

From: Bulletin Intelligence
To: Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com
Subject: U S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, August 11, 2017
Date: Friday, August 11, 2017 7:02:52 AM

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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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DOI In The News

Republicans Making Progress On Longtime Goal For More Local Control Of Federal Lands.

[USA Today](#) (8/10, Sullivan) reports that nearly "eight months into an all-Republican-led effort, it's clear that shift is under way" in the way "the more than 25% of the country that is owned by the federal government is managed." USA Today describes Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "views on the evolving Republican House public lands strategy" as "complicated," saying he "says he wants to be a good steward and opposes turning over federal land to local or state governments or private interests." Although "raising revenue from public lands seems in tune with the goals of House Republicans such as Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop of Utah, Zinke is not entirely on board with all their agenda." Zinke, USA Today adds, "is steeped in the history of his department but also devoted to the mission to make the country's natural resources pay."

Voters Don't Trust Zinke To Decide On National Monuments. [Morning Consult](#) (8/10, Gheorghiu) reports that "a recent Morning Consult/POLITICO poll showed voters don't trust Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and President Donald Trump to make decisions" on national monuments. The article says that "multiple local groups and representatives have opposed the review" of national monuments and "called the process arbitrary and lacking in transparency, saying it would negatively impact their tourist economies." According to the article, "when it comes to public lands, voters across the country – including Americans in Western states that contain most of the monuments under review – place more trust in state residents and local leaders." Heather Swift, Interior Department spokeswoman, said in an email on Thursday, "The poll shows exactly what the Trump Administration has argued all along: local stakeholders should have more of a say in how federal lands in their communities are managed."

27 National Monuments Are Under Review. Here Are Five To Watch. The [New York Times](#) (8/11, FRIEDMAN, POPOVICH, McCANN) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is "reviewing 27 national monuments to determine if previous administrations exceeded their authority in setting aside craggy vistas, ancient cliff dwellings and other large tracts of land for protection." However, "not all of the monuments are truly in the administration's cross hairs, and Mr. Zinke has already declared some of them safe from changes." The article highlights five monuments to watch: Grand Staircase-Escalante, Bears Ears, Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks, Katahdin Woods and Waters, and Papahānaumokuākea.

DOI Spent Thousands On Personal Travel.

The [Daily Caller](#) (8/10, Pearce) reports that Interior Department employees "spent nearly \$40,000 in 2015 and 2016 on inappropriate travel costs," according to an independent audit. The

report “faulted the agency’s controls, saying they ‘weren’t effective in ensuring that all non-payroll costs were appropriate and complied with the Act’s administrative requirements.’” The audit focused on the Interior Department’s implementation of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act.

Western Values Project Drills Into David Bernhardt At Interior.

The [Denver Westword](#) (8/10, Stringer) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has “come under fire for stacking his department, which is charged with balancing development and conservation on federal land, with staffers that have ties to the oil and gas industry – including Zinke’s deputy, David Bernhardt.” The Western Values Project, “a conservation group, is digging deep to track the potential conflicts of interest in Zinke’s department while exploring their potential effects on fossil-fuel drilling in Colorado.” WVP head Chris Saeger is raising concerns about “a department headed by former lobbyists, industry advocates and corporate boardmembers that is prioritizing fossil-fuel development at the cost of conservation, the public and the outdoor industry.”

Bureau Of Indian Affairs

Complaint Filed In Federal Court In Washington D.C. Against U.S. Dept. Of Interior Over Proposed Elk Grove Casino.

[Elk Grove News \(CA\)](#) (8/10) reports that an amended complaint has been filed “in U.S. District Court in Washington D.C. by Stand Up For California (SUFC) against the U.S. Department of the Interior challenging recent decisions that have helped the Wilton Rancheria’s pursuit of a \$400 million casino to be located in Elk Grove City limits.” The complaint, “which was filed on behalf of casino watchdog group SUFC and three Elk Grove residents, continues to challenge the validity of the decision to place the 36-acre parcel located at the site of the unfinished Outlets Collection at Elk Grove shopping center into federal trust. Placement of the parcel into federal trust is required for any Indian casino on non-tribal land.” At the center of the argument is “that the decision was made in violation of 1998 Federal Vacancies Reform Act. SUFC contends the decision made by Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, Lawrence Roberts, lacked the authority under the Vacancies Reform Act (VRA).”

Casino Is Win For Elk Grove, Wilton Rancheria Tribe. In an op-ed for the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (8/10, Cooper), California State Assemblyman Jim Cooper supports the tribe’s plans to build a resort and casino. He has introduced Assembly Bill 1606, which will ratify a tribal gaming compact by the Legislature

Bureau Of Land Management

Judge Scolds Defendant, Orders Him Off Stand.

