

Upper Midwest: Clouds mixed with showers in areas. Highs in the upper 70s to the middle 80s. Lows in the 60s. Weather map is on Page A20.

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Democracy Dies in Darkness

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## Biden now poised for big wins in Congress

Bills on semiconductors, drug prices and more could deliver political lift

By Yasmeen Ahtullah and Mike DeBonis

The first major prescription drug legislation in nearly 20 years. More than \$50 billion to subsidize computer chip manufacturing and research. A bill that would enshrine protection for same-sex marriage.

After a turbulent stretch in which much of President Biden's legislative agenda seemed to be foundering, the president and his party may be on the cusp of significant wins in Congress that the White House hopes will provide at least a modest political boost.

Most politically resonant is a bill to let Medicare negotiate drug prices, a hugely popular idea that Democrats have been pursuing for more than 20 years. Even before that — possibly within days — Congress is likely to pass a bill providing \$52 billion to the U.S. semiconductor industry, intended to bolster the U.S. economy and cut China's influence.

"We're close, so let's get it done," Biden said of the bill on Monday. "So much depends on it."

Democrats hope these measures earn a bigger political payoff, say, Biden's infrastructure law, which seemed to make little impression on voters.

"Democrats now seem to be hitting a stride where they're about to rattle off three meaningful victories in a short amount of time, and for really the first time since we had an open field to politically gain from that," said Kurt Bardella, a former Republican who now consults for Democrats.

The health-care bill, the semiconductor bill, this is stuff everybody generally understands. This is not a complex, nuanced policy.

SEE STORY ON A6

## U.S. Prosecutors Pursuing Details on Trump's Role

JAN. 6 INVESTIGATION

Witnesses Questioned on President's Efforts to Reverse Election

By Maggie Haberman and Glenn Thrush

Federal prosecutors have directly asked witnesses in recent days about former President Donald Trump's involvement in efforts to reverse his election loss, a person familiar with the testimony said on Tuesday, suggesting that the Justice Department's criminal investigation has moved into a more aggressive and politically fraught phase.

Mr. Trump's personal role in elements of the push to overturn his loss in 2020 to Joseph R. Biden Jr. has long been established, both through his public actions and statements and evidence gathered by the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack.

But the Justice Department has been largely silent about how and even whether it would weigh prosecuting potential charges against Mr. Trump, and reluctant even to concede that his role was discussed in senior leadership meetings at the department.

Asking questions about Mr. Trump in connection with the Jan. 6 attack does not mean the Justice Department has opened a criminal investigation into him, a decision that would have immense political and legal ramifications.

The department's investigation into a central element of the push to keep Mr. Trump in office — the plan to name states of electors pledged to Mr. Trump in battleground states — met by Mr. Davy, who now appears to be accelerating as witnesses at the U.S. attorney's office in Washington and prosecutors about Mr. Trump and members of his inner circle, including the White House chief of staff, Mark Meadows, the person familiar with the testimony said.

In a follow-up email, Mr. Wilenski wrote that "alternative" votes is probably a better term than "fake" votes, adding a similar example.

The emails provide new details.

Continued on Page A13

## Russia to Leave Space Station, Clouding Future of Exploration

By Kenneth Chang and Ivan Nechepurenko

As the race to the moon recedes, American and Soviet astronauts met and shook hands in space for the first time in 1975. The United States and Russia continued to work together in outer space, looking beyond their hostilities on Earth, culminating in the 1990s with the nations jointly building and operating a laboratory in space.

The International Space Station, photographed in 2018.

The future of that cooperation grew uncertain on Tuesday as the new head of Russia's space agency announced that Russia would leave the International Space Station after its current commitment expired at the end of 2024.

"The decision to leave the station after 2024 has been made," said Yuri Borisov, who was appointed this month to run Roscosmos, a state-controlled corporation in charge of the country's space program.

