any and all paper currency.

Coast Guard

U.S. icebreaker gap with Russia a growing concern as Arctic 'cold war' heats up

The Washington Times [9/22/2021 8:00 PM, Mike Glenn, 381K] reports that a Seattle-based Coast Guard cutter is almost halfway through a months-long voyage that took it through the ice-choked Northwest Passage north of Canada and will eventually result in a circumnavigation of North America once it transits through the Panama Canal and returns home. The mission of the USCGC Healy, a 420-foot medium ice breaker, was to stage military exercises alongside allies like Canada and carry out high-latitude scientific research. Another assignment was to demonstrate a U.S. presence in the Arctic amid long-term warming trends that are reducing the ice and dramatically increasing maritime traffic in the region. One problem for American strategists seeking to make a statement: By itself, the 22-year-old Healy represents exactly 50% of the U.S. Coast Guard's "fleet" of active polar icebreakers. Russia, by contrast, boasts dozens and is building more, and other states vying for influence and resources in the Arctic also outpace the U.S. The USCGC Polar Star, also based in Seattle, is a heavy icebreaker and even older. It was commissioned in 1976. A third USCG heavy icebreaker, the Polar Sea, is being cannibalized to provide parts for its sister ship. For years, Coast Guard officials have been pleading with Congress to help them bulk up its icebreaker fleet to ensure continued access to the polar regions. With both Russia and China making a concerted push for influence in the Arctic, the lagging American presence is even more glaring in light of the new Pentagon strategy of focusing on "great-power" rivals. "We absolutely need to be up in the Arctic and down in Antarctica on a more persistent basis than we are today. Great power competition is alive and well there," Adm. Karl Schultz, commandant of the Coast Guard, told the House Homeland Security Committee at a hearing this summer.

[TX] Major US port target of attempted cyber attack

The Hill [9/23/2021 8:16 PM, Olafimihan Oshin, 1776K] reports the Port of Houston, a major U.S. port, was targeted in an attempted cyber attack last month, the Port shared in a statement on Thursday. "The Port of Houston Authority (Port Houston) successfully defended itself against a cybersecurity attack in August," the statement reads. "Port Houston followed its Facilities Security Plan in doing so, as guided under the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA), and no operational data or systems were impacted as a result." The attempted hack involved a password management program called ManageEngine ADSelfService Plus, according to The Associated Press. In a joint statement last week, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency along with the FBI and the U.S. Coast Guard said that the vulnerability in the software creates a serious threat to critical infrastructure companies, defense contractors, and others. This comes as some major U.S. companies such as Colonial Pipeline and JBS USA have experienced similar ransomware cyberattacks in 2021. Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) told the newswire that the attack was "concerning," saying that the country needs to "push back against these nation-state actors who continue to probe and to commit these crimes against our public and private sector entities."

Reported similarly:

Axios [9/23/2021 9:54 PM, Fadel Allassan, 526K]

Washington Post [9/23/2021 6:40 PM, Alan Suderman, 11773K]

CISA/Cybersecurity

Officials urge Congress to consider fining companies that fail to report cyber incidents

The Hill [9/23/2021 4:44 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports the nation's top cybersecurity officials on Thursday urged Congress to consider passing legislation that would fine organizations if they failed to report cybersecurity incidents to the federal government, part of an effort to do more to confront a recent spree of attacks. Jen Easterly, the director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), testified in favor of taking the more hardline stance to encourage incident reporting during a hearing held by the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, which is considering bipartisan mandatory cyber reporting legislation. "I know some of the language talks about subpoena authority," Easterly said, referring to the committee's draft legislation. "My personal view is, that is not an agile enough mechanism to allow us to get the information that we need to share as rapidly as possible to prevent other potential victims from threat actors, so I think we should look at fines." Both Federal Chief Information Security Officer Christopher DeRusha and National Cyber Director Chris Inglis testified alongside Easterly on Thursday, with both agreeing that further enforcement mechanisms were needed to encourage cyber incident reporting to the federal government.

Reported similarly:

Washington Times [9/23/2021 10:28 AM, Ryan Lovelace, 381K]

[IA] Russian hackers deny an Iowa grain cooperative counts as 'critical'

The Washington Post [9/23/2021 7:54 AM, Joseph Marks, 11773K] reports that during a June faceoff with Russian President Vladimir Putin, President Biden threatened retaliation if Russian hacking gangs don't steer clear of U.S. critical infrastructure. Now Biden's commitment is being debated amid a ransomware attack gumming up operations at an Iowa grain cooperative – an operation that's small, yet still part of the critical agriculture sector. And Blackmatter, the Russian criminal hacking gang that hacked New Cooperative in Fort Dodge, Iowa, has even appeared to mock the cooperative's claim it counted as critical infrastructure in an online chat, warning "everyone will incur losses." (Analysts at Recorded Future observed and screenshotted the chats.) Agriculture is one of 16 sectors the Department of Homeland Security has officially listed as critical. Others include health care, financial services and energy. But here's the problem: New Cooperative doesn't look particularly critical to the casual observer. It manages only a small portion of the Iowa corn market. And the cooperative quickly developed workarounds such as using paper sale tickets that limited any broader impacts that might affect food prices, as Jacob Bogage reports. That puts the Biden administration in an awkward spot. On one hand: The attack is less damaging than dozens of other ransomware hacks that have hit schools and small businesses in recent months without prompting any significant attention from the federal government. On the other hand: It represents a direct provocation from one of the United States' toughest adversaries. U.S. officials say Russia-based ransomware gangs don't work on behalf of the Russian state but operate with the Kremlin's tacit approval. "A lot of people probably had the same reaction, that New Cooperative doesn't really look like critical infrastructure. But it's not my call. The government has declared it critical infrastructure," Allan Liska, director of threat intelligence at the cybersecurity firm Recorded Future, told me.

[CA] UC San Diego Health sued over data breach that may have exposed records of 500,000 patients

The [San Diego Union Tribune](#) [9/23/2021 9:59 PM, Mike Freeman, 302K] reports UC San Diego Health faces a lawsuit over a data breach last winter that potentially exposed sensitive information from nearly a half-million patients, employees and others connected with the health care system. Lawyers representing an El Cajon cancer patient filed legal action this week in San Diego federal court alleging negligence, breach of contract, and violation of California consumer privacy and medical confidentiality laws. It seeks class-action status and unspecified damages for all individuals whose personal and medical information may have been compromised. "Patients should trust that their most private medical results will not be made public, and that their medical visits will not leave them at risk for identity theft," said San Diego Attorney Jason Hartley, who is working with lead counsel Stueve Siegel Hanson of Kansas City. "This breach was preventable — had UC San Diego Health had the right data protection protocols in place." The lawsuit names the Regents of the University of California doing business as UC San Diego Health. A university spokesperson declined to comment on pending litigation. In July, the health care system announced on its website that hackers had used a phishing scam to gain unauthorized access to certain email accounts over a four-month period from Dec. 2, 2020, through April 8. That opened the door to potential access to a wide range of personal and medical data. At the time, UC San Diego Health didn't say how many people were affected due to an ongoing investigation, which included reporting the breach to the FBI and working with external cybersecurity experts. That probe is now complete. Beginning Sept. 7, UC San Diego Health began notifying the 495,949 individuals affected by the breach on a rolling basis where contact information is available, according to the spokesperson.

Terrorism Investigations

[DC] January 6 committee issues first subpoenas for witness testimony to four Trump loyalists

[CNN](#) [9/23/2021 11:22 PM, Ryan Nobles and Annie Grayer, 4876K] reports the select committee investigating the January 6 riot at the US Capitol issued its first round of subpoenas Thursday, targeting close aides and allies of former President Donald Trump. The subpoenas come as the select committee seeks to investigate efforts the Trump White House took to potentially overturn the 2020 presidential election and how the spread of misinformation fueled the anger and violence that led to the Capitol insurrection. The four subpoenas are going to former Trump White House chief of staff Mark Meadows, former deputy chief of staff Dan Scavino, former adviser Steve Bannon and Kash Patel, a former chief of staff to then-acting Secretary of Defense Christopher Miller who had also served as an aide to Republican Rep. Devin Nunes. The former Trump staffers are being issued subpoenas for private depositions and records. All document requests are due by October 7. The committee requests that Patel and Bannon appear on October 14, while Scavino and Meadows have been requested to appear before the committee on October 15.

[TN] Tennessee Kroger grocery store shooting leaves 1 dead, at least 12 injured, police say

[FOX News](#) [9/23/2021 5:39 PM, Bradford Betz , David Aaro, 9251K] reports police in Tennessee responded Thursday after at least a dozen people were shot at a Kroger supermarket, including at least one who was killed. The shooter, whose identity remained unknown, also was dead of what was believed to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound, police

said. The shooting happened in Collierville, Tennessee, about 30 miles east of downtown Memphis. Collierville police Chief Dale Lane said responding officers and a SWAT team entered the supermarket and went aisle to aisle to rescue employees – some of whom were hiding in the store's freezer. "I've been involved in this for 34 years and I've never seen a scene like this," Lane said, calling it "the most horrific event in Collierville history." Police said 44 employees were in the store at the time of the shooting, though it was unclear how many customers were inside. Lane said an image circulating on social media, showing someone on the store's roof, was later determined to be that of a Kroger employee. The Collierville Police Department originally received a call regarding an active shooter at Kroger at around 1:30 p.m., authorities said. Kroger employee Brignetta Dickerson said she was working the cash register Thursday when shots rang out.

Reported similarly:

[NPR](#) [9/23/2021 4:43 PM, Jonathan Franklin]

[USA Today](#) [9/23/2021 6:10 PM, Katherine Burgess, Dima Amro, Jeanine Santucci, 6282K]

Video: [HERE](#)

National Security News

Diplomat overseeing "Havana Syndrome" response leaving after 6 months

[CBS News](#) [9/23/2021 11:34 AM, Olivia Gazis, Sophie Reardon, and Tori Powell, 2612K] reports that Ambassador Pamela Spratlen, the senior official leading the State Department's response to cases of "Havana Syndrome" reported by U.S. diplomats, is leaving her post after six months in the role, the department confirmed Wednesday. "Ambassador Spratlen earlier this year agreed to return to the Department to take on the role, created by Secretary Blinken, of Senior Advisor of the Health Incidents Response Task Force," a State Department spokesperson said. Spratlen had "reached the threshold of hours of labor" permitted under her status as a retired ambassador, the official said, adding her replacement would be named "soon." "We thank her for her service and invaluable contributions to the efforts of the Task Force," the spokesperson said. Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources Brian McKeon will continue to oversee the task force's efforts. Spratlen's departure comes amid simmering frustration among diplomats who have been affected by "Havana Syndrome," the mysterious neurological illness with symptoms that can include vertigo, nausea and intense headaches. Victims have complained of inattention by the department to their cases and lingering skepticism among its medical staff. Earlier this month, Secretary of State Antony Blinken held a call with affected employees, who have also complained they continue to face hurdles in accessing medical care and benefits. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Top nuclear policy appointee removed from Pentagon post: report

[The Hill](#) [9/23/2021 10:34 AM, Monique Beals, 1776K] reports that the Pentagon has removed one of its top political appointees as the Biden administration looks to solidify its nuclear weapons policies moving forward. Leonor Tomero, the deputy assistant secretary of Defense for nuclear and missile defense, was asked by Pentagon officials to resign, a move first reported by Politico. Tomero had only been in her role for eight months and was responsible for overseeing the Biden administration's Nuclear Posture Review. The president is expected to release that review, which details its strategy surrounding nuclear weapons, in early 2022, the news outlet reported. This strategy could involve cutting back on the country's use of nuclear weapons or modernizing the U.S. nuclear force against the

wishes of progressive lawmakers. Some advocates for nuclear disarmament suggested Tomero's departure was the result of her efforts to challenge current nuclear policies, The Washington Post reported. Nuclear weapons expert Jeffrey Lewis told the Post her departure signals a "no tolerance" policy at the Pentagon for new ideas. "People wonder why we don't learn from failures like Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. The reason is simple: People who point out alternatives to current national security policies are systematically driven out of positions of authority," Lewis, who is also a professor at the Middlebury Institute for International Studies, told the Post. An anonymous Pentagon official denied that Tomero's views contributed to her ousting. "This was a reorganization decision to more appropriately align our organization with policy objectives," the official said to the Post. "This was not a difference in opinion or policy." At a press briefing Wednesday, Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said he would not discuss personnel issues, but insisted their focus was on "protecting our security interests." "It's natural with any new administration — this one's not excepted — that we would want to reevaluate the organizational structure and make changes where we think is appropriate to support the secretary's priorities," he said. The Hill has reached out to the Pentagon for more information.

Congress considers permanent UFO investigation office

The [Washington Times](#) [9/23/2021 8:00 AM, Sean Salai, 381K] reports that Congress is considering setting up a permanent UFO investigation office primarily focused on terrestrial threats. Section 1652 of House Bill HR. 4350, referring to the "Establishment of [an] Office to Address Unidentified Aerial Phenomena," states: "Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence, shall establish an office within the Office of the Secretary of Defense to carry out, on a Department-wide basis, the mission currently performed by the Unidentified Aerial Phenomenon Task Force as of the date of the enactment of this Act." Consumed by more pressing budgetary matters, the House on Wednesday postponed further proceedings on the bill, delaying a final decision. The House bill and its Senate companion make it clear that the federal government's interest in UAPs — the official Department of Defense term for UFOs — strictly concerns possible foreign espionage activities rather than extraterrestrials. On June 25, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence published an unclassified preliminary assessment of UAPs, evaluating a growing number of sightings in recent years as a potential security threat. Prepared for the congressional intelligence and armed services committees, the document noted that it came in response to a Senate request in the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 "to submit an intelligence assessment of the threat posed by unidentified aerial phenomena (UAP) and the progress the Department of Defense Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF) has made in understanding this threat." Out of 144 reported incidents of UFOs, the report explained away only one as a weather balloon, leaving the remainder of the sightings unresolved.

Blinken says U.S. soon will release new strategy for Indo-Pacific region

[Reuters](#) [9/23/2021 11:41 AM, Staff, 5304K] reports that U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken told foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Thursday that Washington would soon release a new comprehensive strategy for the wider Indo-Pacific region. The Biden administration is hoping to pivot from the crisis in Afghanistan to focus on its main national security priority of countering a rising China. Speaking at the start of a meeting with his counterparts in the 10-nation bloc on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly, Blinken said the U.S. strategy would emerge "this

fall" and "builds on our shared vision for a free, open, interconnected, resilient and secure region." "It will reflect Southeast Asia's importance to the Indo-Pacific region and the critical role that ASEAN plays in determining the region's future," he added.

Biden hosts Indo-Pacific leaders as China concerns grow

The AP [9/24/2021 12:11 AM, Aamer Madhani, 11773K] reports President Joe Biden is set to host the first in-person gathering of leaders of an Indo-Pacific alliance known as "the Quad" on Friday, wrapping up a tough week of diplomacy in which he faced no shortage of criticism from both allies and adversaries. Biden's meeting with leaders from India, Japan and Australia at the White House gives the U.S. president a chance to put the spotlight on a central aim of his foreign policy: turning greater attention to the Pacific in the face of what the U.S. sees as China's coercive economic practices and unsettling military maneuvering in the region. The four leaders' talks are also expected to center on climate, COVID-19 response and cyber security. Before the summit, the Japanese and Indian governments welcomed a recent announcement that the U.S., as part of a separate new alliance with Britain and Australia, would equip Australia with nuclear-powered submarines. It's a move that will allow Australia to conduct longer patrols and give it an edge on the Chinese navy. But the announcement infuriated France, which accused the Biden administration of stabbing it in the back by squelching its own \$66 billion deal to provide diesel-powered submarines.

[Cuba] In the middle of the migration crisis, the government is looking for a private contractor to reopen a camp at the Guantanamo base

Univision [9/23/2021 6:14 AM, Staff, 366K] reports that the Biden administration has published an offer seeking a private contractor to operate a migrant detention center at the Guantanamo naval base, on the eastern tip of the island of Cuba. According to the call, the center that exists there has a capacity of 120 people and "will have an estimated daily population of 20 people", but "the service provider will be responsible for maintaining on site the necessary equipment to erect temporary housing facilities for populations that exceed 120 and up to 400 migrants, in a surge event " The mentioned equipment, specifies the call, includes tents and cots, that "the contractor must be able to have them assembled and ready with little notice." However, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has wanted to make it clear that this movement in Guantánamo does not mean that they are thinking of transferring Haitian migrants to the base. In a statement sent to NBC News, DHS said it "is not [shipping] and will not send Haitian nationals who are on the southwestern border to the Migration Operations Center (MOC) at Guantanamo Bay. The MOC has been used for decades to process migrants intercepted at sea for resettlement in third countries. The recently published Request for Information (RFI) is a typical and routine first step in the renewal of a contract, and is not related to the southwestern border. "

[Turkey] Turkey builds a wall to keep out Afghan refugees

CBS News [9/23/2021 2:12 PM, Pinar Sevinclidir, 2612K] reports that some of the refugees fleeing the Taliban's brutality in Afghanistan are taking an arduous route across neighboring Iran to try and cross into Turkey. We met a family in the Turkish border city of Van who made it out of Afghanistan the night before the capital fell to the Taliban. "I don't have money, I don't have food, I don't have dresses, nothing," said the mother. Her family doesn't want to be identified, given how they made it into Turkey without permission, but they told CBS News that they blame the United States and its chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan for their plight. More than 2 million Afghans have already taken refuge in neighboring

Pakistan and Iran, but those countries have closed their borders to new arrivals. Now the Turkish government is working to stop a potential influx of Afghans by building a wall along its border. On the other side of that wall is Iran, which shares another border with Afghanistan. The Afghans who survive the trek through Iran to the Turkish border, which can take weeks, will now be met with a wall of concrete slabs 10 feet high. The Biden administration has asked Congress for funding to help rehome 95,000 Afghan refugees by September 2022, and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said this month that he expected at least 50,000 to be resettled in the U.S. "Recent polling shows strong public support in the U.S. for welcoming refugees, especially Afghan civilians who helped the U.S. war effort in their country." "This is a very unique political moment for President Biden to reset the way that the American public sees the immigration system, much less the United States' role in refugee resettlement," suggested Noorani. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[Israel] House passes \$1B for Israel's Iron Dome after progressive dustup

Politico [9/23/2021 2:17 PM, Andrew Desiderio, 1707K] reports the House on Thursday overwhelmingly passed a bill to replenish Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system, just two days after it was pulled from a government funding package over objections from progressive lawmakers. The bill passed by a vote of 420-9, with eight Democrats and one Republican voting against it, plus two Democrats voting present. But for the majority party, the episode served to further expose the its internal strife over the U.S.-Israel relationship, with progressives demanding a policy doctrine that takes into account the plight of Palestinians and pushes back on Israel's retaliatory offensives in Gaza. Lawmakers who support the security funding sought to highlight the defensive nature of the Iron Dome system, which has proven to be effective in intercepting rockets that would otherwise harm civilians in Israel. Ahead of the House vote, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke with Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz, according to a readout from the Israeli government. Gantz "thanked Secretary Austin for the continued support of the U.S. administration and the Pentagon for the processes to equip Israel with the means necessary to defend itself and its citizens." The Hill [9/23/2021 2:31 PM, Cristina Marcos, 1776K] reports the debate over the Iron Dome funding once again laid bare the internal Democratic divisions over Israel, which have repeatedly flared since they took over the House majority two years ago. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) spoke with the Israeli foreign minister on Tuesday and assured him that lawmakers would address the Iron Dome funding, despite its removal from the bill to prevent a government shutdown on Oct. 1. Funding for the Iron Dome, which is designed to help Israel defend itself from rocket attacks launched by terrorist groups like Hamas in Gaza, has long enjoyed bipartisan support. Democratic members of the House Appropriations Committee sought to stress that the funding is purely for defensive purposes and cannot be used by Israel for procurement of offensive weapons.

[Russia] Milley: US should explore more military talks with Russia

The AP [9/24/2021 12:00 AM, Lolita C. Baldor, 11773K] reports the U.S. should explore ways to expand its military contacts with the Russians, potentially to include allowing observers from each country to watch the other's combat exercises, in a broad effort to increase transparency and reduce the risk of conflict, the top U.S. military officer said Thursday. Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met in Finland for six hours Wednesday with his Russian counterpart, Gen. Valery Gerasimov, chief of the Russian General Staff. Speaking to two reporters traveling with him back to the U.S., Milley said that military contacts between the two great powers are currently largely limited to

senior leaders such as the defense secretary, the chairman and the supreme allied commander for Europe. But he said the U.S. might look into allowing the military service chiefs to form stronger relationships with their Russian counterparts — which is currently not allowed. That way, for example, naval leaders could reach out to avoid conflict when there are tensions at sea. “We need to put in place policies and procedures to make sure that we increase certainty, to reduce uncertainty, increase trust to reduce distrust, increase stability to reduce instability in order to avoid miscalculation and reduce the possibility of great power war,” Milley said. “That’s a fundamental thing that we should try to do, and I am going to try to do it.”

[North Korea] North Korea says call to formally end Korean War is ‘premature’

The Washington Post [9/23/2021 9:00 PM, Michelle Ye Hee Lee, 11773K] reports North Korea said Friday it was "premature" to declare a formal end to the Korean War, a reference to renewed efforts by South Korean President Moon Jae-in to put the agreement back on the table amid stalled nuclear negotiations with Pyongyang. In a statement issued via state media, North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Ri Thae Song said Moon’s calls for the end-of-war declaration carried no guarantee it would lead to the withdrawal of “U.S. hostile policy toward” North Korea. Sustained fighting in the Korean War ended with an armistice agreement in 1953, but the two Koreas remain technically at war. In his speech at the United Nations General Assembly meeting this week in New York, Moon again called for an end-of-war declaration, which he views as a way to move forward in denuclearization talks. Moon proposed that the two Koreas, along with the United States and China, come together for the declaration. The AP [9/23/2021 9:31 PM, Hyung-Jin Kim, 11773K] reports North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Ri Thae Song dismissed Moon’s call as premature so long as U.S. policies were unchanged. “It should be clearly understood that the declaration of the termination of the war is of no help at all to stabilizing the situation of the Korean Peninsula at the moment but can rather be misused as a smokescreen covering up the U.S. hostile policy,” Ri said. He said American weapons and troops deployed in South Korea and its vicinity and regular U.S. military drills in the region “all point to the U.S. hostile policy toward (North Korea) getting vicious day by day.” North Korea has also long described U.S.-led economic sanctions as proof of U.S. hostility against the North.

{End of Report} RETURN TO TOP

Participants:

- Chief Chris Magnus

DHS:

- (b) (6) DHS OLA
- (b) (6) DHS OLA
- (b) (6) CBP OCA

Hill

- (b) (6) (moderator)
- (b) (6) (SFC Majority Staff Director)
- (b) (6) (SFC Majority, Trade Counsel)
- (b) (6)
- (b) (6)
- (b) (6) (SFC Minority, Chief Trade Counsel)
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Chief Magnus (CM) opens with intro. Staff is where the action is, so, I'm eager to engage. I know I'm wearing a police uniform, and you may think border may be primary point of focus, but trade is not going to fall behind. Have worked very hard over the past several months to learn as much as I can. Very interested in trade and that part of CBP's mission.

(b) (6) How do you balance facilitation and enforcement missions in trade role?

CM: A lot of conversations with members with the trade community. Have heard a lot about efficiency, ensuring safety and facilitation in every possible way with CBP. ACE. Other piece they want...transparency, and understand what's expected of them, and how can they play a role in the process. Balancing act. AD/CVD, forced labor, e-commerce...enforcement critical. Making sure that facilitating trade.

(b) (6) Increase in this tension in the [Enforce and Protect Act]/anti-circumvention provisions, and the WRO context, both of which involve allegations, CBP processing, and potential result. Tension between law enforcement need to keep your cards close, and have folks trying to participate in trade. How should we think about transparency in those cases?

CM: Have heard a lot of this in the forced labor context, need to understand what's happening. Not unlike what we deal with in policing...want to be as transparent as possible, without compromising investigation itself. WRO is great tool, but need to find that line with transparency and communicating regularly with stakeholders (COAC). Need to learn what that balance looks like, but eager to get Hill's help.

(b) (6) Regulations. Eager to see those from CBP. If confirmed, we'd encourage you to take a look.

CM: Absolutely.

(b) (6) Customs has been working on 21CCF. Any particular areas that you see as ripe for modernization?

CM: Still learning about 21CCF, but it's been a while since. Goal is to get data-driven decisions from CBP. Challenge, even as other aspects of work become more modernized. Have learned about ACE from Brenda Smith, getting the right data, from right people, at the right time. Eliminate single points of failure. Time is right to address this with key stakeholders. Still on the outside, but pledge to learn more.

(b) (6) Sen. Wyden has keen interest in device searches at the border. There's currently a split between 9th circuit and rest of country. Better protections in 9th circuit than in rest of country. McAleenan worked to adopt 9th circuit standard nationwide on another issue a couple years ago. Expect to see some of this discussion/expectation to push the newest 9th circuit interpretation nationwide. CBP has the authority to follow standard itself, and should. For about 10 years, GAO has identified a security gap about passports. USG forced rest of world to put chips in passports. CBP deployed readers that can access data, but never purchased the software to verify the data. Flagged by GAO. Why hasn't it been purchased. CBP piloted the software, but then pilot ended. Relatively easy for foreign actors to make face passports. Looking forward to working with CBP on this issue.

CM: Definitely interested in following up on these issues, if confirmed.

(b) (6) If confirmed, leading one of world's largest LE agencies. What skills do you bring? What challenges will you face?

CM: There will be a lot of challenges, for sure. I care about these issues. I'm pragmatic, not an ideologue. History of getting things done and making change under difficult circumstances. In policing, the one thing that cops want is change, until they get it. CBP has many issues where change is likely required, and sometimes the best way to accomplish that is through fresh eyes from outside. Not afraid to come into a place and ask "why." Have a history of that. At age and seniority in career where it doesn't bother me to ask/learn. Quick study. Intellectual humility. Doing police work for 41 years, last person to tell you I think I know it all. Good collaborator. Like reaching out, and have already done that extensively. I also realize there are issues to deal with, albeit on a different scale, but even on a smaller scale, I have to deal with budget issues, challenging elected officials, morale, media...and I'll have more resources at CBP. I'm used to getting into the thick of it, and would do so here. A lot of terrific people at CBP willing to assist. Excited to step outside of the organization to learn, as well. Hill, trade groups, unions, etc.

(b) (6) Given the role of CBP, can you speak to your interagency work, including with state and federal partners?

CM: Very used to that in my current and previous roles.

(b) (6) CBP needs to adopt a multi-layered defense for securing borders. What are the layers we should be prioritizing?

CM: Multiple layers have to be addressed. One I put the highest is personnel. Adequate #s, right people doing the right jobs. BP Agents on the border rather than just doing processing. Hiring right people, which has been an issue. Attending to our people...morale is challenging. Infrastructure is another. Not an ideologue on this, and appreciate where wall/fencing is necessary and appropriate, and others where it doesn't make sense. Technology, sensor, UAVs, so much tech out there, some coming

from within CBP....but want to promote thoughtful and effective use of tech. Including at POEs...tech to make movement of goods more efficient, while doing more to detect drugs and other contraband. Add one more, communication/coordination/collaboration. If you don't have people doing those things, other layers won't work.

(b) (6) One of the issues with oversight...how do we measure metrics for success? AD/CVD, WROs, apprehensions at the border? What are the metrics we should evaluate the Commissioner by?
CM: Responsiveness to Congress. Am I listening and providing information that you want/need. Do we have an open flow of communication. I can't solve the immigration problem, I can't address every trade problem, but you can/should evaluate me on the progress made in these areas. If confirmed, I'd like to identify biggest challenge areas and develop a plan to address concerns I've heard so much about.

(b) (6) Are apprehensions a reasonable way to measure? Are uncollected AD/CVD duties reasonable ways to gauge size of problem?

CM: On its face, tempting to say yes, but I've also learned that time as police chief, need to be careful about metrics you use to gauge success. I deal with crime data all the time, and it doesn't always tell me what's going on in the community, nor does it tell me what I need to do. Big fan of data, but want to be cautious. Not disagreeing that there are some metrics that are very important.

(b) (6) Enforcement is important, but how can we also leverage trade facilitation? More information is helpful, but what other initiatives should we consider to facilitate trade?

CM: Continued updating of 21CCF, upgrades for ACE. \$15-25million needed per year to upgrade and enhance ACE. That's going to be a key tool for facilitation. Talked to an array of stakeholders, and they all need to have an open door and opportunity to communicate with agency.

(b) (6) What about partnerships with foreign partners?

CM: Absolutely, and I know that CBP has found some efficiencies with U.S./Mexican customs officials, and I'd explore those types of engagements.

(b) (6) As we move forward on 21CCF and other customs modernization ideas, we are going to face issue of what data, how much, what's appropriate, who has it, etc. One question is how do we think about data as a risk assessment tool and a facilitation tool?

CM: Tough question. Some of the larger companies have resources to comply...not always the case for smaller businesses. Smaller businesses may have a harder time. I'm not sure yet what the answer is yet, and look forward to learning more about it. Need to be able to find this balance. Having stakeholders play a role in the process. COAC is important, but needs to go out further than that. Whether we're dealing with AD/CVD or FL, companies want to be compliant. How do we work with them to make that happen? Enforcement of other laws....American jobs/businesses depend on this.

(b) (6) We think about this, it's a flag for you. Need for robust engagement with COAC and beyond.

CM: West coast brokers made the point that CBP tends to talk with the big kids on the block, and COAC may focus on the bigger parties, but it's small businesses that make up the majority of trade. Are small businesses capable of collecting the type of data we want? Does it put us as a competitive disadvantage in our own country.

(b) (6) Other SFC members really care about makeup of the COAC, making sure enough and diverse voices are being heard.

(b) (6) Small businesses, and customs burden on those businesses. Digital commerce is important to Wyden, particularly as they opening up trade lanes for small and micro businesses.

CM: Really tricky area, as it opens up markets for small businesses, but areas like de minimis are big enforcement concerns. Need to make sure legitimate small businesses are not impeded in our zeal to pursue to keep counterfeits out, dealing with bad actors in ecommerce world.

(b) (6) Sen. Wyden's desire to review/reform Federal LE's use of force and chemical munitions. Senator looks forward to working with you on this issue for CBP. Also looks forward to working with you on immigration and refugee policies at POEs.

CM: Use of Force has been a major issue throughout career. Changing policy is one thing, but changing org culture is another. Commitment to policy, etc. Share the Senator's concerns about what happened in Portland, and look forward to working with you.

Closing, CM: Look forward to meeting in person. I'd be happy to get through this process.

Chief Magnus Meeting with SFC Committee Legislative Assistants, 10/6/21, 3:00pm – 4:00pm

Participants:

- Chief Chris Magnus

DHS:

- (b) (6) DHS OLA
- (b) (6) DHS OLA
- (b) (6) CBP OCA

Hill

- (b) (6) (moderator)
- (b) (6) (SFC Majority Staff Director)
- (b) (6) (SFC Majority, Trade Counsel)
- (b) (6) (SFC Minority, Chief Trade Counsel)
- (b) (6)
- Approx. 23-25 additional staff

Chief Magnus (CM) opening: Very excited about this position. Job where I feel I can make a difference. Worked hard throughout career who's challenged status quo. Constantly improving, trying to innovate, surrounding myself with good people who challenge me. Getting out there to connect with the array of people that work on all these issues, border security, protecting nation from terrorist threats, customs and trade issues.

(b) (6) Staffing shortages at POEs. Serious shortage of CBPOs and Ag inspectors. How would you address those shortages?

CM: I've been hearing that from a lot of different people. Movement of some of those people to SWB for various things, has made it more challenging to move trade at level we'd like at other POEs. Overall, staffing issues more broadly than SWB issue that need to be addressed. I'm encouraged that POTUS has funded Border Processing Coordinators, who can help with processing in various locations where

needed, so BP Agents can get back on the line for primary enforcement job. If confirmed, I'd want to look at that further to expand use of those personnel. Overall, assessment overall of staffing. I know CBP has a process for doing that, but I'd like to become more aware, and through conversations with stakeholders, make decisions about moving people around, asking for more resources, etc. I get it, staffing is a source of frustration at various POEs, and needs to be addressed.

(b) (6) Hear a little more about experience and skillset to deal with pressing problems, like situation at border, tracking down forced labor, AD/CVD evasion. How would you prioritize those issues?

