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**Subject:** Fwd: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Monday, February 6, 2017  
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**Date:** Mon, Feb 6, 2017 at 7:00 AM  
**Subject:** U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Monday, February 6, 2017  
**To:** [Interior@bulletinintelligence.com](mailto:Interior@bulletinintelligence.com)

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NEWS BRIEFING**

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**DATE: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017 7:00 AM EST**

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## DOI in the News:

**TRUMP, REPUBLICANS WORK QUICKLY TO REPEAL OBAMA-ERA ENERGY REGULATIONS.** The [New York Times](#) (2/4, Lipton, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports President Trump and Congressional Republicans are rushing to do what coal and oil “industry leaders had been asking for” by slashing Obama Administration environmental regulations. This week, “Congress nullified a measure intended to curb the venting of gas wells on federal lands, and began the process of rolling back other regulations, including one enacted to limit damage that coal mines cause to streams.” The Administration also expressed support for “the actions taken by the House to begin to nullify unnecessary regulations imposed on America’s businesses.” National Mining Association VP Luke Popovich celebrated the news, calling it “a big, fat victory, after all this time,” while the industry is expected to increase pressure on Congress to repeal other regulations.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/3, Harder, Michaels, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) reports legislation to eliminate a Securities and Exchange Commission rule that requires energy companies to report oil, natural gas, and mineral assets development rights payments to foreign governments, and another Interior Department rule that imposes tougher coal mining standards, are both headed to President Trump for signature. The [Christian Science Monitor](#) (2/3, Iaconangelo, 387K) reports “the mining industry celebrated the news of the repeal,” saying that it is a “very, very important step to get coal back on its feet and stop the hemorrhaging of jobs that we’ve seen.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Politico](#) (2/3, Dixon, Juliano, 2.46M), the [Washington \(DC\) Examiner](#) (2/6, 400K), the [Washington \(DC\) Patch](#) (2/3), [Forbes](#) (2/3, 15.17M), [MSNBC](#) (2/3, 8.33M), the [Lexington \(KY\) Herald-Leader](#) (2/3, 306K), the [Harlan \(KY\) Daily Enterprise](#) (2/4, 19K), the [West Virginia Record](#) (2/2, 313), the [Logan \(WV\) Banner](#) (2/4, 652), the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/3, 4K), the [West Virginia Record](#) (2/3, 313), the [Lynchburg \(VA\) News & Advance](#) (2/2, 90K), the [Cordova \(AK\) Times](#) (2/3, 2K), [Ars Technica](#) (2/5, 1.61M), the [Independent \(UK\)](#) (2/4, Griffin, 1.28M), [Yahoo! News](#) (2/2, 8.62M), [WSIL-TV Harrisburg \(IL\)](#) Harrisburg, IL (2/2, 22K), and [KSL-TV Salt Lake City \(UT\)](#) Salt Lake City (2/5, 547K).

**House Votes To Kill Methane Rule.** The [AP](#) (2/3) reports the House voted “Friday to overturn an Obama administration rule that sought to reduce harmful methane emissions” from “companies that burn off natural gas during drilling operations.” Congressional “Republicans argued that the rule is causing job losses in energy-dependent states.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/3, Harvey, 11.43M) reports the rule was changed “under a law known as the Congressional Review Act, which allows Congress a limited time period to overturn federal regulations after they have been finalized.” Jack Gerard, American Petroleum Institute president and chief executive, praised the move Friday, calling it part of the Trump Administration’s “smarter, science-based regulatory approach to continue meeting America’s energy needs and expanding U.S. global energy and environmental leadership.” [The Hill](#) (2/3, Henry, 1.25M) reports that the change must be “approved by the Senate and signed by President Trump” in order to take effect.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Seattle \(WA\) Times](#) (2/3, 1.05M), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/3, 1.02M), [Reuters](#) (2/3, Lambert, Gardner), [Reuters](#) (2/3), [Forbes](#) (2/3, 15.17M), the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/3, 234K), the [Boston \(MA\) Globe](#) (2/3, 1.08M), the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (2/3, 778K), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/3, 4.59M).

**Senate Approves Resolution To Block SEC Rule For Energy Companies.** [Politico](#) (2/3, Guillén, 2.46M) reports the Senate on Friday approved in a 52-47 vote a “resolution to nullify a SEC rule requiring oil, gas and mining companies to reveal their payments to foreign governments.” Meant as a corruption fighting rule, the article says “critics complained it put US companies at a competitive disadvantage.” The piece notes the House is seeking to add more resolutions to the law, “including a vote today to block an Interior Department rule limiting methane emissions from oil and gas drilling on public land.”

**George Mason University Researcher: Republicans Should Roll Back Regulations That Don't Help Environment.** Research fellow with the Mercatus Center at George Mason University James Broughel wrote in [The Hill](#) (2/3, Broughel, Contributor, 1.25M) "Congress Blog" about Congress' rollback of Obama energy policies, and suggests that the Congressional Review Act "can be a powerful tool to target unnecessary red tape." He criticized the targeted regulations for failing to protect the environment, and called on Republicans to "strike down regulations that are built on inadequate or disingenuous cost-benefit analysis."

**STILL UNKNOWN WHEN ZINKE WILL GET SENATE VOTE.** The "Morning Energy" blog of [Politico](#) (2/3, 2.46M) reported Friday morning that "all three energy-related nominees are now through committee," but they are "not on Majority Whip John Cornyn's Thursday list of the next four Cabinet picks slated for full Senate votes." With Democrats in the Senate "drawing out each vote for days, it may be weeks before the Senate gets around to Interior designee Ryan Zinke, DOE pick Rick Perry, and EPA nominee Scott Pruitt, although there is virtually no doubt all will eventually be confirmed." EPW Chairman John Barrasso said, "I'm not sure what the order is going to be. ... Because it seems like Democrats are trying to delay every Cabinet member. They're going to delay the president from getting a Cabinet, which is unprecedented. It's also childish." [Bloomberg BNA](#) (2/5, 7K) reported Republicans in the Senate started "a major push to get President Donald Trump's nominees for the Justice, Treasury, and Health and Human Services departments confirmed the week of Feb. 6."

**"Unusually Slow" Pace Of Confirmations "Shows No Signs Of Easing."** [McClatchy](#) (2/3, Doyle, 74K) considers how the "sluggish pace of approvals" for President Trump's nominees is "unusually slow." According to McClatchy, the delay "shows no signs of easing, as Senate Democrats vow to continue stalling tactics that could last weeks," and this "tardiness, in turn, has consequences that can magnify over time."

**Montana Political Parties Wait For Zinke Confirmation.** The [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/4, 208K) reports that "both of Montana's political parties had tentatively planned this weekend to select candidates" for Interior nominee Ryan Zinke's at-large House seat. However, "it doesn't appear they'll be voting until the middle of the month, or even later." Jeff Essmann, Montana's GOP chairman, said, "My sources in D.C. tell me that Ryan Zinke will likely not be confirmed next week. They cannot tell me when he is likely to be confirmed. I am now preparing my fourth and fifth set of contingency plans."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (2/6, 85K).

**UTAH RESOLUTION CALLS FOR REPEAL OF BEARS EARS MONUMENT.** The [AP](#) (1/31, 2.2M) reports that "Utah's House of Representatives has passed a resolution asking President Donald Trump to repeal the newly named Bears Ears National Monument." It "passed along mostly along party lines Tuesday, with Republicans voting in support." The House also "passed another resolution asking Utah's congressional delegation to support shrinking southern Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Christian Science Monitor](#) (2/5, 387K), the [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/3, 362K), and [Utah Political Capitol](#) (2/3).

**Bishop Wants Trump To Act On Bears Ears.** [NPR](#) (2/5, 1.92M) reports that Rep. Rob Bishop wants the Trump Administration to "either shrink Bears Ears or nullify it all together." Bishop said, "It is the wrong size. It does not take into account the various uses that the land can do." But "what Bishop is talking about doing, overturning a national monument of this size, has never been done before."

Additional coverage was provided by [USA Today](#) (2/5, 5.28M).

**BURNING MAN MISCONDUCT PROBE MAY DERAIL BUNDY TRIALS.** The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/3, 1.1M) reports that "an investigation accusing a federal agent of misconduct and ethics violations could derail" the Bundy standoff trial. According to the article, "a Jan. 30 report by the Department of Interior's Office of the Inspector General appears to raise serious questions about the BLM special agent in charge

of operations during the standoff, who is expected to be a key witness for the government in the case.” The report, “which does not identify the agent by name, cites ethical violations that occurred in 2015 at the annual Burning Man event in Northern Nevada’s Black Rock Desert.”