The [Arizona Republic](#) (8/10, Anglen) reports that “a Las Vegas courtroom erupted in drama Thursday when a federal judge ordered a defendant in the Bundy Ranch standoff trial to get off the stand, struck his testimony, dismissed jurors and abruptly left the bench.” According to the article, “jurors looked stunned as Eric Parker returned to the defense table with his head hung and then buried his face in his hands, according to lawyers in the case.”

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (8/10, Ferrara) reports that Eric Parker was “photographed in April 2014 pointing a long gun through a barrier on an Interstate 15 overpass that overlooked a sandy ditch where protesters had gathered to face Bureau of Land Management agents.” The article says that “before the start of the second trial for Parker, a married father of two, and three other men, U.S. District Judge Gloria Navarro barred the defense from referencing constitutional rights to freely assemble and to bear arms.” Navarro “also prohibited mention of alleged misconduct or excessive force by law enforcement.”

BLM Expects Large Rangeland Seed Buy.

The [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (8/10, O’Connell) reports that “Ken Kooppin has found raising grass seed for dryland range is risky and challenging, and the market for the niche crop is exceedingly volatile.” However, “officials with the Bureau of Land Management — a major buyer that uses large quantities of locally adapted seed varieties for its reclamation efforts — say their seed inventories are running low amid a bad wildfire season.” BLM officials will “solicit bids from

seed suppliers on Aug. 14 to replenish inventories at their two major seed warehouses, located in Boise and Ely, Nev."

Reward Offered As Cattle Killers Strike Again In Eddy County.

The [Carlsbad \(NM\) Current-Argus](#) (8/10, Hedden) reports that "a \$21,000 reward was announced Wednesday by the Eddy County Sheriff's Office" as "reports of cattle being shot on local ranches increase." The article notes that "People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) donated \$10,000, with the Bureau of Land Management and the New Mexico Cattle Growers Association kicking in \$5,000 each." CrimeStoppers of Eddy County "offered the additional \$1,000."

America's Mustangs: Let's Have Facts, Not "Fake News".

In a piece for the [Huffington Post](#) (8/10, Roy), Suzanne Roy, Executive Director of the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign, criticizes proposals "to 'solve' our nation's wild horse management issue with radical, long-abandoned ideas, such as killing thousands of animals or shipping them to foreign slaughterhouses." Roy says "it's time for stakeholders to come to the table to implement win-win solutions." She supports "pursuing public/private partnerships to implement fertility control," "applying real science to re-evaluate BLM's arbitrary population limits," "compensating ranchers for reduced use of public grazing allotments in herd management areas, which is far cheaper than rounding up, removing and stockpiling wild horses," and "reducing costs by moving horses from holding pens to holding pastures that cost almost three times less, and returning captured mustangs to public lands where they can live out their lives in non-breeding wild herds requiring no taxpayer money for feed."

Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

Opponents Press Governor To Comment On Lease Plan.

The [Coastal Observer \(SC\)](#) (8/10, Best) reports that "opponents of oil and gas drilling off the South Carolina coast are making a push for public comments before next week's deadline on a new federal leasing plan." According to the article, "more than 100 residents came to the Waccamaw Library this week to hear a presentation from Stop Offshore Drilling in the Atlantic (SODA)."

[South Strand News \(SC\)](#) (8/11, Stairs) reports that Peg Howell, "a Pawleys Island resident and former oil drilling engineer," told residents that "there are thousands of reasons to oppose offshore drilling for oil and natural gas in the Atlantic Ocean, but three key reasons are: it is bad for the coastal economy, it is not needed to make America energy independent and it is a forever decision that will harm the natural environment far into the future." Howell said at the forum, "The most important thing you can do right now is to get a comment in during BOEM's comment period. It is also important to let our elected officials know that you oppose offshore drilling and seismic testing for oil and to urge them to submit a comment, too."

Meet The Man Who Wants To Bring Offshore Oil And Gas Exploration To North Carolina.

The [Wilmington \(NC\) Port City Daily](#) (8/10, Mannion) reports that "as the debate over offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean continues, the organization that wants to bring the oil and natural gas industry to North Carolina is urging people not to rush to judgement on what its local representative said is a safe outlet to secure the country's future energy." While the North Carolina Petroleum Council "eventually hopes to open the opportunity for offshore drilling and refining of oil and natural gas in the Atlantic Ocean," Executive Director David "said that is at least eight to 10 years away." He said that "concerned residents...need to use that time to become informed on the subject at hand."

Oil Companies Position For Emerging Offshore Wind Sector.

[Offshore Magazine](#) (8/10) reports oil and gas companies are looking to take advantage of potential growth in US offshore wind projects. Statoil is looking to leverage its experience in offshore oil and gas operations to advance its New Energy Solutions standalone unit, which will focus on offshore wind, solar and energy storage. DONG sold off its offshore oil and gas assets over the past 10 years to focus almost exclusively on wind power. The company now holds the greatest market share of global installed offshore wind capacity.