CM: Thinking about my priorities going in, which may change of course, but one of the top ones for me is robust enforcement of trade laws, including AD/CVD to protect U.S. industry and workers from unfair competition through TFTEA and EAPA. Border security. People in organization. Policing really involves engagement with the community. In this case, community involves not only others in Fed gov, but also in local gov, but business community as well. Not just large biz, but the small business with so much at stake in this environment and need to be involved in the discussions and planning. I bring a history of successful engagement to the table. History in Richmond, CA...difficult community with violence and racial issues. A real divide between police and people in community. In my 10 years there, we transformed that relationship. Built on a lot of hard work talking to people, being thoughtful about problems, building right partnerships. History of that, and a history of challenging the status quo. Pretty relentless. My department leadership refers to a "Magnus year" as 6 months. I have a history of making a difference in some difficult environments. Despite my time on the job, I'm not embarrassed or afraid to learn from other people. Doesn't have to be just Senators or electeds, but can be boots on the ground and at the line level. My husband spent 15 years of his career as COS for 2 elected officials, and got to hear about the good, bad, and ugly. I've learned from all of that. I don't lose sight of who we work for, and at CBP, that's a lot of constituents.

(b) (6) Engagement with the community is going to be key. What is appropriate messaging to our local communities under strain, and to migrants considering heading to the U.S.?

CM: No one single message. Secretary has been clear that this is not the place to come, particularly if doing so illegally. My position is ultimately leading a law enforcement organization, and we need to enforce the law. Not always an easy thing to do, but that's my intention, and I'd make it clear that that's what we're doing as an organization. I'd like CBP to function as apolitically as possible...take the politics out of as much of it as we can. We have to be prepared to deal with asylum seekers or other refugees, and we have to be careful that the message we send isn't always heard. We have to be clear that people fleeing a burning house will find a way to break through whatever wall they need to. We have to be prepared for whatever comes our way. The immigration system is seriously broken, but I'm clear that I'm not in a position to fix that. But I hope to be able to provide whatever influence/input I can from the position I'd be in. I've been a Chief since the last Administration, and I can remember people being dropped off at bus stations or parks in Tucson, because there was no plan for what comes next. We worked as part of local government to work with NGOs and other partners to get people on their way to other locations where they could wait. I didn't love that, and I was super critical of USBP at the time, perhaps not really fairly. I've come to realize they were just dealing with resources they had, or didn't have, at the time. I'd like to work as closely with state/local government as possible to figure out we address asylum seekers and others. I'd like to assess cases like Del Rio to figure out what we can do differently...better anticipate surges and better address needs that come with them. A lot of different messages to send to a lot of different constituencies, and we have to be thoughtful about them.

(b) (6) On trade side, issues like country of origin determinations fall under CBP's purview. These can be very subjective. CBP determines substantial transformation and other specific aspects that determine these decisions. Would you commit to working to increase transparency into that process for importers?

CM: Trade agreements, AD/CVD, forced labor...I understand the frustration in figuring out what trade needs to comply with. Transparency is important, but there is a little bit of a balancing act. You want to be as transparent as possible, without compromising an actual investigation. I'd like to learn more about, because I'd like to go as far as we can in being transparent, but I'd like to learn more to figure out how we strike that balance...from the experts at CBP and in the business community and civil society.

(b) (6) Can you expand on issue of forced labor investigations? It's obviously difficult. How would you improve CBP's ability to investigate these trade practices?

CM: I'm excited to use CBP's technology capabilities, e.g., to identify down to the fiber some of the origins of products. But we could put you out of business if we get it wrong, and we need to be careful. For every step we take to investigate, countries like China take their own steps to obfuscate. Transshipment can make it difficult to trace. I don't know what all the tools are, but this will be part of my learning process, and I'm very committed to expanding that toolbox.

(b) (6) Immigration side. One of the things that has come up since you spoke to my boss, is issues related to travel. CBP only provides updates to our delegation once a year. Can you commit to brief our delegation more frequently? Casework issue of constituents getting through Border Patrol [sic] at airports or POEs.

CM: Thanks for bringing that to my attention. Yes, I'll look into that.

(b) (6) Importance of community. CBP officers are key part of that community. Morale is down. What would you do to support morale, particularly along SWB?

CM: Internal procedural justice. Key is how CBP agents/officers is how they deal with anyone they encounter. What we sometimes forget is our own employees feeling like they're heard/supported, their ideas are important, and broader concept that gets lost in policing and BP that the overwhelming majority of agents/officers are doing really good work under really difficult circumstances. When the bad things happen, usually involving a small number of people, the overwhelming number of people are doing really good work. I'd want to reinforce/reward that. If confirmed, regular meetings not just with the Chiefs, but talking with people on the line level. I want to get out there myself. I have a weekend place in Bisbee, AZ, right on border. A lot of BPAs live there, and I try not to miss an opportunity to talk with them and get a sense of their perspectives. Way better to tell them I'm not a police chief. It means something when you show that you listen. I understand there are issues with pay parity for other Federal LEOs. Mental health...have some real issues. Last I heard, there are not psychologists as part of these groups. I have psychologists in my department. Department pays for psychologists and services, but I hear nothing about who uses, what's said, etc. Complete wall, and that's how I want it. We need to get people help, and these issues should not be career enders or even worse, life enders. Suicide prevention...very tough for the organization, and me personally. Suicide, domestic violence, tough issues with families...I see the problems.

(b) (6) Do you think the behavior of mounted officers in Del Rio was wrong? If confirmed, how will you engage with that investigation, and what would you recommend?

CM: I'm glad you asked, because I've thought about that a lot. No doubt the questions raised by those images were troubling. Don't even have to get into specifics of the whipping or not, and all the back and forth. I think the bigger issue is training/tactics. I've focused on this throughout career. This is

constantly changing, as are public expectations. Horse patrols are of concern in a lot of departments. I understand that horses have been part of BP since before the agency was even founded, and role in some of the environments BP operates, but not unlike Chiefs in other agencies with horses, I have some serious misgivings about use of horses to round up people or control them. I think there are real issues, and I'm glad they're being investigated. But I always support an investigation first, guided by facts, not just what we see in a video or photo. That has to occur before we determine culpability of any employee for their actions. I've learned the hard way, as most Chiefs have, that there's often tremendous pressure by communities or bosses...it usually doesn't come from a bad place, but as the leader of an agency, you have to take the necessary steps to ensure fairness. Full and thorough investigation. Employees are entitled to due process. CBP agents have a union, ground rules set forth for their rights in an investigation, and you have to follow those rights and processes. If you don't follow the process and there was misconduct, you can make it even harder to hold people accountable. I'm on the outside.

(b) (6) Ag issues. Protecting from pests and diseases, and ensuring compliance with trade agreements. Both require close collaboration with USDA. Commit to close collaboration with USDA and APHIS.

CM: Yes. Folks that have helped get me briefed up often caution me not to commit, but I can commit to this one. Not just ag business, and growing up in Michigan, I know it's huge...it's about protecting consumers and the food chain. If people going to grocery stores can't have confidence in what they're buying, whether it's pork or produce, we have a real nightmare on our hands.

(b) (6) Any final words before closing?

CM: Thank you. I know I'm applying for this job, but thank you for the work you're doing. People don't fully appreciate the work done behind the scenes, in Senators' offices or within DHS. The more I learn, the more I come to appreciate the big challenges you all are facing. This is a really important position, and I take it very seriously. I realize I won't be able to make everyone happy, and it's a hyper-partisan environment, but again, thank you for what you've been doing.



DHS MORNING BRIEFING

Prepared for the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

By TechMIS

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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.

TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Wednesday, November 17, 2021 6:00 AM ET

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DHS inspector general declines to investigate Del Rio horse patrol incident

CNN [11/16/2021 5:20 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 5705K] reports the horse patrol incident in Del Rio, Texas, that drew swift condemnation from senior Biden administration officials will not be investigated by the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general, the department announced Tuesday. US Customs and Border Protection had referred the incident -- where Border Patrol agents on horseback aggressively confronted migrants -- to the watchdog, according to the Department of Homeland Security. Instead, CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility is now investigating the incident, the department said, adding that the office has reviewed videos and photographs and interviewed witnesses, employees and CBP leadership. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said he was "horrified" by the incident and had previously pledged he was committed to completing the investigation in "days, not weeks." But nearly two months later, the probe continues. "Once completed, the results of the investigation will be provided to CBP management to determine whether disciplinary action is appropriate and, if so, the specific discipline to be imposed. At that time, the employees will be afforded due process, including an opportunity to respond, and any corrective actions will comport with applicable laws and regulations," DHS said in a statement Tuesday. "The disciplinary process, which is separate from the fact-finding investigation, is subject to certain timelines established in CBP's labor-management agreement with the employees' union of the United States Border Patrol," the statement added. During a Senate hearing Tuesday, Republican Sen. Mike Lee of Utah pressed Mayorkas on his response to the Del Rio incident at the time, asking why he did not defend the Border Patrol. Mayorkas pushed back, saying that an independent investigation will determine the facts and eventually, the outcome. The agents involved in the incident remain on administrative duty, according to DHS spokeswoman Marsha Espinosa. Horse patrol units continue to be deployed based on operational assessments, but are not deployed in the city of Del Rio, she added. FOX News [11/16/2021 11:14 AM, Jessica Chasmar, 11051K] reports the news came just hours before Mayorkas is set to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee, where he will likely face questions about what he and the DHS are doing with the record numbers of migrants crossing the southern border. Mayorkas had initially backed the agents alongside Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz, noting the use of reins to control the horse. He later claimed he had not seen the images when he made those remarks and, while staying away from the "Whip" claims, continued to call the images disturbing as the agents were placed on desk duty and the use of horses were ended in the Del Rio Sector. USA Today [11/16/2021 4:56 PM, Kevin Johnson and

Rebecca Morin, 7620K] reports DHS remains committed to conducting a thorough, independent, and objective investigation. DHS will share information, as available, consistent with the need to protect the integrity of the investigation and individuals' privacy. "I want to assure you that we are addressing this with tremendous speed and tremendous force," Mayorkas said told lawmakers in September.

Reported similarly:

Univision [11/16/2021 11:26 AM, Jorge Cancino, 389K]

Washington Times [11/16/2021 5:12 AM, Stephen Dinan, 389K]

Mayorkas defends border policies against GOP attacks

Roll Call [11/16/2021 4:13 PM, Suzanne Monyak, 106K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas found himself on defense Tuesday before the Senate Judiciary Committee as Republicans grilled him on the record-high number of migrants who journeyed to the southwest border last fiscal year. In the first hearing on oversight of the Department of Homeland Security under the Biden administration, Mayorkas defended the department's policies and decisions to roll back some of the prior administration's immigration restrictions, which Republicans blame for the higher migration levels. Data released last month revealed last fiscal year was the busiest on record at the U.S.-Mexico border, with federal agents logging roughly 1.7 million encounters with migrants from October 2020 through September 2021. "I don't think that the approximately 965,000 people who were subject to Title 42 expulsions under the CDC's authority would consider the border open," Mayorkas shot back at Sen. Mike Lee, after the Utah Republican questioned the administration's control over the southwest border. Mayorkas also defended the administration against questions from Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., on the steep increase in migrant encounters in 2020 — when migration slowed during the COVID-19 pandemic — and in 2021. When Cotton asked if Mayorkas was "satisfied" with the increase, Mayorkas replied: "No, I'm not, but worse is to promulgate and operationalize a policy that defies our values as a nation." A number of Republicans also asked Mayorkas about the reported \$450,000 settlement payments under consideration for migrant families separated at the border under the Trump administration. Mayorkas declined to answer their queries, maintaining that those payments and litigation exist under the jurisdiction of the Justice Department, not DHS. He also insisted the payments are not a so-called pull factor drawing migrants to cross the border. However, the data also showed a downward trend in migrant encounters. The number of overall encounters decreased by 14 percent between September and October, and October was the third consecutive month where the number of encounters decreased. Town Hall [11/16/2021 11:50 AM, Katie Pavlich, 489K] reports that testifying in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee Tuesday morning, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas confirmed the Biden Administration is encouraging illegal immigrant families "separated from their children" to sign up for taxpayer funded relief checks. "We recently launched a website where families who were indeed separated can register for relief. We are working very closely with counsel for the families. We are working with the government, the nation's of origin to accelerate the provision of passports for parents who do indeed want to come here," Mayorkas said.

DHS stops releasing some migrants without providing immigration court dates

CBS News [11/16/2021 1:40 PM, Staff, 2907K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas faced pointed questions from members of Congress about the situation at the U.S.-Mexico border. Among the topics addressed was an initiative to instruct 78,000

migrants who were not fully processed for deportation to appear before an immigration judge. CBS News immigration reporter Camilo Montoya-Galvez joined CBSN's Tanya Rivero to discuss. [Editorial note: consult video at source link] [CNN](#) [11/16/2021 7:37 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 5705K] reports the Department of Homeland Security has stopped the practice of releasing migrants in the United States only with paperwork that tells them to report to an Immigration and Customs Enforcement office, Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told senators Tuesday. The Biden administration continues to expel tens of thousands of migrants arrested at the US-Mexico border under a Trump-era public health order. But some are released into the United States depending on capacity at border facilities and individual circumstances, typically with a "notice to appear," which is a document that instructs people to appear before an immigration judge on a certain date and kicks off the deportation process. But earlier this year, to move migrants faster out of overwhelmed facilities, US Border Patrol began releasing people encountered at the US-Mexico border without the "notice to appear." Instead, agents provided migrants, many of them families, only with notices to report, which put the onus on migrants to initiate their own immigration process. The practice drew wide condemnation from Republicans who argued the Biden administration didn't know the whereabouts of migrants released into the US without the impetus of set court dates for them to reappear.

Mayorkas says not all 1.2M illegal immigrants with final removal orders should be deported

[FOX News](#) [11/16/2021 9:03 AM, Ronn Blitzer, 11051K] reports that Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told the Senate Judiciary Committee Tuesday that the American immigration system is "Broken," while stating that not all of the 1.2 million illegal immigrants with final removal orders should be deported. Committee ranking member Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, pointed to a Sept. 30 memo in which Mayorkas said "The fact that an individual is a removable non-citizens should not alone be the basis of an enforcement action against them." Grassley then asked if this still applied to those who already have final removal order against them. "We cannot remove one point two million individuals," Mayorkas said, speaking to the impracticability of deporting so many people. He then called into question the validity of those orders. "I would not necessarily accept the fact that all of them have received due process," he said. When asked if any of the 1.2 million people should be deported, Mayorkas said those "Who pose a public safety threat, who pose a national security threat, who pose a border security threat," should be deported from the U.S. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., defended DHS's use of "prosecutorial discretion" in deciding which deportation cases to pursue. Coons claimed that "an approach that effectively makes any undocumented immigrant a priority is actually making no one a priority." [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Cruz confronts Mayorkas with photo of migrants sleeping on floor at Texas facility: 'Biden cages'

[FOX News](#) [11/16/2021 3:43 PM, Ronn Blitzer, 11051K] Video: [HERE](#) reports Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas got into a heated exchange over children kept in poor conditions in detention facilities at the border. During a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Tuesday, Mayorkas took issue with Cruz characterizing the facilities as "cages," when the senator asked how many children have been kept there. "Senator, I respectfully disagree with your use of the term cages," Mayorkas said. Mayorkas did not have a firm number of how many children had been there. Cruz then made a point that Democrats have not paid close attention to the situation,

having Mayorkas confirm that neither President Biden nor Vice President Harris has been to the facility. The senator then turned the focus to his own colleagues. Mayorkas insisted that Democrats have been there, but he was unsure whether any of them were part of the committee.

DHS chief Mayorkas: 'I give myself an A for effort'

Newsweek [11/16/2021 2:26 PM, Alex J. Rouhandeh, 2013K] reports that Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, where he answered questions about the state of America's national security, particularly in regard to the situation at the southern border. During the questioning period, South Carolina's Republican Senator Lindsey Graham asked the secretary a number of questions regarding the Biden administration's handling of the border. Among those questions, Graham asked Mayorkas to grade himself. "I'm a tough grader on myself," Mayorkas said. "And I give myself an 'A' for effort, investment in mission, and support of our workforce." Despite the number of reported encounters at the southern border dropping each month since August, over 164,000 migrants were still encountered in October, a figure far exceeding any monthly total reported between October 2019 to January of 2021. On top of this issue, which has served as a continued source for Republican criticism, the Customs and Border Protection agency also faces mounting criticism for its treatment of migrants. CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility finds itself involved in an investigation over whether its horse patrol units used whips against Haitian migrants after disturbing images surfaced in late September. Republican Senator Mike Lee of Utah came after Mayorkas regarding the investigation against the horse patrol units. The Washington Times [11/16/2021 6:06 AM, Stephen Dinan, 389K] reports that fighting through three hours of combative questions from senators on the Judiciary Committee, Mr. Mayorkas said it "takes time" for the results to show along the border, but defended the slow progress even as new numbers showed illegal border crossings last month broke the record for October, usually a slow month. "We're on the road to success," he said. His defense was not reassuring to Republicans on the committee. "The Department of Homeland Security has clearly failed in its mission to obtain operational control," said Sen. Mike Lee, Utah Republican. Mr. Mayorkas found himself on the defensive over activities across his sprawling department. He sparred with one senator who accused him of holding immigrant children in cages, and repeatedly admitted he didn't have data on hand that senators were seeking. Some of his toughest questions came over the screening of Afghan evacuees. Under questioning by Sen. Josh Hawley, Missouri Republican, Mr. Mayorkas admitted that tens of thousands of Afghans who he has granted parole to enter the U.S. were not put through the same rigorous screening as they would have been had they come as refugees. "They have not all been given interviews," he acknowledged. Instead, he said, the department is relying on fingerprints to try to flag potential bad actors, and those folks were then given interviews before boarding planes.

DHS Launches Cybersecurity Recruitment and Talent Management System

HS Today [11/16/2021 6:07 AM, Staff, 14K] reports that the Department of Homeland Security has launched the Cybersecurity Talent Management System, a new personnel system that will enable DHS to more effectively recruit, develop, and retain the United States' top cybersecurity professionals. CTMS will enable DHS to fill mission-critical cybersecurity positions by screening applicants based on demonstrated competencies, competitively compensating employees, and reducing the time it takes to be hired into the Department. Employees hired through this system will join the new DHS Cybersecurity

Service, the Nation's preeminent federal cybersecurity team working to protect U.S. critical infrastructure and the American people from cybersecurity threats, and increase nationwide resilience. "The DHS Cybersecurity Talent Management System fundamentally re-imagines how the Department hires, develops, and retains top-tier and diverse cybersecurity talent," said Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas. "As our Nation continues to face an evolving threat landscape, we cannot rely only on traditional hiring tools to fill mission-critical vacancies. This new system will enable our Department to better compete for cybersecurity professionals and remain agile enough to meet the demands of our critical cybersecurity mission." Earlier this year, Secretary Mayorkas announced the most successful cyber hiring initiative. In the Department's history and established the Secretary's Honors Program to recruit talented recent graduates.

DHS chief information security officer wary of Pentagon's changes to CMMC

The [Federal News Network](#) [11/16/2021 1:16 PM, Justin Doubleday, 76K] reports that the Department of Homeland Security is testing out its own way of evaluating contractor cybersecurity measures, amid concerns about the efficacy of the Defense Department's Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification program. DHS launched a pathfinder this summer to begin evaluating existing contractors with cyber hygiene clauses in their contracts, according to Ken Bible, chief information security officer at DHS. He said DHS has had those clauses in place since 2015, but has never held companies accountable for meeting the standards. He said DHS has assessed one contractor so far on whether it is meeting the cybersecurity standards. "We're going to continue to expand upon that Pathfinder," Bible said during a conference today hosted by SC Media. "I don't know that we found from that one Pathfinder everything that we needed to really build out our DHS program in that area." DHS has been monitoring the Pentagon's CMMC program as it builds out its own approach to contractor cybersecurity. Bible said initial impressions were that the Pentagon's use of third-party audits would not work for DHS. "We looked at that and said, 'Well, that may be a little bit too heavy handed for the industrial base that supports the Department of Homeland Security, really didn't want to disadvantage small businesses, which have been kind of at the heart of being able to innovate within the Department of Homeland Security,'" Bible said. DHS may be concerned the Pentagon has swung too far in the opposite direction.

[AL] Migrant Teen Trafficking Probe Leaves Lingering Concerns

[Bloomberg BNA](#) [11/16/2021 5:19 PM, Ellen M. Gilmer, Ben Penn, 19K] reports federal investigators have been unable to locate most of a group of migrant children allegedly turned over to labor traffickers, but they've also found no evidence of exploitation. At least three agencies looked into reports of potential trafficking or exploitation of unaccompanied migrant children in Enterprise, Ala., and couldn't substantiate those claims, according to two people familiar with the investigation. But the unknown whereabouts of many of the children who had been approved by the Health and Human Services Department for release to adult sponsors in Enterprise, a small city in southeastern Alabama that's home to a cluster of chicken slaughterhouses, exposes major gaps in the government's inquiries. While some of the children who weren't living at the Enterprise addresses listed on their HHS-approved paperwork could have moved to a safer location with a family member, there are still concerns that a network of traffickers used Enterprise as an initial "staging area," before shuttling them off to different worksites, said one of the sources. The Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Labor departments investigated the Enterprise situation but couldn't track down most of the minors who were placed with sponsors there, according

to the people familiar with the investigation. It's not uncommon for federal officials to lose contact with unaccompanied children after their release from government custody. The status of probes into other jurisdictions, including Woodburn, Ore., following a similar pattern was not immediately clear. A Department of Labor spokesperson said the Wage and Hour Division has investigations open with HHS related to labor violations in the Southeastern U.S., but declined to provide additional details. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) on Tuesday accused the Department of Homeland Security of "washing your hands" of children's well-being after they're transferred to HHS and then to sponsors. Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas pushed back on the characterization and said he has "confidence in the dedication" of HHS personnel charged with caring for migrant children.

[Mexico] Mexican president says he will call out US lawmakers who vote against immigration reform

The Hill [11/16/2021 1:14 PM, Rafael Bernal, 2054K] reports that Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said Tuesday he will personally call out U.S. members of Congress who vote against immigration reform. "If legislators from one party block this initiative, we will call them out at a later time in a respectful manner. We will make it known from here that legislators from one party did not help something that is just and humanitarian," said López Obrador at his daily press conference. The remarks were first reported by Mexican daily Reforma. López Obrador also praised President Biden, whom he credited with a proposal to regularize the status of 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. "No president has made a deeper commitment in benefit of migrants than President Biden," López Obrador said. "He committed to 11 million, to regularize the situation of 11 million migrants," he added. Biden's Build Back Better spending bill, which is still be debated in Congress but should get a House vote later this week, currently includes language that could grant some form of immigration relief to about 7 million foreign nationals in the United States. On the campaign trail, Biden did commit to creating a "road map to citizenship" for 11 million undocumented immigrants, in conjunction with Congress. López Obrador and Biden are due to meet in person, along with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, at the White House on Thursday.

[Mexico] Over 1,500 migrants in Mexico caravan regularized, government says

Reuters [11/16/2021 11:08 PM, Tamara Corro, 5304K] reports more than 1,500 members of a migrant caravan that set off toward the U.S. border from southern Mexico last month have been issued documents to regularize their stay in Mexico, the migration authority said on Tuesday. The National Migration Institute (INM) said it had given 1,574 foreign nationals migration cards and ensured they could work in Mexico since the caravan set off on Oct. 23. Enduring adverse weather and under pressure from officials to give up, the caravan containing many women and children has made slow progress through southern Mexico, and on Tuesday moved into the Gulf state of Veracruz from neighboring Oaxaca. Reuters witnesses estimated up to 1,500 people entered Veracruz. Organizers of the caravan put the figure at 2,000. About 3,000 people were in the caravan when it set out, though some estimates since then have put the number higher. Overnight, the caravan stopped in the municipality of Jesus Carranza on Veracruz's border with Oaxaca.

[Mexico] U.S. offers reward for criminal group to which "El Chapo" Guzman's brother belongs

Telemundo [11/16/2021 7:18 PM, Staff, 38K] reports the U.S. State Department on Friday announced a \$5 million reward for information leading to the arrest or conviction of four

Mexican drug traffickers, including Aureliano Guzmán Loera, brother of Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán Loera. This, after the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona unsealed two indictments against "high-ranking members of the Sinaloa Cartel for international drug trafficking". The other three are brothers Ruperto Salgueiro Nevárez, José Salgueiro Nevárez and Heriberto Salgueiro Nevárez, whom U.S. authorities identify as a cell of the Sinaloa Cartel. The brother of "Chapo" Guzmán, who is imprisoned in the United States, and the Salgueiro Nevárezes are accused of violating U.S. drug laws by allegedly distributing controlled substances internationally, including fentanyl, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and marijuana. The indictments date back to Nov. 13, 2019, and Feb. 19, 2020, but were sealed.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Immigration Court accumulates almost 1.5 million cases and the waiting time continues to increase

Univision [11/16/2021 2:27 PM, Jorge Cancino, 389K] reports that the portfolio of processes in the Immigration Court does not stop and is approaching the barrier of 1.5 million cases. The conclusion was reported this week in a report by researchers at Syracuse University's Center for Transactional Records Information and Access. The study indicates that in October alone, the first month of fiscal year 2022, some 50,000 new deportation cases were added to the Immigration Review Office, bringing the cumulative to 1,486,495 cases. The report adds that immigration judges "completed 21,154 cases in October, less than half of the total number of new cases that go to court, which means that the total number of pending cases continues to grow each month." In January 2017, when then-President Barack Obama handed over command to Donald Trump, the Immigration Court had accumulated some 520,000 cases. Four years later, when Trump handed over the mandate to Joe Biden, the EOIR had just over 1.2 million cases, an increase of 56.67%. Report details. The TRAC report highlights that immigration courts have recorded the receipt of 49,817 new cases so far in fiscal 2022. In the same period of fiscal year 2021, there were 21,154 cases that were completed. The report further indicates that, according to court records, "Only 0.68% of new cases in fiscal year 2022 sought deportation orders based on any alleged criminal activity of the immigrant, in addition to possible illegal entry." The revised data also indicates that the courts located in Los Angeles County have the majority of deportation cases pending in Immigration Court. And so far in fiscal year 2022, immigration judges have issued removal and voluntary departure orders in 24.7% of completed cases.

[CA] She promised them citizenship so they could visit dying relatives, but they ended up scammed out of \$ 5,000

Univision [11/16/2021 6:10 PM, Staff, 389K] reports a woman posing as an immigration consultant turned herself in to authorities after allegedly defrauding thousands of dollars from people seeking to adjust their immigration status through citizenship procedures and the Deferred Action program, DACA. In a statement, the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office identified the suspect as Jasmine E. Sánchez, 36, whom they accused of fraud, theft and violations of the Immigration Consultants Act. Sánchez operated from an office in the La Tropicana shopping center, located at 1692 Story Road, in San José. Noticias Univision 14 attended dispatch number 200 and was able to verify that the offices are closed.

[CA] Judge: Iraqi refugee held on murder claims can be deported

The [AP](#) [11/16/2021 8:47 PM, Don Thompson, 706K] reports an Iraqi refugee initially accused of committing a killing for the Islamic State terror group before coming to the U.S. is eligible to be deported because he lied on his immigration papers, a federal judge decided Tuesday. Assistant Chief Immigration Judge Tara Naselow-Nahas ruled that Omar Abdulsattar Ameen lied when he was filling out his refugee application to gain entry into the United States. Among other things, she found he wasn't being truthful when he said he had never interacted with, knew or had involvement with various terrorist groups, including the Islamic State of Iraq. But she rejected other allegations, including that he provided support, engaged in terrorist activity, participated in harming another person, or misrepresented that he was a member of such a group. Naselow-Nahas found that Ameen interacted with a cousin "who is clearly a member of an armed terrorist group." She also found the government proved that he lied when he said his father had been fatally shot and that his brother had been kidnapped.

[China] U.S. and China Agree to Ease Restrictions on Journalists

The [New York Times](#) [11/16/2021 3:00 PM, Michael D. Shear] reports the United States and China announced an agreement on Tuesday to ease restrictions on foreign journalists operating in the two countries, tempering a diplomatic confrontation that led to the expulsion of some American reporters from China during the last year of the Trump administration. The deal was first reported by China Daily, a newspaper controlled by the Chinese government, and later confirmed by a statement issued from the State Department. Under the agreement, made public just a day after President Biden met with President Xi Jinping of China, three news organizations — The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and The New York Times — will be allowed to send journalists back to China, though it remained unclear whether the specific correspondents expelled last year will be permitted to return to work there. The [AP](#) [11/16/2021 10:50 PM, Staff] reports in a statement to The Associated Press late Tuesday, the State Department said China had committed to issuing visas for a group of U.S. reporters "provided they are eligible under all applicable laws and regulations." "We will also continue issuing visas to (Chinese) journalists who are otherwise eligible for the visa under U.S. law," the statement said. China also committed to increase the length for which U.S. media visas are valid from the current 90 days to one year. "On a reciprocal basis, we are committing to increase validity of U.S. visas issued to PRC journalists to one year as well," the State Department statement said, referring to the People's Republic of China. Both sides will also offer multiple-entry visas, it said.

Reported similarly:

[Washington Post](#) [11/17/2021 2:17 AM, Lily Kuo, 12515K]

[Bloomberg](#) [11/16/2021 9:53 AM, Staff, 8629K]

[Reuters](#) [11/16/2021 10:06 AM, Staff]

[Axios](#) [11/16/2021 5:03 PM, Zachary Basu, 526K]

Customs and Border Protection

As migrants travel to the U.S., the U.S. tries to stop them south of the border

[NPR](#) [11/16/2021 4:20 PM, Ailsa Chang, Miguel Macias, Justine Kenin, 5854K] Audio: [HERE](#) reports NPR's Ailsa Chang speaks with journalists Maria Hinojosa and Julieta Martinelli about their reporting in Mexico and Colombia on the policies designed to stop migrants from reaching the U.S border.

Reuters reports: Mexico evaluates tightening entry requirements for Venezuelans at the request of the US

Univision [11/16/2021 1:07 PM, Staff, 389K] reports that in the first month of fiscal year 2022, the Border Patrol detained 13,385 Venezuelans at the southern boundary, a number that had not been seen in the past two previous fiscal years. The figure led the United States to pressure Mexico to tighten the requirements for the admission of Venezuelans, according to a report by Reuters. A Mexican official told the agency that the measures could begin to be implemented soon. Another explained that they are reviewing the options with Venezuela and exploring the possibility of imposing a visa. Until now, citizens of the South American country do not require a visa to enter Mexico. A third source said the United States is urging its neighbor to take measures to slow down the entry of Venezuelans, noting repeated complaints from Border Patrol agents about the spike in arrests of citizens of that country. Mexico, the source explained, seeks to ensure that those who enter do not do so by telling lies. A fourth source assured that the US effort with Mexico is being made through informal diplomatic channels and the Department of Homeland Security, but without exerting strong pressure, as it did during the Donald Trump administration in the face of migratory crises. In the previous two fiscal years, the bulk of Venezuelans who have been detained are adults who arrived alone across the Rio Grande from Mexico. A much smaller number are Venezuelan children who traveled without their parents or guardians to the southern border and were arrested: 7 in 2020, 315 in 2021 and 86 in October 2022.

Mike Braun says Democrats trying to appropriate money to tear down border wall, calls it 'craziness'

FOX News [11/16/2021 12:53 PM, Staff, 11051K] reports that Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind., said Tuesday on "Fox & Friends" that Democrats want to appropriate money to tear down the border wall installed under the Trump administration. SEN. MIKE BRAUN: This is a man-made crisis by a one-man wrecking ball named Joe Biden because he did it, it was Trump, and we're not going to keep those policies in place. We were down there at the border in March and saw all the atrocities, including the smugglers heckling at us, and that was at about 75,000 illegal crossings, it's now about triple that. This is a disaster and in this spending bill, listen to this. There's not only no money there for the wall or for the security that the Border Patrol wants, but they want to appropriate money to start tearing it down. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[TX] Border Patrol rescues 5-year-old girl abandoned on border island

Telemundo 48 El Paso [11/16/2021 5:58 PM, Staff, 10K] reports agents assigned to the Eagle Pass Station rescued a 5-year-old girl after she was dropped off on a small island on November 13. According to authorities, agents encountered a group of migrants who entered the United States illegally near Eagle Pass, Texas. An adult woman in the group informed agents that her youngest daughter was left on an island in the Rio Grande between the United States and Mexico. Agents notified the Eagle Pass Station River Unit, which immediately responded to the area and located a total of 10 undocumented migrants on the island, including the youngest. The family members, both of Venezuelan nationality, immediately gathered at the scene. "Human traffickers are cold and calculated, often separating families for their own convenience or to achieve compliance," said Acting Chief Patrol Agent for Del Rio Sector Robert Danley. "Fortunately, our officers acted quickly and were able to locate the girl and reunite her with her mother without incident," he concluded.