The [New York Daily News](#) (2/5, Silverstein, 4.45M) reports that the next trial for the Oregon standoff could also be impacted. The next trial “includes 17 defendants, mostly militia members.” The report doesn’t name the agent, but Dan Love, “who negotiated with the Oregon occupiers,” has been identified. Attorneys for that group “said that if Love is the agent described in the report, they will ask for the charges to be dismissed.”

**REPORT: TOURISTS DRAWN TO MONTANA’S OUTDOOR ATTRACTIONS.** The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/5, 114K) reports that in 2016, “12.3 million travelers from out of state visited” Montana, and “the main reason they’re coming here is because of the state’s mountains, rivers, lakes, streams, wildlife, national parks and other outdoor recreation opportunities.” According to Norma Nickerson, the director of the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana, “those visitors created 52,630 jobs in the state and spent an estimated \$3.49 billion in the state.” During a recent Economic Outlook webinar presented by UM’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research, Nickerson said, “The outdoors is our business. If it weren’t for our mountains, lakes and streams – and access to those places – our way of life and the economy here would be different. Our economy wouldn’t be the same and there would be less people spending money here.”

**INTERIOR MARKS GROUNDHOG DAY.** The [Bradford \(PA\) Era](#) (2/4, 30K) reports that “in celebration of Groundhog Day on Thursday, the U.S. Department of the Interior shared a little information on the rodents on Tumblr.” According to the DOI, “groundhogs are not only good predicting future winter weather, but they are also good at swimming and climbing trees.”

**PRESERVATION OF NATION’S “SPECIAL PLACES” URGED.** In an op-ed for the [Riverside \(CA\) Press Enterprise](#) (2/3, 291K), Jocelyn Giron, a student at Victor Valley College and a member of El Nuevo Comienzo Church, writes, “From Teddy Roosevelt through President Obama, there is a legacy of presidents — both Republicans and Democrats — conserving our country’s historical, cultural and natural wonders with the Antiquities Act.” Giron lauds Obama for leaving “behind a significant legacy in this area.” Giron hopes that Interior nominee Ryan Zinke will take “the opportunity to continue what Teddy Roosevelt started more than 100 years ago and preserve our country’s natural, cultural and historic treasures.”

**OP-ED: SELLING OFF PUBLIC LAND “AN ASTOUNDINGLY BAD IDEA.”** Scott Martelle writes an op-ed for the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/3, Martelle, 4.52M), in which he says that selling off millions of acres of public land in 10 states would be “an astoundingly bad idea.” Conservatives have sought to force the federal government to turn over around 640 million acres it owns to state or private hands, saying that the states have a better perspective on how the land should be managed. Martelle says, while that idea is fine in the abstract, what the conservatives want is to open the land to less regulated development and exploitation than the federal government would allow. Previously, the federal government had to consider the value of the land it considered selling, but under a new rule pushed by Utah Rep. Rob Bishop, the land is deemed to have no budgetary impact, making it easier to sell. Martelle says that this ignores the intrinsic value of the land and will add to the disastrous costs of increasing global temperatures.

**CONSERVATIONISTS URGED TO PUT PRESSURE ON ZINKE.** In an op-ed for the [Roanoke \(VA\) Times](#) (2/5, 234K), Rupert Cutler, a board member of the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy, writes that “conservationists must encourage the ‘better angels’ within Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue when it comes to administrative decisions affecting our natural resources legacy.” Cutler points out what he sees as both positives and negatives of Zinke’s stances on conservation issues, and says that “we’ll see where his priorities lie when we see his first budget.”

**MONTANA PERSPECTIVE ON OUTDOORS AMPLIFIED.** In an editorial, the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/3, 114K) notes that Rep. Ryan Zinke’s “nomination to become Interior secretary was approved after a week-long delay and sent to the full Senate for a final vote.” Also, Sen. Steve Daines was appointed chairman of the Senate National Parks subcommittee, and finally, Gov. Steve Bullock was named the Democratic co-chair of the Governors Sportsmen’s Caucus. According to the paper, “with three prominent Montanans

in national leadership positions, Montanans can bet that this perspective will be heard and will help shape any decisions regarding our shared outdoors.”

**ACTION ON KING COVE ROAD URGED.** In an editorial, the [Fairbanks \(AK\) News-Miner](#) (2/4, 42K) says that “the continual battle to obtain a much, much needed — and potentially life-saving — road out near the tip of the Alaska Peninsula is one such example of how some government officials on the far side of the nation can’t understand Alaska and don’t recognize a common sense solution to a problem.” According to the paper, unlike former Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, Interior nominee Rep. Ryan Zinke of Montana, “almost certainly will be receptive to approving a land exchange” for the King Cove road. The paper concludes that it is past time for Congress to act on the road.

**EDITORIAL: LEASE PROCESS FOR PUBLIC-LAND ENERGY PROJECTS MUST IMPROVE.** In an editorial supportive of energy development on public land, the [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (2/5, 85K) argues that “vetting those public land projects should be inclusive and long enough to consider all risks and viewpoints.” Recent events “stress that we must work to create a predictable, stable energy permitting environment in this nation when it comes to energy projects on public land.” It argues that “private industry can’t shoulder the risk of the current process where ‘final’ decisions are unreliable.”

## **America’s Great Outdoors:**

### ***National Park Service:***

**YELLOWSTONE SEEKS INPUT ON CELL SERVICE UPGRADE.** The [AP](#) (2/3, 272K) reports that the National Park Service is “taking comment on a proposal to expand the capacity of cell towers in developed areas of Yellowstone National Park.” A proposal by Verizon Wireless would “improve capacity at Old Faithful and Grant, Canyon and Lake village areas.” Comments on the proposal are due by March 2.

**NPS LAUNCHES REVIEW INTO CHIMNEY TOP 2 FIRE.** [WMC-TV](#) Memphis, TN (2/3, 74K) reports that the National Park Service “launched a review of the Chimney Tops 2 fire that burned within the boundaries of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, as well as surrounding communities.” According to the article, “the team of fire experts will focus specifically on the fire that burned within the boundaries of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.” They will make “recommendations on any planning, operational, or managerial issues that need to be addressed to reduce chances of a similar incident in the future.” National Park Service Division of Fire and Aviation Chief Bill Kaage said, “The team will conduct a thorough review of the actions and response to this fire, which will include compliance with policy and application of professional wildland firefighting practices. Ultimately the purpose of the review is to identify lessons learned from this incident for use by any wildland firefighting agency.”

**BATTLE FOR WINTER ACCESS TO OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK’S HURRICANE RIDGE “FIZZLES OUT.”** The [AP](#) (2/5, Baurick, 272K) reports that “once open seven days a week,” Olympic National Park’s Hurricane Ridge is “now limited to a weather-dependent Friday to Sunday schedule.” According to the article, “access isn’t likely to improve anytime soon” since “plowing the ridge’s only road is a major expense for a park that’s seen its budget and staffing levels shrink and maintenance costs grow.” Furthermore, “park priorities have also changed” such that “the low-impact, wilderness aesthetic is in” and “ski lifts, groomed snow and other not-so-natural attractions are out.” According to longtime ridge advocate Roger Oakes, “community groups have tried several times to raise money for expanded access, but those efforts have ‘fizzled out.’”

**MONTANA’S DELEGATION URGED TO SPEAK UP FOR NATIONAL PARKS.** In an op-ed for the [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (2/4, 52K), Stephanie Adams, the Yellowstone program manager for the National Parks Conservation Association, urges Montana’ political leaders to “better protect Yellowstone, Glacier and other national parks in Montana and beyond.” It notes that “one of our parks’ greatest challenges arose as a common theme from proceedings and announcements for both appointments: the \$12 billion infrastructure repair backlog in our national park system.” However, Adams argues that in addition of money, an effort must be made “to protect what makes them so special – their crystal clear air

and waters, iconic wildlife, and spectacular scenery.”