[E&E Publishing](#) (8/10, Klump) also provided coverage.

Bureau Of Reclamation

Southern Californian Could See A Water Rate Hike To Pay For Brown's Tunnels.

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (8/10, Sabalow) reports that "more than 6 million Southern Californian households could pay \$3 more a month to help cover the costs of Gov. Jerry Brown's controversial plan to bore two huge tunnels under the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta." However, "that's cheaper than the \$5 a month that households in the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's service area were expected to pay under projections released four years ago, Jeffrey Kightlinger, the water district's general manager, said Thursday." Kightlinger said in an announcement, "Given the importance of this project to maintain water supply reliability for the region, these are encouraging numbers. It also goes to show the ability of the Southland region to fund major infrastructure projects by pooling our resources."

Fish And Wildlife Service

Feds Put Off Decision On Texas Hornshell's Status.

The [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (8/11, Chacón) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "delayed a decision Thursday on whether to add the last remaining native mussel in New Mexico to the endangered species list, raising concerns about its future amid efforts in Congress to reform the Endangered Species Act." The FWS "announced it was delaying a listing decision on the Texas hornshell for six months and would reopen the comment period for an additional 30 days."

Divers Find No Adult Invasive Mussels In Montana Reservoir.

The [AP](#) (8/10) reports that "U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services scuba divers searched for three days but did not find any indication of adult aquatic invasive mussels on the face of Tiber Dam in north-central Montana." The divers were "brought in this week because a juvenile mussel was found in a water sample taken from Tiber Reservoir near Chester last fall." That discovery and "a suspect sample taken from Canyon Ferry Reservoir near Townsend led Montana to increase its efforts to prevent the possible spread of the shellfish that can clog water pipes and displace native species."

Wis. Bear Hunters Who Use Dogs Under Attack By Wolf Advocates.

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (8/10, Marcotty) reports that "a national watchdog group says Wisconsin bear hunters are harassing wolves with their dog packs — then claiming state compensation when their hounds are killed — and wants the federal government to launch a criminal investigation." In a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an attorney for Professional Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) said that "the practice amounts to 'a state-sanctioned financial subsidy for hunters engaged in the criminal harassment' of wolves." Adam Carlesco, staff counsel for PEER, said, "It is harassment of an endangered species, committed by a relatively small number of hunters."

Most Plovers Have Fledged, Much Of Refuge Beach Reopens.

The [North Andover \(MA\) Eagle Tribune](#) (8/10, Lodge) reports that "much of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge beach, which had been closed since April to protect nesting piping plovers, reopened on Friday." The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service "annually closes its six miles of refuge beach and parking lots 2 through 7, which connect to the beach, to keep humans from disturbing the nesting shorebirds." Kaytee Hojnacki, "a biology technician at the refuge who had been monitoring the status of the plovers and their nests for the past three months, said 24 plover pairs produced 53 chicks that fledged (they are able to fly), which is down from the high last year of 77, but still 'our third-highest fledgling count ever, and still very good.'"

Site Chosen For Refuge Open House.

The [Mohave Valley \(AZ\) Daily News](#) (8/10, Richards) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Havasu National Wildlife Refuge plans "to hold an open house listening session on Thursday, Aug. 17, to accept written public comments on a draft recreational boating compatibility determination (CD)." Comments will be accepted through Aug. 30.

US-China Cooperation On Wildlife Smuggling: An Opportunity.

In a piece for the [Huffington Post](#) (8/10, Devlin), Kathleen Devlin, a Master's Graduate of the Global Affairs Program at the Yale Jackson Institute, writes that the United States and China "have access to frameworks that could facilitate collaboration on wildlife issues." She also points out that "the United States and China are far and away the two largest markets of unlawful animal products and plants, so both have an outsized duty to take leadership roles and aggressively tackle the issue head-on." Devlin argues that "because of their combined market share, any collective action successfully adopted and carried out would have noticeable effects on the international stage."

National Park Service

Data-driven Decisions For National Parks.

[Government Computer News](#) (8/10) reports, that "data on visitors has been collected for many years, but the National Park Service hasn't been able to analyze it or use it to inform other decisions." According to the article, "to help it make better operations and programming decisions with the data it already has, NPS wants to put its visitor experience data from 1999-present into usable formats so it's easier to review and analyze." The NPS is "looking for a contractor to compile reports and visualizations on visitation trends, funding, staff allocations and interpretive media using existing data from the agency's servicewide interpretive report, visitor use statistics and potentially cross-referencing that information with data from the Census Bureau."

Why Was There A Giant Inflatable Chicken Near The White House?.

The [New York Times](#) (8/10, Joseph) reports on the "giant inflatable chicken [that] appeared outside the White House on Wednesday," saying those who saw it "had no trouble identifying its human doppelgänger: President Trump. The chicken was the brainchild of Taran Singh Brar, an artist and documentary filmmaker who lives in Laredo, Calif." Brar said "that he wanted to make a statement about the president being a 'weak and ineffective leader.' He added, 'He's too afraid to release his tax returns, too afraid to stand up to Vladimir Putin, and playing chicken with North Korea.'"