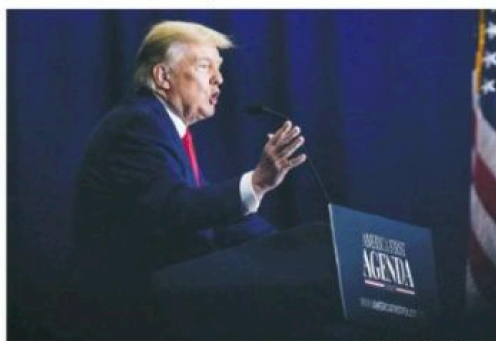
The announcement came during a meeting between Mr. Borisov and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Mr. Borisov told Mr. Putin that Russia would fulfill commitments directly to users through its OAN Live and KloudTV streaming platforms, Mr. Borisov said.

With tensions between Washington and Moscow rising after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February, Russian space officials including Dmitry Rogozin, Mr. Borisov's predecessor, had made declarations in recent months that Russia was planning to leave. But they all left ambiguity about when the would happen and whether a final decision would be made.

If Russia follows through, it could accelerate the end of a project that NASA has spent about \$100 billion on over the last quarter-century and set off a

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## Back in D.C. — but as possible rivals



Alex Bevilacqua for The Washington Post



Drew Henson for The Washington Post

Former president Donald Trump and former vice president Mike Pence, who are possibly eyeing 2024 presidential runs, made appearances in Washington on Tuesday, speaking at the America First Agenda Summit and the National Conservative Student Conference, respectively. The trip was Trump's first to D.C. since leaving office. Think tanks, Trump allies and other Republican organizers are already working on a government in waiting if he wins a second term. **AS**

## School-prayer fight blurs church-and-state line

Activists push for more worship in public education after Supreme Court's ruling on religious freedom

By Hannah Natanson

A Michigan superintendent is pondering whether coaches should lead students in pregame prayer. A school board member in Florida wants her district to teach students about prayer and offer religious studies. In Hawaii, the leader of a faith- and family-focused activism group sees a path to altering a state policy that says public-school employees cannot initiate prayer on campus.

A month has passed since the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Washington state football coach who knelt at midfield to pray and was joined by student-athletes. The court wrote, in a 6-5 decision, that Bremerton High School as-



Kried and Kyle Robertson, seen with their daughter Aurora in Yukon, Okla., are athletes. Aurora's mother says her child discovered God and Christianity via her third-grade public-school teacher.

## Criminal probe by DOJ now looks at Trump actions

Phone records of top aides have been seized

By Carol D. Livingston, Devlin Barrett, Josh Dawsey and Spencer S. Hsu

The Justice Department is investigating President Donald Trump's actions as part of its criminal probe of efforts to overturn the 2020 election results, according to four people familiar with the matter.

Prosecutors who are questioning witnesses before a grand jury — including two top aides to Vice President Mike Pence — have asked in recent days about conversations with Trump, his lawyers and others in his inner circle who sought to substitute Trump allies for certified electors from

some states Joe Biden won, according to two people familiar with the matter. Both spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation.

The prosecutors have asked hours of detailed questions about meetings Trump held in December 2020 and January 2021, his pressure campaign on Pence to overturn the election; and what instructions Trump gave his lawyers and advisers about fake electors and sending electors back to the states, the people said. Some of the questions focused directly on the extent of Trump's involvement.

SEE TRUMP ON A8

## Russia says it will leave space station after 2024

Withdrawal would end decades of post-Cold War cooperation with U.S.

By Mary Ilyushina and Christian Davenport

Russia on Tuesday announced it will withdraw from the International Space Station (ISS) project after 2024, signaling an end of an era in one of the last remaining areas of cooperation between Russia and the United States.

Russia's newly appointed head of space agency Roscosmos announced the decision in a meet-

ing with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday, saying that the agency will instead focus on building its own orbital station.

"We will fulfill all our obligations to our partners, but the decision to leave this station after 2024 has been made," the space agency chief Yuri Borisov said.

Russian officials have discussed leaving the project since at least 2021, citing aging equipment and growing safety risks. The countries involved in the ISS agreed to use the station until 2024 and NASA plans to use the station until 2030.