**INVESTMENT IN NATIONAL PARKS URGED.** In an op-ed for the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (2/5, 493K), John Plonski, who served as executive deputy secretary for Pennsylvania's parks and forests, writes that “conditions at most of the 412 National Parks, Battlefields, Monuments and Seashores have worsened in recent years because administrations and Congress have continually shortchanged parks’ capital budgets.” According to Plonski, “while national parks visitation is climbing (about 325 million this year, equivalent to the entire population of the United States!), the beleaguered stewards who care for parks just can’t stay ahead of the deterioration.” He warns that “budget and staffing shortages threaten the maintenance of natural resources and potentially place the safety of park visitors at risk.” Plonski urges President Donald Trump and Congress could “invest \$500 million per year for each of the next eight years to greatly reduce the backlog of national parks improvement projects.”

**AMERICAN URGED TO BECOME INVOLVED IN PROTECTION OF PUBLIC LANDS.** In an op-ed for the [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (2/5, 245K), Randall Shular wants more Americans to be involved in the protection of public lands. Shular recommends getting involved with the Wilderness Society and “finding out who your representative is and staying up to date on their policies.”

#### ***Fish and Wildlife Service:***

**BILL TARGETS ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.** [The Verge](#) (2/3, 1.25M) reports that “Republicans in Congress are once again trying to change the Endangered Species Act in a way that would make it harder to protect species at risk of extinction.” The legislation, “introduced last week in the House of Representatives, would require government agencies to consider the economic costs tied to listing a species as ‘threatened.’” The measure “would also eliminate clear timeframes the government has for responding to listing petitions; the bill would basically allow government agencies to ignore petitions or prioritize certain petitions over others.”

**GRAVES FILES BILL TO RESTORE SQUAW CREEK NAME.** The [St. Joseph \(MO\) News-Press](#) (2/3, 17K) reports that Rep. Sam Graves has “introduced legislation to restore the name of Squaw Creek Wildlife Refuge outside of Mound City, Missouri.” Graves said, “Despite clear and overwhelming objections from the people who live around Squaw Creek, President Obama’s Fish and Wildlife Services went ahead and changed the name of the refuge anyway. Their reasons were flawed, their process was flawed and their priorities during their final days in power were flawed. The bill I introduced today will restore the Squaw Creek that all of us in Northwest Missouri have known for the past 80 years.”

**FWS PROPOSES TO DOWNLIST TOBUSCH FISHHOOK CACTUS.** The [Bandera County \(TX\) Courier](#) (2/2, 11K) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing to downlist the Tobusch fishhook cactus from endangered to threatened. Benjamin Tuggle, the Service’s Southwest Regional Director, said, “Working with our partners, we have demonstrated that the ESA can and does work to recover species like the Tobusch fishhook cactus. We remain focused on working with our partners to improve the status of this unique cactus with the ultimate goal of one day delisting the species.”

**FWS TO HOLD OPEN HOUSE FOR LACOMBE HEADQUARTERS AT SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES COMPLEX.** The [AP](#) (2/5, 272K) reports that on February 18, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will hold “an annual open house at the Lacombe headquarters for its Southeast Louisiana National Wildlife Refuges Complex .”

**FWS FLOODED WITH COMMENTS ON PROPOSED GRIZZLY DELISTING.** The [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (2/5, 52K) reports that “because of a large amount of public comment on the proposal” to delist the grizzly bear, “officials have said they might not produce a final proposal until this summer.” The FWS has “received more than 650,000 comments.” Michael Thabault, an assistant director for ecological services with the agency, “said the load of comments now has to be reviewed before it issues a final decision, which is what prevented the agency from releasing a decision by the end of 2016.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Salon](#) (2/4, 564K).

**JOHN HEINZ WILDLIFE REFUGE POLLUTED FOR NEARLY 50 YEARS.** The [Daily Caller](#) (2/5, Barton, 898K) reports that “pollution dangers at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum have been documented since at least 1980, but little has been done by the EPA or anybody else to eliminate the problems.” According to the article, “it’s unclear why so little pollution has been cleaned, given the known dangers.” FWS spokesman David Eisenhower “didn’t comment on the lengthy time required for the clean-up to be completed.” He said, “FWS has been working in partnership with EPA to investigate the site” since 1980, as Congress ordered.

**NEW FWS REPORT SUPPORTS BALLVILLE DAM REMOVAL.** The [Fremont \(OH\) News-Messenger](#) (2/3, 13K) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service “reaffirmed that incremental removal of the Ballville Dam and construction of an ice control structure remain its preferred option.” The FWS “released a formal record of a decision Thursday for its Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) on the dam project.” The agency “had released a final SEIS Oct. 28 and taken additional public comments before issuing the record of decision.”

**REWARD FOR MISSING ENDANGERED SALAMANDERS RAISED TO \$20,000** The [AP](#) (2/3, 272K) reports that “a reward for the return hundreds of endangered salamanders missing since November from a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aquatic center in Central Texas has been increased to \$20,000.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KEYE-TV](#) Austin, TX (2/3, 32K).

**ADDITIONAL COVERAGE OF OBAMA-ERA LEAD RESTRICTIONS.** Additional coverage of “pending lead restrictions on ammunition and fishing tackle for some federal lands approved through executive action by the Obama administration before he left office” was provided by the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/4, 208K), the [Dubois \(PA\) Courier-Express](#) (2/5, 1K), and [Gear Junkie](#) (2/3, 4K).

**ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: RUSTY PATCHED BUMBLE BEE NOW AN ENDANGERED SPECIES.**

Additional coverage that the rusty patched bumblebee is now an endangered species was provided by the [AP](#) (2/4, Gronau, 272K) and the [Portland \(ME\) Press Herald](#) (2/5, 177K).

#### ***Bureau of Land Management:***

**TEXAS LANDOWNERS BATTLE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OVER RED RIVER “LAND GRAB”.** [Fox News](#) (1/31, 11.07M) reports on the dispute over the ownership of property along the Red River. According to the article, “the landowners believe this is a classic example of aggressive land grabbing by the federal government and government officials say they are just taking back what rightfully belongs to them.” BLM officials “say they have tried to make clear they have no intent to force current landowners from their properties.” Instead, the government says “landowners can purchase land belonging to the U.S. if it coincides with their deed.” However, “landowners say they shouldn’t have to ‘buy back’ property they believe they’ve rightfully owned and diligently paid taxes on for decades.”

**BLM’S COST OF HOSTING BURNING MAN GOES DOWN.** The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (2/3, 219K) reports that the U.S. Bureau of Land Management’s “cost of hosting” Burning Man on “federal land is going down.” In 2016, Burning Man paid the bureau “a total of \$4.4 million, which covered the BLM’s costs, all of the contracts and the 3-percent revenue that the arts organization has to turn over to the BLM each year after the massive art party in the Black Rock Desert.” The article notes that “the cost was about \$150,000 more the year before.” A BLM statement said that “the overall reduction in cost resulted partly from drops in staffing the event and the length of the BLM staff’s assignment on-site.”

**SIX BUNDY RANCH STANDOFF DEFENDANTS TO BEGIN TRIAL.** The [AP](#) (2/4, Ritter, 272K) reports that “a federal jury in Nevada is about to be picked to decide whether a tense standoff pitting armed ranchers and rangers against federal agents over a herd of cattle in a dry river bed amounted to a peaceful expression of free speech and weapon rights, or an insurrection against the U.S. government.” Trial starts Monday in Las Vegas “for six men – the first of a trio of proceedings for 17 defendants that will later include Nevada cattleman Cliven Bundy, four of his adult sons and seven other men.” According to the article, “although they’ve been characterized as the least culpable ‘followers and gunmen’ among the 19 men arrested a year ago, stakes are high for Drexler, Todd Engel, Eric Parker and Steven Stewart, all

of Idaho, Gregory Burleson of Phoenix and Richard Lovelein of Oklahoma.”

**JOINT MOTION FILED TO DISMISS APPEAL OF OVER THE RIVER PROJECT.** The [Denver Post](#) (2/3, 778K) reports that “the group that has battled artist Christo’s now-abandoned plan to drape a portion of the Arkansas River between Cañon City and Salida in shimmering fabric has hammered a final nail in the project’s coffin.” A week after Christo “announced he was canceling his 20-year-old Over The River project to focus on other work, the Rags Over the Arkansas River group — or ROAR — secured a promise that Christo would never try to revive the project and he would permanently relinquish all permits already obtained for the art installation.” On Friday, the Over The River Corp., the BLM and ROAR “filed a joint motion to dismiss the appeal and Christo’s group promised not to fight for the project any more.”