Rat Population Increase Can Have Real Impact On City Infrastructure.

[WRC-TV](#) Washington (8/10, Fleischer, Yarborough, Piper, Jones) reports that the rise in the population of rats is having an impact on the D.C. metro area. Of note, the "rat problem" is adding to the expenses of the National Park Service. NPS spokesman Mike Litterst. said, "Certainly if you have rats that are making it worse, adding to that tally, that's something we're trying to avoid."

Yellowstone Park Vehicle Traffic Nearing Capacity.

The [AP](#) (8/10, Moen) reports that "sometime within the next four to six years, Yellowstone National Park is expected to reach its capacity for being able to handle all the vehicles that tourists drive through the park." The National Park Service on Thursday "released a pair of studies looking at traffic and parking in the nation's first national park and visitor demographics and expectations." According to the agency, "potential solutions include instituting a reservation system or passenger shuttles to control the number of visitors during peak times for the busiest attractions in the park, but no decisions will be made for at least a couple of years." Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk said in a statement, "Historic and recent trends demonstrate that visitation will increase over the long-term, therefore, it is imperative for us to plan now. Good visitor use management will allow the park to protect resources, encourage access, and improve experiences."

Vehicle Strikes, Fatally Injures Yellowstone Bison.

The [AP](#) (8/10) reports that "a bull bison that had wandered out of Yellowstone National Park was killed after suffering severe head and leg injuries when it was struck by a vehicle just east of the park." Wyoming Game and Fish warden Travis Crane, "the bison was walking in circles on the highway after the collision Sunday evening near Wapiti and couldn't be moved." Crane said "he shot and killed the injured bull because the Wyoming Highway Patrol said it was a public safety hazard."

Grand Canyon Water Pipeline Slated For Multimillion-dollar Replacement.

The [Arizona Daily Sun](#) (8/10, Conley) reports that “an aging pipeline bringing water to residents, resorts and 6 million visitors a year at the Grand Canyon has broken about 80 times since 2010 and needs a multimillion-dollar replacement, park officials say.” According to Grand Canyon spokeswoman Kirby-Lynn Shedlowski, “officials have sutured the breaks over the years, but that is no longer enough.” Shedlowski “said it’s time to go beyond patchwork and spend up to \$124 million to replace it before a major disruption of water service at the international tourist draw.”

Gatlinburg Wildfire Records: What We Know, What’s Still Secret.

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (8/10, Lakin) reports that “authorities began releasing copies Wednesday of key public records on the deadly Gatlinburg wildfire, nearly nine months after flames swept through town Nov. 28 and killed 14 people.” However, the National Park Service has “yet to release records requested under the federal Freedom of Information Act.”

Bubonic Plague Detected At Quarai Mission In New Mexico.

The [AP](#) (8/10) reports that “an animal case of bubonic plague has been detected at the Quarai mission of Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument in New Mexico.” Monument staff found “a dead rock squirrel in the square kiva at the mission on July 11.” According to the article, “a veterinary diagnostic lab says the squirrel tested positive for plague.”

Acadia Ramps Up Park Pass Enforcement.

The [Mount Desert \(ME\) Islander](#) (8/10, Broom) reports that Acadia National Park rangers have “started cracking down on people who park their vehicles in the park without displaying an entrance pass.” Park officials “said in a press release Tuesday that they are ‘enhancing efforts’ to ensure that visitors have passes and that rangers will issue a ‘fee compliance notice’ for vehicles that don’t display a valid pass.” Park spokesman John Kelly “said the ‘notice’ is actually a ‘citation’ that carries a fine of \$130.” However, “the vehicle’s owner or operator can avoid the fine if, within 24 hours, they buy an entrance pass or show proof that they had a valid pass that was not displayed.”

Council Of Town Near Grand Canyon Votes For Special Election.

The [AP](#) (8/10, Silber) reports that “a small town at the edge of the Grand Canyon will have a special election in November to decide whether to increase the maximum building height in the city and pave the way for new retail and housing development in the community.” The town council in Tusayan “voted unanimously Wednesday evening to settle the issue by mail ballot.” Critics claim “the building height increase would have serious effects on water usage, impact visitor capacity to Grand Canyon National Park and cause potential damaging consequences for the area’s dark skies conservation.” The National Park Service “sent a letter to the town expressing those concerns, while environmentalists also remain steadfast any growth in Tusayan would mar the beauty of the area.”

New Science Education Program Brings National Parks To Classrooms.