[ND] Audit: North Dakota firm was properly awarded wall contract

The AP [11/16/2021 5:00 PM, James MacPherson] reports the Defense Department's internal watchdog said its investigation into a \$400 million border wall contract found it was properly awarded to a North Dakota firm whose owner used multiple appearances on Fox News to push for the job. The Pentagon's inspector general on Monday released results of the audit, requested last year by House Homeland Committee Chairman Bennie Thompson, a Mississippi Democrat. "We reviewed Fisher Sand and Gravel's proposal, compared it to the solicitation, and agreed with (the Corps') assessment that it was the LPTA (Lowest Price Technically Acceptable) and was properly awarded the contract," the audit said. The inspector general's report said Corps officials testified that "there was no undue influence," and that none of the documents reviewed by investigators "provided evidence that there was undue influence from the White House or members of Congress" that affected the award of the contract to Fisher Sand and Gravel. The report, however, noted investigators weren't able to get answers from some Corps employees because they were instructed by administration lawyers "to not answer our specific questions about communications between the White House and senior (Corps) officials."

Transportation Security Administration

[WI] Air travel in Wisconsin returning to pre-pandemic levels

The AP [11/16/2021 10:43 AM, Staff, 706K] reports that Wisconsin airports are returning to pre-pandemic traffic levels as the busy holiday season gets underway. Dane County Regional Airport has seen traffic increase every month this year since the COVID-19 vaccine became widely available, officials said. According to Milwaukee County's Mitchell International Airport marketing coordinator Christie Green, the number of flights during Thanksgiving week is expected to be up 50% compared to last year, but down about 7% compared to the same week in 2019. Green Bay Austin Straubel International Airport director Marty Piette says the size of the airport means even on a busy day, travelers are unlikely to wait long at TSA checkpoints. "We are in constant communication with our TSA stakeholders just to keep apprised of the situation," he said. "But from a staffing standpoint, we're going to be OK here." Still, airport officials are encouraging travelers to arrive early - at least two hours in Milwaukee and 90 minutes in Madison. The federal Transportation Security Administration isn't expecting any major disruptions for holiday travel. The Thanksgiving holiday coincides with the start of a vaccine requirement for federal airport security officers. TSA workers must be vaccinated by Nov. 22 unless the Biden administration honors a request from the American Federation of Government Employees asking to delay the deadline, Wisconsin Public Radio reported. In a letter to White House officials, the union cites a confusing "double standard" because federal contractors are not required to be vaccinated until early next year.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Infrastructure bill unleashes funding to address risky dams

The AP [11/16/2021 2:57 PM, David A. Lieb] reports states will soon be flooded with federal money to address a pent-up need to repair, improve or remove thousands of aging dams across the U.S., including some that could inundate towns or neighborhoods if they fail. The roughly \$3 billion for dam-related projects pales in comparison to the tens of billions of dollars going to roads, rails and high-speed internet in the \$1 trillion infrastructure plan signed Monday by President Joe Biden. But it's a lot more than dam projects had been

getting. Over the past decade, the Federal Emergency Management Agency provided more than \$400 million for projects involving dams, mostly to repair damage from natural disasters. But until just a few years ago, there was no national program focused solely on improving the thousands of dams overseen by state and local entities. FEMA's Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dams Grant Program has divvied up \$31.6 million among 36 participating states from 2019-2021. That amount, appropriated by Congress, was barely one-fifth of what had been authorized under a 2016 federal law. The infrastructure bill provides more than 18 times that amount, pumping \$585 million into the program for hazardous dams, including \$75 million set aside for their removal. Because of administrative requirements, FEMA said the new money likely won't start flowing to states before the 2023 fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, 2022. Previous grants often have been enough only to cover engineering or planning expenses. "This funding will allow for significant increases in the number and amount of actual dam rehabilitation and removal projects which the current funding levels have not allowed," said David Maurstad, FEMA's deputy associate administrator for insurance and mitigation. Repairing and modernizing all 14,343 high-hazard dams that aren't owned by the federal government could cost more than \$20 billion, according to an estimate by the dam safety association. The infrastructure legislation also includes \$148 million for FEMA to distribute to state dam safety offices — a significant increase over the \$6 million to \$7 million annually that has been divided among states. The new money could help states hire more staff or consultants to assess the safety of dams and develop emergency action plans. Every state except Alabama has a dam safety program, but many are underfunded and understaffed, creating a backlog of work.

[CO] Kruger Rock wildfire in Colorado poses "immediate and imminent danger," threatening homes and businesses

CBS News [11/16/2021 5:20 PM, Tori B. Powell, 2907K] reports mandatory evacuation orders have been issued for some Colorado residents and businesses as firefighters respond to the Kruger Rock Fire, which ignited Tuesday morning in Estes Park. Officials believe the 100-acre flame was ignited by an issue with power lines, CBS Denver reported. In a series of emergency messages, the Larimer County Sheriff's Office warned residents in the area that the fire poses "immediate and imminent danger." The fast-spreading fire is just 90 minutes away from Denver and is located at the eastern entrance to Rocky Mountain National Park. The flame was reported just before 7 a.m. local time and none of it is contained at this point. The sheriff's office said structures in the area are threatened, but no damage has been reported as of Tuesday morning. Larimer County Sheriff Justin Smith told CBS Denver there is concern the flames will reach U.S. Highway 36, which has since been closed from the eastern part of Estes Park to the western edge of Lyons.

[WY] Wind-stoked wildfire causes death in Wyoming, evacuations

The AP [11/16/2021 6:05 PM, Staff] reports wildfires pushed by strong winds forced the evacuation of homes in Montana, Wyoming and Colorado and led to a death in Wyoming, officials said Tuesday. Downed power lines caused a fire near the northern Wyoming community of Clark on Monday night that burned at least two homes and seven outbuildings, said Jerry Parker, the Park County Fire District administrator. Wind gusts topped 100 mph (161 kph) in the area Monday night. In south-central Montana, a fire reported at about 11:30 p.m. Monday led the Stillwater County Sheriff's Office to order evacuations southwest of the town of Absarokee, including an area between the communities of Ingersoll and Roscoe. Thirty-five evacuation notices were issued and deputies also went door-to-door, but it's not clear how many people left their residences, the

sheriff's office said. The cause of the fire is still under investigation. The fire had burned an estimated 6 square miles (16 square kilometers) in timber and rough terrain by Tuesday afternoon. Rain fell on the area Tuesday morning, but the wind increased the fire activity in the afternoon, said Tammie Mullikin, a spokesperson for the Stillwater County Sheriff's Office. In north-central Colorado, a fire southeast of Estes Park forced evacuations in a forested region of Larimer County while sending plumes of smoke toward the eastern plains. The fire was first reported about 7 a.m. in rugged terrain and triggered evacuations in the Hermit Park and Little Valley areas near Estes Park and, later, southward to the Boulder County line and east of U.S. Highway 36 between Estes Park and Lyons. The blaze grew to 115 acres (47 hectares), the Larimer County Sheriff's Office said. The cause of the fire was unknown.

[WA] Hundreds Rescued After Mudslides and Floods Pummel British Columbia

The [New York Times](#) [11/16/2021 12:14 AM, Christine Hauser, Ian Austen, Eduardo Medina, and Jesus Jiménez, 2730K] reports that hundreds of people were rescued from highways in British Columbia on Monday, officials said, after torrential rain set off mudslides that trapped people in their cars and prompted evacuations. Officials said that about 275 people who had been stuck on Highway 7 near the town of Agassiz, a small community east of Vancouver, since Sunday evening had been rescued. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reported that the helicopter rescue operation had ended by nightfall. Jordan Turner, British Columbia's communications director for emergency management, said by telephone late Monday night that approximately 150 more people had been saved from other stretches of highway in the area. He said that crews had whisked drivers away by helicopter and cleared debris from the road. "There are no longer any people or vehicles stranded between slides at this point in time," he said. Mike Farnworth, British Columbia's minister of public safety, told reporters on Monday afternoon that about 80 to 100 vehicles had become trapped on Highway 7. Rescues were underway in Agassiz and the nearby district of Hope, he added. "We've heard from people who are concerned about their loved ones being in their vehicles and trapped on these slides," he said. "We hear you, and we know it's difficult. But help is on the way." As of Monday afternoon, there had been no confirmed reports of fatalities from any accidents related to the severe weather, Mr. Farnworth said. The weather system was caused by an atmospheric river, part of a convergence of storms that was so vast that it swept from California into Washington and southern British Columbia. [The Hill](#) [11/16/2021 10:40 AM, Joseph Guzman, 2054K] reports that heavy rains and powerful winds brought on by an atmospheric river caused severe flooding and mudslides in parts of Washington state and Canada Monday, prompting evacuations and rescues in several communities. Several flood warnings were issued by the National Weather Service in western Washington and rivers began to swell Monday following days of rainfall, according to The Associated Press. Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D) issued a severe weather emergency proclamation for 14 western Washington counties to direct state resources to do "everything reasonably possible" to help those negatively affected by the weather, as some areas logged up to 6 inches of rain over the past several days. Wind gusts reached upwards of 60 miles per hour in some areas, with the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport clocking winds at 58 mph. Flooding and mudslides forced the closure of the I-5 in both directions in Whatcom County, which sits along the Canadian border. Southbound lanes in some areas began reopening early Tuesday, according to local King 5. Residents of Hamilton, a town northeast of Seattle, and Mount Vernon were advised to evacuate the area Sunday. Whatcom County officials said about 500 people were displaced in the north and northeast areas of the county due to flooding and hundreds were moved to shelter locations. Emergency officials in the county were conducting search

and rescue missions Monday night. At one point Monday more than 158,000 people were without power in the region, according to The Associated Press. By Tuesday morning about 50,000 were without electricity.

Reported similarly:

Alabama Public Radio [11/16/2021 11:46 AM, Joe Hernandez, 1K]

[PR] An arrest warrant, a fugitive CEO: Puerto Rico's effort to privatize its electrical grid is off to a rocky start

The Washington Post [11/16/2021 6:00 AM, Arelis R. Hernández and Douglas MacMillan, 12515K] reports a phalanx of armed deputies wearing bulletproof vests descended on the corporate offices of the company hired to fix Puerto Rico's antiquated power grid. They were looking for Luma Energy chief executive Wayne Stensby, who had been labeled a fugitive by local lawmakers for refusing demands to turn over documents related to the company. The deputies didn't find Stensby, and the warrant that had been issued for his arrest was suspended after he handed over a memory drive with thousands of documents that leaders of the territory's House of Representatives are reviewing as part of a probe into Luma's use of public money. But the drama that unfolded last week was the latest chapter in the almost-biblical saga of the island's efforts to fix its failing infrastructure as its more than 3 million residents face increasing extreme-weather events. "It's a story that goes back forever, involves thousands of players, involving many sins and many calls to 'come to Jesus,'" said Tom Sanzillo, director of financial analysis for the nonprofit Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, which has studied the island's power grid. The hiring of Luma last year marked a new beginning for the island: a 16-year, \$1.5 billion experiment with privatization. Luma, a venture created by two energy companies — Alberta, Canada-based ATCO and Houston-based Quanta Services — was contracted to distribute electricity to 1.5 million customers and make badly needed upgrades to the power grid. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has allocated nearly \$10 billion in taxpayer funds for the effort. The Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA), the state-run utility provider, now only manages the generation of electricity. But in the five months it has been in charge, problems have worsened, by many measures, including numerous sustained power outages and rate increases that have infuriated customers and lawmakers.

Secret Service

[NH] Former bank manager used dead customers' identities to defraud employer

Union Leader [11/16/2021 4:48 PM, Shawne Wickham, 29K, Positive, Secondary] reports a former Salem bank manager has been sentenced to a year and a day in federal prison for stealing more than \$560,000 from his bank using the accounts and identities of dead customers. Kazi Pervez, 42, of Methuen, Mass., was convicted of bank fraud, according to a news release from the U.S. Attorney's office, which prosecuted the case. Pervez, who pleaded guilty last March, was also ordered to forfeit \$454,730 for restitution. According to court documents, Pervez was working at a branch of Santander Bank in Salem in 2016 and 2017 when he devised a scheme to defraud the bank. Pervez opened bank accounts or directed other bank employees to do so, using the identities and personal information of deceased customers, authorities said. He then withdrew funds from the accounts that exceeded the balance of those accounts and "used his authority as branch manager to authorize the overdraft from the account," court documents said. Pervez also identified inactive accounts of dead customers and transferred more than \$450,000 to accounts at

other banks, or used the funds to pay his bills, authorities said. John Farley, acting U.S. Attorney, called what Pervez did a “significant breach of trust.” The case was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service.

[MA] Massachusetts Man Sentenced to Over One Year in Prison for Bank Fraud

The United States Department of Justice [11/16/2021 3:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports Kazi Pervez, 42, of Methuen, Massachusetts was sentenced to 12 months and 1 day in federal prison for bank fraud, Acting United States Attorney John J. Farley announced today. According to court documents and statements made in court, Pervez was a branch manager for a bank in Salem, New Hampshire. From at least April of 2016 until September of 2017, Pervez used his position as branch manager to steal or attempt to steal more than \$560,000 from the bank. For example, Pervez opened or instructed bank employees to open accounts in the name of deceased bank customers. Pervez then withdrew funds from the accounts that exceeded the balance of the accounts and used his authority as branch manager to authorize the overdrafts from the account. Pervez also identified inactive bank accounts of deceased bank customers and transferred money out of those accounts to other accounts that he controlled. Pervez previously pleaded guilty on March 29, 2021. In addition to his sentence, Pervez was ordered to forfeit \$454,730.26, which will be used for restitution. “The US Secret Service is committed to investigating complex fraud schemes especially those that involve the exploitation of elderly and deceased victims.” stated Timothy Benitez, Resident Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service’s New Hampshire Office. This matter was investigated by the United States Secret Service. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Matthew T. Hunter and John Kennedy and former Assistant U.S. Attorney Arnold Huftalen. Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Rabuck assisted with the forfeiture aspects of the case.

[RI] Rhode Island man pleads guilty to child pornography charges

The AP [11/16/2021 8:46 AM, Staff, 2730K] reports that a Rhode Island man who was twice arrested on child pornography charges, the second time while he was waiting trial following his first arrest, has pleaded guilty, federal prosecutors said. Jacob S. Munroe, 23, faces up to 20 years in prison when he is sentenced in February, according to a statement Monday from the U.S. attorney’s office in Rhode Island. Munroe, who lives in the Pascoag village of Burrillville, was first arrested in June 2019 when illicit images were found on his cellphone after Homeland Security agents found that child pornography posted to an Internet messaging and networking application was tied to Munroe’s IP address, authorities said. In an unrelated investigation, while awaiting trial on charges related to first arrest, Munroe was arrested by Rhode Island State Police in November 2020 when it was determined that he downloaded images depicting child pornography. He pleaded guilty Monday to distribution of child pornography and possession of child pornography, prosecutors said.

[DE] Biden Delaware trips cost taxpayers about \$3M in Secret Service alone

The New York Post [11/16/2021 7:31 PM, Steven Nelson, 6459K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Americans may be grappling with how to put food on the table amid a sharp rise in the cost of everyday goods — but you’d never know it from the tab President Biden has racked up on their dime. Biden’s choice of regular weekend and a few midweek trips home to Delaware have cost nearly \$3 million in security alone, Secret Service expense records shared with The Post show. Biden’s security detail spent \$1.96 million on 16 trips to his Delaware homes this year, the records indicate. Another nine trips aren’t yet counted and likely push the total to \$3 million. Those 25 trips have been racked up in just 43 weeks in

office. And the true price tag to taxpayers is higher because the Pentagon hasn't released costs for Air Force One and Marine One helicopter trips. "Most Americans know that Biden is being hidden because he isn't fit for office," a former Trump White House official taunted. "What they may not realize is that they're paying insane amounts of money for him to be tucked into bed in Delaware every weekend." The documented expenses mostly cover hotels and rental cars for Secret Service agents, as well as airfare and train tickets for them to reach Delaware.

[NC] Second person accused in murder of 15-year-old in shooting near Southside Park in Charlotte

WBTV News [11/16/2021 6:05 PM, Staff, 56K, Positive, Secondary] reports a second person has been accused in the murder of a 15-year-old who was shot to death in south Charlotte in October. Detectives have now charged 19-year-old Taizojh Deaveon Smith for the murder of 15-year-old Daliamontray Decarlo Strothers Jr. Detectives had already previously charged 18-year-old Dametrius Hilliard in the murder. According to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, officers responded to a shooting in the area of Griffith Street and Fairwood Avenue, which is near Southside Park, at 11:58 p.m. on Oct. 12. When they arrived, they found the victim, who was taken to Atrium Main with life-threatening injuries. As a result of continued investigation, detectives identified Smith as the suspect in this case, and warrants were issued for his arrest. On Nov. 16, Smith was located and arrested in Statesville by CMPD with assistance from the U.S. Secret Service, Statesville Police Department, and N.C. Highway Patrol. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[AL] In Alabama, Training for Cyber Crime and Competing in War Games

The Wall Street Journal [11/16/2021 5:30 AM, James Rundle, Neutral, Primary] reports around 300 police and National Guard officers from all corners of the U.S. filtered into a drab, white building off Interstate 65 in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. They were there to learn about ransomware from each other, and the U.S. Secret Service. This October day would not be a rehashing of cybersecurity nostrums. Instead, Aaron Sparling, an investigator of 17 years at the Portland Police Bureau in Oregon, was going for something more visceral. In a contained system, he proceeded to set off one of the most destructive malware variants in recent memory for students at the Secret Service's National Computer Forensics Institute. "Essentially, what I did was I took a virtual machine and detonated the WannaCry virus," he said, referring to the ransomware that ripped through public and private organizations in 2017 and counted over 200,000 victims in 150 countries, including FedEx Corp. and Britain's National Health Service by the time it was done. Hands-on experience with a live virus showed students just how the malware goes to work in real time, as instructors coached them in ways to cut detection and response times from hours to minutes, Mr. Sparling said. "I think they had a lot of fun with that," he said. The weeklong event included sessions on incident response and practical education. The following week the Secret Service hosted a war game, in which teams from law-enforcement agencies competed in responding to a ransomware attack on critical infrastructure—the nightmare scenario for U.S. officials, who have called ransomware a national-security threat.

[OH] South Bloomfield Police Warn on Counterfeit Bills

The Scioto Post [11/16/2021 7:00 AM, Jeremy Newman, Neutral, Secondary] reports that, in October, they posted a story on counterfeit bills being passed in Pickaway and Ross county now they seem to have hit South Bloomfield also. South Bloomfield reported today that they have found some fake money in their town also The money looks real but has

some telltale signs if inspected with words that say, "Copy Money" but other than that a quick glance and it could be taken as real. If you own a local business please share the post with others it is unsure if there are other denominations out there.

[TX] McLennan County law enforcement recovers \$75,000 in stolen property

The Waco Tribune Herald [11/16/2021 7:18 PM, Amaris E. Rodriguez, 46K, Positive, Secondary] reports items stolen from a man's store the day after he died were among almost \$75,000 in stolen property area law enforcement officials recently recovered, including high-priced guitars, firearms, fishing rods, electronics and more, McLennan County Sheriff Parnell McNamara said Tuesday. The sheriff's office, a U.S. Marshals Service task force, and Waco, Bruceville-Eddy, Lacy Lakeview and Bellmead police departments were involved in arrests of three people involved in the thefts, McNamara said. Officials arrested Tony Glenn Fisher and Destiny Renee McCollum on Nov. 8 at a residence in the 1600 block of San Jacinto Street in Bellmead. Isaiah Garvin was arrested Nov. 4. McNamara said all three were involved in burglaries, but McCollum was arrested on one charge, possession of a controlled substance. Her specific involvement is unclear. "It was a combined effort, a combined investigation of all of these agencies that brought together these three creeps that you see on the board," McNamara said. He said Garvin called the family of a man he knew who died Oct. 31 to offer his condolences. The day after the man's death, Garvin robbed his store, McNamara said. On the day of his arrest, Fisher also had "a large quantity of counterfeit cash," McNamara said. None of his charges appear to involve counterfeit cash. He previously has been charged for counterfeiting money, McNamara said.

[SD] Fake \$100 bills circulating in Lead

The Black Hills Pioneer [11/16/2021 1:00 PM, Wendy Pitlick, Neutral, Secondary] reports three counterfeit \$100 bills have circulated around the Lead area over the last two weeks, Lead Police Chief John Wainman said Monday. During the regular city commission meeting, Wainman reported that area banks alerted him to the fake bills. "They look pretty real and they feel real," Wainman said. "They're pretty authentic. They're better than most forgeries." One telltale sign of the counterfeit bills are the tiny words "Movie Money" at the top of the bills. But if a cashier or someone doing business does not know to inspect the bill, it could slip by undetected. Wainman said businesses or individuals who receive \$100 bills should check them with a marker or inspect them closely for anything that could be suspicious. Anyone who detects these bills is encouraged to contact the Lead Police Department, 584-1615.

Coast Guard

Coast Guard prioritizing climate change resiliency, workforce in infrastructure investments

The Federal News Network [11/16/2021 6:20 PM, David Thornton, 76K] reports the U.S. Coast Guard has received nearly \$2 billion in shore infrastructure appropriations since 2018. Vice Adm. Paul Thomas, deputy commandant for Mission Support at the Coast Guard, told the House Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation subcommittee that the service is investing much of those funds into resiliency and its workforce. But the General Accountability Office is worried that it isn't enough. "Our work identified that almost half of the Coast Guard's shore infrastructure is beyond its service life, resulting in costly

recapitalization construction and maintenance project backlogs, and as of 2019, these backlogs totaled more than \$2.6 billion,” Heather MacLeod, acting director for Homeland Security and Justice at GAO, said during the Nov. 16 hearing. “In fact, in 2018, the Coast Guard estimated that it would take almost 400 years to address the \$1.77 billion backlog of major projects reported for that year. Also, it’s likely that the estimated costs to address the backlog are understated. This is particularly concerning not only because of the amount of time needed to address the backlog, but because of other potential impacts. For example, we have identified that deferring maintenance can lead to higher costs in the long run, while also risking posing risks to safety, security, readiness, staffing, resources and mission execution.” Added on top of that is the cost of responding to the effects of climate change as the Coast Guard invests in its facilities. MacLeod said that cost needs to be incorporated into all of the Coast Guard’s projects. Thomas said the process of folding those costs into the backlog is underway – though still in its infancy – as part of a greater climate change vulnerability assessment.

[MI] 11-year-old sole survivor of plane crash saved by father’s last ‘bear hug’

ABC News [11/16/2021 7:41 AM, Mina Kaji and Bill Hutchinson, 23K] reports that the 11-year-old sole survivor of a plane crash was saved by her father’s last hug, her mother believes. “Her last memory is her dad just grabbed her and held her really, really tight,” Christie Perdue told ABC News transportation correspondent Gio Benitez about her daughter, Laney. Perdue explained that Laney suffered injuries only on one side of her body, and the other side was protected by one of her father’s “big, bear hugs.” She also shared that Laney is now recovering at the children’s hospital in Grand Rapids, Michigan. “She has five broken bones all over the place, but she is amazing and she’s inspiring.” The commuter plane carrying Laney, her father and three others crashed Saturday at the Welke Airport on Beaver Island in the far northern part of Lake Michigan. The Island Airways aircraft was attempting to land at the Welke Airport after departing from Charlevoix, Michigan, about 32 miles away, according to a statement from the Federal Aviation Administration. A helicopter crew from the Coast Guard Great Lakes was training in the area at the time and responded to an emergency call from the island. They flew Laney, who was critically injured, and a male adult, who initially survived the crash, to McLaren Northern Michigan Hospital in Petoskey, Coast Guard officials said. The male victim was later pronounced dead at the hospital. The helicopter crew performed chest compressions on Laney en route to the children’s hospital, the Coast Guard Great Lakes said in a tweet.

[WA] Coast Guard rescues 10, including baby, from raging Washington floodwaters

The Hill [11/16/2021 3:45 PM, Joseph Guzman, 2054K] reports new video shows the moments Coast Guard crew members rescued 10 people from the severe flooding that slammed the Pacific Northwest Monday. The video tweeted by the Coast Guard Pacific Northwest shows several instances of crews hoisting adults and children stranded on roofs into a helicopter as floodwaters raged around them. The Coast Guard said six adults and four children, including one baby, were rescued in Forks, Wash., during the operation Monday. Crews were unable to get to the stranded residents by boat due to “excessive currents,” and had to access them by air, according to KGW8. No one was injured in the rescue. The rescue was one of many in the region as an atmospheric river unleashed heavy rainfall over western Washington and parts of Canada. Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D) issued a severe weather emergency proclamation for 14 western Washington counties to direct state resources to do “everything reasonably possible” to help those negatively affected by the weather, as some areas logged up to 6 inches of rain over the past several

days. Whatcom County officials said about 500 people were displaced in the north and northeast areas of the county due to flooding and hundreds were moved to shelter locations. Emergency officials in the county were conducting search and rescue missions Monday night. At one point Monday nearly 160,000 people were without power in the region. By Tuesday afternoon, just under 50,000 were still without electricity, according to poweroutage.us.

Reported similarly:

[USA Today](#) [11/16/2021 8:00 AM, Staff, 7620K] Video: [HERE](#)

[CA] Lifeguards pull 3 Mexican citizens from ocean after report of large-scale crossing attempt

The [San Diego Union Tribune](#) [11/16/2021 9:17 PM, Karen Kucher, Alex Riggins, 353K] reports San Diego lifeguards pulled three people from the ocean Monday night after it was reported that dozens of people were attempting to swim from Mexico into the United States, authorities said. Tijuana officials reported the crossing attempt about 9:30 p.m., telling officials in San Diego there was “some sort of commotion down by the marine boundary line,” Petty Officer 3rd Class Alex Gray, public affairs specialist with the Coast Guard, said late Monday. According to the Border Patrol, the agency “received a report that dozens of people were attempting to illegally swim across the international boundary ... near Border Field State Park.” Agents responded to the area — where dense fog was covering much of the coast — and immediately requested help from the Coast Guard and San Diego Fire-Rescue Department firefighters and lifeguards. Rick Romero, a San Diego lifeguard lieutenant, said the three people pulled from the water were uninjured. Border Patrol agents then took custody of the trio, which consisted of a man, a woman and an unaccompanied juvenile boy who were all Mexican citizens, according to the agency.

CISA/Cybersecurity

FBI left out of the loop in cyberattack reporting bill

[Politico](#) [11/16/2021 11:55 AM, Betsy Woodruff Swan and Eric Geller, 2024K] reports that the FBI could be sidelined in new cybersecurity legislation, a top Bureau official told lawmakers Tuesday. And, in the view of America’s most powerful law enforcement agency, that would be a big problem. In testimony to Congress, Bryan Vorndran, the assistant director of the FBI’s Cyber Division, said that the Biden administration is “troubled” by legislation proposed by the Senate and House Homeland Security committees requiring a wide range of companies to report intrusions to the Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency but not simultaneously to the FBI. “Current incident reporting legislation being considered fails to recognize the critical expertise and role that DOJ, including the FBI, play when it comes to cyber incident reporting,” Vorndran said in a statement for the record provided to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. “Cyber is the team sport, and the Department of Justice and the FBI are a key player,” Vorndran continued. “It is time for legislation to reflect this reality.” The Biden administration’s stance throws a last-minute wrench into a yearslong effort to require key companies to disclose cyberattacks. The House’s annual must-pass defense bill includes language requiring critical infrastructure operators and federal contractors to alert CISA if they are hacked. Similar language is likely to make it into the Senate’s version of the bill. The provision — the result of weeks of negotiations between the leaders of the Senate homeland security and intelligence panels — would represent the most sweeping cyber

regulation ever imposed on the private sector.

Reported similarly:

Washington Times [11/15/2021 7:00 PM, Ryan Lovelace, 389K]

Oversight finds 'small lapses' in security led to Colonial Pipeline, JBS hacks

The Hill [11/16/2021 2:45 PM, Maggie Miller, 2054K] reports a series of "small lapses" in cybersecurity led to several recent successful ransomware attacks, the House Oversight and Reform Committee concluded in a staff memo released Tuesday. "Ransomware attackers took advantage of relatively minor security lapses, such as a single user account controlled by a weak password, to launch enormously costly attacks," the memo reads. "Even large organizations with seemingly robust security systems fell victim to simple initial attacks, highlighting the need to increase security education and take other security measures prior to an attack." Beyond the security lapses, the committee also concluded that the companies impacted by ransomware attacks did not have clear points of contact with the federal government, hampering response efforts, and that they faced a huge amount of pressure to pay the attackers. The memo was published ahead of a hearing on ransomware attacks held by the Oversight and Reform panel on Tuesday, which featured National Cyber Director Chris Inglis and top officials from the FBI and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) giving testimony. "From an FBI perspective, we have not seen a decrease in ransomware attacks in the past couple of months originating from Russia," testified Bryan Vorndran, the assistant director of the FBI's Cyber Division. "We do have incomplete data, in a best case scenario, we only see about 20 percent of the intrusions in the country, no different than our partners at CISA, but the FBI has remained focused on investigating cyber criminals in and around Russia." "We will continue to pressure the Russians, but they must understand they must do their part," Inglis testified Tuesday.

G-7 Conducts Cyber-Security Exercise as Financial Threats Climb

Bloomberg [11/16/2021 10:12 AM, Christopher Condon, 227K] reports that Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and counterparts from other leading economic powers conducted a "cyber exercise" Tuesday to showcase the importance of international cooperation amid escalating threats to the financial system. The exercise included finance ministers and central bank chiefs from the Group of Seven nations. It "covered how G-7 members will seek to cooperate in the hypothetical event of a significant, cross-border incident affecting the financial sector," the Treasury said in a statement Tuesday. Policy makers and regulators in the U.S. and other countries have pointed to cyber threats from criminal and state actors as an increasing threat to financial stability. The G-7 last year laid out a multi-year testing program to improve the ability of government and private-sector actors to respond to cyber attacks. In an April interview with CBS's "60 Minutes" program, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said he worried about potential scenarios in which a large payments system or financial institution might be crippled by a cyber attack. "There's a lot of effort going in to deal with those threats," he said at the time. "That's a big part of the threat picture in today's world." During Tuesday's session, Yellen "reaffirmed Treasury's commitment to counter the threats posed by ransomware and other malicious cyber activity across the financial services sector and economy," the statement said. A Treasury spokesperson didn't immediately respond to a request for more details about the exercise.

Data Breach Rule for Health Apps Leaves Developers in the Dark

Bloomberg [11/16/2021 5:36 AM, Christopher Brown, 19K] reports makers of health apps are scrambling to understand the extent of their legal liability after a divided Federal Trade Commission announced they're now required to inform users about data and privacy breaches—and if they have used their customers' health data without authorization. The commission approved 3-2 a policy statement that the makers of health apps, including apps on smartphones and fitness devices, must comply with the FTC Health Breach Notification Rule. The rule had previously applied to a much narrower set of health-information software, primarily apps used to collect and store health records from doctors and other health-care providers. Supporters say it's a welcome attempt to extend privacy protections to health data being gathered and stored by a new generation of health and fitness apps that hadn't been imagined when the breach notification rule was issued in 2009. These apps gather such information as menstrual cycles, fitness and sleep patterns, and blood-glucose levels. But app developers say the September statement leaves them in the dark about crucial questions, including which apps and app makers are included under the rule, and how big the fines could be for violations, especially in cases where an app maker has been sharing users' health information without authorization.

Terrorism Investigations

[TX] Grandmother reports 'locked and loaded' school board comment to FBI as domestic terror threat

FOX News [11/16/2021 8:35 PM, Tyler O'Neil, 11051K] reports a Fort Worth grandmother reached out to the Dallas office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to report what she described as a "terrorist threat" at a school board meeting last week. A local father who supports critical race theory had addressed anti-CRT protesters during a school board meeting and said, "I got over 1,000 soldiers ready to go," before adding, "locked and loaded." "I filed a report with the FBI office in Fort Worth," Ladonna Meyers, a grandmother of two who was at the school board meeting on Nov. 9, told Fox News in an interview Tuesday. "It's their job to check in on terrorism, and this was a terrorist threat." In the Fort Worth Independent School District board meeting on Nov. 9, Malikk Austin turned to address the parents who had spoken up about critical race theory. "For those who got an issue with this critical race theory equity, this is something I fight for, for my children," Austin, who is African American, began. "How dare you come out here and talk about the things that my daddy and my grandparents went through? The lynching, the oppression, Jim Crow — and my kids are still being afflicted by this." "We are not our ancestors," Austin added. "I got over 1,000 soldiers ready to go." After Austin's one minute to speak had run out, officers came and escorted him out of the room. During this time, he shouted, "I'll bring my soldiers with me next time... locked and loaded."