**PRONGHORNS RELOCATED FROM NORTHERN NEW MEXICO PRIVATE RANCH.** The [AP](#) (2/4, 272K) reports that “approximately 100 pronghorns captured on a northern New Mexico private ranch have been relocated to Santa Ana Pueblo near Albuquerque and to federal land in south-central New Mexico.” According to the article, “the state Department of Game and Fish says 40 pronghorns from the Express II Bar Ranch near Cimarron went to the pueblo and 66 went to Bureau of Land Management land near the Capitan Mountains.”

### ***US Geological Survey:***

**CLIFF COLLAPSE AT HAWAII VOLCANO STOPS “FIREHOSE” FLOW.** [AP](#) (2/3, 1.02M) reports that “a section of sea cliff above a massive ‘firehose’ lava flow on Hawaii’s Kilauea Volcano has collapsed and splashed into the ocean as tourists and geologists watched.” The collapse halted “the heavy stream of lava that had been arching out from near the top of the cliffs for weeks.” The lava stream, called a “firehose” flow “because it shoots lava outward from the source like water from a hose, had recently increased in intensity.” The USGS “warned that a portion of unstable cliff may still be attached and could break off at any time.” USGS geologist Janet Babb on Friday said, “This collapse yesterday did not diminish the hazards. As long as lava continues to flow into the ocean, that area is still quite hazardous... there’s still potential for collapses of the sea cliff there.”

## **Securing America’s Energy Future:**

### ***Offshore Energy Development:***

**MEASURES DETRIMENTAL TO OFFSHORE ENERGY PRODUCTION CRITICIZED.** In an op-ed for the [Washington Examiner](#) (2/5, 400K), Randall Luthi, the president of the National Ocean Industries Association, hopes that the Trump Administration and Republicans in Congress will “repeal and replace” the Obama Administration’s decision to “permanently” withdraw “areas of the Atlantic and Arctic oceans from future oil and natural gas leasing” and to deny “seismic survey permits that would allow sensible and environmentally safe energy exploration in the Atlantic.” Luthi argues that “measures that decrease access to offshore energy resources place the United States at a competitive disadvantage and sacrifice these potential jobs and economic stimuli.” He concludes that “the offshore energy industry, and the hundreds of thousands of workers who depend on it for their livelihoods, are hopeful that the Trump administration can repair some of the damage done over the past eight years by putting policies in place that increase, rather than decrease, access to federal offshore areas.”

### ***Onshore Energy Development:***

**BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AGENTS TO CLEAR DAKOTA ACCESS PROTESTERS.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/3, Eilperin, 11.43M) reports the government announced Friday it will send Bureau of Indian Affairs agents “to help clear Dakota Access Pipeline protesters from the Standing Rock Sioux reservation.” Acting assistant secretary of Indian affairs Michael S. Black said that closing “the camps is a matter of public health and safety,” noting that “North Dakota Governor [Doug] Burgum, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe leadership, local law enforcement, and local landowners have all warned the public and those still camped of the dangerous spring flooding expected due to the heavy amount of snowfall the state received this winter.” The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has also passed a resolution asking them to

leave.

**Dakota Access Pipeline To Start Operating In Second Quarter Of 2017.** [Reuters](#) (2/3, Renshaw, Ngai) reports the Phillips 66 said in a conference call Friday that the Dakota Access Pipeline will start operations in the second quarter. Phillips 66 has a 25% stake in the pipeline. [Bloomberg News](#) (2/3, Vamburkar, Tobben, 2.41M) reports that Energy Transfer Partners “confirmed that the project would be in service in the second quarter,” which is a delay from its previous indication of starting this quarter.

**Dakota Access Developer Facing Possible Fine For Rule Violation.** The [AP](#) (2/3, Nicholson) reports Energy Transfer Partners, the Dakota Access pipeline developer, “will have to present evidence at a hearing to prove the company didn’t willfully violate North Dakota rules when it failed to provide details of how it planned to avoid disturbing Native American artifacts during construction,” according to state regulators. Officials say that the company faces “a fine of at least \$15,000” if it violated the rules, but ETP points to “comments in November by Public Service Commission Chairwoman Julie Fedorchak” that suggests the violation “might have resulted from miscommunication within the company.”

**In Los Angeles, Thousands Protest Trump’s Order On Pipelines.** The [AP](#) (2/5) reports that demonstrators marched in Los Angeles Sunday to protest President Trump’s “executive order fast-tracking the Dakota Access and Keystone XL oil pipelines.” According to the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/5, Khan, 4.52M), thousands of people joined the protest which organizers said was “first anti-pipeline protest” in the city since Trump’s executive order.

**TRIBES, REGULATOR OPPOSE CLOSURE OF NAVAJO GENERATING STATION.** The [AP](#) (2/3) reports that “the possible shutdown of a northern Arizona coal-fired power plant that provides hundreds of jobs is drawing opposition from two Native American tribes and a state utility regulator.” Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe leaders “said keeping the Navajo Generating Station near Page in full operation benefits the tribes and the state because it is an important economic driver, while Corporation Commission member Andy Tobin said the plant’s owners should consider more than their own economics.” The Salt River Project has “said it and other plant owners are considering whether to close it because of low prices for natural gas that can produce electricity.” The owners “are still assessing the future of the plant beyond 2019 and intend to make a decision in the coming weeks,” SRP spokesman Scott Harelson said Friday. Navajo Nation Council Speaker LoRenzo Bates said “SRP needs to take into full consideration the impact that a possible closure would have on the economy, jobs, and communities that rely on NGS.”

**EPA TOLD OKLAHOMA REGULATORS TO DO MORE TO PREVENT EARTHQUAKES.** The [AP](#) (2/3) reported that the EPA told Oklahoma regulators to do more to safeguard against a surge in earthquake activity in the state. In November, an EPA administrator sent a letter “to the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, saying a magnitude 5.0 earthquake happened despite state and federal action to curb wastewater injection.” In its response to the EPA, the commission “said Oklahoma will continue to work with federal officials and made note of a governor’s task force on wastewater.” The commissions’ study is expected later in February.

**BLM URGED TO REJECT DRILLING NEAR ZION NATIONAL PARK.** In an op-ed for the [St. George \(UT\) Spectrum](#) (2/4, 45K), Tom Butine, board president of Conserve Southwest Utah, opposes “an application to lease almost 5,000 acres of our public land for oil and gas drilling near Virgin just outside of Zion National Park.” Butine urges readers to send “letters to the BLM explaining the reasons we think this lease should not be granted.” He argues that “this operation with its damaging local effects would add unnecessarily to global climate change, which is predicted to have significant local impacts” and that “there is no need to allow it on our scenic and sensitive local public lands that have such high value to us and our economy.”

### ***Renewable Energy:***

**TWO FORMER BOEM CHIEFS URGE TRUMP TO STAY COURSE ON OFFSHORE WIND** [Law360](#) (2/3, 23K) reports that “while President Donald J. Trump has made fossil fuel development — onshore and offshore — a priority, he shouldn’t slam the brakes on the offshore wind program developed by the Obama administration, which has already produced the U.S.’ first commercial offshore wind farm, the two

former heads of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management recently told Law360.”

## **Empowering Native American Communities:**

**DEMOCRATS SAY FEDERAL HIRING FREEZE COULD PUT NATIVE SERVICES IN PERIL.** [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (2/4, 39K) reports that a federal hiring freeze is “breaking the federal government’s trust responsibility to tribes, a group of Democratic senators said in a letter this week to President Donald J. Trump.” Sen. Tom Udall, “ranking Democrat on the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and six other senators asked the president to exempt health, education and law enforcement jobs in Indian Country from the federal hiring freeze.” The letter said, “Even before the hiring freeze was announced, Federal agencies that provide these services were struggling to recruit and retain a qualified workforce, with personnel vacancies consistently cited by the Government Accountability Office and agency inspectors general as a major factor in the lack of essential and basic services for Native peoples.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#).

## **Tackling America’s Water Challenges:**

**FOLSOM DAM SPILLWAY PROJECT NEARING COMPLETION.** The [Roseville & Granite Bay \(CA\) Press Tribune](#) (2/5) reports that “the Folsom Dam auxiliary spillway project is in its last phase and on schedule to finish by October, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District.” The article notes that “the \$900 million structure, which runs parallel to Folsom Lake Crossing, has been in construction since 2008 and is a joint project between several federal and state agencies: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, State of California and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency.” The Corps of Engineers constructed “the dam, while the Bureau of Reclamation excavated the spillway chute and will operate the dam when it is finished.”