The [Knoxville \(TN\) Focus](#) (8/10) reports that “teachers and students across the country will have the opportunity to participate in a new science education program, Citizen Science 2.0 in National Parks, thanks to a \$1 million Veverka Family Foundation donation to the National Park Foundation’s Centennial Campaign for America’s National Parks.” The program is “kicking off this 2017-2018 school year with four national parks: Cabrillo National Monument, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and Rock Creek Park.” Will Shafroth, president of the National Park Foundation, said, “Private support from generous partners like the Veverka Family Foundation is making it possible for national parks – some of our richest learning environments – to offer new and innovative education programs like Citizen Science 2.0. Thanks to this \$1 million donation to our Centennial Campaign for America’s National Parks, teachers and students across the country will experience science outside the textbook and inside national parks.”

Fort McHenry Ranger Can’t Stay Retired Even After 50-year Career.

The [Washington Post](#) (8/10, Pitts) reports that that 79-year-old Paul Plamann “retired July 1 after a 50-year career” at the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine. However, “he was back in action this week, reprising his popular role as Beanes in his new guise as a part-time volunteer.” According to the article, “the man known to generations of colleagues as ‘The Old Ranger’” now plans to be at the Hampton National Historic Site in Towson on Saturdays and at

Fort McHenry on Tuesdays.

Free Entrance To Point Park To Celebrate The National Park Service's Birthday.

The [Chattanooga \(TN\)](#) (8/10) reports that "to celebrate the National Park Service turning 101 years old, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park is waiving the entrance fee to Point Park on Friday, Aug. 25."

Lookout Lake Michigan Shipwreck In Two Rivers Gets Historic Status.

The [Manitowoc \(WI\) Herald Times Reporter](#) (8/10) reports that "the Lookout shipwreck in Two Rivers has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, Wisconsin Historical Society announced Thursday."

Pearl Harbor Nonprofit CEO Leaves Organization.

The [AP](#) (8/10, McAVOY) reports that "a nonprofit that supports National Park Service operations at Pearl Harbor said Thursday its CEO is no longer with the organization." Pacific Historic Parks "didn't disclose the reasons for Ray L'Heureux's departure, saying it was a confidential personnel matter." The article notes that "the move came four months after the organization's board placed L'Heureux on paid administrative leave while it investigated allegations made against him in an anonymous letter."

Office Of Insular Affairs

Trump Renews Warning To North Korean Leaders.

Media reports cast President Trump's comments Thursday on North Korea as intensifying his warnings to North Korea's leaders and doubling down on his earlier "fire and fury" warning. All three networks again Thursday night led with the story, dedicating just under 20 minutes to the story – down from 23 minutes the night before. Lester Holt opened [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/10, lead story, 3:05, Holt) saying the President Trump "fired off another vague and ominous-sounding threat," and "appeared to paint another red-line, this time over Guam." Trump was shown saying, "Let's see what he does with Guam. If he does something in Guam, it will be an event the likes of which nobody has seen before what will happen in North Korea." Cecilia Vega said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/10, lead story, 3:30, Muir) that Trump is "not backing down, but he's also not telegraphing what comes next." The [Washington Post](#) (8/10, Rucker, Deyoung) too says Trump "escalated his rhetoric," but when asked what would have been tougher than "fire and fury," Trump replied only, "You'll see. You'll see." He also "would not say whether he is considering a preemptive strike," but said diplomatic efforts "over the years had done little to halt the country's nuclear program."

Trump, the [New York Times](#) (8/10, Baker) reports, "escalated his war of words...rejecting critics at home and abroad who condemned his earlier warning as reckless saber-rattling," and Jim Sciutto said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (8/10) that he has "doubled and tripled down...despite" several of his senior advisers on Wednesday trying to "walk...back" his earlier remarks.

Anthony Mason said in the lead story for the [CBS Evening News](#) (8/10, lead story, 2:40, Mason) that Trump said "he might not have been tough enough, so he got tougher today, saying that if the North Koreans even think about launching an attack, 'things will happen to them like they never thought possible.'" David Martin said the President "seemed to hold out little hope negotiations could resolve the standoff, and doubted economic sanctions would be effective enough. ... It seems the Commander-in-Chief has already run out of patience."

The President's remarks Thursday, [Bloomberg News](#) (8/10, Olorunnipa) reports, "continue days of escalating rhetorical exchanges," and [USA Today](#) (8/10, Korte) says he "doubled down on his threats...pushing back against criticism that his aggressive rhetoric might backfire and inflame tensions." Said Trump of his previous statement, "Maybe it wasn't tough enough. It's about time that somebody stuck up for the people of this country and for the people of other countries. So if anything, maybe that statement wasn't tough enough."

[Reuters](#) (8/8, Oliphant, Blanchard) reports Trump "took specific aim" at Kim Jong-un, saying he had "disrespected our country greatly. He has said things that are horrific. And with me, he's not getting away with it." The [Washington Times](#) (8/10, Muñoz) reports Trump's comments came as Defense Secretary Mattis confirmed Thursday that a "military solution" is in place "should the White House opt to pursue an armed response" to North Korea. Mattis, however, "remained

largely mum on the details." Another [Washington Times](#) (8/10, Muñoz) report says Mattis also "declined to comment whether he was taken aback by Mr. Trump's harsh rhetoric."