National Security News

[United Kingdom] British police declared Liverpool taxi explosion a 'terrorist incident,' but admit the motive remains unknown

The Washington Post [11/16/2021 2:48 PM, Karla Adam and Ellen Francis, 12515K] reports that British authorities are scrambling to understand the motives of the suspected bomber in a Liverpool taxi explosion who died in the blast, but that hasn't stopped them from quickly declaring the incident a terrorist attack. On Sunday, a taxi exploded outside of Liverpool Women's Hospital, and the following day, police designated it a terrorist incident even while

acknowledging that "The motivation for this incident is yet to be understood." Police have not pointed to a target for the attack or confirmed details reported in local media about the suspect's background - but said it was declared a terrorist incident "Given all the circumstances." British police have broad discretion in what they label a "Terrorist incident," as long as it's consistent with the definition of terrorism in the Terrorism Act 2000, which includes the use or threat of serious violence "For the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause." Analysts said that in this case, the decision to label it as terrorism may be related to the use of an improvised explosive device in the attack, as well as other reasons not declared publicly. According to guidance on the Crown Prosecution Service website, when explosives are used or threatened to be used, "It is not necessary to prove that the action is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, as is the case with other terrorist offences." Analysts say, by designating the attack as terrorism, the local police force will have access to national resources, including intelligence services, specialist forensic officers and translation help.

[Iran] Video shows Iran helicopter's "unsafe" maneuver near U.S. warship

CBS News [11/16/2021 8:10 AM, Staff, 2907K] reports that the Pentagon on Monday accused Iran of "Unsafe and unprofessional" conduct by a naval helicopter that it said flew within about 25 yards of a U.S. Navy ship and circled it three times in the Gulf of Oman. Video published by Iranian media appeared to show the helicopter flying low and coming close to the USS Essex, an amphibious assault ship. Video circulating on Iranian Telegram channels today of an #Iran military helicopter getting close to what looks like the USS Essex. Would note this comes after US reported the USS Essex had an "Unsafe & unprofessional interaction" with multiple Iranian drones earlier this month. Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said the Iranian helicopter circled the USS Essex three times and at one point flew as low as 10 feet off the surface of the water. He said the incident on Nov. 11 had no effect on the Essex's operations. "Without getting into specifics, the crew of the Essex took the appropriate force protection measures they felt that they needed to, and they acted in accordance with international law," Kirby said. CBS News national security correspondent David Martin reports that previously, defense officials had said the encounter was not considered "unsafe and unprofessional" because the Iranian helicopter was not armed.

[Afghanistan] Taliban Warn of Mass Refugee Exodus if U.S. Keeps Funds Frozen

Bloomberg [11/17/2021 3:36 AM, Eltaf Najafizada, 8629K] reports the Taliban's top diplomat warned of an Afghan refugee exodus if the U.S. continues to block the release of some \$9 billion of the country's assets. "We are concerned that if the current situation prevails, the Afghan government and people will face problems and will become a cause for mass migration in the region and world," Amir Khan Muttaqi, the Taliban's acting foreign minister, said in an open letter to the U.S. Congress. It will also exacerbate the humanitarian crisis, he said. The statement comes shortly before the United Nations Security Council holds a meeting to address the Afghan crisis. The country's economy is reeling as the Taliban struggles to stabilize Afghanistan's finances, with the World Food Program saying more than half of the population faces acute food insecurity. Muttaqi also said that Afghanistan is now secure under the Taliban leadership, posing no threat to the world and willing to engage in positive cooperation. He urged the U.S. to invest in the manufacturing, agriculture and mining sectors of the country. The U.S. had blocked the

assets on concerns about the militant group's continued links with terrorism, human rights abuses and failure to build an inclusive government.

[Belarus] Group behind cyberattacks on multiple governments linked to Belarus

The Hill [11/16/2021 12:15 PM, Maggie Miller, 2054K] reports that hacking and disinformation groups believed to be behind attacks on governmental agencies in countries including Germany in recent months were linked by cybersecurity researchers on Tuesday to the Belarusian government. Researchers for cybersecurity company Mandiant made the attribution as part of a new report, assessing with "high confidence" that the activity of what has been labeled the "Ghostwriter" information campaign was "aligned with Belarusian government interests." A cyber espionage group, which Mandiant labeled "UNC1151," was also linked to the Belarusian government. Mandiant in April had reported that UNC1151 was helping conduct Ghostwriter influence operations. Targets of UNC1151 have included government and private sector groups in Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Ukraine and Germany, with UNC1151 going after Belarusian journalists, dissidents and media entities with a focus on stealing confidential information. Mandiant noted that while UNC1151 has targeted former Soviet nations, it had not gone after any state entities in either Russia or Belarus. The Ghostwriter campaign was previously linked by officials to the Russian government, including the European Union, which formally called out Russia for the attacks on members of Parliament, government officials and others in EU member states. The Associated Press reported in September that the German government was formally blaming Russia's GRU intelligence service for targeting German lawmakers ahead of the country's elections. Mandiant researchers on Tuesday stressed that while "we cannot rule out Russian contributions ... at this time, we have not uncovered direct evidence of such contributions."

[China] Biden, Xi Open to Nuclear-Arms Talks

The Wall Street Journal [11/16/2021 4:36 PM, Alex Leary, Lingling Wei and Michael R. Gordon] reports President Biden and President Xi Jinping of China have agreed to explore talks on arms control, a top White House official said, a day after the two used a virtual meeting to emphasize the need to avoid conflict on regional security and economic matters. "The two leaders agreed that we would look to begin to carry forward discussions on strategic stability," White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said Tuesday. Mr. Sullivan made clear the discussion was tentative. "It is now incumbent on us to think about the most productive way to carry it forward from here," he said in response to a question about China's growing military prowess during an event at the Brookings Institution think tank. Nuclear-arms talks, should they materialize, would be one of the few concrete outcomes from Monday night's meeting, which ran more than three hours and saw Messrs. Biden and Xi holding firm to their positions on a range of issues, including Taiwan. The overall benefit of the meeting, experts said, was keeping lines of communication open. "This high-level meeting at a minimum paves the way for more intensive technical discussions about economic and geopolitical issues in which there remains a possibly unbridgeable gulf between the two sides," said Eswar Prasad, a professor of trade policy at Cornell University. Reuters [11/16/2021 5:43 PM, David Brunnstrom, Michael Martina and Tom Daly, 5304K] reports Sullivan did not elaborate on what form the discussions on strategic stability could take, but went on to say: "That is not the same as what we have in the Russian context with the formal strategic stability dialogue. That is far more mature, has a much deeper history to it. There's less maturity to that in the U.S.-China relationship, but the two leaders did discuss these issues and it is now incumbent on us to think about the most productive way to carry it forward." Washington has repeatedly urged China to join it and Russia in a new

arms control treaty. Beijing says the arsenals of the other two countries dwarf its own. It says it is ready to conduct bilateral dialogues on strategic security "on the basis of equality and mutual respect."

[China] U.S.-China engagement to intensify - U.S. national security adviser

Reuters [11/16/2021 10:57 AM, Staff, 5304K] reports that U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said on Tuesday that U.S. engagement with China will intensify at multiple levels to ensure that competition between the two powers does not veer into conflict. Speaking hours after a virtual summit between U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, Sullivan said the two leaders had agreed that "we would look to begin to carry forward discussion on strategic stability" - a reference to U.S. concerns about China's nuclear and missile buildup. "President Biden did raise with President Xi the need for a strategic stability set of conversations...that that needs to be guided by the leaders and led by senior empowered teams on both sides that cut across security, technology and diplomacy," Sullivan said in a Brookings Institution webinar. "You will see at multiple levels an intensification of the engagement to ensure that there are guardrails around this competition so that it doesn't veer off into conflict." Biden and Xi talked for about three and a half hours in their virtual meeting, but appeared to do little to narrow differences between the superpowers which have raised fears of an eventual conflict between them. The United States had envisioned the meeting, the leaders' most in-depth exchange since Biden took office in January, as a way to put stability in a relationship increasingly troubled over a litany of issues, including what Washington sees as Beijing's aggressive actions toward self-ruled Taiwan. In the meeting Biden pressed his Chinese counterpart on human rights and Xi warned that China would respond to provocations on Taiwan.

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IACHR and UN's Special Rapporteur Condemn Excessive Use of Force and Deportations of Migrants from Haiti at the United States' Southern Border

Washington, D.C. – The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants condemn the excessive use of force against migrants from Haiti in Del Rio, in the US state of Texas, as well as the deportations (to Mexico or directly to Haiti) conducted at the United States' southern border. The Commission and the Special Rapporteur urge the State to investigate this situation with due diligence, to punish anyone found guilty of wrongdoing, and to guarantee that these sorts of events will not happen again in the future.

According to the available reports, a migrant camp has emerged since September 17 near the border town of Del Rio and has brought together 14,000 people, most of them believed to be Haitians. Based on these reports and on the videos that have been posted on several media platforms, both institutions are concerned about the use of force by border patrol officers on horseback against individuals at the camp on September 19. In particular, the videos show blows with whip-like objects and other attacks against defenseless migrants, including women, children, and adolescents. The IACHR and the Special Rapporteur are also concerned about mass returns of migrants on flights to Haiti.

The informal camp at Del Rio was allegedly dismantled on September 25, and thousands of migrants are believed to have been either deported or taken to migrant facilities in other cities. Civil society organizations report the lack of clear criteria and detailed statistical data concerning these procedures.

In this context, the President of the United States condemned the violent acts committed by the mounted patrol, and the White House spokeswoman subsequently confirmed that the use of mounted patrol for migration control at the border in Del Río would be suspended and placed under investigation.

The Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of All Migrants, Refugees, Stateless Persons, and Victims of Human Trafficking state that security in migration checkpoints must always focus on protecting migrants and their rights. Coercion must only be used when all other means to control the situation have been exhausted, and even then it needs to be strictly proportionate and necessary. The IACHR and the United Nations' Special Rapporteur therefore stress that border security operations must not be a hurdle for access to procedures that enable an individual assessment of protection needs. The IACHR and the UN's Special Rapporteur further stress that any measures and responses that are implemented must integrate a gender perspective and differential treatment concerning age, race, and other factors.

The IACHR and the UN's Special Rapporteur note the recommendations made in the former's Preliminary Observations on its visit to United States' southern border in 2019. The State must protect the right to request and be granted asylum, by taking all measures necessary to ensure access to the proceedings available to do so, and it must also remove barriers and unwarranted delays in proceedings. The State must further adapt domestic legislation to international standards, which state that migrating is not a crime—many people engaged in migration movements need international protection, while many others are vulnerable and require special protection.

In line with the report Due Process in Procedures for the Determination of Refugee Status and Statelessness and the Granting of Complementary Protection, the IACHR and the UN's Special Rapporteur stress the importance of State efforts to adapt and strengthen structures and institutions to address migration and provide protection. This requires ensuring these structures and institutions have the capacity to adequately process and assess (ensuring due process) the situation of the individuals who are currently part of migrant flows in the Americas.

The Inter-American Commission and the UN's Special Rapporteur therefore urge the United States to ensure the minimum standards for human safety and due process that are necessary to process and acknowledge the protection needs of all mobile individuals. The IACHR and the UN's Special Rapporteur also stress the State's duty to investigate recent events and to punish anyone responsible for violence and an excessive use of force against mobile individuals.

Both the IACHR's Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants and the United Nations' Special Rapporteur will continue to closely monitor the situation of mobile individuals around the Americas.

A principal, autonomous body of the Organization of American States (OAS), the IACHR derives its mandate from the OAS Charter and the American Convention on Human Rights. The Inter-American Commission has a mandate to promote respect for and to defend human rights in the region and acts as a consultative body to the OAS in this area. The Commission is composed of seven independent members who are elected in an individual capacity by the OAS General Assembly and who do not represent their countries of origin or residence.

Felipe González Morales is the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants. The UN's Special Rapporteurs are involved in the Human Rights Council's Special Procedures. The Special Procedures, the highest-level group of independent experts in the UN's human rights system, is a generic way to address the Council's independent

investigation and oversight mechanisms, in charge of situations involving specific countries and thematic issues all over the world. Experts in the Special Procedures are volunteers: they are not part of the UN staff and they are not paid for their work. They are independent of all governments and organizations and they provide their services in an individual capacity.



DHS MORNING BRIEFING

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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.

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New DHS commission will look at best law enforcement practices: Mayorkas

ABC News [9/29/2021 11:31 AM, Luke Barr, 37K] reports that the Department of Homeland Security on Wednesday announced the formation of the Law Enforcement Coordination Council - an effort to "Institutionalize best practices in law enforcement," Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in an interview with ABC News. The LECC, chaired by Mayorkas, is the "First ever" department-wide body that will serve as a governing organization for the department's agencies like the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Mayorkas said. During his previous stint at the department starting in 2009, best practices for law enforcement training and use-of-force policies have been a subject of Mayorkas' portfolio. " We are bringing a greater, in my opinion, a greater degree of organization, cohesion to [law enforcement policies]" Mayorkas said. "And the Law Enforcement Coordinating Council is comprised not only of the agencies that perform the law enforcement mission, but also offices within our department that have significant equities oversight offices as well, for example, such as the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, the office of privacy and the office of the inspector general." The commission being announced Wednesday was not influenced by photos of border patrol agents on horseback aggressively pursuing migrants attempting to cross the southern border, Mayorkas said. "These efforts began well before the incident at issue," Mayorkas said. "We have received broader inquires for some time now, with respect to our training, our practices and procedures are policies to include use of force ... and as we are communicating in response to those inquiries, we felt it appropriate in the service of transparency, to communicate directly to the public," he said. Mayorkas said that he doesn't have a sense of timing on when the investigation into the border patrol agents on horseback will be complete. "I know that the investigators understand the need to move both thoroughly and quickly, and they're conducting the investigation independently," he said. Mayorkas explained that the results of the commission and best practices will be integrated into the department's federal law enforcement training center. Mayorkas also said that the

commission will look into various Department of Homeland Security agency policies, to ensure that any law enforcement policy discrepancies between agencies is "intentional" to fit the needs of that agency. Mayorkas said the department will move with "deliberate speed" in getting these policies up and running and sharing them with the public but did not offer any concrete timeline.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 12:29 PM, Monique Beals, 1776K]

[Yahoo! News](#) [9/29/2021 1:17 PM, Ivana Saric, 13869K]

Border Patrol agents must be vaccinated by Nov or face being fired: Whistleblower
[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 5:00 PM, Breck Dumas, 9251K] reports U.S. Customs and Border Patrol agents have been put on official notice by the Biden administration that they must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Nov. 1 or face being fired, according to a whistleblower who sounded the alarm to House Judiciary Committee ranking member Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio. The purported deadline for Border Patrol agents to get vaccinated comes as the DHS struggles to manage the ongoing crisis at the southern border, and Republicans warn that terminating agents over President Joe Biden's vaccine mandate for federal workers could not come at a worse time. In a letter to DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, Jordan and Immigration and Citizenship subcommittee ranking member Rep. Tom McClintock, Calif., accused the Biden administration of "now openly targeting the heroic men and women of the U.S. Border Patrol" with the threat of pink slips. The pair told Mayorkas, "We hope that for the safety of our country that you see the error in this decision, choose to support the heroes of CBP who put their lives on the line every day, and find reasonable accommodations for CBP officers who do not choose to comply with this mandate for personal or medical reasons."

About 4,600 Haitians have been expelled from the US since September 19, DHS says
[CNN](#) [9/29/2021 12:48 PM, Priscilla Alvarez, 4876K] reports approximately 4,600 Haitians have been removed from the United States on repatriation flights from Texas to Haiti since September 19, a Homeland Security spokesperson told CNN on Wednesday. The Department of Homeland Security has been conducting regular removal flights to Haiti. Since September 19, it has conducted 43 repatriation flights from Del Rio, Texas, to Haiti. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas cited the toll of the pandemic on economies as a contributing factor to the surge of migrants over recent months and defended the continued use of a public health authority, known as Title 42, to swiftly expel those who arrive. "The fact of the matter is -- this is not specific to Haitian diaspora -- but the world is still reeling from a pandemic. And the downturn of economies have caused people in greater numbers to leave their homes," Mayorkas said Monday during the annual Immigration Law and Policy Conference. But senior administration officials, including Mayorkas, have defended their decision, saying that they studied conditions and determined migrants could be sent back.

Homeland Security says to end Trump-era 'Remain in Mexico' policy in 'coming weeks'

[USA Today](#) [9/29/2021 7:14 PM, Rebecca Morin, 6282K] reports President Joe Biden's administration announced Wednesday it will seek to end in several weeks a Trump-era policy that forced migrants to wait in Mexico for immigration hearings. The Department of Homeland Security said it will issue a memorandum terminating the Migrant Protection

Protocol in the "coming weeks", but it will not take effect until the current injunction is lifted by court order. The Biden administration was forced to restart the program after attempting to end it earlier this year. The U.S. Supreme Court in August denied a request by the administration to stay a lower court order requiring it to restart the policy, also known as "Remain in Mexico." That essentially forced the administration to resume the policy. DHS has appealed the ruling in the lower courts. The Biden Administration has been working in "good faith" to restart the program, DHS said in a statement. "The Department remains committed to building a safe, orderly, and humane immigration system that upholds our laws and values," DHS said in its announcement. "The Department also continues to process individuals in accordance with U.S. law and our mission." [Politico](#) [9/29/2021 8:13 PM, Myah Ward, 1707K] reports the move comes after a U.S. District Court in Texas said the administration's June 2021 memorandum ending Migrant Protection Protocols was against the law. The Supreme Court struck another blow to the Biden administration in August when it rejected the Justice Department's request for a stay that would have put the policy on hold while litigation over Biden's efforts to rescind was resolved in the courts — a victory for states like Texas and Missouri, which sued over the administration's repeal of the policy. Homeland Security said on Wednesday that it had worked to restart MPP to comply with the court's order and that its new memorandum aimed to "address the concerns raised by the courts with respect to the prior memorandum." "In the meantime, while the court injunction remains in effect, the Department has been working in good faith to re-start MPP in compliance with the order, and it will continue to do so," DHS said in a statement. "To that end, the Department, working with the Department of State, is engaged in ongoing and high-level diplomatic discussions with Mexico."

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 6:42 PM, Rafael Bernal and Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K]

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 8:55 PM, Breck Dumas, 9251K]

[Washington Times](#) [9/29/2021 3:55 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K]

Kamala Harris sees solution to migration crisis in coffee beans, credit cards and Wi-Fi

The [Los Angeles Times](#) [9/29/2021 11:06 AM, Noah Bierman, 3710K] reports that a team of experts in Switzerland has spent months smelling and tasting coffee harvested from the volcanic soil of Central America, trying to find farmers who can produce beans that will retain their flavor and complexity after they are ground up and packaged into Nespresso pods. It's a long way from Washington and the raging debate over immigration and the political fights on cable news over the U.S.-Mexico border. The expansion of a collaboration between small coffee farmers and Nespresso, a Swiss coffee giant, exemplifies the hope and limitations of a broader U.S. plan spearheaded by Vice President Kamala Harris to address the so-called root causes of migration from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Pitched to American audiences as a way to curb migration, the plan is premised on enlisting government and private companies to address crises in the region, which include drug cartel violence, natural disasters, environmental degradation, poverty and corruption. It calls for spending as much as \$4 billion in American taxpayer dollars and spurring at least \$750 million in private investments seeding an array of economic and social programs intended to instill everything from a more functional digital economy to democratic values. In the case of Nespresso, the U.S. administration hopes that the company's practice of paying farmers more for coffee beans and the expertise of its agronomists will diminish the allure of smugglers offering would-be migrants a perilous journey to the U.S.-Mexico border. The

Biden administration's overarching strategy faces significant hurdles both in the United States and in Central America.

[Mexico] U.S., Mexico to hold high-level security talks on Oct 8

Reuters [9/29/2021 7:33 PM, Diego Ore and Adriana Barrera, 5304K] reports U.S. and Mexican officials will hold high-level security talks on Oct. 8, Mexico's Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said on Wednesday. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland would participate in the talks in Mexico City, Ebrard said. "The main agenda is a document of understanding that we have been working on together with the United States...on the focus and priorities for security," he told reporters at an event in Mexico City

[Panama] Next border surge

Axios [9/29/2021 8:26 PM, Stef W. Kight, 526K] reports Panama foreign minister Erika Mouynes expressed frustration to Axios that the Biden administration seemed caught off guard by the Haitian migrant crisis because "we sounded the alarm when we should have." Why it matters: The worst may still be coming. Mouynes said there are as many as 60,000 migrants — mostly Haitian — poised to make their way north to the U.S.-Mexico border. Panama is expecting more migrants to cross through the dangerous jungles of the Darién Gap this month than in all of 2019 — nearly 27,000, according to Panamanian government estimates provided to Axios. Mouynes is calling on the U.S. to help enforce a plan coordinated with countries in the region, saying, ultimately, "Let's recognize that they all are heading toward the U.S." The foreign minister wrapped up meetings Monday and Tuesday in Washington with Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and members of Congress, among others. Mouynes expressed her exasperation to Axios after spending months warning leaders across the hemisphere of the impending Haitian wave. "We've engaged with every single authority that we can think of, that we can come across, to say, 'Please, let's pay attention to this,'" Mouynes said. A Homeland Security spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Panama is often the first country to provide medical help, food and shelter to northbound migrants — despite their travels through multiple South American countries like Colombia and Peru. "When we receive them on the Panamanian side, they're malnourished. The children are in terrible condition, so even getting them up to a healthy state takes time," the minister said.

[Afghanistan] Over 100 Americans evacuated from Afghanistan through private charter

Axios [9/29/2021 3:11 PM, Shawna Chen, 526K] reports the State Department said Wednesday that it is vetting and verifying the identities of over 100 U.S. citizens and permanent residents who were evacuated from Afghanistan through a charter plane this week, Reuters reports. The founder of the nonprofit Project Dynamo, which chartered the flight out of Kabul with Human First Coalition, said U.S. Customs and Border Protection had denied the charter flight landing rights in the U.S. Bryan Stern told Reuters that the Department of Homeland Security had notified authorities at the Abu Dhabi airport in the United Arab Emirates that one of the evacuees posed a "problem," but wasn't sure if that is why landing rights were denied. Evacuees included nine Special Immigrant Visa holders, according to the organizations, as well as 59 children under the age of 18 and 16 under age 3. "Our embassy staff in the UAE has been working around the clock to verify the accuracy of the passenger manifest and is coordinating with DHS/Customs and Border Protection on the ground to ensure the passengers are screened and vetted before they are permitted to

fly to the United States," a State Department spokesperson told CNN. All U.S.-bound flights "must follow the established safety, security, and health protocols before they are cleared for departure," a DHS spokesperson added. "This process requires flight manifests to be verified before departure to the U.S. to ensure all passengers are screened appropriately."

Reported similarly:

CNN [9/29/2021 11:59 AM, Jennifer Hansler and Jake Tapper, 4876K]

[Afghanistan] Americans evacuated from Kabul due to fly on to U.S.

Reuters [9/30/2021 2:44 AM, Jonathan Landay, 5304K] reports more than 100 U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents evacuated to Abu Dhabi from Afghanistan aboard a charter flight are expected to fly on to the United States on Thursday, the State Department and flight organizers said. U.S. officials on Wednesday were working to verify the accuracy of the list of passengers aboard the charter plane, the State Department said, after the flight's organizers said Washington denied it landing rights. "Our embassy staff in the UAE has been working around the clock to verify the accuracy of the passenger manifest and is coordinating with DHS/Customs and Border Protection on the ground to ensure the passengers are screened and vetted before they are permitted to fly to the United States," a State Department spokesperson said. "We expect the passengers to continue onward travel tomorrow morning," the spokesperson added. Bryan Stern, a founder of the nonprofit group Project Dynamo that chartered the flight out of Kabul, said late on Tuesday that the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection agency had denied landing rights for the charter flight in the United States. In a subsequent interview on Wednesday, Stern said that DHS had identified to authorities at Abu Dhabi airport in the United Arab Emirates one person among the evacuees as "a problem," but he did not know definitively whether this was the reason that landing rights were denied. Stern said they are scheduled to leave on morning flight on Thursday to Chicago, for which he will pay half and the State Department will pay half. Twenty-eight U.S. citizens, 83 lawful permanent residents - green card holders - and six people with U.S. Special Immigration Visas granted to Afghans who worked for the U.S. government during the 20-year war in Afghanistan were aboard the Kam Air flight, Stern said. "All U.S.-bound flights must follow the established safety, security and health protocols before they are cleared for departure," a DHS spokesperson said. "This process requires flight manifests to be verified before departure to the U.S. to ensure all passengers are screened appropriately."

[Afghanistan] Conditions deteriorate for American evacuees from Kabul stranded in UAE, organizers say

FOX News [9/29/2021 7:57 AM, Emma Colton, 9251K] reports the Department of Homeland Security denied landing rights in the U.S. for a charter flight carrying more than 100 Americans and green card holders from Afghanistan, according to organizers of the evacuation effort. "They will not allow a charter on an international flight into a U.S. port of entry," Bryan Stern, a founder of non-profit group Project Dynamo, told Reuters of Customs and Border Protection. The evacuation on Tuesday was part of a multi-group effort from Project Dynamo, the Human First Coalition and The Shadow Warriors Project to bring the Americans home. Families are currently being held in a hangar at an airport in Abu Dhabi, according to organizers of the evacuation. The conditions are poor, Fox News has learned, with limited food and water, no shower options, poor bathrooms, and restricted movement due to them being on an airfield, organizers say. Families are sleeping on tile floors and hard plastic chairs with limited access to potable water.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Senate parliamentarian rejects Democrats' Plan B for Dreamers and other immigrants

The [Los Angeles Times](#) [9/29/2021 5:37 PM, Jennifer Haberkorn, 3710K] reports a key Senate official dealt a second blow to immigration advocates who are hoping to secure a path to citizenship in the Democrats' social spending bill, ruling Wednesday that a second proposal would not comply with Senate rules, according to a document obtained by the Los Angeles Times. Democrats wanted to change the immigration registry, a once-obscure part of immigration law that allowed certain people in the country since 1972 to apply for citizenship, to be updated to include more recent arrivals. The Senate parliamentarian, Elizabeth MacDonough, said changing the date of entry for eligibility would not be allowed in the bill. "We'll go to Plan C," said Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.). He declined to reveal what that is. [Roll Call](#) [9/29/2021 3:09 PM, Caroline Simon, 119K] reports that following her meeting Wednesday with Senate Democrats, Parliamentarian Elizabeth MacDonough rejected plans to update the immigration registry through reconciliation, according to a Senate aide. MacDonough told lawmakers that updating the registry would be a "weighty policy change," according to materials obtained by CQ Roll Call. She hinted that any bill adjusting the status of millions of undocumented immigrants would not pass muster under Senate rules for budget reconciliation bills. "The change in status to LPR [lawful permanent residency] remains a life-long change in circumstances the value of which vastly outweighs its budgetary impact," she said.

Reported similarly:

[Bloomberg](#) [9/29/2021 3:08 PM, Laura Litvan, 6400K]

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 4:30 PM, Jordain Carney, 1776K]

[CBS News](#) [9/29/2021 3:27 PM, Camilo Montoya-Galvez, 2612K]

US diversity lottery winners wait on visas as time runs out

The [AP](#) [9/29/2021 2:59 PM, Amy Taxin] reports more than 20,000 people have sued after they were declared winners of the visa lottery and turned in the required paperwork but never got an interview or a shot at coming to the United States. The government has issued about a quarter of the visas allotted for the fiscal year ending in September after processing was halted during the coronavirus pandemic and then resumed at a much slower pace as other visa applications got priority, their attorneys said. A State Department official said the pandemic led to "profound reductions" in its capacity to process visas. While embassies and consulates have been instructed to try to prioritize the lottery cases, the U.S. likely won't issue the number of visas it could for the soon-to-be-ending fiscal year, the official said.

What is the Immigrant Registration Law and how it could give the "green card" to millions of undocumented immigrants

[Telemundo 51](#) [9/28/2021 2:47 PM, Staff, 14K] reports that uncertainty reigns around the next step for Democratic congressmen to open the path to citizenship for millions of undocumented immigrants. Senator from New Jersey, Bob Menéndez, reported last week that he plans to modify the Registry Law, created in 1929 and previously amended to protect undocumented families. Currently the registration date is for those who arrived in the country before January 1, 1972, but Democrats intend to change the registration date to 2010, which would benefit some nine million undocumented, according to estimates. After attempts to include the plan to grant citizenship to millions of undocumented immigrants under the Reconciliation Bill failed, Democrats opted for a plan B to achieve that goal and

the new focus is the Registration Act. Senators Dick Durbin, Alex Padilla, Bob Menéndez, Ray Luján and Catherine Cortez Masto seek to modify the registration date to expand the range of immigrants who benefit. The Registry Law allows undocumented persons who are living in the United States before January 1, 1972, to request legal resident status, provided they meet the criteria. Although the Democrats focus efforts on changing the date from 1972 to 2010, it would not be the only alternative in which they work. However, the Registration Law is a feasible alternative to benefit the undocumented, dreamers and people with temporary protected status, agricultural workers, among other non-citizens. If Congress succeeds in changing the registration date, millions of non-citizens could potentially apply for the status. According to the Department of Homeland Security, 47% of undocumented immigrants in the United States in 2018 had arrived before 2000. Depending on the date that Congress appoints, many of these undocumented residents could qualify for registration.

[Mexico] About 3,000 migrants are still waiting in Mexico for their asylum appointments in the US, many live in fear

Univision [9/29/2021 11:34 AM, Jorge Cancino, 366K] reports that some 3,000 migrants are waiting in Mexico for their asylum appointments in United States courts, after federal immigration authorities returned them under a policy implemented in the era of Donald Trump. The Migrant Protection Program, also known as Stay in Mexico, was activated in January 2018 as part of the previous government's 'zero tolerance' immigration policy. "In CONECTA there are about 3,000 people whose prosecution was suspended due to the litigation promoted by the States of Texas and Missouri," Sibylla Brodzinsky, communications director of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, told Univision News. in Mexico. "Within that group there are people from other countries," in addition to Mexico, she added. CONECTA is the digital page activated by UNHCR to help asylum seekers waiting in Mexican territory. Brodzinsky also said that in the waiting group "There are people with active PPM cases, others with closed cases and still others who are part of mixed families." UNHCR defines mixed families as groups that were in the process of having the Washington government confirm or deny their eligibility to return to the United States after the temporary cancellation of the program in January and continue their migratory asylum processes in the United States. Known as the Migrant Protection Program or Remain in Mexico Program, it was created at the end of 2018, was operational for two years and was canceled in January of this year by the Joe Biden government. But a federal court in Amarillo ordered the Department of Homeland Security to reinstate him. In the ruling, Judge Matthew J. Kacsmaryk said that the cancellation of the program had been arbitrary and that the government violated the Law of Administrative Procedure. The Justice Department appealed the ruling to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court, but both instances upheld the lower court's decision in response to a lawsuit brought by Texas and Missouri, both ruled by Republicans. Telemundo20 [9/29/2021 6:28 PM, Staff, 20K] reports that, in the midst of the crisis and with no encouraging outlook in sight, migrants who have been stranded in the city of Tijuana for several months now face another concern: the growing violence that plagues this Mexican border. The northwestern state of Baja California has registered more than 2,300 victims of organized crime so far this year. Of these, nearly 1,500 have occurred in Tijuana and only 128 are from September, according to data from the state Attorney General's Office. In the midst of this situation are the migrants living in the Agape shelter in the Nueva Aurora neighborhood, who in the same week experienced two armed confrontations between police and criminals in terror. On September 14, the first confrontation occurred after

Municipal Police officers chased a pair of armed men to the cemetery next to the migrant shelter, detaining one of them. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[Afghanistan] Afghans left behind face visa, logistical challenges as friends, family try to get them out

The Houston Chronicle [9/29/2021 6:40 PM, Elizabeth Trovall, 183K] reports Mohammad is one of many U.S. allies and other vulnerable Afghans struggling to flee their native country, despite receiving help from Houston-area attorneys, family members and U.S. military veterans. While the Biden administration has pledged its support for at-risk Afghans, there is concern they are being forgotten as they face a web of legal and logistical challenges to getting to safety. Mohammad, for example, is still waiting for an initial approval of his Special Immigrant Visa, a protection designated for Afghans and Iraqis who helped the U.S. military. Every time he asks about his case, it takes a month or so to hear back. The visa would allow him and his wife to come to the U.S., but he said it would be “a miracle” if they manage to stay alive with the visa process moving at such a crawl. In a written statement, a State Department spokesperson reaffirmed the Biden administration’s commitment to processing special visa applications of people still in Afghanistan. “We will honor our commitment to SIV (Special Immigrant Visa) applicants who stood by us and risked their lives in support of our mission in Afghanistan,” the spokesperson said.