**GRANT COUNTY PUD CONTRACT CHANGES WILL IMPACT IRRIGATION DISTRICTS.** The [Columbia Basin \(WA\) Herald](#) (2/3, 26K) reports that “an expiring contract between the Grant County PUD and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation could have an impact on costs for irrigators.” According to the article, “the contract in question is a ‘transfer agreement’ between the PUD and Bureau of Reclamation. It was part of a larger agreement dating to 1976, when the PUD bought some electrical lines from the Bonneville Power Administration.”

## **Top National News:**

### **TRUMP CRITICIZED OVER COMMENTS ON JUDGE WHO BLOCKED IMMIGRATION ORDERS.**

President Trump’s continued criticism of US District Court Judge James Robart over his halting of Trump’s executive orders on entry of refugees and residents of seven Muslim-majority nations is very critical, with the focus on the propriety of the President’s attacks – which were criticized by members of both parties – rather than on the legal issues at hand. Analyses also say that Trump’s criticism of a federal judge is now expected to be an issue in the confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch. In addition, feature stories on families affected by the travel restrictions, now able to enter the US, are casting the policy in a critical light.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/5, lead story, 2:35, Llamas, 14.63M) said in its lead story that Trump “attack[ed] the legal system for refusing to immediately restore his travel ban.” ABC’s David Wright: “A legal showdown with tearful repercussions. ... Families, torn apart by Trump’s abrupt targeted travel ban, racing to reunite, not sure how long the door will remain open. Today, Trump warned, ‘I have instructed Homeland Security to check people coming into our country very carefully. The courts are making the job very difficult.’ ... Even some Republicans are expressing discomfort about the tone the President has set, especially with that [tweet](#) disparaging ‘this so-called judge.’” Sen. Ben Sasse: “I don’t understand language like that. We don’t have ‘so-called judges,’ we don’t have ‘so-called senators,’ we don’t have ‘so-called presidents.’”

[NBC Nightly News](#) (2/5, lead story, 1:30, Snow, 16.61M) said in its lead story that Trump “again took to Twitter, criticizing the judge in Seattle who halted the policy late Friday and issuing a warning.” NBC’s Kelly O’Donnell: “Today President Trump [doubled down](#): ‘Just cannot believe a judge would put our country in such peril. If something happens blame him and court system. People pouring in. Bad!’” The [New York Times](#) (2/5, Baker, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says the President “took to Twitter to pre-emptively blame the judge and the judiciary for what the president suggested would be a future terrorist attack.”

[Reuters](#) (2/5, Volz, Rascoe) reports that the President “broadened his attack on the country’s judiciary” in a series of tweets. Senate Judiciary Committee ranking Democrat Patrick Leahy “said Trump seems intent on precipitating a constitutional crisis,” and “some Republicans also expressed discomfort with the situation.” On [CNN’s State Of The Union](#) (2/5, 420K), Senate Majority Leader McConnell, “I think it is best not to single out judges for criticism. We all get disappointed from time to time at the outcome in courts about things that we care about. But I think it is best to avoid criticizing them individually.” The [Huffington Post](#) (2/5, Bobic, 237K) says Trump “continued to sow doubt about the nation’s judicial system.”

[The Hill](#) (2/5, Shelbourne, 1.25M) reports that Vice President Pence said that Robart “‘certainly’ has the authority to halt...Trump’s travel ban, but insisted the administration would seek a stay of the order.” Pence also said on [ABC’s This Week](#) that he did not think Trump’s tweets undermined the separation of powers. Pence said, “I think the American people are accustomed to the President speaking his mind, and speaking very straight with them.”

Joe Scarborough writes in the [Washington Post](#) (2/5, 11.43M) “Post Partisan” blog, “When a president tweets insults at a Hollywood star, the dignity of his office is tarnished. When a commander in chief uses Twitter to attack a loyal military ally, America’s friends across the globe become unsettled. But when a president uses social media to question the legitimacy of a federal judge following an inconvenient (and temporary) outcome, that is simply unacceptable.”

However, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/5, story 3, 0:30, Llamas, 14.63M) reported, the issue of whether Trump respects the judiciary could now come into play during the confirmation hearings for Gorsuch. ABC’s David Wright: “Specifically, does he believe in checks and balances, in an independent judiciary, and in context of these issues, this could put him in the odds with the President.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/5, Barnes, 11.43M) says Gorsuch’s nomination “lands at a time when the Supreme Court is likely to be called upon to review what Trump already has shown to be a broad reliance on executive power.” [McClatchy](#) (2/5, Doyle, 74K) also says Trump’s actions could soon be before the court. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (2/5, Kapur, 201K) reports that Senate Minority Leader Schumer said Trump “‘shows a disdain for an independent judiciary that doesn’t always bend to his wishes’ and [that he] would increase the scrutiny on Gorsuch.”

Meanwhile, the ban remains on hold, but Trump and his Administration are expressing confidence that it will be reinstated. The [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/5, lead story, 3:10, Quijano) said in its lead story that on Sunday morning, “a federal appeals court denied the Trump Administration’s request for an immediate reinstatement of the ban.” CBS’ Tony Dokoupil said, “The Justice Department has until 3 p.m. Pacific Time on Monday to make a fuller case for a restart of the President’s ban on travelers from seven Muslim majority countries.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Barrett, Kendall, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) reports that until at least that time, immigration agents will not be enforcing the order.

[Reuters](#) (2/5, Hurley) says the President “faces an uphill battle,” and [Bloomberg Politics](#) (2/5, Dolmetsch, 201K) observes that the Administration will have to “convince an appeals court of mostly Democratic appointees – and possibly a divided Supreme Court.” But the [AP](#) (2/5, Tucker) reports that Vice President Pence said, “We’ll accomplish the stay and will win the case on the merits.”

Pence said on [CBS’ Face The Nation](#), “We are very confident that as we move through the process of these appeals that the President’s authority in this area will be upheld and will continue to take such actions as are necessary to put the safety and security of the American people first.” On [NBC’s Meet The Press](#), Pence said, “When you have people as diverse as Alan Dershowitz and Jonathan Turley who

have acknowledged the merits of the President's action under the Constitution and the law, I think it speaks to itself. We're very confident that we're going to prevail." On [Fox News Sunday](#) (2/5, Wallace), Pence said, "We do not appoint judges to the district courts to make foreign policy or decisions about the national security. Under statutory law and under the Constitution, that authority belongs to the president of the United States." [USA Today](#) (2/5, Jackson, 5.28M) says the Vice President "defended President Trump's criticism of a federal judge who ruled against a travel ban from seven Muslim countries, and predicted that a higher court would eventually uphold the measure in the name of national security."

The [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/5, story 2, 1:55, Quijano) reported that "the political battle over the ban dominated the discussion on the Sunday morning news programs," and Democrats were critical. House Minority Leader Pelosi said on [NBC's Meet The Press](#), "What was the election about? The election was about improving the lives of the American people, about the future, about jobs, financial stability and the rest. ... When they don't do something, they have a diversionary tactic and a Muslim ban." On [Fox News Sunday](#), Sen. Dianne Feinstein said, "The President is not a dictator. He is the chief executive of our country." On [ABC's This Week](#), Sen. Amy Klobuchar said, "It's not a surprise to me you're seeing courts look at it and temporarily staying it or in the case of the Seattle judge, actually saying it should be thrown out. ... There is a difference between being bold and being rash."

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says that while the law is on Trump's side, his attacks on the judge and the judiciary are both offensive and unhelpful to his own argument.

**DOJ Criticizes "Judicial Second-Guessing."** The [Washington Post](#) (2/5, Barnes, Zapotosky, Phillip, 11.43M) reports that the Justice Department "said it was improper for a lower court to 'second-guess' President Trump's controversial immigration order, and said an appeals court should dissolve a judge's order that stopped its implementation." In a brief, Acting Solicitor General Noel Francisco wrote, "Judicial second-guessing of the President's determination that a temporary suspension of entry of certain classes of aliens was necessary at this time to protect national security would constitute an impermissible intrusion on the political branches' plenary constitutional authority over foreign affairs, national security, and immigration." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Jones, Gershman, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says Robart's ruling is more significant than those of other courts because it was applied nationally, not just regionally.

**Trump In Friday Interview: Implementation "Very Smooth."** In an interview with Bill O'Reilly recorded Friday for broadcast Sunday afternoon during Super Bowl pre-game coverage on [Fox](#) (2/5, 11.07M), President Trump said of the implementation of the ban, "I think it was very smooth. We had 109 people out of hundreds of thousands of travelers and all we did was vet those people very, very carefully."