Trump's "strong language," the [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/10, Bierman) reports, "came only hours after...Mattis stressed the importance of diplomacy in the increasingly tense standoff with the nuclear-armed state." A [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/10, Lauter) analysis says Trump's rhetoric toward North Korea has "highlighted as never before the tension between the president's duties as chief executive and the role he often seems to prefer as the country's highest-profile TV and Internet commentator." Secretary Tillerson said this week that Americans should "sleep well at night" and has pressed for talks, "albeit with preconditions." On Thursday, "even as Trump said his previous statements were perhaps 'not tough enough,'" Defense Secretary Mattis "emphasized diplomacy." Said Mattis, "Do I have military options? Of course I do. That's my responsibility. But what we're trying to do here is leave it loud and clear...in the diplomatic arena: It is North Korea's choice."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/10, Sonne, Radnofsky) reports that earlier Thursday, North Korea said "sound dialogue is not possible" with Trump and repeated the threat it made a day earlier to strike Guam, saying it could surround the island in "enveloping fire" by launching four intermediate-range Hwasong-12 missiles at it. The [AP](#) (8/10, Lemire, Lederman) says Trump spoke after North Korea "intensified its own rhetoric by announcing a detailed plan to launch a salvo of ballistic missiles" toward Guam.

Trump: China Can Do More To Resolve Crisis. The [CBS Evening News](#) (8/10, story 2, 1:30, Mason) reported President Trump also said Thursday that China can do more to resolve the North Korea crisis, "and he said he thinks China will." However, CBS (Tracy) said "it's unclear at this point how much North Korea will even listen to what China says. In fact, the regime is very upset with China because it went along with those tough US sanctions." Furthermore, Trump on Thursday "sent a US Navy ship into waters that China claims is its own, and that's only antagonized them more. When you consider how much the US needs China right now on this issue of North Korea, these sorts of actions are not likely to help." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/10, Wong) reports, Trump's rhetoric leaves China as it seeks to reduce tensions with few options.

The [New York Times](#) (8/10, Perlez), meanwhile, reports that with US allies in the region "unnerved" by Trump's threats, China "sees a chance to capitalize on the fear and confusion and emerge as the sober-minded power in the region, according to analysts." Trump has "increasingly been seen in China as unreliable," and his comments this week have "only deepened that perception, analysts say." The [Washington Post](#) (8/10, Denyer) similarly says China's "narrative about US recklessness was reinforced this week" by Trump's threats. His rhetoric, the Post says, "gave China the perfect platform to project itself as the voice of reason — especially as it had just agreed to join the world in stiffening sanctions against North Korea."

A [New York Times](#) (8/10, Ramzy) analysis notes that the last time an American president contemplating how to stop an "isolated, authoritarian state in Asia" from becoming a nuclear power it was China. The Times says that a "look at that time reveals just how perilous such a situation can be, when a new nuclear player emerges and an established power tries to stand in its way. But it also shows that all-out war can be avoided."

US Officials: North Korean Missile Launch Would Take 14 Minutes To Reach Guam. [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/10, story 2, 2:50, Holt) reported North Korea is saying its military is developing a plan to strike Guam with "four ballistic missiles they say could be fired in the next week." Barbara Starr reported on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (8/10) that if the North launched ballistic missiles at Guam, it would be "unprecedented" and "very dicey," but "there are several layers of missile defense," while [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/10, story 2, 2:55, Muir) reported a launch from North Korea would take only 14 minutes to reach Guam, which is home to 160,000 American civilians and 7,000 US forces on two US military bases. A senior US official told ABC that a "preemptive strike could be on the table in the next six to 12 months, if sanctions do not work, and if Kim Jong-un continues to make progress on a nuclear tipped missile," but ABC's Jim Avila added that "any military retaliation from North Korea could be catastrophic."

The [New York Times](#) (8/10, Choe) reports that for Kim, failure of an attack on Guam "would be a potentially costly blunder that could subvert his authority." However, North Korea's threat "also includes some maneuvering room for a possible compromise, South Korean analysts said." With the launches "still in the planning phase" there is the "possibility of delay or cancellation," but the [Washington Post](#) (8/10, Fifield) reports, "Still, North Korea is not showing signs of backing down at the moment."

[USA Today](#) (8/10, Michaels) reports that if North Korea "follows through on its threat to fire ballistic missiles" at Guam, the US military "probably will try to shoot them down, raising the

stakes even further in a dangerous global standoff." A [New York Times](#) (8/10, Gordon, Schmitt) analysis says North Korea's threat Thursday to test-fire ballistic missiles at Guam "deepened the challenge confronting the Trump administration: how to defang Pyongyang's missile programs without risking all-out war." The Times cautions that "even a limited strike against a North Korean missile on its launching pad or the shooting down of a missile in midair would pose risks" that Kim Jong-un "might retaliate, setting off a spiral of escalation that could plunge the Korean Peninsula into war."