Customs and Border Protection

Fake COVID-19 vaccine cards aren’t just dangerous, they’re illegal: Attorneys general

USA Today [9/29/2021 7:02 AM, Josh Stein and Herbert Slatery, 6282K] reports U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in Memphis, Tennessee, recently made a strange but increasingly more common seizure: a package filled with counterfeit COVID-19 vaccination cards imported from China. More than 120 similar packages filled with thousands of fake cards, with typos and misspelled words, have been seized this year in Memphis alone. As more municipalities, music venues, universities and employers institute vaccine requirements, many unvaccinated people are reevaluating their decision and are getting the COVID-19 vaccine. On the other hand, some are deciding to violate the law by creating fraudulent vaccine cards. As chief legal officers for our states, we want all our constituents to understand that selling or using fake vaccination cards is illegal and can result in fines or jail time. Throughout the country, state attorneys general are responsible for enforcing consumer protection laws. Earlier this year, we led a bipartisan coalition of almost all of our fellow attorneys general in asking major e-commerce and social media companies, including Twitter and eBay, to prevent the sale of blank or fraudulently completed COVID-19 vaccination cards on their platforms. False and deceptive marketing and sales of fake COVID-19 vaccination cards likely violate consumer protection laws in many states, but more important, they severely threaten the health of our residents.

[MI] Michigan nurse charged with selling fraudulent COVID-19 vaccine cards

The Hill [9/29/2021 8:48 PM, Caroline Vakil, 1776K] reports two Michigan residents, including a registered nurse, were arrested on Wednesday and charged with selling fraudulent COVID-19 vaccine cards. Bethann Kierczak, 37, faces charges of theft or embezzlement related to a healthcare benefit program and theft of government property. The complaint alleges that starting as early as May, the registered nurse distributed and sold real COVID-19 cards that had either been stolen or embezzled from a Veterans Affairs

hospital. In order for the cards to look even more authentic, Kierczak used stolen or embezzled vaccine lot numbers for the cards, prosecutors say. Kierczak is accused of using Facebook's Messenger feature to connect with potential buyers and sell the cards for between \$150 and \$200 each. Rapheal Jarrell Smiley, 32, was also arrested and faces charges of identity document fraud, trafficking in counterfeit goods and fraud involving department or agency seals. Prosecutors say Smiley operated a scheme to distribute and sell COVID-19 vaccination cards, though these cards were fake from the onset. The Detroit resident is accused of getting the cards from two Chinese shippers and then using several social media accounts to advertise the sale of the COVID-19 vaccine cards.

[TX] Illegal immigrants turn to drain pipes to sneak into U.S.

The Washington Times [9/29/2021 3:34 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports a group of illegal immigrants used a drain pipe Wednesday to sneak into the country in Hidalgo, Texas, according to Border Patrol agents who made the arrest. Agents were tipped to the group after being told people were using the local sewers. "In total, authorities arrested 20 migrants who were found to have used the drainage system to enter the country," Customs and Border Protection said. A day earlier, in Brownsville, three migrants were found inside a drainage pipe in that city. Agents spotted shoe prints entering the pipe and apprehended the three when they tried to come out. Those incidents followed another attempt through Hidalgo's drains on Sept. 18, when agents arrested three groups of migrants. Agents say they spotted people going into the drain in the early morning. They joined with local police officers to set up a perimeter and nabbed one group of three, then an hour later caught three more.

[TX] Border cities to sue Biden for 'failure to enforce the laws'

FOX News [9/29/2021 10:56 AM, Caitlin McFall, 9251K] reports that the county in Texas that witnessed the flood of 30,000 migrants earlier this month has said it will unite with neighboring counties to sue the Biden administration and push action at the southern border. "We've talked about immigration reform for as long as I can remember. Both parties have had control of Washington at one point or another over the last 20 years, and we have failed to do anything about it other than create the mess that we have today," Val Verde County Commissioner Beau Nettleton said in a Tuesday night meeting. Nettleton said it was time for fellow border counties and cities to join forces in a suit to challenge U.S. immigration policies that have led to the largest influx of migrants at the southern border in more than 20 years. U.S. Customs and Border Protection have reported more than 1.5 million illegal bordering crossings during the fiscal year 2021 - a figure that has not yet included the number of illegal encounters during the month of September. "I don't have the answer as to whether a lawsuit solves this problem, but it draws attention to this problem," Nettleton said. "They took the same oath of office that I did, which was to uphold the constitution they need to comply with that oath and do their job and stop this mess." President Biden has received fierce backlash from both Republicans and Democrats on the Hill for the administration's failure to address the crisis at the southern border. Democrats are furious over the continued use of Trump-era policies, like Title 42, which permits expedited deportations as a precaution to the coronavirus pandemic. Members of the GOP have claimed Trump-era policies that stymied that flow migrants have been made ineffective.

[TX] Del Rio residents respond to viral Border Patrol images taken near their community

FOX News [9/29/2021 6:49 AM, Lisa Bennatan, 9251K] reports locals in Del Rio, Texas, who spoke with Fox News overwhelmingly supported Border Patrol, despite recent viral images from their community that sparked criticism and an internal investigation. "It brought me to tears," one longtime resident said. "These men are giving their lives, leaving their families, to come here and to secure us. I'm personally very thankful." The resident's wife added: "We've been here for 54 years ... I've watched when there was a multitude of people coming, their kindness to them." Images of Border Patrol agents on horseback catching Haitian migrants in Del Rio recently went viral. The agents were falsely accused of whipping the migrants. "We back them completely," the woman said. "We say don't lie about them. Please don't lie about them." Diane, who lives right on the border, told Fox News: "Border Patrol are phenomenal." In response to the photos, President Biden said it was "horrible," "outrageous" and that these people "would pay." Horse patrols were temporarily suspended while the Department of Homeland Security investigates the incident. White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki was asked Monday whether new information released contrasting the narrative that migrants were whipped changed anything.

[WA] Greyhound Agrees to Pay \$2.2 Million Over Immigration Sweeps on Buses

The New York Times [9/29/2021 6:32 PM, Michael Levenson, 24635K] reports Greyhound Lines will pay \$2.2 million to resolve a lawsuit filed by Washington State that accused it of allowing U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents to conduct warrantless immigration sweeps on its buses, state officials said this week. Washington State's attorney general said the settlement would be used to provide restitution to passengers who were detained, arrested or deported after immigration agents boarded their buses at the Spokane Intermodal Center, and for partial reimbursement of his office's litigation costs. Greyhound failed to warn customers of the sweeps, misrepresented its role in allowing the sweeps to occur and subjected its passengers to discrimination based on race, skin color or national origin, according to the attorney general, Bob Ferguson. Mr. Ferguson's office estimates that since 2013, as many as 57,000 passengers may have been on buses that were boarded by immigration agents at the Spokane Intermodal Center. The office said that about 250 of those passengers might have been detained.

Reported similarly:

Axios [9/29/2021 7:20 PM, Ivana Saric, 526K]

Transportation Security Administration

[FL] American Airlines passenger detained after allegedly opening emergency exit, walking on wing

FOX News [9/29/2021 11:12 PM, David Aaro, 9251K] reports a passenger was detained Wednesday evening in South Florida after he allegedly opened a plane's emergency exit and walked on the wing. Officials said the incident happened around 7:30 p.m. on an American Airlines flight that had just arrived in Miami from Colombia. The passenger exited the plane as it reached the terminal at Miami International Airport. "During deplaning in Miami, a customer on American Airlines flight 920 with service from Cali, Colombia (CLO) to MIA exited the aircraft via an emergency exit. The customer was immediately detained by law enforcement. We thank our team members and law enforcement for their professionalism and quick action," American Airlines spokeswoman Whitney Zastrow told

Fox News. The passenger was identified as Christian Segura, 33, an American citizen, Miami's WPLG-TV reported.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Hurricane Sam to kick up 'life-threatening' surf along East Coast this weekend

USA Today [9/29/2021 5:45 PM, Doyle Rice, 6282K] reports that expect some dangerous surf if you're headed to the beach this weekend along the East Coast. "Significant" swells from Hurricane Sam though hundreds of miles offshore "will likely cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions, and beachgoers are urged to follow the advice of lifeguards and local officials through the upcoming weekend," the National Hurricane Center warned. It is also possible that wave action may produce minor flooding at times of high tide in areas prone to taking on water during nor'easters, AccuWeather said. "Right now we're not forecasting it to make landfall over any coastal locations, but it's certainly a big hazard for ships at sea, and again those swells are impacting a large area of the western Atlantic," hurricane center senior specialist Richard Pasch said. Forecasters said large swells already were hitting the Leeward Islands and will spread to portions of the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, the Bahamas and Bermuda by Thursday or Friday as the storm curves northward. As of Wednesday morning, Sam was the most powerful storm on the planet, according to AccuWeather. The Category 4 hurricane, packing 130 mph winds, was churning 385 miles to the east-northeast of the northern Leeward Islands and moving northwest at 9 mph. Sam should maintain major hurricane intensity status (Category 3 or higher) because of light wind shear and warm water along its projected path, AccuWeather senior meteorologist Adam Douty said. Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Victor formed Wednesday afternoon in the far eastern Atlantic Ocean, the hurricane center said. It's expected to become Hurricane Victor within the next couple of days. The forecast for the storm, however, shows it curving north and staying away from land as it spins over the open ocean. Victor is the 20th named storm of the 2021 Atlantic hurricane season.

Federal response to wildfires must change, Forest Service chief says

The Los Angeles Times [9/29/2021 4:02 PM, Erin B. Logan, 3710K] reports the U.S. Forest Service needs to hire more firefighters and reconfigure how it mitigates the risk of wildfires that are growing more intense, the head of the agency told lawmakers on Wednesday. This year "has been devastating in not only the size and frequency of large wildfires but also in terms of sustained activity," U.S. Forest Service Chief Randy Moore testified before the House Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry. Moore blamed the severity of recent fire seasons on extreme drought, a warming climate and a century of "overly aggressive suppression policies" that have made forests ripe for more destructive fires. As of Monday, about 46,000 fires have burned nearly 6 million acres across the West this year, destroying 4,500 structures and killing four federal firefighters this year, Moore said. About 27,000 firefighters have been deployed by the federal government to fight wildfires this year, but they are still stretched thin. The problem reached a critical point this summer when a burst of early wildfires began in the West amid extreme staffing shortages. A combination of low pay, competition from state and local fire departments and exhaustion from longer and more destructive fire seasons has left federal agencies scrambling to fill positions. The forest chief told lawmakers that his agency would instead focus on mitigating the impact of wildfires by more aggressively treating forests before fires begin. Such treatments include thinning underbrush and debris, and clearing dead branches and trees to reduce potential

fuel for blazes. Moore testified that such treatments near Lake Tahoe helped stymie the spread of the Caldor fire last month, saving homes and lives.

[VT] President signs disaster declaration after Vermont storms

The AP [9/29/2021 4:06 PM, Staff] reports President Joe Biden has signed a disaster declaration for damage caused by storms that hit the southern Vermont counties of Windham and Bennington at the end of July, the office of Vermont Gov. Phil Scott said Wednesday. The presidential declaration comes after officials identified more than \$5 million in damage to public infrastructure from the storms on July 29 and 30. "We're grateful for the help coming our way, as it will significantly lessen the financial impact of this storm on towns in Bennington and Windham counties," Scott said in a statement. Previously awarded hazard mitigation funding coupled with the new disaster declaration will make it possible for affected communities to protect against future damage, the state said. "This is the time for towns to think big and make lasting changes to public infrastructure that will protect lives and cut the cost of future disaster recovery," said Vermont Emergency Management Director Erica Bornemann.

[LA] Hurricane Ida devastation lingers in Louisiana 1 month later

The AP [9/29/2021 6:24 PM, Stacey Plaisance, 302K] reports that the land on which Audrey Trufant Salvant's home sits in the small Louisiana town of Ironton has become an island in a sea of mud and snake-infested marsh grass. Nearby houses are disconnected from their foundations, a refrigerator is lodged sideways in a tree, and dozens of caskets and tombs from two nearby cemeteries are strewn across lawns for blocks. A month after Hurricane Ida roared ashore with 150-mph winds, communities all along the state's southeastern coast - Ironton, Grand Isle, Houma, Lafitte and Barataria - are still suffering from the devastating effects of the Category 4 storm. Many, like Trufant Salvant, are bunking with relatives until they can get back into their homes. Others are staying in hotels or have left the state, she said. Some residents have returned to pick up what few belongings may have survived the flood, but she says they aren't finding much to salvage - the storm surge generated by Ida rose as high as some homes' rooftops. "The day that they allowed folks to come back in here, it was like a funeral," she said. "Everybody was just heartbroken, because we had seen devastation before ... but we had never seen anything like this." Churches and charity organizations are working to help, but the destruction is so far-reaching, there don't seem to be enough donations to go around, said Michael Williamson, head of the United Way of Southeast Louisiana, which covers seven parishes hit by Ida. The storage room in the United Way's New Orleans headquarters - typically filled with donated food, water, tarps and cleaning supplies for residents in storm-battered communities - is nearly bare. Donations have been slow to trickle in compared to previous storms, even smaller ones, and there's not enough to meet the demand, Williamson said.

[IL] Chicago installing 'Bleeding Control Kits' around city amid gun violence

The Hill [9/29/2021 1:53 PM, Rema Rahman, 1776K] reports Chicago has begun installing "Bleeding Control Kits" across the city under the new Safe Chicago program amid an increase in gun violence. The city will install 426 Bleeding Control Kits in 269 Chicago buildings, including City Hall and Chicago Public Library locations. Each kit can treat up to eight victims. Every kit comes equipped with a tourniquet, gauze, shears, gloves, and an instruction manual on how to best use it in instances of "life threatening bleeding emergencies" that can result from falls, penetrating injuries (such as stabbings), gunshot wounds, and more. Announced earlier this month to coincide with National Preparedness

Month, the program was launched by the Office of Emergency Management and Communications and the Federal Emergency Management Agency in partnership with the Chicago Fire Department, Chicago Police Department, and Assets and Information Services. As of Monday, Chicago has reported 2,688 shootings, an 11 percent increase from this time last year, as well as 602 homicides, marking a 4 percent increase. The data does not specify the homicide causes of death.

[HI] Hawaii's Kilauea volcano erupts, lava fountains form in park

The [AP](#) [9/29/2021 10:19 PM, Caleb Jones, 302K] reports one of the most active volcanos on Earth is erupting on Hawaii's Big Island. Officials with the U.S. Geological Survey confirmed Wednesday that an eruption has begun in Kilauea volcano's Halemaumau crater at the volcano's summit. Webcam footage of the crater showed lava fountains covering the floor of the crater and billowing clouds of volcanic gas were rising into the air. The same area has been home to a large lava lake at various times throughout the volcano's eruptive past. The eruption is not in an area with homes and is entirely contained within Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. "All signs indicate that it will stay within the crater," said Ken Hon, the USGS scientist in charge of Hawaii Volcano Observatory. "We're not seeing any indications that lava is moving into the lower part of the east rift zone where people live. Currently all the activity is within the park." The volcano's alert level has been raised to "warning" and the aviation code changed to red. Earlier Wednesday, officials said increased earthquake activity and ground swelling had been detected, and at that time raised the alert levels accordingly. Kilauea had a major eruption in 2018 that destroyed more than 700 homes and displaced thousands of residents. Before that eruption, the volcano had been slowly erupting for decades, but mostly not in densely populated residential areas. Before the major 2018 eruption, Kilauea had been erupting since 1983 and streams of lava occasionally covered rural farms and homes. During that time, the lava sometimes reached the ocean, causing dramatic interactions with the water.

Federal Protective Service

Homeland Security officials told Pentagon 'no major incidents of illegal activity' after Capitol riot began

[Yahoo! News](#) [9/29/2021 12:13 PM, John Bowden, 13869K] reports that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) sent an advisory to the US Army stating that "no major incidents of illegal activity" had occurred around the US Capitol even as the 6 January attack on the US Capitol had clearly begun. An email obtained through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request and published by Politico on Wednesday revealed that DHS sent the above guidance to the Army shortly before 1:40 p.m. local time, nearly an hour after a pipe bomb had been discovered at around 12:45 p.m. outside of the Republican National Committee (RNC) headquarters, located just a block from the Cannon House Office Building. The guidance covered the past two hours, during which officers from US Capitol Police were dispatched to respond to the scene of the bomb's discovery. Other agencies, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the FBI, also responded to the bomb, as well as a second device discovered shortly after outside of the Democratic National Committee's headquarters. At the same time that DHS was sending guidance dismissing the severity of what was occurring at the Capitol and around Washington, DC, the attack on the Capitol itself had already begun. Numerous media reports indicated that US Capitol Police barricades on the western perimeter of the complex had already been breached by the time DHS sent its advisory, and rioters including members of the right-wing

Proud Boys group, known for their violent tactics, had already clashed with officers. DHS officials did not immediately respond to questions about the early afternoon guidance sent to the Army when contacted by The Independent, and declined to answer Politico's inquiries. "Under Secretary Mayorkas' leadership, addressing domestic violent extremism is a top priority for DHS," an agency spokesperson told the news outlet. "The Department is working closely with federal, state, local, tribal, and non-government partners to improve our ability to detect, evaluate, and mitigate the threats posed by domestic terrorists."

Secret Service

Secret Service agents are getting tapped out by the workload

The [Federal News Network](#) [9/29/2021 12:10 PM, Eric White, 49K] reports that the mission of the Secret Service is stressing out its workforce. The National Academy of Public Administration said its employees are doing more than ever with less. Employees are working more overtime. And the agency is still recovering from recent budget cuts due to sequestration and hiring freezes. The Secret Service asked the academy to review its employee viewpoint survey results and recent efforts to improve workforce engagement. The academy said employee engagement has plateaued since 2019. It made 48 recommendations on how the Secret Service can build on recent progress. [Editorial note: consult audio at source link]

[NH] Peterborough, ConVal strike deal on scam fund repayment

[Monadnock Ledger-Transcript](#) [9/29/2021 3:21 PM, Rick Green, 5K, Neutral, Secondary] reports the town of Peterborough, which was bilked out of a \$1.2 million payment intended for the ConVal School District, has reached an agreement with the district on how to start repaying the lost money. An additional \$125,000 per month will be added to the town's payment to the district through December "with the understanding that as soon as the Town was able we would bring the account current," Town Administrator Nicole MacStay said in an email Monday. The town's July 23 electronic payment to the school district went missing along with two payments to bridge contractor Beck & Bellucci. Fraudsters posing as the district and the contractor persuaded town staff members by email to change the routing of the transactions. Money lost in the scam totaled \$2.3 million before the Secret Service recovered \$594,331 intended for the bridge contractor. The town has repaid the balance of the money it owed to the Beck & Bellucci. It's not clear how much of the overall loss may be covered by the town's NH Primex insurance.

[NY] Oneida police warn of counterfeit bills circulating around city

[NBC-WKTV News Channel 2](#) [9/29/2021 2:21 PM, Staff, 15K, Neutral, Secondary] reports Oneida City Police have seen an uptick in counterfeit \$20 bills circulating in the area, and want residents to be mindful when receiving cash. Police say the counterfeit bills they've confiscated have spelling errors and foreign characters on the front and back. Any businesses taking cash as payment should also look carefully for signs of the bills are phony before accepting them.

[KY] Lexington Man Sentenced to 120 Months for Investment Fraud

The [United States Department of Justice](#) [9/29/2021 9:00 AM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a Lexington, Ky., man, William S. Evans, III, 69, was sentenced to 120 months in federal prison Tuesday, by U.S. District Court Judge Karen K. Caldwell, for commodities

fraud and wire fraud. Evans, doing business as Turning Point Investments, purported to be a professional investor and solicited substantial amounts of money from numerous friends and acquaintances as investments, into a fund that he would manage by investing on the commodity futures market. According to his plea agreement, he accepted funds from more than 20 investors, amounting to nearly \$17 million, and invested a portion of that money on the commodity futures market, without registering as a commodity pool operator. Evans convinced investors to turn over savings and liquidate their retirement accounts, promising substantial gains, low-risks, and coverage for any tax penalties. He reported back to his investors that there were substantial gains on their investments, paid out distributions upon request, and continuously solicited more investments. However, in reality, Evans lost nearly all the funds he invested on the commodity futures market, paid people distributions out of other people's investments, and spent some of the investment funds on personal expenditures. Evans pleaded guilty in June 2021. Evans was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$16,934,773.40. Carlton S. Shier, IV, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Robert Holman, Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service; and Charles Vice, Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Financial Institutions; made the announcement.

[FL] Ocoee man gets prison for using fake IDs in lawmakers' names to pass bad checks at Lowe's stores

The Orlando Sentinel [9/29/2021 11:00 AM, Jeff Weiner, Positive, Secondary] reports a 51-year-old Ocoee man was sentenced to more than six years in prison this week for passing hundreds of fake checks at Lowe's stores across Central Florida — using fake IDs bearing the names of current and former politicians, according to federal authorities. Michael T. Watters pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft and wire fraud in June, as part of a plea deal with prosecutors. According to his plea agreement, Watters came under investigation by the U.S. Secret Service in May 2019, after a corporate fraud investigator reported that he had passed "numerous" counterfeit checks at Lowe's stores in the Orlando area to buy merchandise he later returned for cash. Federal investigators eventually determined Watters had passed 265 counterfeit checks at various Lowe's locations between December 2018 and May 2019, often while being recorded by surveillance cameras. In order to pass the fake checks, Watters presented Lowe's workers with a variety of fake IDs, his plea deal states, most of which featured the names, dates of birth and driver's license numbers of real people. Most of the people were current and former lawmakers, including several members of the state House and Senate, federal authorities said. The victimized lawmakers were identified only by initials in court records. In total, Watters' haul from the fraudulent transactions was more than \$50,000, according to the plea agreement.

[IN] Body of missing teen found

The Corydon Democrat [9/29/2021 9:26 AM, Staff, Neutral, Secondary] reports a week after a Corydon teenage was reported missing, his body was found within a couple of miles of his home. The Harrison County Sheriff's Dept., along with the FBI and Secret Service, had been looking for 14-year-old Jacob McCarty since he was reported missing by his father, Jeremiah McCarty, on Tuesday, Sept. 21. According to police, the teen was last seen at approximately 4 p.m. that day at his home. He had left home to take his dog, Isabella, a German shepherd, on a walk in the woods near his home. Harrison County Sheriff Nick Smith had shared in a Facebook video post that the police department has searched the area by ground and by air numerous times and had utilized K-9 teams, as well, but had been unable to find the teen. In a press release issued last night (Tuesday), the sheriff's

department said it had received information from a person who said she may have seen Jacob and his dog walking west along Interstate 64 just after 5 p.m. on Sept. 21. This was followed by a business owner who provided security camera footage showing what appeared to be a person walking along I-64 just after 5 p.m. last Tuesday.

[TX] Local high school student arrested on child porn charges

[Valleycentral.com](#) [9/29/2021 7:40 PM, Sydney Hernandez, 20K, Positive] reports a 17-year-old man from Donna was arrested for possessing hundreds of images and videos of child pornography, Wednesday morning. A federal investigation prompted the search of the teen's home on Date Palm Drive in Donna where agents and officers found the illegal images. Edmundo Parra Jr. was arrested by Donna Police around 7:30 Wednesday morning. Parra was taken into custody where he is facing the third-degree felony charge of the possession of child pornography in the state of Texas could lead to a conviction that imposes up to a \$10,000 fine and ten years in state prison. Judge Javier Garza issued Parra a \$5,000 dollar bond. The investigation conducted was by the Donna Police Department Criminal Investigations Division, United States Secret Service, and U.S. Department of Homeland Security Investigations.

[NE] Fake \$100 bill used at Lincoln garage sale

[KOLN/KGIN](#) [9/29/2021 10:40 PM, Ellis Wiltsey, 20K, Neutral] reports one Lincoln family is putting out an alert after they received a fake \$100 bill during a weekend garage sale. They hope others can learn from their mistake and that people who are hosting similar sales are on alert. Christine Goodwin said the sale was to hopefully raise money to replace old appliances around her home. Cash is short in her family's single-income home she shares with her husband and almost 2-year-old son. Now, they're out \$40 and the two items she was swindled out of as well. The fake \$100 bill looks and feel is pretty authentic until you take a much closer look. Small wording printed on it says it's not actual currency. Goodwin said the man who paid her with it hung around the garage sale for some time, perusing various items. The Better Business Bureau said scammers in this type of scenario will often target places like garage sales because the people running them are not trained to recognize the signs of a counterfeit bill. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[Nigeria] Businessman docked for possession of fake dollars, euro

[Pulse](#) [9/29/2021 3:03 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports the police charged Shehu of Kankia Street, Ungwar Sarki, Kaduna with a two-count charge of using as genuine counterfeit and cheating. The prosecution counsel, Fidelis Ogbobe told the court that the complainant, Halima Gambo of Bangu Street, off Durban Street, Wuse 2, Abuja reported the matter at the Area Commander's office, Metro- Maitama, Abuja. Ogbobe alleged that on June 2, the defendant, his wife, along with two others currently at large, conspired and deceived the complainant into transferring N5.2 million into his wife's bank account for a contract he was going to facilitate from Kaduna State Procurement Board for the complainant. The prosecutor in addition alleged that when it was discovered that the said contract was a fraud, the defendant offered to refund the complainant's money. The defendant however, pleaded not guilty.

Coast Guard

Risk of oil spills may rise as climate change creates more monster storms

ABC News [9/29/2021 10:05 AM, Julia Jacobo, 37K] reports that Hurricane Ida left a trail of destruction after slamming into the Gulf Coast, but offshore the Category 4 storm left something else in its wake: oil spills. Oil spills aren't uncommon with strong storms, but as climate change pushes up sea levels and creates stronger storms with more moisture, offshore refineries are going to need greater and greater protections. The Gulf of Mexico is "particularly vulnerable" because of the prevalence of storms, the low-lying geography, sea-level rise, receding shorelines and the presence of oil facilities, Christopher Vaccaro, a spokesman for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, told ABC News. Since offshore drilling began in the region in 1942, about 6,000 oil and gas structures have been installed in the Gulf of Mexico. On Sept. 4, the day before Ida made landfall in Louisiana, the Coast Guard announced that cleanup crews already were responding to a large oil spill at an offshore drilling about 2 miles south of Port Fourchon, Louisiana. The oil, which came from an underwater pipeline, appeared in satellite images to drift east for dozens of miles. More than 100 birds were found to be soaked in crude oil, according to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and the Coast Guard began investigating nearly 350 reports of oil spills as a result of the storm. "We've seen the damage that hurricanes do in regions that have offshore drilling and oil production and refining," Jacqueline Savitz, chief policy officer for ocean conservation nonprofit Oceana, told ABC News. "And we can expect that to continue." Oil spills are just another disastrous consequence from natural disasters made worse by warming temperatures. One of the many destructive results of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 was the 8 million gallons of oil spilled as a result of the Category 5 storm.

[IN] Steel plant restarts after discharge into Indiana waterway

The AP [9/29/2021 4:33 PM, Staff] reports operations resumed Wednesday at a steel plant in northwestern Indiana that was temporarily shut down after it leaked wastewater containing elevated levels of iron causing an orange plume in a Lake Michigan tributary. The U.S. Steel Midwest plant in Portage was back up and running Wednesday, according to The (Northwest Indiana) Times. U.S. Steel idled the plant about 30 miles (48 kilometers) east of Chicago as a precaution after it said a wastewater treatment facility experienced "an upset condition" that sent the rusty colored plume into the waterway Sunday. The U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are expected to release more details on the spill Wednesday, U.S. Steel spokeswoman Amanda Malkowski said.

[CA] Coast Guard: Report of plane crashing off Carlsbad coast unfounded

The San Diego Union Tribune [9/29/2021 4:23 PM, Karen Kucher, 302K] reports Coast Guard personnel conducted a search Wednesday afternoon off the coast of Carlsbad after a boater reported a small plane may have gone down, but the report turned out to be unfounded, authorities said. The agency called off the search by mid-afternoon after learning the aircraft had made a safe landing at a nearby airport, Petty Officer 1st Class Adam Stanton, a Coast Guard spokesman, said. Coast Guard crews aboard a helicopter and a boat began their search late Wednesday morning after a boater reported seeing the low-flying plane disappear from view, Stanton said. The person said they saw the aircraft flying low, turned around momentarily and then didn't see the plane again. Stanton said the person on the boat reported the possible crash on an emergency radio channel and it was relayed to the Coast Guard. The person who reported it didn't see any splash, crash or debris in the water, but Stanton said the agency searched for several hours anyway, just to be sure.

CISA/Cybersecurity

Lawmakers demand briefing on FBI's decision to withhold Kaseya decryption key

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 3:48 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports the leaders of the House Oversight and Reform Committee on Wednesday demanded a briefing from the FBI on its decision to withhold for three weeks the decryption key necessary for companies impacted by the ransomware attack on IT company Kaseya to recover. The request came a week after [The Washington Post](#) first reported that the FBI, in consultation with other agencies, chose to hold on to the decryption key as part of a planned effort to disrupt REvil, the Russian-based cybercriminal group behind the attack on Kaseya. "Although the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reportedly obtained a digital decryptor key that could have unlocked affected systems, it withheld this tool for nearly three weeks as it worked to disrupt the attack, potentially costing the ransomware victims—including schools and hospitals—millions of dollars," Committee Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) and ranking member Rep. James Comer (R-Ky.) wrote in a letter sent to FBI Director Christopher Wray Wednesday. "We request information to understand the rationale behind the FBI's decision to withhold this digital decryptor key and the agency's approach to responding to ransomware attacks," the lawmakers wrote. Wray defended the decision in the face of intense questioning by members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee last week. "When it comes to the issue of encryption keys or decryption keys, there is a lot of testing and validating that is required to make sure that they are going to actually do what they are supposed to do, and there is a lot engineering that is required to develop a tool that is required to put the tool in use," Wray testified. "Sometimes we have to make calculations about how best to help the most people, because maximizing impact is always the goal." He also stressed that the FBI made the decision in conjunction with agencies including the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), describing it as a "complex, case-specific" issue.

House passes legislation to strengthen federal cybersecurity workforce

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 2:42 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports the House on Wednesday passed bipartisan legislation aimed at strengthening the federal cybersecurity workforce, an issue that has garnered support following a year of massive information security incidents. The Federal Rotational Cyber Workforce Program Act, sponsored by Reps. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.) and Nancy Mace (R-S.C.), would establish a program to allow cybersecurity professionals to rotate through multiple federal agencies and enhance their expertise. The bill would also encourage federal agency leaders to identify cybersecurity positions that can be rotated through government, and give the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) jurisdiction over the Federal Rotational Cyber Workforce Program. "We have to make sure that our government is protected from increasing cyberattacks," Khanna said Wednesday in a statement provided to [The Hill](#). "That doesn't just mean ensuring the Pentagon and the Department of Defense are well-equipped to tackle these threats. It means ensuring that we have a comprehensive approach to cybersecurity implemented across all of our federal agencies."

Standardizing the playbook for responding to cyber vulnerabilities, incidents

[The Federal News Network](#) [9/29/2021 12:30 PM, Patience Wait, 49K] reports that it is hard to quantify how much the federal government has been hobbled in its responses to cyber incidents by not having uniform procedures to identify, remediate and recover from vulnerabilities and attacks. There is no doubt that the lack of a single set of standards

makes it difficult for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to track agencies' responses, their effectiveness and their compliance with National Institute of Standards and Technology standards such as multi-factor authentication. Section 6 of President Joe Biden's cyber executive order aims to address this shortcoming by having CISA work with the director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Federal Chief Information Officers Council, the Federal Chief Information Security Officers Council, the director of the National Security Agency, the Attorney General and the director of National Intelligence. They are tasked with creating a standard set of operational procedures "To be used in planning and conducting a cybersecurity vulnerability and incident response activity respecting federal civilian executive branch" information systems. This playbook, as the executive order names it, will incorporate all appropriate standards laid out by NIST, and lay out what milestones signify progress and completion through all phases of incident response. At the same time, the progression through those steps must allow for flexibility so it can be used for a variety of responses.