**Most Of The Seven Nations In Trump Order First Listed In GOP Bill.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Palazzolo, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) reports that though the White House has said that the seven nations listed in the ban were identified by the Obama Administration as the most dangerous in terms of harboring terrorists, most of them were first identified in Republican legislation signed by President Obama in 2015.

**Visa Holders And Refugees Arriving In US, But Trepidation Continues.** Reports on visa holders and refugees entering the US since the court order are very sympathetic toward the travelers and implicitly critical of the Administration. The [AP](#) (2/5, Lavoie, Mathis) reports that travelers from the countries "targeted" by Trump "enjoyed tearful reunions with loved ones in the US on Sunday." Iranian painter Fariba Tajrostami arrived in New York "with a huge smile and tears in her eyes as her brothers greeted her with joyful hugs." She "had tried to fly to the US from Turkey over a week ago but was turned away." She said, "I was crying and was so disappointed. Everything I had in mind, what I was going to do, I was so disappointed about everything. I thought it was all over." Another Iranian-American said her wedding had been put on hold due to the travel ban.

[USA Today](#) (2/5, Bacon, 5.28M) reports, "Refugees and some foreigners were racing the clock to enter" the US. The [New York Times](#) (2/5, Dickerson, Nir, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports, "At a sweltering refugee camp on the Kenya-Somalia border, dozens of Somalis who had cleared all the final

security and medical checks to enter the United States were told to prepare themselves for a flight to a new life.” An Iranian medical student “finally got back to school” in Pittsburgh, and in New York, “a 6-year-old boy sprinted across the arrivals hall to embrace a family friend who had finally made it back” to the US from Sudan.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/5, Nirappil, Zezima, Guarino, 11.43M) quotes a medical student who has lived in the US for 18 years and who is a US citizen, who was hoping to be reunited with his wife, a Yemeni refugee, and their daughter. He said, “This is one of the greatest moments of my life. The ruling allowed me to see my wife. ... I always believed in the foundations that this country was built on. This is a reaffirmation of that.”

Each of the three broadcast networks also aired features on affected families. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/5, story 5, 2:05, Llamas, 14.63M) reported on an Iraqi family “caught in the ban for eight days struggling to make it to America.” Morgan Radford of [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/5, story 4, 1:55, Snow, 16.61M) covered the same family: “After working as a translator for the US government during the Iraq War and waiting on a two-year approval process, he finally received a visa approval for him and his family. ... A dream come true, seemingly shattered in an instant after President Trump’s executive order.” The [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/5, story 3, 2:55, Quijano), saying that “the travel ban has rattled thousand of immigrant families, and its affects are perhaps most widespread among the Iranian-American community,” reported on one such family.

But the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Palazzolo, Mahtani, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says the pace of arrivals was slow, reflecting both the quickly shifting nature of the story and the legal uncertainty over what lies ahead. The [Washington Post](#) (2/4, Loveluck, Zakaria, 11.43M) reports on one Syrian refugee family: “Last month, the Tawouz family were told a new life in the United States was just days away. Last week, they learned they were no longer welcome. And by Saturday, they had no idea what to believe.”

On its front page, the [Washington Post](#) (2/5, A1, Samuels, 11.43M) has a feature on Syrian refugees settling into their new home “in deeply conservative Nebraska.” Gov. Pete Ricketts, “who has supported a ban on Syrians from the moment Trump first pitched it, has also talked about welcoming refugees already here as a source of statewide pride.”

**Hayden: Executive Order Has Placed “Burden” On CIA Case Officers.** Former CIA Director Michael Hayden writes in the [Washington Post](#) (2/5, 11.43M) that Trump’s “executive order on immigration was ill-conceived, poorly implemented and ill-explained. ... I’ve heard from a lot of intelligence professionals who are going to have to live with the consequences. They noted that six of the seven countries involved in the ban (Iran being somewhat an exception) are troubled, fragmented states where human sources are essential to defeating threats to the United States.” Hayden says the order has placed an “unnecessary burden” on CIA case officers.

**Ex-Obama State Department Official: US Has Admitted Many Christian Refugees From Iraq.** In a [New York Times](#) (2/5, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) op-ed, Obama Administration State Department official Tom Malinowski writes, “I would never say that we have done enough to help persecuted religious minorities in the Middle East. ... But to suggest, as the Trump administration now does, that the United States has done nothing, and use this falsehood to justify favoring Christians over others among our refugee admissions, is outrageous.” Malinowski writes that more than 40 percent of Iraqi refugees admitted to the US “have been Christians or members of other religious minority groups. This was based on need, without setting any religious test.”

**Musk Put Travel Ban On Administration Business Council Agenda.** [USA Today](#) (2/5, McCoy, Mandaro, 5.28M) reports, “Elon Musk, who vowed to use his place on a Trump administration business council to seek alterations to the president’s travel ban says he made the controversial issue topic number one at the group’s Friday meeting.” He [tweeted](#), “At my request, the agenda for yesterday’s White House meeting went from not mentioning the travel ban to having it be first and foremost.” Former GE CEO Jack Welch “confirmed to CNBC that Musk did talk about immigration.”

**Washington State Takes Lead Role In Challenges To Policy.** The [Washington Post](#) (2/5, Wang,

11.43M) observes that “a surprising number of roadblocks” to President Trump’s agenda have come from Washington State, which was the first state to challenge the executive order on immigration in federal court, and which is also the home of Judge Robart. Several of Seattle’s big technology companies have been outspoken critics of the ban, and Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz “announced that the Seattle-based company would hire 10,000 refugees over five years in 75 countries.”

**Several Super Bowl Ads Dealt With Immigration Themes.** Several ads broadcast during Sunday’s Super Bowl touched on the issue. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/5, story 10, 1:30, Llamas, 14.63M) reported on Budweiser’s “controversial” Super Bowl ad, which correspondent T.J. Holmes called “a dramatic telling of one of Budweiser’s founders, and his struggles immigrating from Germany to America in the 1800s.” There is now an online boycott movement, “but the company says it didn’t set out to be political.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/5, Benner, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that Airbnb ran an ad “showing a diverse group of people and text that read: ‘We believe no matter who you are, where you’re from, who you love or who you worship, we all belong. The world is more beautiful the more you accept.’” In addition, 84 Lumber “had to change an ad that showed a Spanish-speaking mother and daughter in front of a border wall” because the NFL and Fox “maintain the right to approve ads.”

**Record Number Join Annual Run For Refugees In Connecticut.** The [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/5, story 4, 2:00, Quijano) aired a feature on “the annual Run For Refugees in New Haven, Connecticut,” which drew “a record number” of participants, topping 2,500.

#### **MCCONNELL, OTHER REPUBLICANS REJECT TRUMP’S COMPARISON OF US AND RUSSIA.**

President Trump’s comments on Russia in an interview with Bill O’Reilly recorded Friday and broadcast Sunday afternoon on [Fox](#) (2/5, 11.07M) as part of its Super Bowl pre-game programming came under harsh bipartisan criticism. When O’Reilly called Russian President Vladimir Putin “a killer,” Trump replied, “There are a lot of killers. What, do you think our country is so innocent? Do you think our country so innocent? ... Take a look at what we have done too.”

The [AP](#) (2/5, Superville) reports that “Democrats and Republicans took issue” with the comment. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/5, story 2, 1:10, Wright, 14.63M) reported on the “mounting criticism,” while the on the [CBS Weekend News](#) (2/5, story 5, 1:40, Quijano), Jonathan Vigliotti reported that Trump “seemed to downplay President Putin’s history of violence.” [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/5, story 2, 1:15, Snow, 16.61M) said Trump’s comment “stunned even fellow Republicans.”

Senate Majority Leader McConnell said on [CNN’s State Of The Union](#) (2/5, Tapper, 420K), “Putin is a former KGB agent. He is a thug. He was not elected in a way that most people would consider a credible election. ... I don’t think there is any equivalency with the way the Russians conduct themselves and the way the United States does.” [USA Today](#) (2/5, Przybyla, 5.28M) reports that McConnell “said he doesn’t view...Putin in the same way that President Trump does,” and the [Washington Times](#) (2/5, Wolfgang, 272K) reports that McConnell “publicly clashed” with Trump.