A front-page [Washington Post](#) (8/10, A1, Fisher, Nakamura) analysis says that "in this moment of heated, belligerent rhetoric, planners in and out of government are diving into decades of plans and projections, playing out war games, engaging in the macabre semi-science of estimating death tolls and predicting how an adversary might behave." According to the Post, the "pathways that have been examined fall into four main categories: doing nothing, hitting Kim Jong Un's regime with tougher sanctions, pushing for talks, and military confrontation."

Guam Governor Reassures Nervous Residents. [MSN](#) (8/9) reports that "elected officials in Guam are reassuring constituents that the U.S. territory is safe following North Korea's threat against the island." [ABC News](#) (8/9, Caplan) reports that "Guam's governor, Eddie Calvo, released a two-minute video message to the island's residents, in which he said, 'I want to ensure that we are prepared for any eventuality.'"

Additional coverage was provided by the [Guam Daily Post](#) (8/9, Calvo).

Additional Coverage. Additional coverage was provided by the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (8/9, Stanglin), the [Guam Daily Post](#) (8/9), the [Guam Daily Post](#) (8/8, Oliphant, Blanchard), the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (8/10, Raymundo), the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (8/9, Raymundo), the [Guam Daily Post](#) (8/9, Roberto, Losinio), the [Marianas Variety](#) (8/10), the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (8/10, Mora), and the [Guam Daily Post](#) (8/10, Losinio).

Six B-1 Bombers Arrive From South Dakota.

The [Guam Daily Post](#) (8/9) reports that "six B-1B Lancers and 350 airmen with the 37th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron from Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota, recently arrived at Andersen Air Force Base for another rotational deployment, the U.S. Pacific Command announced." According to the article, "the squadron arrived after the 9th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, from Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, completed its Guam rotation that started in February."

Additional Coverage: Hawaii, Guam Get More Funds To Abate Compact Impact.

Additional coverage that the Interior Department has "made available two technical assistance grants totaling \$467,095 to support one-stop centers in Guam and Hawaii that provide information and services to migrants from the freely associated states" was provided by the [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (8/10), the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (8/10, Engichy), and the [Pacific \(GUM\) Daily News](#) (8/9).

Guam Is Overlooked Asset In Asia.

In an op-ed for the [Detroit News](#) (8/9, Lennox), Dennis Lennox, who was executive director of the Republican Party of the Virgin Islands, writes that "North Korea's threat presents a unique opportunity for the federal government to simultaneously fly the flag while empowering Guam to promote the national interest, be it economically or diplomatically." To achieve this, Lennox urges President Trump "to reinvent the way the federal government oversees the territories." Lennox argues that "it's time to use broad authority of the president to transfer Guam and the territories from Interior to a new, standalone cabinet-level agency."

The South Pacific's Strategic Role.

In an op-ed for the [Washington Times](#) (8/10, Jacobs), Erik M. Jacobs, a student at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, writes that "as China continues its military expansion and modernization and as President Trump and seeks to expand the capabilities of the U.S. Navy to restore traditional American strategic power, the South Pacific will only continue to grow in strategic importance." Jacobs argues that "small and targeted strategic investment in the South Pacific will not only show the U.S. commitment to its strategic value, it will ensure that the U.S. is prepared to deal with current and emerging threats across the broader Asia-Pacific region."

Office Of Surface Mining

West Virginia Governor Wants To Sell Trump On A \$4.5 Billion Coal Bailout By Calling It A “Homeland Security Initiative”.

The [Washington Post](#) (8/10, Ingraham) reports, “Jim Justice, the Republican governor of West Virginia, is floating a federal proposal to bail out the struggling Appalachian coal industry at a cost to taxpayers of up to \$4.5 billion a year.” The Post says Justice is calling the proposal a “homeland security initiative” to protect “the eastern energy grid.” Columbia University Center on Global Energy Policy Director Jason Bordoff said the “claim that taxpayers should subsidize Appalachian coal for national security reasons is meritless.”

US Geological Survey

Yellowstone Supervolcano: Map Shows Ground Deformation Around Caldera Over Last Two Years.

[Newsweek](#) (8/10, Osborne) reports that “a map showing how the ground around the Yellowstone supervolcano has deformed over the last two years has been released by the U.S. Geological Survey.” The map, by USGS geophysicist Chuck Wicks, “shows movement around the caldera between 2015 and 2017 using radar images of Earth’s surface collected from orbiting satellites.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Daily Mail](#) (8/10, Macdonald).

USGS Upgrades To Broadband From California To Arizona.