CISA to maintain 'rumor control' site to counter false claims in future elections

The Hill [9/29/2021 12:40 PM, Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports that the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) will use its "rumor control" website to counter disinformation and misinformation during future elections despite the site's role in former President Trump ousting several of the agency's top officials in 2020. CISA Director Jen Easterly made the announcement Wednesday, noting her concern around misleading election claims and saying the site would be one of the efforts to combat disinformation and misinformation that the agency is pursuing ahead of next year's midterm elections. "So rumor control, when I looked at this as a private citizen, I saw what CISA was doing, which is really making sure that the American people have the facts that they need," Easterly said during a keynote at the Aspen Institute's Cyber Summit. "I worry a lot about misinformation and disinformation as a citizen, but also as a mom." "If you don't have the facts, if you don't have the best information, you can't make the best decisions," Easterly said. "So we are going to continue with rumor control, we are also going to continue with some innovative things, graphic novels, which is kind of cool." The rumor control site, first used in 2020, was one of the key reasons Trump fired former CISA Director Chris Krebs following the 2020 presidential election. The White House also forced former CISA Deputy Director Matthew Travis and Bryan Ware, a former top CISA cyber official, to resign. The page worked to debunk voter fraud and election interference claims in the days after the 2020 presidential election. Krebs later blamed Trump for being a "big part of the disinformation" around the presidential election. Former CISA acting Director Brandon Wales, who took over CISA after Krebs and the other officials were forced out, said in December that the rumor control page would remain up through January and the Georgia Senate runoff elections, but Easterly's announcement Wednesday means the page will stay up indefinitely.

Terrorism Investigations

Investigating the threat of white supremacy and domestic terrorism

CBS News [9/29/2021 5:24 PM, Nicole Sganga, 2612K] reports CBS News homeland security and justice reporter Nicole Sganga joins CBSN's "Red & Blue" to discuss Wednesday's House committee hearing on domestic terrorism and white supremacy in America. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[NY] N.Y. Uber driver tried to travel to Afghanistan to join the Taliban, prosecutors say

The [Washington Post](#) [9/29/2021 7:11 PM, Shayna Jacobs, 11773K] reports an Uber driver on trial for planning to travel to Afghanistan to kill U.S. citizens there was on his way to complete his mission when he was arrested at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport in July 2019, federal prosecutors said in opening statements Wednesday. Delowar Mohammed Hossain, 36, was headed to Afghanistan with a goal of becoming a member of the Taliban, a "violent, brutal group . . . who the U.S. government designated as terrorists," Assistant U.S. Attorney Ben Schrier said at the outset of Hossain's trial in U.S. District Court in Manhattan. Hossain was expecting to fly to Thailand, his first stop on a journey to a conflict zone where he hoped he could help the Taliban murder many Americans, Schrier said. "He wasn't just any other traveler — he was on a mission to Afghanistan to join the Taliban and kill Americans," he said. "And he was on his way." Hossain faces decades in prison if convicted on two counts: attempting to provide material support and resources to terrorism and attempting to support the Taliban. The recent withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan enabled the Taliban to swiftly regain control of the country. By 2019, when Hossain decided he would leave his family and join a fundamentalist group, the Taliban "had already killed thousands of Americans," Schrier added. Hossain, of the Bronx, allegedly spent about a year plotting his trip. In that time, he studied literature of al-Qaeda, the Islamist terrorist group founded by Osama bin Laden. The literature included bombmaking instructions and a guide on pursuing jihad.

[DC] Jan. 6 investigators subpoena organizers of rallies that preceded Capitol attack

[Politico](#) [9/29/2021 7:20 PM, Betsy Woodruff Swan, Kyle Cheney and Nicholas Wu, 1707K] The Jan. 6 select committee has subpoenaed Katrina Pierson, a veteran Trump campaign operative who helped organize the Jan. 6 rally that preceded the insurrection at the Capitol. The subpoena was one of 11 issued to organizers of the events of Jan. 5 and Jan. 6, which drew thousands of Trump supporters — including those who turned violent at the Capitol — to Washington. Targets also included top organizers Amy Kremer and Caroline Wren, as well as Maggie Mulvaney — the niece of former Trump chief of staff Mick Mulvaney — who was described in official paperwork as the "VIP Lead" for the rally. The new round of subpoenas demands documents from the organizers by Oct. 13 and depositions between Oct. 21 and Nov. 3. The targets include organizers affiliated with a group called Women for America First, which helped lead the Jan. 6 rally at the Ellipse. The group's leaders include Kremer and Wren. The panel specifically is asking Pierson about a reported Jan. 4 meeting she had with then-President Donald Trump at which he asked about a separate event featuring speakers like Ali Alexander and Roger Stone. Pierson reportedly informed Trump about a Jan. 5 rally organized by a group called the Eighty Percent Coalition, whose leader Cindy Chafian also received one of the 11 subpoenas.

Reported similarly:

[CNN](#) [9/29/2021 7:48 PM, Annie Grayer, Ryan Nobles, Whitney Wild, Zachary Cohen, 4876K]

[WA] US jury convicts leader of neo-Nazi threat campaign

The [AP](#) [9/29/2021 6:21 PM, Gene Johnson, 2701K] reports a federal jury in Seattle on Wednesday convicted a leader of a neo-Nazi campaign to threaten journalists and Jewish activists in three states. The jury deliberated for about 90 minutes Wednesday following a two-day trial before convicting 25-year-old Kaleb Cole of five felony charges, including

conspiracy, mailing threatening communications and interfering with a federally protected activity. He could face a decade in prison when Judge John C. Coughenour sentences him in January. Cole, most recently of Montgomery, Texas, was a leader of a hate group called Atomwaffen Division. He and four others were charged last year with having cyberstalked and sent Swastika-laden posters to journalists and employees of the Anti-Defamation League in Washington state, Arizona and Florida, telling them, “You have been visited by your local Nazis,” “Your Actions have Consequences,” and “We are Watching.” The posters included images such as a hooded figure preparing to throw a Molotov cocktail at a house, and the words “Death to Pigs” — the same message followers of Charles Manson scrawled in victims’ blood during a home invasion murder. Cole has been on law enforcement’s radar since at least 2018, when he was stopped at U.S. Customs upon returning from a trip to Europe. Authorities searched his cell phone and found photos of him at various sites throughout Europe, displaying a white supremacist flag and performing the Nazi salute.

National Security News

U.S., Europe Team Up to Address Chip Shortage, Tech Issues

The [Wall Street Journal](#) [9/29/2021 6:23 PM, Yuka Hayashi] reports U.S. and European Union officials agreed to join forces in an effort to boost the semiconductor supply chain and maintain leadership in emerging technologies. In a joint statement Wednesday, the new U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council said the two governments will “seek to strengthen their competitiveness and technological leadership by developing common strategies to mitigate the impact of non-market practices at home and in third countries.” While the statement didn’t mention China by name, Beijing’s economic practices—including subsidies for favored industries—were one of the factors behind the commission’s formation. “We know a big part of this is due to the behavior of China,” a senior European trade official said. In their meetings Wednesday, officials discussed ways to reinforce semiconductor supply chains and to strengthen export controls and investment screening to protect sensitive technologies and data. The two sides will also develop and implement artificial-intelligence systems that will protect privacy and human rights. The U.S. was represented by Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai. [Reuters](#) [9/29/2021 7:25 PM, Nandita Bose, 5304K] reports senior cabinet officials from both continents pledged to cooperate on the screening of investments on export controls for sensitive dual-use technologies and on the development of artificial intelligence (AI).

[Afghanistan] Defense Secretary blames State Dept. for delay in Afghanistan evacuation

[The Hill](#) [9/29/2021 11:26 AM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Wednesday blamed the State Department for the last-minute evacuation of allies from Afghanistan. “The call on how to do that and when to do it is really a State Department call,” Austin said in response to a question from Rep. Jim Langevin (D-R.I.). The Biden administration has come under intense scrutiny for a chaotic withdrawal that left behind many Afghan allies, including those seeking a special immigrant visa (SIV) following their assistance to the U.S. military. Austin said the State Department pumped the breaks on a quick exit following pushback from then-Afghan President Ashraf Ghani. “Their concerns rightfully were that, No. 1, they were being cautioned by the Ghani administration that if they withdrew American citizens and SIV applicants at a pace that was too fast, it would cause a collapse of the government that we were trying to prevent. And so, I think

that went into the calculus,” Austin said. He also said that slow SIV processing stalled the military operations. “A number of things kind of came together to cause what happened to happen. But again, we provided our input and we certainly would have liked to see it go faster or sooner,” Austin said. For his part, Langevin criticized the Biden administration for waiting well into the withdrawal to begin its rushed evacuation. “I wish the administration had been more thoughtful and not had rushed this. I’ve yet to hear the answer to the question, though, of why did we not start withdrawing American citizens and SIVs sooner. We knew we were going to be withdrawing,” he said. Rep. John Garamendi (D-Calif.) said lawmakers had been given assurances from Ghani and other Afghan leaders they would be able to stabilize the country so long as there was not a massive exodus of Afghans.

Reported similarly:

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 12:08 PM, Brooke Singman, 9251K]

[Afghanistan] Taliban warns US against invading airspace or face ‘negative consequences’

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 1:10 PM, Caitlin McFall, 9251K] reports that the Taliban on Wednesday warned the U.S. against flying drones over its “Sacred airspace” or there could be “negative consequences.” “We recently saw [the] United States violating all international rights, laws and commitments made to the [Taliban] in Doha, Qatar, as Afghanistan’s sacred airspace is being invaded by U.S. drones,” a spokesperson said on Twitter. “We call on all countries, especially [the] United States, to treat Afghanistan in light of international rights, laws and commitments in order to prevent any negative consequences.” The Pentagon did not reply to the Taliban warnings and instead directed Fox News to comments made by press secretary John Kirby, who said the U.S. retains “All necessary authorities to execute over-the-horizon counterterrorism operations.” “We remain confident in these capabilities moving forward,” he told reporters Friday. “Without speaking to specific rules of engagement surrounding airstrikes, there is currently no requirement to clear airspace with the Taliban. And we do not expect that any future over-the-horizon counterterrorism strikes would hinge on such a clearance.” President Biden said following the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan that the U.S. will rely on “Over-the-horizon” capabilities to counter terrorism in the now Taliban-controlled nation.

[China] Milley confirms he told China he would call ahead of US attack, claims Esper ordered calls based on intel

[FOX News](#) [9/29/2021 12:52 PM, Brooke Singman, 9251K] reports that Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley confirmed that he told his Chinese counterpart that he would likely call ahead of any potential U.S. attacks on Beijing, maintaining he had that conversation at the direction of then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper after assessing intelligence suggesting heightened Chinese concerns about escalation between the two “great” powers. Milley addressed allegations that he held “secret” calls with his Chinese counterpart, Gen. Li Zuocheng of the People’s Liberation Army, in October 2020 and days after the Capitol riot in January 2021, which were included in “Peril,” a book co-authored by Washington Post correspondents Bob Woodward and Robert Costa. Milley has faced calls to resign since the revelations were made public earlier this month. The “peril” book Costa claims that Milley contacted Li after he had reviewed intelligence that suggested Chinese officials believed the United States was planning an attack on China amid military exercises in the South China Sea. The book claims Milley contacted Li a second time to reassure him that the U.S. would not make any type of advances or attack China in any form. On

Wednesday, during a hearing before the House Armed Services Committee focused on the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan, Milley responded to questions about the allegations. Milley explained that there was a "body of intelligence" that led to the call with his Chinese counterpart that was "persuasive" to Esper and himself, that the Chinese "Thought wrongly that the United States is going to attack them." "I am certain, guaranteed certain, that President Trump had no intent to attack," Milley said Wednesday. "And it was my task to make sure I communicated that, and the purpose was to de-escalate." [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[China] Milley says he won't 'tip off the enemy' to 'surprise' plans

The Hill [9/29/2021 12:10 PM, Morgan Chalfant, 1776K] reports that Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Wednesday that he would never tip off an enemy to any "surprise" U.S. attack plans as he defended himself from Republican criticism over calls he made to his Chinese counterpart during the Trump administration. Milley acknowledged that he told Gen. Li Zuo Cheng of China "I'll probably give you a call" before the U.S. launched an attack against China, but he said the comment was part of a broader effort to tamp down Chinese fears about an imminent U.S. attack on orders of then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper. "I'm not going to tip off the enemy about what the United States is going to do in an actual plan. What I'm trying to do is persuade an adversary that is heavily armed that was clearly and unambiguously according to intelligence reports very nervous about our behavior and what was happening inside this country and they were concerned that we, President Trump was going to launch an attack. He was not going to launch an attack," Milley told the House Armed Services Committee during testimony Wednesday. "At the direction of the secretary of Defense, I engaged the Chinese in order to persuade them to do that. I would never tip off any enemy to any kind of surprise thing that we were going to do. That is a different context than that conversation," Milley added. Earlier during Wednesday's hearing, Rep. Vicki Hartzler (R-Mo.) asked Milley if reports were true that he told Li he would give him a call before a U.S. attack in a call last year. The calls between Milley and Li, which took place on Oct. 30 and Jan. 8, were recently revealed in the book "peril." "As part of that conversation, I said, 'Gen Li, there's not going to be a war, there's not going to be attacks between great powers,'" Milley answered, describing his Oct. 30 call with Li. "And if there was, the tensions would build up, there would be calls going back and forth from all kinds of senior officials.' I said, 'Hell, Gen. Li, I'll probably give you a call, but we're not going to attack you. Trust me. We're not going to attack you.'"

[North Korea] North Korea Kim Jong Un Says U.S. as Ongoing Threat

The Wall Street Journal [9/30/2021 2:09 AM, Timothy W. Martin] reports Kim Jong Un said the U.S. threat against North Korea remains "utterly unchanged" under President Biden, accusing Washington of using increasingly cunning methods and words. In a policy speech to his rubber-stamp legislature, Mr. Kim didn't mention or criticize Mr. Biden by name, though specified his assessment was proved by the American deeds done over the past eight months, according to a Thursday state-media report of his remarks. The North Korean leader ordered officials to take tactical measures that would firmly protect the country's sovereignty. "The U.S. is touting 'diplomatic engagement' and 'dialogue without preconditions,'" Mr. Kim said, "but it is no more than a petty trick for deceiving the international community and hiding its hostile acts." The State Department said the U.S. harbors no hostile intent toward North Korea and remains ready to meet without preconditions. "We hope the DPRK will respond positively to our outreach," it said in a statement, referring to North Korea by its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea. [Bloomberg](#) [9/29/2021 10:37 PM, Jeong-Ho Lee, 6400K] reports North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sent a fresh warning to the U.S. and offered a concession to South Korea to restore communications links, just after Pyongyang claimed it tested a new hypersonic missile designed to evade U.S. defenses. Kim accused the U.S. of being a “fundamental danger” to the international community and said in a speech on the second day of a parliament meeting he would boost his nuclear capabilities. Pyongyang for years has been trying to drive wedges between Washington and its allies, hoping to use any discord to its advantage. North Korea has also been warming up to South Korea in the past week, perhaps looking to win concessions from President Moon Jae-in before he leaves office in May. Moon has made reconciliation with Pyongyang a top policy priority and another summit with Kim could help his legacy and give his progressive party a boost in presidential elections to replace him when his term ends next year. In an olive branch for Seoul, Kim said he would restore hotlines set up under Moon with South Korea from early October that have been silent for months due to political rancor. Kim said the move was “part of the efforts for realizing the expectations and desire of the entire Korean nation to see the earlier recovery of the north-south relations from the present deadlock and durable peace,” KCNA reported. Over the weekend, Kim Yo Jong, the North Korean leader’s sister, reached out to South Korea and said Pyongyang would consider taking part in another summit declaring an end to the 1950-53 Korean War -- if Seoul adopted a less hostile policy.

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DHS MORNING BRIEFING

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TO: Homeland Security Secretary & Staff

DATE: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 6:00 AM ET

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Top News

DHS secretary condemns treatment of Haitian migrants but says US will ramp up deportations

The New York Times [9/21/2021 8:38 PM, Eileen Sullivan, Zolan Kanno-Youngs, 24635K] reports images of Border Patrol agents on horses, pushing back Haitian migrants crossing the Rio Grande to try to reach U.S. soil, have prompted outrage among Democrats and called into question President Biden's decision to swiftly deport thousands who had been arriving en masse at a small Texas border town. Vice President Kamala Harris on Tuesday called the treatment "horrible" and said she planned to discuss the issue with Alejandro N. Mayorkas, the secretary of the Homeland Security Department, which has started an investigation. "Human beings should never be treated that way," Ms. Harris said. "And I'm deeply troubled about it." Asked if Mr. Biden had seen the images, the White House press secretary, Jen Psaki, said: "He believes that the footage and photos are horrific. They don't represent who we are as a country. And he was pleased to see the announcement of the investigation." The Hill [9/21/2021 4:21 PM, Rebecca Beitsch and Maggie Miller, 1776K] reports GOP senators on Tuesday grilled Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas over the influx of Haitian refugees seeking asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border and viral images of Customs and Border Patrol officials on horseback chasing migrants away. Mayorkas told lawmakers there would be no tolerance for the abuse of migrants during his appearance before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. "I was horrified to see the images, and we look forward to learning the facts that are produced from the investigation, and we will take actions that those facts compel," he said. "We do not tolerate any mistreatment or abuse of a migrant, period," Mayorkas added, nodding to his agency's commitment to investigate the officers' behavior. While the event has placed a renewed focus on the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) treatment of migrants, Mayorkas said the administration has no plans to cease flights to a country that in a matter of months has seen an earthquake and an assassination attempt that have led to severe instability. "We are increasing the frequency and number of the repatriation flights each day," Mayorkas said. "And we're hoping that what we are doing now serves as a deterrent

because it backs up the words that we have spoken since the very outset: that irregular migration is not the way to enter the United States. It will not work." On the Afghanistan front, lawmakers aired frustration with Mayorkas over a lack of data disclosed by an administration that had boasted of evacuating more than 124,000 people but hasn't provided a precise breakdown of the different categories of people who fled the country. Mayorkas said roughly 12,000 Afghans remain at different military sites while they await vetting to enter the U.S. and that 60,000 Afghans have entered the country. Of those, he said nearly 8,000 are either U.S. citizens or residents, while about 1,800 are SIV holders. But he did not provide numbers on Afghans who fit into the Priority 1 and Priority 2 categories created for vulnerable Afghans and others who assisted in a range of U.S. projects. The [US News & World Report](#) [9/21/2021 2:28 PM, Kaia Hubbard, 4947K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas traveled to Del Rio on Monday and has directed that Office of Professional Responsibility personnel "be on site full-time to ensure that the responsibilities of DHS personnel are executed consistent with applicable policies and training and the Department's values," the DHS said. Mayorkas told CNN's "New Day" on Tuesday that he was "horrified" by images and footage he has seen of the scene at the border. "I'm going to let the investigation run its course. But the pictures that I observed troubled me profoundly."

Reported similarly:

[NPR](#) [9/21/2021 11:07 AM, Bill Chappell, 4917K]

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 3:15 PM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K]

White House faces bipartisan backlash on Haitian migrants

[Reuters](#) [9/21/2021 5:37 PM, Daina Beth Solomon, 5304K] reports U.S. President Joe Biden faced bipartisan anger on Tuesday over the handling of an impromptu, mainly Haitian, migrant border camp in Texas, with Republicans saying security was lax and Democrats worried about the humanitarian situation. Several United Nations agencies also voiced concerns about the deportation of migrants to Haiti, citing instability in the poor Caribbean nation, where a presidential assassination, rising gang violence and a major earthquake have spread chaos in recent weeks. The U.N.'s refugee agency said expulsions without screening for protection needs were "summary," "inconsistent with international norms and may constitute refoulement." U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris said the situation was complex and that the United States needed "to do a lot more" to support the basic needs of people in Haiti. Several hundred have already been sent to Haiti from the camp in Del Rio, Texas, since Sunday. Thousands more have been moved into U.S. detention for processing and more flights are slated. One arrived in Haiti on Tuesday. The camp's population peaked at up to 14,000 at the weekend, but has since diminished. Following an outpouring of anger over an incident in which mounted U.S. border agents in cowboy hats used horse reins like whips to intimidate the migrants, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas emphasized that U.S. border agents were delivering medical attention and were working with the Red Cross. Mayorkas said he was horrified by the images of the mistreatment, echoing increasingly strident criticism from the White House which said the footage "does not represent who we are as a country." Despite the risk of being returned to Haiti, many migrants remained in the Del Rio camp. [USA Today](#) [9/21/2021 5:33 PM, Savannah Behrman, 6282K] reports "There are going to be investigations," said Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Calif., Chair of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, who called the footage "unacceptable." House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., called the reports of mistreatment and "use of what appear to be whips" to be "deeply troubling." She also called for an investigation. The Department of

Homeland Security ramped up deportation flights of Haitians back to Haiti and transported migrants to different processing centers along the border. But the president has also been pressured by refugee and asylum advocates, as well as fellow Democrats, to do more to help the asylum seekers. [The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 11:34 AM, Jordain Carney, 1776K] reports that Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) on Tuesday urged the Biden administration to stop its deportation of Haitian immigrants along the U.S.-Mexico border, arguing that the decision to return them to Port-au-Prince "defies common sense." "I'm told there are four flights scheduled to deport these asylum-seekers back to a country that cannot receive them. Such a decision defies common sense. It also defies common decency," Schumer said from the Senate floor. "I urge President Biden and [Homeland Security] Secretary [Alejandro] Mayorkas to immediately put a stop to these expulsions and to end this Title 42 policy at our southern border. We cannot continue these hateful and xenophobic Trump policies that disregard our refugee laws," Schumer added. [The Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 10:55 PM, Sean Sullivan and Nick Miroff, 11773K] reports that many immigrant-rights activists have increasingly concluded that Biden has failed to live up to his campaign vows to defend vulnerable foreigners seeking a better life in the United States. Their fury marks a new inflection point in Biden's ongoing struggles with immigration. [The AP](#) [9/21/2021 5:31 PM, Alexandra Jaffe, Colleen Long and Ben Fox] reports that reflecting the urgency of the political problem for the administration, Homeland Security chief Alejandro Mayorkas said Tuesday the images "horrified" him, a seeming shift in tone from a day earlier, when he and others were more sanguine about the situation at the border. More than 6,000 Haitians and other migrants have been removed from the encampment in Del Rio, and Mayorkas predicted a "dramatic change" in the number of migrants there within the next two to four days as the administration continues the removal process. Vice President Kamala Harris also weighed in, telling reporters in Washington that she was "deeply troubled" by the images and planned to talk to Mayorkas about the situation. Asked about the images on Tuesday, Mayorkas told lawmakers that the issue had been "uppermost in my mind" ever since he had seen them. He said the department had alerted its inspector general's office and directed that staff from the Office of Professional Responsibility be present round-the-clock in Del Rio. "I was horrified to see the images, and we look forward to learning the facts that are adduced from the investigation, and we will take actions that those facts compel," Mayorkas said. "We do not tolerate any mistreatment or abuse of a migrant. Period." Previously, during a Monday press conference, both Mayorkas and Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz played down the incident, with Ortiz telling reporters that the agents were working in a difficult and chaotic environment and trying to control their horses. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Mayorkas spoke Monday before he had seen the images. "He believes this does not represent who we are as a country and does not represent the positions of the Biden-Harris administration," Psaki told reporters on Tuesday.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 5:24 PM, Brett Samuels, 1776K]

[Axios](#) [9/21/2021 11:46 AM, Erin Doherty, 526K]

U.S. preparing to nearly double deportations to Haiti as some returnees decry being shackled

[Politico](#) [9/21/2021 2:04 PM, Nick Niedzwiadek, 1707K] reports Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told Congress on Tuesday that the Biden administration is aiming to relocate the thousands of migrants camped along the U.S. border in Del Rio, Texas by the month's end. "Our goal is to do so within the next 10 days or

nine days,” Mayorkas said in response to questioning from Sen. James Lankford (R-Ok.). Mayorkas told members of the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs committee that officials “expect to see dramatic results within the next 48 to 96” hours, at which point they’ll have a better grasp of the remaining task. Mayorkas said that the administration is continuing to ramp up “the frequency and number” of repatriation flights for the migrants, the bulk of whom hail from Haiti. He said that DHS is also transporting them to other processing centers in order to expedite the process and get them out of the makeshift campsite along the U.S.-Mexico border that has ballooned in recent days to include thousands of would-be asylum seekers. Mayorkas had been peppered with questions about the fast-developing situation involving Haitian migrants, as well as the Biden administration’s approach to border security and illegal border crossings more broadly. The White House has decried the alleged behavior by the agents, some of whom appeared to be using whips or similar objects to intimidate the migrants. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s Office of Professional Responsibility opened an investigation on Monday into the situation. The Washington Post [9/21/2021 2:58 PM, Widlore Merancourt, Anthony Faiola, and Nick Miroff, 11773K] reports the Western Hemisphere’s poorest nation is already dealing with a convergence of crises — including the aftermath of a presidential assassination, a deadly earthquake, worsening food insecurity and rising social anarchy amid a grab for territory by gang warlords. On Sunday and Monday, several hundred migrants per day arrived on up to three flights to Port-au-Prince, with four flights scheduled for Tuesday. International agencies have been told that the United States will begin ramping up to “six to seven” flights daily, to Port-au-Prince as well as Haiti’s second-largest city, Cap-Haïtien, starting Wednesday. A spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security said the department could not confirm the flight plans, citing operational and security factors. However, one U.S. official confirmed that the flights would increase to six or seven per day, split between the two Haitian cities. The official was not authorized to discuss the plan and spoke on the condition of anonymity. The State Department said Monday that Secretary of State Antony Blinken had spoken with Henry about “cooperation to repatriate Haitian migrants on the Southern border of the United States.” “The United States and Haiti share a mutual concern for the safety of Haitian citizens and discussed the dangers of irregular migration, which puts individuals at great risk and often requires migrants and their families to incur crippling debt,” the State Department said. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told senators Tuesday that DHS intends to empty a Del Rio, Tex., camp — where in the past week thousands of Haitian migrants have gathered — within the next 10 days. He said he expected “dramatic results” over the next two to four days as authorities send caravans of buses to transport migrants out of Del Rio. On Tuesday, the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, Filippo Grandi, condemned the U.S. deportations, saying they denied “most people arriving at the southwest U.S. land border any opportunity to request asylum.”

Reported similarly:

Washington Post [9/21/2021 4:36 PM, Amber Phillips, 11773K]

DHS chief Mayorkas says border numbers are dropping, insists border is closed

The Washington Times [9/21/2021 8:30 AM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports that Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas suggested his department has turned the corner on the border surge, telling senators Tuesday that the number of people being arrested this month has begun to tick down from the unprecedented level of July and August. Under questioning from Republicans, Mr. Mayorkas defended his handling of the border and said the plans the Biden administration developed are beginning to bear fruit. “It is, in fact,

working. We have seen in the last several weeks, if not the month, a drop in the number of encounters at the United States border,” the secretary told the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. He also projected confidence that his department has taken the right steps to dismantle the migrant camp of mostly Haitians that sprung up on the U.S. side of the Rio Grande, serving as a major breach of the border. Mr. Mayorkas said the number of people in the camp has been cut to below 10,000, and some Haitians who showed up in northern Mexico eyeing the crossing have even begun to turn back, which he said was due to the get-tough approach. That includes up to three deportation flights from Texas to Haiti each day. “We’re hoping that what we are doing now serves as a deterrent because it backs up the words we have spoken,” the secretary said. Sen. James Lankford, Oklahoma Republican, pointed out that 107,000 people this year have been caught and released on a promise that they would return to get a court date for their deportation proceedings. Nearly 30,000 of them have already missed their deadline to do so, meaning they are absconders. Mr. Mayorkas promised they would be “a priority” for deportation, if they can be found. The secretary also revealed the latest data on the Afghan evacuation, saying 60,000 people have been brought out of Kabul and have reached the U.S. Mr. Mayorkas said very few Afghans have been flagged and denied entry to the U.S. He said it was a “de minimis” amount. “We have not found many people with derogatory information relative to those who qualify for admission to the United States by reason of their status,” the secretary said. [FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 12:27 PM, Jessica Chasmar, 9251K] reports that Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas insisted that the U.S. borders are closed during a heated exchange with Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wisc., on Tuesday. During a Senate Homeland Security Committee hearing, Johnson grilled the DHS secretary on the surge of illegal immigration under the Biden administration. “You have repeatedly stated that our borders are not open, they’re closed. Do you honestly believe that our borders are closed?” Johnson asked. “Senator, I do, and let me speak to that -” Mayorkas responded before being cut off by the senator. The senator then asked the DHS secretary to give “ballpark” estimates for how many migrants of the 1.3 million apprehended since October are still being detained, as well as how many have been deported and how many have been released into the U.S. The men continued to talk over one another, but Mayorkas said he ultimately couldn’t provide the estimates. “If you come to the United States illegally, you will be returned. Your journey will not succeed and you will be endangering your life and your family’s lives,” Mayorkas said Monday. “This administration is committed to developing safe, orderly and humane pathways for migration. This is not the way to do it.”

Officials: Many Haitian migrants are being released in US

The [AP](#) [9/22/2021 2:12 AM, Elliot Spagat, Maria Verza and Juan A. Lozano, 1707K] reports many Haitian migrants camped in a small Texas border town are being released in the United States, two U.S. officials said, undercutting the Biden administration’s public statements that the thousands in the camp faced immediate expulsion. Haitians have been freed on a “very, very large scale” in recent days, according to one U.S. official who put the figure in the thousands. The official, with direct knowledge of operations who was not authorized to discuss the matter Tuesday and thus spoke on condition of anonymity Many have been released with notices to appear at an immigration office within 60 days, an outcome that requires less processing time from Border Patrol agents than ordering an appearance in immigration court and points to the speed at which authorities are moving, the official said. The Homeland Security Department has been busing Haitians from Del Rio to El Paso, Laredo and Rio Grande Valley along the Texas border, and this week added flights to Tucson, Arizona, the official said. They are processed by the Border Patrol at

those locations. A second U.S. official, also with direct knowledge and speaking on the condition of anonymity, said large numbers of Haitians were being processed under immigration laws and not being placed on expulsion flights to Haiti that started Sunday. The official couldn't be more specific about how many. [Editorial note: consult video at source link] [FOX News](#) [9/22/2021 1:11 AM, Brie Stimson, 9251K] reports the head of the U.N refugee agency said the expulsions might violate international law by sending refugees back to life-threatening situations and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said the deportations "defy common sense," Reuters reported. DHS confirmed to Fox News Tuesday that three U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers were injured after "two separate disruptions" by Haitian migrants when they deplaned on the tarmac at Port-au-Prince. The injuries were not life-threatening.

Reported similarly:

[FOX News](#) [9/22/2021 1:11 AM, Brie Stimson, 9251K]

[Univision](#) [9/22/2021 3:37 AM, Staff, 366K]

Harris 'deeply troubled' by treatment of Haitian migrants

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 12:42 PM, Brett Samuels, 1776K] reports that Vice President Harris on Tuesday condemned the treatment of Haitian migrants at the southern border after images circulated appearing to show Border Patrol agents on horseback grabbing individuals seeking to enter the U.S. "What I saw depicted, those individuals on horseback treating human beings the way they were was horrible," Harris told reporters after an event to promote the White House's economic agenda. "I fully support what is happening right now, which is a thorough investigation into what is going on there. But human beings should never be treated that way, and I'm deeply troubled about it," she said. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) earlier Tuesday announced it is investigating the treatment of Haitian migrants by Customs and Border Protection agents after video and images surfaced of the agents on horseback chasing down migrants at the southern border. "DHS does not tolerate the abuse of migrants in our custody and we take these allegations very seriously," the department said in a statement on Twitter. "We are committed to processing migrants in a safe, orderly, and humane way. We can and must do this in a way that ensures the safety and dignity of migrants." Harris was tasked by President Biden earlier this year with overseeing efforts to address root causes of migration from Central America. Asked if her responsibilities will extend to Haiti, Harris expressed sympathy for the plight of Haitians in the wake of multiple natural disasters and the assassination of their president.