Sen. Ben Sasse also weighed in, saying on [ABC’s This Week](#), “I’ll be honest. I don’t know what the President is trying to do with statements like [that]. ... Has the US made ever made any mistakes? Of course. Is the US at all like Putin’s regime? Not at all. ... There is no moral equivalency” between the US and Russia.

[Bloomberg Politics](#) (2/5, Brody, 201K) reports that Sen. Marco Rubio “also rejected the idea that there was a moral equivalency between the US and Russia,” [tweeting](#), “When has a Democratic political activist been poisoned by the GOP, or vice versa? We are not the same as #Putin.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/5, Debonis, 11.43M) says the “trio of Republican senators reacted sharply” to Trump’s remarks.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Bender, Ballhaus, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says McConnell rebuked Trump, and [Politico](#) (2/5, Zapler, 2.46M) has a report under the headline “Republicans Denounce Trump’s Defense Of ‘Killer’ Putin.” [The Hill](#) (2/5, Bolton, 1.25M) and the [Huffington Post](#) (2/5, Edwards-Levy, 237K) also cover the senators’ remarks.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/5, King, 4.52M) reports that Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar was “harsher” in her response. Klobuchar told [ABC's This Week](#), “This is a man and a regime that has taken down a passenger plane in Ukraine, killing hundreds of people. This is a regime that has been known to poison human rights activists. ... This is a regime that we believe, 17 intelligence agencies in our own country has said has tried to influence our own election. I don't think there's any comparison. And I do really resent [Trump] would say something like that.”

Vice President Pence defended Trump on two Sunday shows, saying on [CBS' Face The Nation](#), “What I can tell you is there was no moral equivalency in what the President was saying. He was simply acknowledging that he has been throughout his life willing to be critical of government policies and government actions in the United States.” On [NBC's Meet The Press](#), Pence said, “President Trump has been critical of American policy in the past, and I expect he's always going to continue to be candid with the American people, but what you have in this President is an absolute determination to re-engage the world.”

But the [Washington Post](#) (2/5, Parker, 11.43M) reports that Pence “seemed to break slightly” with Trump, “taking a harder line than the president on how to handle Russia's incursion into Ukraine.” Pence told [ABC's This Week](#), “We're watching. And very troubled by the increased hostilities over the past week in eastern Ukraine.”

***Pelosi Calls For FBI To Investigate “What The Russians Have On” Trump.*** [Politico](#) (2/5, Arnsdorf, 2.46M) reports that House Minority Leader Pelosi “urged the FBI to probe President Trump's finances and personal ties to find out if the Russian government is blackmailing him.” Pelosi said on NBC's Meet The Press, “I want to know what the Russians have on Donald Trump. I think we have to have an investigation by the FBI into his financial, personal and political connections to Russia, and we want to see his tax returns, so we can have truth in the relationship between Putin, whom he admires, and Donald Trump.”

**PENCE SAYS GORSUCH WILL GET SENATE FLOOR VOTE “ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.”** Asked on [Fox News Sunday](#) (2/5, Wallace) about the potential use of the “nuclear option” to end a likely filibuster of the Supreme Court nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch, Vice President Pence said, “We're very encouraged that more than at half a dozen Democrats have committed themselves to an up-or-down vote on the floor of the Senate. ... No associate justice to the Supreme Court in American history has ever faced a successful filibuster, and Neil Gorsuch should not be the first. ... One way or another, Judge Gorsuch is going to get an up-or-down vote on the floor of the Senate.” On [ABC's This Week](#) (2/5, 6.61M), Pence similarly said, “We remain very confident that despite some of the posturing that we see in the Senate today, that Judge Gorsuch is going to be well received by the members of the Senate. And I'll promise you, one way or the other, he'll get an up-or-down vote.”

***McConnell “Confident” Gorsuch Can Get 60 Votes.*** On [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (2/5, Tapper, 420K), Senate Majority Leader McConnell said, “I'm very confident that he will be confirmed. ... If we have to get 60 votes, I'm confident that we will.” McConnell did not say he would employ the “nuclear option,” adding, “I'm confident that we will get 60 votes.”

Two Democrats also said a 60-vote threshold would be needed. On [ABC's This Week](#) (2/5, Stephanopoulos, 6.61M), Sen. Amy Klobuchar said, “Let's keep that 60-vote threshold in place. It's been a long-standing precedent. Both of President Obama's nominees got over 60 votes. That is the threshold.” On [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (2/5, Tapper, 420K), Sen. Bernie Sanders said, “If 60 people vote to confirm Judge Gorsuch, those are the rules. ... So yes, 60 votes to appoint the next Supreme Court justice.”

***Feinstein Wants Democrats To Start Off “Neutral” On Gorsuch.*** On [Fox News Sunday](#) (2/5, Wallace), Sen. Dianne Feinstein said, “I want the Democratic side to start out from a neutral base and really do the proper exploratory work and then be able to hold full and fair hearings. And we will do that. And then it is fair, I will make a conclusion. I will be happy to share it with you.”

## **Editorial Wrap-Up:**

**NEW YORK TIMES. “The Finger On The Nuclear Button.”** A [New York Times](#) (2/5, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorial notes that amid fears President Trump could launch a nuclear attack, Sen. Edward Markey and Rep. Ted Lieu proposed legislation “to prohibit any president from launching a first-strike nuclear weapon without a declaration of war from Congress.” The Times says the bill “sends a clear message to Mr. Trump that he should not be the first since World War II to use nuclear weapons.”

**“Black Lives, White Lies And Emmett Till.”** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/6, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) writes that in the book “The Blood of Emmett Till,” on the 1955 kidnapping and murder of a 14-year-old black boy in Mississippi, Carolyn Bryant Donham, the white woman who accused Emmett of assaulting her, admits she lied in “a reminder of how black lives were sacrificed to white lies.” This “also raises anew the question of why no one was brought to justice in the most notorious racially motivated murder of the 20th century, despite an extensive investigation by the F.B.I.” Donham’s revelation “underscores yet again that killers and collaborators from other racial terror attacks may still be alive – and that the horror of their crimes still weighs heavily on the nation.”

**“A Wiser Generation Of Prosecutors.”** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/6, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) praised the “new generation of local and state law-enforcement officials” who “are working to change the national conversation about the proper role of the prosecutor” from one who always seeks to prosecute and always seeks the harshest sentences. Some are “openly turning against” capital punishment, and others seeking to keep nonviolent offenders out of jail and into treatment programs, making them less likely to re-offend. The Times concludes that such local officials are especially important given President Trump’s “blunt, hysterical ‘law and order’” attitude.

**WASHINGTON POST. “Congress Should Update The Higher-Ed Law, Starting With The Student Loan Mess.”** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/5, 11.43M) calls on Congress and the Trump Administration to update the Higher Education Act, “lest widespread dissatisfaction with higher-ed — especially with the financial challenges of securing an undergraduate degree — deepen.”

**“Will Trump Keep His Promise On Protecting LGBT Rights?”** A [Washington Post](#) (2/5, 11.43M) editorial calls it a “relatively encouraging sign” that the White House said last week that President Trump will not “roll back Obama-era protections for LGBT people working in the federal government or for federal contractors.” However, press secretary Sean Spicer “took a different tone in the White House briefing room, saying that the ‘pendulum’ has swung away from religious people ‘in the name of political correctness.’” LGBT advocates, the Post adds, “fear that an order concerning the activities of federal agencies and contractors is on the way that may expand the scope for discrimination under the guise of religious freedom.” The Post argues against such an order and says that if Trump “takes his words about respecting LGBT people seriously,” he will not take that action.

**“Maryland Has To Address Its Rape Kit Backlog.”** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (2/5, 11.43M) calls on Maryland lawmakers to establish statewide standards governing rape kits. According to the Post, a survey of the Maryland’s “135 law enforcement agencies in which 102 responded revealed 3,700 untested rape kits, some going as far back as 1981” The tests are “waitlisted because of a lack of resources and staffing. Instead, a determination was made not to submit them for testing at all,” and “the patchwork of different policies results in some rape kits being destroyed after a year while others are kept indefinitely.” The Post calls for legislation “to establish the best practices” detailed in report from attorney general and “coming up with the funding to make them possible.”

**WALL STREET JOURNAL. “A Trump-Cohn Financial Rewrite.”** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) praises President Trump’s executive orders to roll back Dodd-Frank and the Labor Department’s fiduciary rule. The Journal calls for firm rules and high capital standards which will enable banks to weather losses during a downturn, which is thinking behind House Financial Services Chairman Jeb Hensarling’s proposed financial reform.