But the ongoing rift between Moscow and Washington over the Russian invasion of Ukraine and

SEE SPACE STATION ON A11

## GOP opinion on marriage bill: Nothing to speak of

By Mike DeBonis

The Respect for Marriage Act, a bill that would enshrine the right to same-sex and interracial marriages in federal law, is only four short pages long. Yet in the week since the House passed the measure on a bipartisan vote and Democratic leaders indicated they planned to put it on the Senate floor, few Republican senators have found the time to read it — or so they said Tuesday.

"Hav'n't read it," said Sen. John Neely Kennedy (R-La.).

"We're still looking at it," said Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.).

"I'm not going to comment on it in terms of how I'm going to vote until I see the bill — if it does get a vote," said Sen. Mike Braun (R-Ind.).

SEE MARRIAGE ON A8

## Poor in Texas, And Helpless Against Heat

By Edgar Sandoval

SAN ANTONIO — One day last week, Juanita Cruz-Perez poked her head out the back door of her two-bedroom home in San Antonio and shook her head so. It was not quite noon yet, and the heat was already unbearable.

She opened the front and back doors, praying for any kind of breeze, and turned on a plastic fan that splattered hot air. She resisted the temptation to turn on the power-guzzling air conditioner.

"The A.C. only goes on at night, no matter how hot it gets," she said.

Ms. Cruz-Perez has several health problems that are exacerbated by the stifling heat, including diabetes and high blood pressure, but her \$800-a-month budget leaves little room for what she would consider a luxury.

In San Antonio, weathering the second week of a heat wave that has been ferocious even by Texas standards, lower-income residents like Ms. Cruz-Perez are sometimes left with few options to relieve the misery. Not only can she not afford air-conditioning during the hottest part of the day, she lives in the Westside, one of several parts of San Antonio — nearly all of them working-class or poor neighborhoods — where there are few trees to provide shade.

Simple things like venturing into the backyard, walking to the store or waiting for a bus can be perilous.

"When you are poor, the sun finds you faster," Ms. Cruz-Perez said.

San Antonio has had at least 46 days of 100-plus-degree weather this year, according to the National Weather Service. Through Monday, measurements taken at

## Possible 'Death Blow' as Conservative Network Loses TV Carriers

By Jeremy W. Peters and Benjamin Millin

The future of One America News, which established itself as a powerful voice in conservative media by promoting some of the most outlandish falsehoods about the 2020 election, is in serious doubt as major carriers drop it from their lineups and deflation

## Biden Labors to Ease Voter Fears of a Recession

By Jim Tankersley

Dispute Contradictory Signals, Economy Is Strong, He Says

After a virtual meeting with tech manufacturing executives on Monday, President Biden was asked about his latest economic headache: How worried should Americans be that the country might be in a recession?

"We're not going to be in a recession," he replied.

The president's aides have spent much of the past several days musing that case publicly, ahead of critical economic data set for release on Thursday that could, at least informally, signal the start of a recession by a common shorthand definition.

After more than a year of attempting to soothe consumer anxieties over soaring inflation, Biden administration officials



Laura DeSormeal for The New York Times

have segued into a sustained public campaign to extinguish fears that the nation's economy has dipped back into recession. Officials have leaned heavily on the strength of the job market and referred frequently to the criteria used by the economic research committee that formally declares when a recession has started and ends.

The campaign has been complicated by the Federal Reserve, which has tried to slow the economy in seeking to wreath inflation under control. On Wednesday, the Fed was expected to make another surprise interest rate increase, likely lifting rates by three

## Stepping Out Again in Kyiv

Nightlife is slowly returning to Ukraine's capital, but not without some guilty feelings. Page A4.

lousness threaten to drain its finances.

By the end of this week, the cable network will have lost its presence in some 20 million homes this year. The most recent blow came from Verizon, which will stop carrying OAN on its FiOS television service starting Saturday. That will starve the network of a major stream of revenue: the fees it collects from Verizon, which counts

## OAN Amplified the Lies on the 2020 Election

roughly 3.5 million cable subscribers. In April, OAN was dropped by AT&T's DirecTV, which has about 15 million subscribers.

OAN's remaining audience will

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