Reported similarly:

[Axios](#) [9/21/2021 2:57 PM, Shawna Chen, 526K]

[FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 2:06 PM, Adam Shaw and Peter Hasson, 9251K]

[Washington Times](#) [9/21/2021 9:50 AM, Dave Boyer, 381K]

Biden Reacted in Horror to Video of Border Agents; Pledges to Get Border 'Under Control'

[Bloomberg](#) [9/21/2021 1:19 PM, Justin Sink, 6400K] reports that President Joe Biden believed scenes of border patrol agents on horseback intimidating Haitian migrants were "horrific and horrible" and is fully committed to a Department of Homeland Security investigation into the matter, the White House said Tuesday. "I don't know anyone who could watch that video and not have that emotion," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said during an interview with CBS News. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office

of Professional Responsibility launched an probe into the incident in Del Rio, Texas, on Monday to determine possible disciplinary action. Video from the site showed asylum-seeking migrants shielding their heads in what appeared to be fear of the agents on horseback using reins as whips. "I think it's important for people to know this is not who we are," Psaki said. "That's not who the Biden-Harris Administration is, and we're going to absolutely pursue that investigation and get to the bottom of what happened here." The Department of Homeland Security also said Monday night it would be dispatching additional personnel to the border to help oversee operations as a growing group of Haitians seek entry into the U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat, joined other lawmakers Monday in condemning the administration's handling of the situation. "Reports of the mistreatment of Haitian migrants fleeing violence and devastation from natural disasters are deeply troubling," Pelosi said, calling for an investigation into "any acts of aggression or violence." [FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 12:26 PM, Adam Shaw and Ben Evansky, 9251K] reports that President Biden on Tuesday pledged to get the situation at the border "Under control" as his administration faces a fresh border crisis in Del Rio, where more than 10,000 migrants have descended in recent days. "We will get it under control," Biden said in response to a question about the border, after speaking at the United Nations General Assembly. He was then asked if his administration has it under control or will get it under control. "We will get it under control," he repeated. Biden's administration has been facing a surge in migration that has overwhelmed officials and capacity since taking office. In August there were more than 208,000 migrant encounters, the second month in a row where encounters have been above 200,000. While the administration has been repeating its claim that the border is not open, and noting that a significant number of encounters result in a Title 42 expulsion, it has been facing accusations from Republicans of encouraging mass migration by rolling back Trump-era policies like the Migrant Protection Protocols. More recently, it has been facing a surge in Haitian migrants in Del Rio, where more than 10,000 are currently gathered as they seek entry into the United States. A combination of reports of canceled deportation flights and the extension of Temporary Protected Status to Haitians already in the country, as well as dire conditions and political instability in Haiti, has fueled the crisis. The number at one point at the border was over 14,000, and there are reports of tens of thousands more on the way.

Reported similarly:

[CNN](#) [9/21/2021 10:26 PM, Chandelis Duster and Maegan Vazquez, 4876K]

Biden Asks Court to Let Him Scrap Trump's Remain-in-Mexico Rule

[Bloomberg](#) [9/21/2021 12:16 PM, Erik Larson, 6400K] reports that the Biden administration urged a federal appeals court to let it cancel a controversial Trump-era policy requiring asylum seekers at the U.S. southern border to wait in Mexico for their cases to be processed. President Joe Biden is seeking to lift an injunction won by Texas and Missouri that is forcing him to re-implement a rule put in place in 2019. The U.S. Constitution gives the executive branch wide discretion over immigration policies, and Biden gave a proper justification for scrapping the measure, the U.S. Justice Department said in a court filing late Monday in New Orleans. The fight over former president Donald Trump's Migrant Protection Protocols comes as hundreds of thousands of people from Central America and other nations have surged across the Mexico border into the U.S. in recent months and detentions of migrants have soared. Republicans say the crisis is evidence that Trump's policies worked, while the Biden administration argues the "Remain in Mexico" rule is doing more harm than good. The injunction "threatens to profoundly disrupt the government's management of border security and foreign policy -- two areas that the Supreme Court has

recognized are committed to the discretion of the executive branch," the Justice Department said in the filing. The administration argues U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk in Amarillo, Texas, was being unrealistic when he ruled that Trump's policy should remain in place until the border agency has enough capacity to detain hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants at the border "and millions of non-citizens unlawfully present inside the country." The case is *Texas v. Biden*, 21-10806, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (New Orleans).

UN agencies raise concerns about US deportations of Haitian migrants

The Hill [9/21/2021 10:34 AM, Joseph Choi, 1776K] reports that United Nations agencies on Tuesday expressed concerns about the U.S.'s deportation of thousands of Haitian migrants from Texas this week, saying that many of them had a right to seek asylum. "We are disturbed by the images that we have seen and by the fact that we have seen all these migrants and refugees and asylum-seekers in transport to Port-au-Prince," Marta Hurtado, a spokesperson for the U.N. Human Right office, said, according to Reuters. "We are seriously concerned by the fact that it appears there have not been any individual assessments of the cases ... and that therefore maybe some of these people have not received the protection that they needed," Hurtado added. The U.S. began deporting thousands of Haitian migrants this week to Port-au-Prince. On Monday, it was reported that the Biden administration was prioritizing single adults and families who are not seeking asylum for deportation. Unaccompanied minors and some families will be permitted to stay in the U.S. and be given asylum hearing dates. Around 12,000 migrants are believed to have sheltered under a bridge in Del Rio, Texas, living in squalid conditions. Due to the threat of deportation, hundreds of migrants have reportedly crossed back into Mexico. Spokesperson for the U.N. Refugee Agency Shabia Mantoo called for the U.S. to consider all claims of asylum, regardless of if a migrant is a refugee, Reuters reported. "While some people arriving at the border may not be refugees, anyone who ... claims to have a well-founded fear of being persecuted in their country of origin - they should have access to asylum and to have their claim assessed before being subjected to expulsion or deportation," said Mantoo.

Reported similarly:

Reuters [9/21/2021 7:35 AM, Stephanie Nebehay, 5304K]

Axios [9/21/2021 8:44 AM, Oriana Gonzalez, 526K]

[TX] Haitian migrants take over DHS transport bus in Texas, flee the scene

FOX News [9/21/2021 4:59 PM, Bill Melugin, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports a group of Haitian migrants on Monday took over a bus being used to transport them to a different immigration processing station in Texas, before fleeing the area, sources told Fox News. Multiple sources told Fox that the bus, traveling from Del Rio to Brownsville, was taken over by migrants who didn't want to be removed from the U.S. back to Haiti. The migrants forced their way off the bus and fled. All were later caught. The bus is said to have been contracted by DHS and did not have law enforcement on board. National Border Patrol Council President Brandon Judd mentioned the incident at a press conference alongside Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who called for the perpetrators to be prosecuted. The Biden administration has surged agents and resources to the area and ramped up deportation flights, while DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas has warned illegal immigrants they won't be allowed in the country. "If you come to the United States illegally, you will be returned. Your journey will not succeed and you will be endangering your life and your family's lives,"

Mayorkas said. "This administration is committed to developing safe, orderly and humane pathways for migration. This is not the way to do it."

[Canada] Mayorkas pressed on land border closure with Canada

Roll Call [9/21/2021 4:53 PM, Suzanne Monyak, 119K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas dodged questions from senators Tuesday about the criteria used to justify keeping the nation's northern land border closed to fully vaccinated Canadians, hours after the U.S. renewed its border restrictions for another month. Testifying on "threats to the homeland" before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, Mayorkas would not directly respond to queries from Chairman Gary Peters, D-Mich., and Sen. Maggie Hassan, D-N.H., about the reasoning behind barring Canadians who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 from driving to the U.S. Mayorkas also signaled the fate of the northern border may be tied to that of the U.S.-Mexico border, where the federal government currently enforces strict asylum and entry restrictions amid record-high migration levels. "We are taking it iteratively. We are looking at the situation, not only at the ports of entry at our northern border but also at our southern border," he said. Peters asked Mayorkas to provide his office and the public with the "specific criteria the administration is using to justify ongoing restrictions for fully vaccinated Canadians at land ports of entry." Mayorkas said he "most certainly will" but did not provide any metrics at the hearing. The Homeland Security chief added that he was "mindful" of the effects the border closure has had on Canadian-American families and on border communities that rely economically on tourism. He said the administration is "reviewing both the public health and the family impact consequences of our decision on a daily basis."

[Mexico] Mexican government cracks down on Haitian migrants in Ciudad Acuña

USA Today [9/21/2021 5:42 PM, Lauren Villagran, El Paso Times, 6282K] reports Mexican authorities have begun rounding up Haitian migrants here in a crackdown that involved law enforcement at every level of government. Convoys of local police, Coahuila state investigative agents, Mexico's federal immigration agency and the National Guard patrolled the streets of Ciudad Acuña on Monday and early Tuesday, chasing down dozens of people and loading them into vans. Once apprehended, the agents loaded them into a van emblazoned with the insignia for Mexico's National Migration Institute, or INAMI. Coahuila's Vanguardia newspaper reported Tuesday that INAMI had chartered flights to transport migrants, including numerous Haitians, from the border town of Piedras Negras, Coahuila, to Tapachula, Chiapas — where Mexico has one of its largest migrant detention centers. Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard told reporters in a morning news conference that he had been in touch with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken regarding the "significant, notable recent flow of Haitian nationals that are coming from Brazil and Chile, not Haiti." He didn't address Mexico's response at the northern border, but said that Haitians were receiving false information about opportunities in the U.S. "They aren't asking for refugee status in Mexico, except a small percentage of them," Ebrard said. "They are basically asking for the freedom to travel to the United States." After the Department of Homeland Security extended permission to apply for Temporary Protected Status to Haitian nationals living inside the U.S. as of July 29, "people in the Haitian network told their people in Brazil and Chile, 'you need to go to the United States quickly,'" Ebrard said. "They are tricking them." U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price on Tuesday said Blinken and Ebrard discussed "the common goal of promoting safe, orderly, and humane migration" as well as "the need for a coordinated regional effort to stem the flow of irregular migration." The AP [9/21/2021 2:00 PM, Julie Watson, Juan A. Lozano and Elliot Spagat] reports discussion

Monday at the Tijuana restaurant offered a snapshot of Haitians' diaspora in the Western Hemisphere, which picked up steam in 2016 and has shown little sign of easing, demonstrated most recently by the more than 14,000 mostly Haitian migrants assembled around a Del Rio bridge. The town has only about 35,000 people. Nearly all Haitians reach the U.S. on a well-worn route: Fly to Brazil, Chile or elsewhere in South America. If jobs dry up, slowly move through Central America and Mexico by bus and on foot to wait — perhaps years — in northern border cities like Tijuana for the right time to enter the United States and claim asylum. Haitians shifted over the summer to Ciudad Acuña, Mexico, across from Del Rio. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Monday that it was unusually sudden.

[Haiti] Deported Haitians try to rush back into plane amid anger

The AP [9/21/2021 5:47 PM, Pierre-Richard Luxama] reports dozens of migrants upset about being deported to Haiti from the U.S. clashed with authorities while trying to rush back into a plane that landed Tuesday afternoon in Port-au-Prince. Meanwhile, the future of thousands of migrants who remain along the Mexico-Texas border is in limbo. U.S. expulsion flights are expected to continue while Mexico was flying and busing some of the migrants away from the border. So far, more than 6,000 Haitians and other migrants had been removed from an encampment at Del Rio, Texas. Reuters [9/21/2021 8:50 AM, Gessika Thomas and Daina Beth Solomon, 5304K] reports angry scenes broke out at Haiti's main airport on Tuesday among migrants sent home from a squalid Texas border camp, as U.S. President Joe Biden faced mounting pressure to stop an expulsions policy the U.N. refugee chief said may be illegal. Nearly 10,000 migrants, mainly Haitian, remain in worsening conditions in the impromptu camp that sprang up under a bridge spanning the Rio Grande from the Texas town Del Rio to Mexico's Ciudad Acuna. In recent days, U.S. authorities have removed at least 4,000 people from the site for processing in detention centers. Some 523 Haitians have been deported to their homeland on four flights, with repatriations set to continue on a regular basis, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said. Following an outpouring of anger over an incident in which mounted U.S. border agents in cowboy hats used horse reins like whips to intimidate the migrants, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas emphasized that U.S. border agents were delivering medical attention and working with the Red Cross. Mayorkas said he was horrified by the images, echoing increasingly strident criticism from the White House, which said the footage "does not represent who we are as a country." The agents under investigation have been assigned administrative duties and are no longer dealing with migrants, Mayorkas said. He also ordered that the conduct of personnel in Del Rio be consistent with the policies, training and "the values of this department."

[Afghanistan] Afghanistan Aftermath's Risk of Terrorism Cited by Senate Panel

Bloomberg [9/21/2021 1:02 PM, Chris Strohm and Ellen M. Gilmer, 6400K] reports that Senators pressed top U.S. national security officials Tuesday about the country's vulnerability to terrorism from the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan and from the thousands of evacuees arriving in the U.S. "These recent events have put a heightened foreign terrorist threat top-of-mind," Senator Rob Portman, an Ohio Republican, said at a hearing of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. FBI Director Christopher Wray said the bureau is working with state and local agencies to "get in front of any radicalization" of Afghan evacuees in the U.S., relying on more than 200 joint terrorism task forces to monitor potential threats. "We're putting a heavy focus on community outreach as the evacuees settle here in the United States," Wray said. Defending the

ongoing vetting of Afghan evacuees, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said “we continue to screen and vet individuals seeking to arrive in the United States.” “We have not relaxed our vigilance over the years,” Mayorkas added. More than 60,000 people have been brought into the U.S. from Afghanistan so far, Mayorkas said. About 7% are U.S. citizens, 6% are lawful permanent residents and 3% are Afghans who have received special immigrant visas, Mayorkas said. The rest are vulnerable individuals and those whose applications haven’t yet been approved, he said. Mayorkas didn’t provide any new information on vetting, reiterating past points that the U.S. gathers biographic and biometric information and relies on experts to conduct screening and vetting before allowing people into the country. “We have not found many people with derogatory information relative to those who qualify for admission to the United States,” Mayorkas said. The Homeland Security Department would seek to remove any Afghan evacuees who raised red flags, possibly to a third country, he said. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

[Afghanistan] U.S. national security officials express concern about terror threats tied to Afghanistan

The Los Angeles Times [9/21/2021 5:46 PM, Erin B. Logan, 3710K] reports top U.S. national security officials on Tuesday said they were concerned about the threat posed by foreign terrorist groups following American military forces’ chaotic exit last month from Afghanistan. National Counterterrorism Center Director Christine Abizaid testified before Congress that the Taliban’s reemergence and takeover of Afghanistan could set the stage for terrorist groups to rebuild there. The Taliban sheltered Al Qaeda as the group planned the Sept. 11 attacks. Abizaid testified that the likelihood of major attacks on American soil had diminished in the two decades since the Sept. 11 attacks. While the danger is “less acute” than in 2001, she said, preventing attacks remains a challenge because the threat is “more ideologically diffuse and geographically diverse.” Abizaid was joined during the hearing by FBI Director Christopher A. Wray and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas who agreed that terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan posed mostly a regional threat. However, Wray testified that the U.S. pullout from Afghanistan and the Taliban’s rapid takeover of the country could inspire extremists living in the U.S. and other Western countries to engage in violence. Wray added that his agency has also been doggedly tracking the threat posed by domestic terrorist groups, particularly since a pro-Trump mob swarmed the Capitol on Jan. 6. He testified that the FBI has about 2,700 active domestic terrorism investigations, up from about 1,000 in spring 2020. He said he has doubled the number of personnel devoted to investigating such cases. Portman and other lawmakers also raised concerns about how well Afghan refugees and evacuees are being vetted by U.S. officials. The U.S. evacuated 124,000 people from Kabul’s airport in the days after the Taliban took over the city. Mayorkas said the Department of Homeland Security is carefully screening Afghans. He said more than 60,000 people have been brought to the U.S. from Afghanistan. About 7% are U.S. citizens, 6% are lawful permanent residents and 3% are Afghans who have received special immigrant visas for their work on behalf of the U.S. government. The rest are vulnerable individuals whose applications are being carefully reviewed and processed, he testified. “We have a screening and vetting architecture,” Mayorkas said. “We have greater cooperation amongst the federal agencies in the counter-terrorism, intelligence and law enforcement communities. We remain ever vigilant in that regard.”

Reported similarly:
AP [9/21/2021 2:50 PM, Eric Tucker]

[ABC News](#) [9/21/2021 2:55 PM, Luke Barr and Alexander Mallin, 37K]

[CBS News](#) [9/21/2021 4:24 PM, Nicole Sganga, 2612K]

[Afghanistan] Lindsey Graham: Terrorists will 'infiltrate' US border if Biden does not change course

[FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 10:31 AM, Staff, 9251K] reports that Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., warned Tuesday that the chaos in the Middle East may soon attempt to "infiltrate" the U.S. via the southern border, as Biden faces criticism on his Afghanistan withdrawal and handling of immigration policy. LINDSEY GRAHAM: The chaos in the Middle East is going to come to us here at home through the border if we don't change something. How easy would it be for some terrorist group to hire a cartel and take them into the United States through the southern border? Nothing changes until you change our asylum law but I'm really worried about the narrative out there that America was defeated in Afghanistan and every jihadist is going to Afghanistan-and there will soon be an effort to infiltrate this country through the southern border if we don't do something about it.

[Afghanistan] Lawmakers push for numbers behind Afghan evacuation

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 3:15 PM, Rebecca Beitsch, 1776K] reports lawmakers on Tuesday aired frustration over a lack of data disclosed by the Biden administration, which has boasted of evacuating more than 124,000 people from Afghanistan but haven't provided a precise breakdown of the different categories of those who fled the country amid and after the U.S. withdrawal. Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla.), speaking to Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, pointed to a gap between the 60,000 people who have been brought into the U.S. and the total number evacuated. "We don't know the remaining where they're going, who they are, are they coming here or not, we don't know the breakdown of refugees and parolees, we don't know the breakdown of SIVs — Special Immigrant Visas — and what are called partial SIV immigrant visas or folks that were American citizens and green card holders, there's some very basic pieces of information that we keep trying to be able to get," Lankford said. Mayorkas did offer some figures in the hearing, saying that roughly 12,000 Afghans remain at different military sites while they await vetting to enter the U.S. He also pointed to previously released numbers from the administration, noting that of the 60,000 Afghans who have entered the U.S., nearly 8,000 are either U.S. citizens or residents, while about 1,800 are SIV holders, having obtained visas after assisting the U.S. military. But he did not provide numbers how many fit into the Priority 1 and Priority 2 categories created for vulnerable Afghans and others who assisted in a range of U.S. projects.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

[Haiti] ICE officers injured by Haitian migrants after deportation flights land in Port-au-Prince

[FOX News](#) [9/21/2021 9:55 PM, Adam Shaw, 9251K] reports a number of Haitian migrants who had been deported from the United States injured three Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers on the tarmac at Port-au-Prince, Fox News confirmed on Tuesday. A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson told Fox News that a number of adult migrants who had been deported from the U.S. caused two separate disruptions at the airport after deplaning in the Haitian capital. "Haitian crowd control officers responded to both incidents and resolved the situations," the spokesperson said. "ICE fully respects the

rights of all people to peacefully express their opinions, while continuing to perform its immigration enforcement mission consistent with our priorities, federal law and agency policy," the spokesperson said. The agency also confirmed that three ICE officers sustained non-life-threatening injuries.

Citizenship and Immigration Services

Biden to double refugee cap despite slow resettlement pace

Roll Call [9/21/2021 3:27 PM, Caroline Simon, 119K] reports President Joe Biden would fulfill a longtime promise by raising the refugee admissions cap to 125,000 for fiscal 2022, but reaching that number could prove difficult after a year on track to have the lowest resettlement numbers in recent history. On Monday, the State Department announced the administration's intent to raise the refugee admissions cap to 125,000 for fiscal 2022. The refugee admissions picture is slightly complicated by the arrival of thousands of at-risk Afghans since Afghanistan's collapse in August. Many are in line for special immigrant visas, which do not count toward overall refugee numbers, while others have been granted humanitarian parole rather than traditional refugee benefits. The proposed regional admissions goals would sharply increase the number of expected arrivals from "Near East/South Asia," from a projected level of 13,000 to 35,000. It also would accept up to 40,000 refugees from Africa, 15,000 from East Asia, 10,000 from Europe and Central Asia, and 15,000 from Latin America and the Caribbean. The remaining 10,000 refugees may be from anywhere in the world. The State Department is planning for the likelihood that ramping up refugee admissions program capacity to meet Biden's goal could be a lengthy process with uncertain results. The Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, according to the report, will only fund the domestic refugee program and its overseas components at a level supporting 65,000 refugees at the start of fiscal 2022 "in the interest of careful stewardship of taxpayer resources," as well as operational constraints related to COVID-19. "Those funding levels will be re-evaluated and increased as appropriate as the year progresses and it becomes clearer how much progress can be made against the target," the report said.

Major companies vow to train, hire Afghan refugees arriving in U.S.

Axios [9/21/2021 1:24 PM, Erin Doherty, 526K] reports that more than 30 major companies have promised to hire and train Afghan refugees coming to the U.S., per a press release from the Tent Partnership for Refugees, the group spearheading the effort. The big picture: The 33 companies, including Amazon, Facebook, Pfizer and UPS, are joining the Tent Coalition for Afghan Refugees, a coalition founded by Hamdi Ulukaya, the founder and CEO of yogurt and food company Chobani. An initial group of 37,000 Afghans arrived in the U.S. this month and are heading to states across the country. Driving the news: Amazon said it will offer refugees jobs in the company's warehouses or transportation hubs and in tech and corporate roles. The company will also pay for training and education programs. Pfizer's efforts to include Afghans in the workforce range from "Hiring them into our workforce, to mentoring Afghan refugees and preparing them for their new workplaces," per CEO Albert Bourla. What they're saying: "I've said this before and I'll say it again - the moment a refugee gets a job, it's the moment they stop being a refugee," Ulukaya said in a statement. "It's the moment they can stand on their own two feet; it's the moment they can make new friends; it's the moment they can start a new life."

[DC] Protesters press Congress for path to citizenship as Democrats' plan hits obstacle

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 12:20 PM, Ellie Silverman, 11773K] reports that this was finally a moment of hope for Pavel Mena, an undocumented immigrant who has been living in the United States for six years. He saw Democratic leaders pushing to insert sweeping immigration provisions in the \$3.5 trillion budget package and believed the long-awaited promise of providing a pathway to citizenship for millions of undocumented immigrants in the United States would finally happen. The Senate parliamentarian, who was evaluating if this measure was enough of a budget matter to be considered in the package, advised against it, ruling it is "Not appropriate" for that type of measure. He said he pays taxes with an IRS-issued Individual Taxpayer Identification Number since he is unable to receive a Social Security number and has continued to work in construction during the pandemic as an "essential worker" doing waterproofing. "We are contributing to the economy, and we already prove it," said Mena, 40 of Reisterstown, Md., who is the sole provider for his pregnant wife; three children ages 15, 9 and 19 months; and mother-in-law. "We're valuable here to pay taxes. We're valuable here to help build the economy, and they even call us 'essential.'" On Tuesday, Mena is joining other immigrants, advocates and community members in Washington to push back, demanding that Congress include a pathway to citizenship in the budget reconciliation package and emphasizing the crucial role of immigrants in the U.S. economy. They are also pressing Congress to pass ambitious climate legislation and support caregivers, arguing these issues disproportionately affect communities of color.

[NV] Governor: Nevada getting first 150 Afghans for resettlement

The [AP](#) [9/21/2021 7:41 PM, Staff, 495K] reports the U.S. State Department plans to resettle 150 Afghans in Nevada, with about 100 expected to go to northern areas including Reno and Sparks and about 50 to the Las Vegas area, Gov. Steve Sisolak's office said Tuesday. Immediate resettlement plans were not disclosed and the governor's office said the first people to arrive under the federal Afghan Placement and Assistance program weren't available for immediate interviews "for concerns for their safety." The state was awaiting word from the federal government about how many Afghan refugees and special immigrant visa holders will eventually be sent to Nevada, Sisolak said in a statement. "Nevada is and will continue to be a welcoming state for all," said the governor, a Democrat. "I am proud of our long-standing tradition of resettling refugees and other eligible populations fleeing from persecution fearing for theirs and their families' lives and safety." Sisolak said his Governor's Office for New Americans was working through Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, which serves as the state's Office of Refugee Resettlement. Deacon Thomas Roberts, president and CEO of Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, said the lack of affordable housing was a key factor in allocating 50 people to southern Nevada and 100 to the north. He noted also there are differences in services and benefits available through regular Catholic Charities services and those provided to Afghan evacuees. The Biden administration has set a goal of taking in 125,000 refugees and their families to the U.S. next year.

[WA] Immigrant rights activist targeted for deportation can stay

The [AP](#) [9/21/2021 4:54 PM, Gene Johnson] reports a Northwest immigrant rights activist who had been facing deportation says she can now remain in the U.S., after the Department of Homeland Security agreed to drop her case. Maru Mora Villalpando, a Mexico City native, has been in the U.S. since overstaying a visa in 1996. She said

Tuesday that an immigration judge last week approved the decision to drop deportation proceedings against her, amid the Biden administration's re-evaluation of immigration enforcement priorities. ICE denied targeting her or any other immigrant for political reasons, and immigration judge Brett Parchert rejected her arguments on those grounds. Mora Villalpando had no criminal record and her case posed no such security issues. She and her attorney, Devin Theriot-Orr, requested that the agency use its prosecutorial discretion to drop her case, and the agency agreed, she said.

Customs and Border Protection

Border Patrol council VP pushes back on media's claim of agents 'whipping' migrants

FOX News [9/21/2021 2:31 PM, Staff, 9251K] Video: [HERE](#) reports National Border Patrol Council Vice President Art Del Cueto pushed back against mainstream media claims of agents whipping migrants. During an interview on "America Reports" Tuesday, Del Cueto explained agents are not assigned whips and the techniques used were within safety protocol to protect both the agent and the horse involved in the incident.

Democrats support probe into border altercation with Haitians

Roll Call [9/21/2021 5:32 PM, Caroline Simon, 119K] reports Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas told lawmakers Tuesday he was "horrified" by images of Border Patrol agents on horseback confronting Haitian migrants along the Rio Grande, but said he would let an investigation reveal what happened. "We look forward to learning the facts. We do not tolerate any mistreatment or abuse of a migrant. Period," he told members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. Vice President Kamala Harris called the images "horrible" and said she supported a full investigation. "Human beings should never be treated that way, and I'm deeply troubled about it," she said Tuesday, adding she planned to speak with Mayorkas later. During his visit to Del Rio a day earlier, Mayorkas said the Border Patrol chief explained his horse-mounted agents carried "long reins" used to help control their animals — and not whips as some accounts reported. He told reporters at the site that department officials would "investigate the facts to ensure that the situation is as we understand it to be. And if it's anything different, we will respond accordingly." DHS said the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Professional Responsibility is investigating the situation and has notified the department's inspector general's office. "The footage is extremely troubling and the facts learned from the full investigation, which will be conducted swiftly, will define the appropriate disciplinary actions to be taken," DHS said in a statement.

GOP investigates FAA drone ban that shut down coverage of migrant camp

The Washington Times [9/20/2021 8:00 PM, Stephen Dinan, 381K] reports that Republican investigators demanded answers Tuesday from the Federal Aviation Administration over its decision last week to impose a ban on drone flights near the Texas migrant camp that sprang up on the banks of the Rio Grande. Kentucky Rep. James Comer and fellow Republicans on the House Oversight Committee said the ban was "totally devoid" of a justification and, given the details, it's tough to avoid the conclusion that the FAA was trying to protect the Biden administration from embarrassing images. "Using government resources to conduct such blatant censorship is exactly the kind of abuse of power that must be rooted out of our government — to say nothing to the basic lack of transparency,"

the House Republicans wrote in a letter that The Washington Times obtained first. The drone ban went into effect the night of Sept. 16, just as the camp was swelling to 5,000 people and as media interest was growing. Federal authorities were keeping the public away from the site on the ground, but aerial images captured the size of the gathering. The ban lasts until Sept. 30. In the announcement, the agency said drones that break the ban could be destroyed in a "security action" by the Department of Homeland Security, the Justice Department or even the Defense Department. The FAA, in a statement to the Times, said the Border Patrol requested the ban "due to drones interfering with law enforcement aircraft on the border." The agency said news agencies are able to get exemptions, and Fox News, Reuters and the Associated Press have applied and been approved.

[TX] Texas rancher says she encountered 23 illegal immigrants on property, says Border Patrol overwhelmed

FOX News [9/21/2021 10:27 AM, Amy Nelson, 9251K] reports that Texas ranchers are calling for help as the crisis at the U.S. southern border continues to affect American citizens. Laura Allen, a rancher in Val Verde County, told Fox News' Lawrence Jones that 23 illegal immigrants trespassed on her property in one night. As part of Governor Greg Abbott's "Operation Lone Star," the Texas Department of Public Safety has been able to aid in combatting the surge of illegal immigration as Border Patrol remains overwhelmed with the surge of migrants, particularly in Del Rio. "We actually intervened and had them taken from Border Patrol, handed over to DPS for prosecution," Allen said of the migrants that entered her property. "They're being processed for criminal trespassing." "DPS has stepped in and been able to do something out in the areas that Border Patrol is not able to get to." Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas visited Del Rio, Texas, Monday as thousands of migrants were seen under the International Bridge. Mayorkas issued a stern warning to people traveling into the United States illegally. "The border is not open and people should not take the perilous journey here," he said. "We are returning people to other countries." Allen said on "Fox & Friends" that local officials are "fed up" with the situation at the border. "They're tired. We've dealt with more than we should ever have to deal with. We've seen more than we should ever have to see." She said the crisis is an "insurmountable obstacle" without help from Washington.

Transportation Security Administration

U.S. to require COVID vaccination on arrival for some foreign nationals with exemptions, memo says

Reuters [9/21/2021 6:14 AM, Andrea Shalal and David Shepardson, 4947K] reports under new U.S. rules, foreign nationals admitted to the United States on humanitarian grounds, who are not required to have COVID-19 vaccinations, will have to agree to be vaccinated upon arrival, according to a planning document seen by Reuters. The White House on Monday said it would lift restrictions that bar many non-U.S. citizens from traveling to the United States by air starting in November. The United States will require nearly all foreign nationals age 12 and over to show proof of COVID-19 vaccines before entering the country. Exemptions to that policy will include "children, COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial participants and humanitarian exceptions for people traveling for an important reason and who lack access to vaccination in a timely manner," the planning document said. Most people who receive those "very limited" exemptions would be required to agree to get vaccinated upon arrival, the document said. It was not immediately clear how or where vaccines would be

administered or if the travelers would have to quarantine while waiting for their immunity to build.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Northern Hemisphere's summer of wildfires let off record-breaking carbon emissions

CNN [9/21/2021 11:38 AM, Amy Woodyatt, 4876K] reports that the amount of carbon emitted from severe wildfires that tore across many parts of the Northern Hemisphere this summer broke records, according to data from the European Union's Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service published Tuesday. Intense blazes, including fires in hotspots in the Mediterranean, North America and Siberia, let off more than 2.7 billion metric tons of carbon over the summer, with July and August both breaking monthly records for emissions from fires. More than half of July's emissions could be put down to fires in North America and Siberia. Europe experienced its hottest summer on record this year and the Mediterranean also broke temperature records by large margins, as did parts of the Arctic and Canada. Human-made climate change is making extreme weather events more frequent and intense, and dry conditions and heatwaves in the Mediterranean this year turned the region into a wildfire hotspot, letting off large quantities of smoke pollution. Meanwhile, wildfires in the Arctic -- a region that has warmed more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet since 2000 -- released 66 million tons of CO2 between June and August, Copernicus said. The boreal fire season usually lasts from May to October, and activity peaks between July and August. "Throughout the summer we have been monitoring wildfire activity across the Northern Hemisphere. What stood out as unusual were the number of fires, the size of the areas in which they were burning, their intensity and also their persistence," Mark Parrington, senior scientist and wildfire expert at Copernicus, part of the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, said in a statement.

[LA] Louisiana delegation split over debt-hike bill with disaster aid

The Hill [9/21/2021 12:25 PM, Scott Wong, 1776K] reports that Hurricane-battered Louisiana's congressional delegation is divided over Democrats' package to avert a government shutdown, raise the nation's legal debt limit, and allocate nearly \$30 billion in emergency aid responding to Hurricane Ida and other natural disasters. Sen. John Kennedy (R-La.) said he'll break with his GOP leaders and "probably" vote to pass the package "because my state needs the help," even as he predicted it would fail in the Senate. The state's other senator, Republican Bill Cassidy, hasn't made up his mind yet about how he'll vote, and the delegation's only Democrat, Rep. Troy Carter, will vote yes. But two Louisiana Republicans in House leadership — Minority Whip Steve Scalise, who runs the GOP's vote-counting operation, and Rep. Mike Johnson, who helps run GOP messaging — are urging their colleagues to vote down the Democratic proposal when it comes to the floor later Tuesday. They are complaining that President Biden and the Democrats are spending too much, imposing higher taxes and driving up inflation through their separate \$3.5 trillion social safety net package. "If you notice the debt that [Democrats have] incurred just this year alone to fund things like bailing out failed states, paying people not to work and then ultimately now to pass this [\$5 trillion-plus] tax-and-spend bill ... we're not the only ones against it. Most American people don't want this level of spending and taxes that are going to increase inflation even higher," Scalise told reporters after huddling with House Republicans. "Democrats want to bring bad policies like that, they're the ones that are going to have to answer for it," Scalise added. "They shouldn't try to tie it, by the way, to a

bill that funds basic needs of government, and the Senate made it clear they're not going to go for this.”