**“Trump Restraining Order.”** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Subscription Publication,

6.37M) says that while the law is on Trump's side, his attacks on the US District Court Judge James Robart and the judiciary are both offensive and unhelpful to his own argument.

***"Coaxing Workers Back To Work."*** A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/5, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial says the January jobs report was good news not only because of the number of jobs created but also because of the increase in the labor participation rate and the employment-population ratio.

## **Big Picture:**

### **HEADLINES FROM TODAY'S FRONT PAGES.**

#### ***Wall Street Journal:***

[Trump Rips Judge On Travel-Ban Ruling](#)  
[Trump Administration Explores Driving Wedge Between Russia And Iran](#)  
[Mexico Teeters Between Recent US Friendship And 170 Years Of Hostility](#)  
[The \\$100 Billion Reason Investors Loved Trump's Bank Order](#)

#### ***New York Times:***

[Trump Clashes Early With Courts, Portending Years Of Legal Battles](#)  
[Lifting Of Travel Ban Sets Off Rush To Reach US](#)  
[Trump And Staff Rethink Tactics After Stumbles](#)  
[Trump Protesters Borrow From Tea Party To Put Pressure On Lawmakers](#)  
[Split By "Brexit," May And Merkel Diverge On Wider Issues, Too](#)  
[A Small Ohio Town Clamors To Curb Aggressive Policing](#)  
[Patriots Mount A Comeback For The Ages To Win A Fifth Super Bowl](#)

#### ***Washington Post:***

[After A Year, Metro's Chief Still Faces Uphill Climb](#)  
[Learning "To Be" In A Trying Climate](#)  
[Trump Order Is In Legal Limbo](#)  
[Real Risk In Tension Between US, Iran](#)  
[Democrats See A Question For Gorsuch In Trump Tweets](#)  
[Online Pundits Use "Bots" To Turn Tweets Into Roars](#)

#### ***Financial Times:***

[Le Pen Promises Crackdown On Immigration And Globalization](#)  
[Overseas Chinese Acquisitions Worth \\$75Bn Cancelled Last Year](#)  
[Stakes Rise In Legal Battle Over Trump Travel Ban](#)

#### ***Washington Times:***

[Some IRS Employees Cheated On Their Taxes And Agency Let Most Keep Their Jobs](#)  
[White House Scrambles For New Strategy After Courts Stifle Extreme Vetting](#)  
[Navy's 'Diversity Road Map' Lays Foundation For Multiethnic Force Protected Against Discrimination](#)  
[Trump Targets CFPB In Plan To Unravel Dodd-Frank Act](#)  
[McConnell Doubts Gorsuch Will Need 'Nuclear Option'](#)  
[Trump, EPA Nominee Differ On Renewable Fuel Program](#)  
[Brady Leads Super Bowl Comeback For The Ages To Rip Title From Falcons](#)

#### ***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

**ABC:** Immigration Order-Legal Challenge; Trump-Russia; Immigration Order-Supreme Court Nominee; Immigration Order-Judicial Expert Comment; Immigration Order-Iraqi Family; Jogger Murder Arrest; Louvre Terror Attack; Hikers Mountain Accident; Weather Forecast; Budweiser Super Bowl Ad; IRS Fraud Warning; Mexico Volcano Eruption; Michigan Burglar; UK Queen Sapphire Jubilee; Tennis Player; Tom Brady Family Picture; Young Nanny.

**CBS:** Immigration Order-Legal Challenge; Immigration Order Halt Reactions; Immigration Order-Iranian-American Family; Run For Refugees; Trump-Russia; US Automation Adding Jobs; Senior Swimmer; Super Bowl Book Reader.

**NBC:** Trump-Federal Judge; Trump-Russia; Immigration Order-Legal Challenge; Immigration Order-Iraqi Family; US-Iran Tensions; Flu Season; Super Bowl Security; Health-Eye Aging; NYC Racist Graffiti Removal; Israel Border Wall; Georgia Super Bowl Players.

***Network TV At A Glance:***

Immigration Order-Legal Challenge – 7 minutes, 25 seconds

Immigration Order-Immigrant Reactions – 6 minutes, 55 seconds

Trump-Russia – 4 minutes, 5 seconds

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** Super Bowl News; Immigration Order Halt; Jogger Murder Arrest.

**CBS:** Super Bowl News; Immigration Order Halt; Confirmation Hearing; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** Super Bowl News; Immigration Order Halt; Confirmation Hearing; Trump-O'Reilly Interview.

**NPR:** Immigration Order Halt; Trump-O'Reilly Interview; Super Bowl News; Confirmation Hearing; New England History Research; Box Office News.

**Washington Schedule:**

**TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.**

**White House:**

**PRESIDENT TRUMP** — Receives a central command and special operations briefing; has lunch with enlisted personnel; makes remarks to coalition representatives and senior US commanders; meets with Governor Rick Scott

**VICE PRESIDENT PENCE** — No public schedule announced.

**US Senate:** Senate expected to vote on Education Secretary-nominee Betsy DeVos, though may need Vice President Pence to break tie – Senate convenes, with agenda expected to include vote on the nomination of Betsy DeVos to be Secretary of Education \* Chamber made a rare 6:30 AM start Friday – thought to be an attempt by the chamber's ruling Republicans to run down the 30-hour post-cloture clock in time to hold a final vote today \* DeVos is expected to be confirmed in the role, although with two Republican senators – Susan Collins and Lisa Murkowski – having already expressed their opposition to the nomination, Vice President Pence may be required to use his casting vote to break a tie, which would be the first time a vice president has ever needed to do so to ensure the confirmation of a Cabinet nominee Location: Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

**US House:** 4:00 PM Bipartisan Heroin Task Force hosts hearing on synthetic opioids – Bipartisan Heroin Task Force hosts hearing on synthetic opioids, led by co-chairs Reps. Annie Kuster and Tom MacArthur, focusing on the science and treatment issues behind opioids such as fentanyl. Panel of experts includes NIH National Institute of Drug Abuse Director Dr Nora Volkow, American Society of Addiction Medicine Advocacy Committee Chairman Dr Corey Waller, Pew Charitable Trusts Director of Health Programs Dr Josh Rising, and Dartmouth Center for Technology and Behavioral Health Director Dr Lisa Marsch Location: Rm 2168, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC [kuster.house.gov](http://kuster.house.gov) <https://twitter.com/RepAnnieKuster>

5:00 PM Hearing on 'Priorities of the House Officers and Legislative Branch Entities for FY 2018 and Beyond' Location: Rm 1310, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://cha.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseAdmnGOP>

5:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on 'H.J. Res. 44 – Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management regulations that establish the procedures used to prepare, revise, or amend land use plans pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976', 'H.J. Res. 57 – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to accountability and State plans under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965', and 'H.J. Res. 58 – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues' Location: H-313, US Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

**Other:** 10:00 AM French chief of defense receives US Armed Forces Legion of Merit – Joint Chiefs of

Staff Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford awards French Armed Forces Chief of the Defense Staff Gen. Pierre de Villiers with the Legion of Merit, during an Armed Forces Full Honor Arrival ceremony Location: Conmy Hall, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, VA <http://mdwhome.mdw.army.mil/>  
[https://twitter.com/JFHQNCR\\_MDW](https://twitter.com/JFHQNCR_MDW)

1:30 PM GOP Sen. Tom Cotton speaks at AEI on 'Renewing American Strength Abroad' – Republican Sen. Tom Cotton speaks on 'Renewing American Strength Abroad' at American Enterprise Institute, discussing where America stands in the current geopolitical landscape and what the national security agenda should be for the Trump Administration and the new Congress Location: AEI, 1789 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC <http://www.aei.org/> <https://twitter.com/AEI>

4:00 PM GOP Rep. Peter Roskam speaks on tax reform – Republican Rep. Peter Roskam speaks on 'Tax Reform in the New Congress' at Heritage Foundation, discussing 'the pillars of pro-growth tax reform – growth, simplicity, and service' and 'the urgent need to end the 'Made in America' tax, lower tax rates for job creators of all sizes, and allow companies to fully write off the costs of new capital investments' \* Postponed from 23 Jan Location: Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Ave NE, Washington, DC [www.heritage.org](http://www.heritage.org) <https://twitter.com/Heritage>

## **Last Laughs:**

### **LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.**

All late-night talk shows were in re-runs or had no political jokes.

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