[MT] Gianforte sends National Guard to aid in virus response

The AP [9/21/2021 5:20 PM, Staff] reports National Guard soldiers will assist Montana hospitals with their COVID-19 response as the state struggles with a surge in infections, Gov. Greg Gianforte announced Tuesday. A total of 70 soldiers will assist six different hospitals in Helena, Billings, Butte, Missoula and Bozeman. They will begin helping the hospitals either this weekend or next weekend, according to an announcement from the governor's office. The Guardsmen will support staffing with non-medical intensive care assistance, environmental services, patient data entry and virus testing. Gianforte has stopped short of issuing any statewide mask or vaccine requirements even as some communities face record high COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. The decision to mobilize the National Guard comes after Gianforte announced last week that 10 Guardsmen would begin assisting Billings Clinic and seven additional Guardsmen would assist in the state lab. Gianforte also directed Montana Disaster and Emergency Services to assist hospitals in the process of securing full reimbursements from FEMA for their COVID-19 staffing needs, after several hospitals reported last week that they faced staffing shortages that complicated their efforts to respond to the pandemic. State health officials reported 1,181 new COVID-19 cases on Tuesday, bringing the total number of active cases to just under 10,000. Over 370 people were reported hospitalized with the virus as of Tuesday, and 1,901 Montana residents have died of the virus since the onset of the pandemic.

[CA] D.C. could send California billions for fire recovery — but there's a catch

The San Francisco Chronicle [9/21/2021 5:21 PM, Tal Kopan, 495K] reports billions of dollars that could cover the loss of burned vines and smoke-tainted wine grapes. Hundreds of millions to help with drought, and hundreds of millions more for hazardous fuels management. Democrats on Tuesday unveiled a nearly \$30 billion disaster relief package that could be a godsend to Northern California's wildfire-ravaged and drought-stricken communities. But in classic Washington fashion, there's a catch — the money is tied up in a partisan game of chicken. With funding set to run out next Thursday, Democrats unveiled a bill to keep the federal government open for another year on Tuesday. That bill is paired with a \$28.6 billion supplement for disaster relief, including recent wildfires, drought, hurricanes and floods, and \$6.3 billion to support Afghan evacuees. While it's unclear exactly how much California would get of the overall disaster package, it is expected to cover the \$7.7 billion that the state's U.S. senators have requested based on estimates of California's need. Those provisions are largely uncontroversial and have bipartisan backing. But their fate is intertwined, for now, with Democrats' efforts to raise the debt limit — a cap on federal borrowing that Congress regularly has to raise in order to prevent the U.S. from defaulting.

Secret Service

Secret Service agents warn fleets about 'fuel skimming' thieves

The Commercial Carrier Journal [9/21/2019 2:00 PM, Aaron Huff, Neutral, Secondary] reports two Secret Service agents came to the Comdata user conference in Orlando on Sept. 13 to warn fleet managers about fuel skimming, an illegal activity that costs the

trucking industry millions every month. Long before the Secret Service was tasked with protecting U.S. presidents, the agency was founded in 1865 to suppress counterfeiting. That mission continues today with investigating credit card fraud. Fuel thieves are spreading rapidly along the I-10 corridor from Florida through Texas, Arizona and into California, they said. Most are immigrants from Cuba, via Miami, said Special Agent Roger Fuentes. "Guys who did drugs have switched to this. It is a lot less dangerous." Traditional card controls, such as setting daily limits for gallons and dollar amounts, have limited ability to prevent fuel fraud. As an example, Lomonaco said he recently investigated a case where a state National Guard unit lost \$800,000 over a three-month period from thieves using counterfeit GSA fuel cards. Jon Bernstein, Comdata's vice president of product innovation, followed the presentation from the Secret Service agents to discuss available tools for fleets to prevent fraud. Comdata has a product that uses GPS and vehicle tank capacity data from ELD telematics systems to enhance pre-authorization fuel controls, he said. When a card is swiped at the pump, Comdata instantly verifies that the vehicle is at the location using GPS data from the telematics system, he said.

Federal agencies buying up Chinese drones previously deemed a national security threat: report

FOX News [9/21/2021 10:21 PM, Andrew Mark Miller, 9251K, Neutral, Primary]

Federal law enforcement agencies in the Biden administration are reportedly purchasing surveillance drones from China that have previously been labeled a potential national security threat by the Pentagon. The U.S. Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have recently acquired surveillance drones from the Shenzhen-based company DJI, around the same time the Defense Department deemed products from the Chinese company to be a potential national security threat, according to an Axios report. Procurement records show that the Secret Service bought eight DJI drones on July 26 just three days after the Defense Department issued a statement warning about possible threats posed by the company's products. Around the same time, records show that the FBI bought 19 drones from DJI. DJI is one of the most popular drone manufacturers in the industry, and the company requires those who purchase their products to download proprietary software and provide to users their own mapping databases that have the potential to be monitored remotely. Concerns about the company's products being used to advance China's interests have been longstanding and include a 2017 statement from the Department of Homeland Security that claimed with "moderate confidence" that DJI was "providing U.S. critical infrastructure and law enforcement data to the Chinese government."

[GA] Guest speakers announced for Save America rally at Georgia National Fairgrounds

13WMAZ [9/21/2021 3:37 PM, Staff, Neutral, Secondary] Video: [HERE](#)

Former President Donald Trump is making a stop in Central Georgia in just a few days, and organizers of the rally have released a schedule. Guests will be screened by the United States Secret Service upon entry. The intent of the rally is to drum up support for a slew of candidates that have declared they're entering statewide races. Perhaps the biggest candidate is Herschel Walker, the UGA legend who previously announced he would be running against Sen. Raphael Warnock in 2022. He recently received an endorsement from the former POTUS. Trump has also thrown his support behind state senator Burt Jones for the Lieutenant Governor position currently held by Geoff Duncan, who announced he would NOT be seeking re-election in May, and Jody Hice for Secretary of State.

[AL] Former Chick-fil-A Employee Pleads Guilty for Scheme to Steal Funds

The United States Department of Justice [9/21/2019 3:00 PM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a former Chick-fil-A employee pleaded guilty today to participating in a conspiracy to defraud his former employer and committing bank fraud, announced U.S. Attorney Prim F. Escalona and U.S. Secret Service Special Agent in Charge Patrick M. Davis. Larry James Black, Jr., 37, of Center Point, the former Director of Hospitality at Chick-fil-A Five Points, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and bank fraud before U.S. District Judge Madeline H. Haikala. Black's sentencing hearing is scheduled for January 20, 2022. Black's co-defendant, Joshua Daniel Powell, 40, of Moody, a former manager at the same location, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud in June. Powell's sentencing hearing is scheduled for October 20, 2021. According to the plea agreement, between April 2018 and January 2018, Black and Powell devised and implemented a scheme to divert \$492,000 in customer payments to bank accounts under their control. Black and Powell used these accounts to receive customer credit card payments intended for Chick-fil-A Five Points. Many of these payments were for catering orders from large customers. To effectuate the scheme, Black and Powell used fraudulent email and digital payment accounts that imitated the look of official Chick-fil-A accounts. In addition to these fraudulent "Chick-fil-A" accounts, Black and Powell also utilized a personal email account belonging to Powell to intercept virtual credit card payments that were made on behalf of an additional customer. Black used the fraud proceeds to support his lifestyle, including the purchase of high-end luxury vehicles and vacations. The U.S. Secret Service Cyber Fraud Task Force investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward J. Canter prosecuted the case.

[FL] Apopka custodian used as 'Money Mule' to transfer \$3.1M to Nigerian police barracks

Click Orlando [9/21/2021 11:34 PM, Mike Holfeld, 188K, Neutral, Secondary]

The U.S. Secret Service has uncovered a multi-million dollar scheme that used a young Apopka janitor as a "money mule" to transfer cash, money orders and unemployment benefits to a Nigerian police barracks over the last six years. Senior Special Agent Roger Fuentes, of the Orlando Secret Service, told News 6 the young man was convinced he was helping a woman he met and fell in love with on social media to assist a struggling church congregation. "He admitted that they pledged their undying love," Fuentes said. "He believed this woman cared for him." Investigators are convinced the words behind the romance were probably authored by men. News 6 has confirmed the photos of the woman he loved were of an adult film star used to perpetuate a lie that lasted six years. The woman has nothing to do with the scheme. "He had no idea," Fuentes told News 6. "It was romance scams, it was vacation rental scams, it was internet sales scams, any kind of scam you can think of they were funneling it through him." Agents acting on a tip from the Apopka Police Department were waiting for the young man when he arrived home from his shift a few weeks ago. Fuentes said they confiscated \$100,000 in cash, along with stacks of money orders, gift cards and unemployment debit cards from California and Arizona. The man, who asked not to be identified, first met the woman on Facebook when he was just 19 years old.

[NE] Chamber president warns that Kearney business accepted fake \$50 bill

The Grand Island Independent [9/21/2021 10:05 AM, Staff, 25K, Neutral, Secondary]

The Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce is issuing a warning to its members that a Kearney business had received a counterfeit \$50 bill. "I just received communication from a business that they received a counterfeit \$50 bill," Chamber President Derek Rusher said in the warning. "When comparing the fake \$50 to an authentic \$50, they looked and felt

identical because they bleached a \$1 bill before printing on it." Rusher said that when the fake bill was held up to the light it did not have the presidential water mark. "But it was difficult to even catch that." The victimized business didn't know it was a fake bill until their bank caught it as a \$1 bill when going through the currency counter. Rusher advised the chamber membership to pass along the warning about fake \$50 bills.

[CA] San Ramon High School Student Shooting: Man Found Guilty

The [Patch](#) [9/21/2019 11:01 AM, Staff, Positive, Secondary] reports a jury convicted a Fremont man Wednesday of second-degree murder for the killing of a San Ramon high school student in 2018, Alameda County prosecutors said Thursday. Christian Kelling, 24, was found guilty of shooting and killing California High School student Damani Chadly, 17, on Dec. 4, 2018, in Fremont after selling marijuana to Chadly, according to prosecutors. Kelling exchanged four ounces of marijuana for \$400 from Chadly and a friend at about 11 p.m. in the 34000 block of Torrington Court, prosecutors said. Chadly allegedly paid for the marijuana with counterfeit bills. Prosecutors said the exchange was arranged on Snapchat. When Kelling realized the bills were counterfeit, he opened fire with a 9 mm gun on the vehicle that Chadly was in, according to prosecutors. Kelling fired five times at the car and hit Chadly, who was in the front passenger seat, prosecutors said. Chadly died at the scene. The driver of the car, Robert Johnston, was also struck by gunfire, according to prosecutors. He was hit on his right hand and left arm and crashed the car into a home when he realized he was shot. Johnston ran from the car because he was afraid Kelling would shoot him again, prosecutors said. Kelling fled to Texas and was with family there when he was arrested by a U.S. Marshals Service team on Dec. 12, 2018. Kelling is currently being held without bail at Santa Rita Jail in Dublin.

Coast Guard

[WA] Coast Guard rescues hiker who was missing for a week

[NBC News](#) [9/21/2021 11:42 AM, Wilson Wong, 37K] reports a hiker who was missing for a week was rescued in Washington state late Sunday, authorities said. Jerren Fisher, 26, was hoisted from a ravine in Olympic National Park by a helicopter crew about 8 p.m., the U.S. Coast Guard said in a statement. He was flown to the Olympic Regional Airport and taken to a hospital where he was stable. Fisher had a travel plan for a solo hike between Sept. 8 and 12, according to the National Park Service. He "was planning on camping at Enchanted Valley, Marmot Lake, Camp Pleasant, and Sundown Lake before returning to his vehicle via Graves Creek Trailhead," the park service said in a statement. "Park rangers then located Fisher's vehicle at the Graves Creek Trailhead and initiated a hasty search." A family member reported Fisher was missing, prompting authorities to begin their search efforts on Thursday, officials said. "Search and rescue personnel hiked into the wilderness Thursday afternoon from the Graves Creek Trailhead towards Sundown Lake following Fisher's itinerary in reverse as well as from the North Fork Skokomish Trail," the park service said.

CISA/Cybersecurity

Treasury department will sanction crypto exchanges that help channel payments to hackers

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 1:06 PM, Gerrit De Vynck, 11773K] reports that the U.S. government is stepping up its efforts to disrupt the infrastructure hackers use to make

money from breaking into and holding hostage computer networks, announcing sanctions against one virtual currency exchange and warning U.S. companies it could be legally risky for them to pay off hackers that hit their systems. The Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control announced sanctions Tuesday against Suex, an exchange that lets people buy and sell virtual currencies with regular credit cards, according to its website. The government said as much as 40 percent of known transactions run by Suex were criminal. "We are going to continue to look at the ecosystem and look for actors that are taking similar actions," Anne Neuberger, the White House's deputy national security adviser on cybersecurity, said during a call with reporters. Ransomware attacks, where hackers lock out a company or organization from its computer system and demand a ransom payment to restore access, more than doubled from 2019 to 2020. The government sees them as both a criminal menace, and a national security threat. In February, a hack on the Colonial Pipeline fuel-delivery network led to fuel shortages up and down the East Coast. President Biden has told Russian President Vladimir Putin, whose country is known to host many of the ransomware gangs responsible for the surge, that he would take "Any necessary action" to defend critical infrastructure against cyberattacks. On Monday, Iowa-based New Cooperative, a major buyer and distributor of grain and feed, said it had been hit by a ransomware attack, though it was able to find a workaround to keep most of its business running. The announcement Tuesday is part of the government's attempts to lower the frequency and profitability of ransomware attacks. It has urged companies to increase their cybersecurity practices, such as requiring all employees to use two-factor authentication.

Reported similarly:

[New York Times](#) [9/21/2021 4:50 PM, Alan Rappeport, Andrew E. Kramer and David E. Sanger, 24635K]

[Politico](#) [9/21/2021 10:31 AM, Sam Sabin and Victoria Guida, 1707K]

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 10:34 AM, Maggie Miller, 1776K]

FBI held back ransomware decryption key from businesses to run operation targeting hackers

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 2:58 PM, Ellen Nakashima and Rachel Lerman, 11773K] reports that the FBI refrained for almost three weeks from helping to unlock the computers of hundreds of businesses and institutions hobbled by a major ransomware attack this summer, even though the bureau had secretly obtained the digital key needed to do so, according to several current and former U.S. officials. The key was obtained through access to the servers of the Russia-based criminal gang behind the July attack. Deploying it immediately could have helped the victims, including schools and hospitals, avoid what analysts estimate was millions of dollars in recovery costs. But the FBI held on to the key, with the agreement of other agencies, in part because it was planning to carry out an operation to disrupt the hackers, a group known as REvil, and the bureau did not want to tip them off. Also, a government assessment found the harm was not as severe as initially feared. The planned takedown never occurred because in mid-July REvil's platform went offline — without U.S. government intervention — and the hackers disappeared before the FBI had a chance to execute its plan, according to the current and former officials. The previously unreported episode highlights the trade-offs law enforcement officials face between trying to damage cyber criminal networks and promptly helping the victims of ransomware — malware that encrypts data on computers, rendering them unusable. The White House has made fighting ransomware a priority, and President Biden has urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to rein in ransomware criminals operating out of Russia. "The questions we ask each time are: What would be the value of a key if disclosed? How

many victims are there? Who could be helped?" said one individual familiar with the matter, who, like others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive matter. "And on the flip side, what would be the value of a potential longer-term operation in disrupting an ecosystem? Those are the questions we will continue to have to balance."

'Anonymous' hackers claim to hit website hosting firm popular with Proud Boys

CNN [9/21/2021 10:53 PM, Sean Lyngaas, 4876K] reports the hacking collective Anonymous last week claimed to have stolen and leaked reams of data held by Epik, a website hosting firm popular with far-right organizations like the Proud Boys. The more than 150 gigabytes of data swept up in the breach shine a light on years of online activities from far-right groups, including those who tried to overturn the 2020 presidential election. While researchers are still sifting through the data, Epik has historically provided web hosting services to an array of conspiracy theorists, and for conservative media networks like Parler and Gab. The breach also undercuts Epik's pledge to customers that it can safeguard their anonymity, no matter what dangerous conspiracy theories they spread online. For that reason, experts told CNN the hack could have repercussions for how far-right groups organize and try to protect themselves online. "A breach like this will force some of these actors to find security providers outside of North America, in Europe, to possibly step up their security game," Gabriella Coleman, a professor of anthropology at Harvard University, told CNN. Coleman said the data dump "confirmed a lot of the details of the far-right ecosystem."

The Mercenary Threat of U.S. Hackers-for-Hire

The Washington Post [9/22/2021 4:05 AM, Bobby Ghosh, 11773K] reports that in the summer of 2012, an Iranian computer virus named Shamoon wiped data from tens of thousands of computers at two of the Middle East's most important energy companies, Saudi Aramco and Qatar's Ras Gas. Shamoon was no Stuxnet: Unlike the Israeli digital weapon that destroyed nuclear centrifuges in the Islamic Republic, the virus that attacked the energy companies did little damage to their operations. But the demonstration of their vulnerability panicked policy makers in the Gulf Arab states. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Oman all turned to the U.S. for expertise to protect their vital national resources against cyberattacks. With the blessings of the Obama administration, American defense contractors specializing in cybersecurity were happy to help. To meet the surging demand for their services, these firms recruited cyber-operatives and analysts from U.S. intelligence agencies, offering what one former Federal Bureau of Investigations agent described to me as "buy-yourself-a-Ferrari" salaries. For some, their job description evolved from playing defense against hackers to going on the offense, heading attackers off at the pass. Others were assigned to counterterrorism operations, doing for their new clients what they had previously done for their country, and often using the same tools. Nobody in Washington heard the sound of a can of worms being opened. But it wasn't very long before there were inklings of where the worms had wriggled off to. Within a couple of years, word was filtering back to the U.S. intelligence community that some of their former colleagues were being deployed as cyber-spies, to hack into the phones and computers of political dissidents, rights activists and journalists. These targets included American citizens. The first clear sight of what the worms were up to came from a 2019 investigation by Reuters into the role of former U.S. intelligence operatives in a UAE operation that, among other things, allegedly snooped on government critics. Earlier this summer, the UAE was among several governments accused of using spyware created by the Israeli company NSO Group to hack the smartphones of journalists, activists and business executives worldwide.

[IA] Russian hackers target Iowa grain co-op in \$5.9 million ransomware attack

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 6:16 PM, Jacob Bogage and Laura Reiley, 11773K] reports Russian hackers leveled a ransomware attack on an Iowa farming co-op and demanded \$5.9 million to unlock the computer networks used to keep food supply chains and feeding schedules on track for millions of chickens, hogs and cattle. Fort Dodge-based New Cooperative, a member-owned alliance of farmers that sells corn and soy products, contained the breach and developed a workaround to continue accepting grain shipments and distributing feed, a person close to the company told The Washington Post, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive information. But the cooperative took its computer network offline to isolate the incursion, the person said, and shuttered its soil-mapping software — a master-control system that optimizes irrigation and fertilization — as a precaution. Farmers, meanwhile, have taken to using paper scale tickets to log their grain hauls as they drop them off at the cooperative, said Tim Luginsland, Wells Fargo’s food and agribusiness sector manager. The hacking group BlackMatter threatened to publish a terabyte of the cooperative’s data, including invoices, research and development documents, and the source code to its soil-mapping technology, if it did not receive the ransom payment in cryptocurrency by Sept. 25, said cybersecurity experts who evaluated the attack. On Sept. 3, the FBI warned that agriculture producers were being targeted by cybercriminals. In June, another Russian cybercrime cell, REvil, carried out a ransomware attack on JBS, the world’s largest meat producer. The company, which operates in the United States, Brazil, Canada and Australia, eventually paid an \$11 million ransom. Should the New Cooperative hack be seen as a success, national security experts worry it could lead to more attacks on agriculture producers, especially cooperatives. “Huge amounts of money move with the transfer of agricultural commodities — many, many millions of dollars are transferred back and forth,” said Bobby J. Martens, the Iowa Institute of Cooperatives endowed professor of economics at Iowa State University. “The bad guys are going to see those transfers. There’s a tremendous amount of money that exchanges hands in this area.” The size of the hack — New Cooperative represents only a small portion of Iowa’s fall harvest — and the cooperative’s workaround limited the market impact of the breach, Luginsland said. But such threats may require significant security upgrades, the cost of which could be passed on to consumers.

[China] Justice Department investigating Zoom’s China ties over Five9 deal

The [Hill](#) [9/21/2021 6:00 PM, Monique Beals, 1776K] reports the Department of Justice (DOJ) has opened an investigation into Zoom’s \$15 billion deal to buy Five9 over of the videoconferencing giant’s connections to China. The DOJ requested the Federal Communications Commission defer action on Zoom’s application to acquire Five9 until Team Telecom, an interagency committee responsible for ensuring U.S. telecommunications security, completes a review, according to The Wall Street Journal. Five9 is authorized as a carrier connecting domestic and overseas networks, which drew the Team Telecom scrutiny. The Justice Department cited “the foreign relationships and ownership” as a potential national security risk in a letter regarding the partnership with Five9, an American customer service company. As a result, Zoom’s \$15 billion deal remains on hold. Zoom’s value soared as the U.S. workforce went remote during the pandemic, but its shares have fallen 20 percent in recent months. The company has responded to previous questions about its ties to China by pointing out that it is based in Silicon Valley and that its China-born chief executive, Eric Yuan, is a U.S. citizen, according to the Journal.

Terrorism Investigations

Wray warns Taliban takeover in Afghanistan could inspire US-based extremists

The Hill [9/21/2021 7:01 PM, Olafimihan Oshin, 1776K] reports FBI Director Christopher Wray warned Tuesday that the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan could inspire a new wave of extremism in the U.S. Wray testified before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee that extremist groups have never stop plotting attacks on U.S. soil. He also said that the domestic terrorism caseload has skyrocketed since the spring of 2020, from around 1,000 possible investigations to 2,700. "We are concerned that, with developments in Afghanistan, among other things, that there will be more inspiration to the first bucket," Wray told the committee. "So I think we anticipate, unfortunately, growth in both categories as we look ahead over the next couple of years." This comes as National Counterterrorism Center Director Christine Abizaid also testified to the committee that the terrorism threat to the country is less "acute" than it was two decades ago. Abizaid also said that U.S. officials have been monitoring how terror groups al Qaeda and ISIS could rebuild their forces and conduct an attack on the U.S. "In the wake of our withdrawal, the question is, at what point does that regional threat build to a capability and intent that is focused externally and particularly focused on the homeland?" Abizaid said. "I would say from an intelligence community perspective, that's one of our highest priorities, is just to monitor and assess the degree to which those groups actually present an external threat." [Editorial note: consult Top News for extended commentary]

Reported similarly:

Axios [9/21/2021 8:12 PM, Ivana Saric, 526K]

Reuters [9/21/2021 2:28 PM, Jan Wolfe, 4947K]

National Security News

Biden, at U.N., calls for unity in addressing the pandemic and climate change

The Washington Post [9/21/2021 7:20 PM, Anne Gearan, 11773K] reports that President Biden made a case Tuesday that the United States can compete with China economically and ideologically while cooperating to confront global threats like climate change and the coronavirus, as he tried to reassure allies with growing qualms about American leadership. In his first address to the United Nations as president, Biden also defended the messy end to nearly two decades of war in Afghanistan, affirmed U.S. support for the United Nations and an alphabet soup of international partnerships and pledged support for poorer countries often disproportionately affected by climate change. "We've ended 20 years of conflict in Afghanistan and as we close this era of endless war we are opening an era of endless diplomacy," Biden said in a measured address notable mostly for its contrast to the boastful tone and sour reception accorded President Donald Trump. Challenges that require a united response include "Ending this pandemic, addressing the climate crisis, managing shifts in global power dynamics, shaping the role of the world on vital issues like trade, cyber and emerging technologies and facing the threat of terrorism as it stands today," Biden said. Biden was meeting with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison later Tuesday, less than a week after the surprise announcement that Australia would purchase U.S.-made nuclear submarines, a major military challenge to China in its Pacific neighborhood. The arrangement infuriated France, which had contracted to provide less capable ships, with French officials claiming they were blindsided. The fence-mending follows several setbacks

for Biden as he tries to rebuild trust among allies after four years of President Donald Trump. European allies have grown increasingly skeptical about Biden's message that "America is back" in light of an Afghanistan withdrawal that left NATO nations feeling sidelined and as he advances a China agenda many find needlessly confrontational. [Editorial note: consult video at source link]

Reported similarly:

[Politico](#) [9/21/2021 3:27 PM, Nahal Toosi and Quint Forgey, 1707K]

[Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 1:09 PM, Brady Dennis, 11773K]

Biden to tap intelligence expert Corless for Treasury terrorism post

[Reuters](#) [9/21/2021 3:55 PM, Andrea Shalal, 5304K] reports U.S. President Joe Biden will nominate Shannon Corless, a career intelligence expert, as assistant secretary of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence at the Treasury Department, the White House said on Tuesday. Corless currently oversees economic security, energy security, export controls, sanctions, supply chain, telecommunications, threat finance, and trade partnerships at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). If confirmed, Corless, a former naval intelligence officer, will be part of a team making decisions about sanctioning the Taliban and other issues impacting the flow of capital into Afghanistan.

House sends bill aiding 'Havana Syndrome' victims to Biden's desk

[Politico](#) [9/21/2021 6:51 PM, Andrew Desiderio, 1707K] reports the House on Tuesday unanimously passed a bill to aid Americans believed to be suffering from "Havana Syndrome," as the Biden administration struggles to understand how and why U.S. spies and diplomats are developing mysterious, debilitating brain injuries. The illness, believed to be the result of an invisible directed-energy attack, has long stumped U.S. intelligence officials, and reports of what the government officially calls "anomalous health incidents" have skyrocketed in recent months. At the same time, the victims — which total around 200, officials say — have faced bureaucratic hurdles as they seek medical care for symptoms that can range from severe headaches to brain damage. After POLITICO first reported earlier this year the alarming increase in suspected incidents both on U.S. soil and abroad, Republican and Democratic lawmakers who serve on the House and Senate intelligence committees drew up legislation to boost medical resources for these individuals. The bill, dubbed the HAVANA Act, authorizes new funding for treatment and gives the CIA director and the secretary of state increased flexibility on how the money is spent. It also requires both to report regularly to Congress on the funding initiatives. Behind closed doors, lawmakers have expressed frustration with the intelligence community for what they perceive to be a failure to sufficiently address the matter in recent years. "There's no higher priority than ensuring the safety of our people, and the individuals who've served our country now suffering from these troubling health incidents deserve answers and our support," said House Intelligence Chair Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), who led the effort in the lower chamber.

Reported similarly:

[The Hill](#) [9/21/2021 7:06 PM, Cristina Marcos, 1776K]

[Washington Times](#) [9/21/2021 4:35 PM, Joseph Clark, 381K]

[Israel] Spending bill contains \$1 billion for Israel's rocket defenses

Roll Call [9/21/2021 3:32 PM, John M. Donnelly, 119K] reports that the decision by Democratic leaders to remove military funding for Israel from a draft continuing resolution underscored a split in the party amplified by GOP criticism of the move. The \$1 billion for Israel's Iron Dome rocket-defense shield was in an initial version of the resolution but, after progressives said they'd oppose the measure if it was included, was deleted from a subsequent version that the Rules Committee is readying for a floor debate and vote. House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer, D-Md., an advocate of the aid, said he'd put the funding in a separate bill and bring it to the floor later this week. Democrats were deeply divided over whether to include the \$1 billion in the continuing resolution or not. "The Iron Dome protects innocent civilians in Israel from terrorist attacks and some of my colleagues have now blocked funding it," tweeted New Jersey Democrat Josh Gottheimer. "We must stand by our historic ally — the only democracy in the Middle East." House Armed Services Committee member Elissa Slotkin of Michigan criticized her colleagues for "using a system that just saved hundreds, if not thousands, of lives as a political chit." And one of the House's staunchest progressives, Wisconsin Democrat Mark Pocan, was notably not among the liberals who pushed to have the \$1 billion for Iron Dome deleted from the bill. Pocan has become an ardent supporter of the system as a means of de-escalating the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Republicans, meanwhile, were unsparing in attacking Democrats over failing to provide this latest installment of long-running Iron Dome funding. The Israeli government had requested the \$1 billion in June, on the heels of Hamas rocket attacks on parts of Israel.

[Afghanistan] What happens now to U.S. counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan?

The Washington Post [9/21/2021 7:00 AM, Sarah Kreps and Paul Lushenko, 11773K] reports President Biden promised retribution for the U.S. deaths after the Islamic State in the Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) attacked the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul on Aug. 26, killing 13 U.S. military personnel and dozens of Afghan citizens. On Aug. 29 the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) conducted a drone strike in Kabul that reportedly killed ISIS-K terrorists. Within days, New York Times reported that the strike killed an Afghan citizen who worked for an aid group affiliated with the U.S., as well as members of his family. On Thursday, U.S. CENTCOM commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie cited this investigation, calling the strike a "tragic mistake" that inadvertently killed 10 civilians, including children. Since 9/11, U.S. presidents have adopted drone warfare as a central feature of America's foreign policy. In 2016, President Barack Obama conceded America was getting complacent with drones and discounting the risks. Some scholars contend that governments have a moral obligation to use drones because they minimize physical risk to military personnel. Advocates also argue that drones minimize civilian casualties, although evidence suggests that counterterrorism strikes have killed thousands of civilians. The force protection dividend of drones — that they avoid military casualties — leads to a "moral hazard" dynamic. This means individuals take greater risks because they avoid the burden of the costs of these risks. Many analysts anticipate that Americans will be dismayed by these casualties. But research also suggests that Americans are more concerned with the consequences of strikes when Americans are directly affected. What makes drones so appealing to policymakers as a military tool is that they fly under the radar of public opinion, which insulates U.S. officials from criticism. A recent study conducted by our colleagues suggests that American support for the use of force abroad is mediated by the number of U.S. military casualties. These findings echo the results of another recent study. When presented with a hypothetical scenario, a majority of Americans perceived a drone strike against a terrorist that also resulted in a civilian casualty as legitimate.

[China] Biden to China: We do not want “a new Cold War”

The [Washington Post](#) [9/21/2021 11:58 AM, Olivier Knox, 11773K] reports that President Biden told world leaders just now that he will confront China's military and economic ambitions but promised "We are not seeking a new Cold War," as he urged collective action to smother the pandemic and respond to the worsening climate crisis. "All the major powers of the world have a duty, in my view, to carefully manage their relationships so we do not tip from responsible competition to conflict," Biden said in his first speech as president to the annual U.N. General Assembly. "The United States will compete, and we'll compete vigorously, and lead with our values and our strength. We'll stand up for our allies and our friends and oppose attempts by stronger countries to dominate weaker ones, whether through changes to territory by force, economic coercion, technical exploitation or disinformation," he said. Biden also defended his withdrawal from Afghanistan as a necessary recalibration of American power and expressed hopes of reviving diplomatic efforts to roll back nuclear programs in Iran and North Korea. Its leader, President Xi Jinping, will be the final speaker to address UNGA on Tuesday, delivering a prerecorded message because he did not make the trip to New York. America's tense relationship with the Asian superpower dominated the speech and yielded its most notable line: "We are not seeking a new Cold War, or a world divided into rigid blocs." "The United States is ready to work with any nation that steps up and pursues peaceful resolution to shared challenges, even if we have intense disagreements in other areas, because we'll all suffer the consequences of our failure if we do not come together to address the urgent threats like covid-19 and climate change or enduring threats like nuclear proliferation," he said. FBI Director Christopher Wray and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas are testifying before the Senate Homeland Security Committee on 9/11's impact on homeland security and on threats to the national security. Mayorkas said this morning he was "horrified" by images of horse-mounted Border Patrol agents attempting to grab Haitian migrants and use their animals to push them back toward Mexico and promised a "Swift" investigation, according to John Wagner. "I was horrified by what I saw," Mayorkas said during an appearance on CNN. "I am going to let the investigation run its course, but the pictures that I observed troubled me profoundly." Investigations are starting: DHS "Announced a formal inquiry into the episode, which it said Mayorkas directed after seeing the videos. Mayorkas said he has also directed the Office of Professional Responsibility, DHS's internal oversight office, to send personnel to the area full-time."

{End of Report} [RETURN TO TOP](#)