[KJZZ-FM](#) Phoenix (8/10, Van Blokland) reports that “the USGS is upgrading out-of-date earthquake monitoring sites from analog to digital broadband.” According to the article, “for its most remote sites — in which more traditional internet providers don’t provide service — the USGS Earthquake Science Center is partnering with a California company to install satellite internet.”

Top National News

Trump To McConnell: “Get Back To Work.”

Media reports are casting the President’s criticism of Senate Majority Leader McConnell as both highly unusual and counterproductive. Some reports, however, indicate the President’s comments over the last few days are part of a deliberate strategy. [Politico](#) (8/10, Dawsey), citing “four White House officials and Trump friends,” reports Trump is “preparing to distance himself from Republicans in Congress if they aren’t successful in passing legislation,” and that he is “prepared to cast himself as an outsider – and Congress as an ‘insider’ Washington institution.” [Breitbart](#) (8/10, Spiering) also sees Trump as “eager to distance himself from the Senate majority leader,” and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/10) editorializes that while Steve Bannon and his White House allies relish the feud as part of their effort to rebrand the GOP, the ongoing dispute only helps Senate Minority Leader Schumer and his party – and risks permanently stalling the President’s agenda.

Along those lines, [NPR](#) (8/9, Taylor) said the “escalating tension...has the potential to jeopardize the rest of the Republican legislative agenda in the Senate when Congress returns,” and the [New York Times](#) (8/10) that McConnell is “the one person” Trump “may most need to execute a stalled Republican legislative agenda.” David Catanese of US News and World Report said on [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (8/10) that Trump is “smart to run against Congress, given his own approval rating,” but “it’s going to come to a head in the fall because...he’s going to depend on...McConnell to get” things “done. ... So, short-term gain but long-term problematic to poke at the Majority Leader.” David Axelrod similarly argued on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (8/10) that if Trump “has any hope of getting his legislative program through, then it seems like a very foolish long-term strategy to be in this sort of tête-à-tête with...McConnell.” Under the headline “Donald Trump’s Strategy On Mitch McConnell Is Totally Pointless,” Chris Cillizza wrote in a piece for [CNN](#) (8/10) that “this is a fight” the President “can’t win – and shouldn’t keep stoking. Which, of course, means he almost certainly will.”

To [Reuters](#) (8/10), Trump is “venting frustration over Republicans’ dramatic failure to repeal and replace the Obamacare healthcare law,” and [USA Today](#) (8/10, Collins) says “Trump and some conservatives are not ready to give up on repeal,” but “it is not clear what the president has in mind for reviving the legislation.” The [Washington Post](#) (8/10, A1, Wagner) refers to “an extraordinary fight” and [Roll Call](#) (8/10, Rahman) to a Trump “crusade against...McConnell,” while

the [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/10, Mascaro) says the “escalating attacks...underscore the rocky relationship between the White House and what typically would be the president’s allies.” The [AP](#) (8/10, Bykowicz, Werner) refers to “a stunning feud,” as “a sitting president openly turning on a Senate majority leader of his own party in such a fashion is practically unheard of – yet another norm destroyed since Trump’s rise on the political scene.”

As [Business Insider](#) (8/10) reported, the McConnell “suggested Tuesday that Trump was frustrated with the healthcare failure because he had ‘excessive expectations’ due to his lack of experience in politics.” Trump first responded to McConnell on [Twitter](#) on Wednesday, and continued to chide the GOP leader yesterday, [writing](#), “Mitch, get back to work and put Repeal & Replace, Tax Reform & Cuts and a great Infrastructure Bill on my desk for signing. You can do it!”

□ [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/10, story 3, 2:10, Muir) showed him saying later in the day, “I have been hearing repeal and replace now for seven years. All I hear is repeal and replace. And then I get there and I said, where’s the bill, I want to sign it, first day. And they don’t have it... Mitch, get to work, and let’s get it done. They should have had this last one done. They lost by one vote. For a thing like that to happen is a disgrace. And, frankly, it shouldn’t have happened.”

The [Washington Times](#) (8/10, Dinan) reports Trump also “said...McConnell must prove he can get things done with a GOP majority or else it will be time to talk about ousting the longtime Republican floor leader.” The □ [CBS Evening News](#) (8/10, story 4, 1:20, Garrett) showed Trump saying, “If he doesn’t get repeal and replace done, and if he doesn’t get taxes done, meaning cuts and reform, and if he doesn’t get a very easy one to get done, infrastructure, if he doesn’t get them done, then you can ask me that question.” The comments, says [AP](#) (8/10, Bykowicz, Werner), were “far from a vote of confidence,” though □ [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/10, story 4, 2:35, Alexander) noted that he added, “I’m disappointed in Mitch, but if he gets these bills passed, I’ll be very happy with him, and I’ll be the first to admit it.”

□ [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/10, story 4, 2:35, Alexander) noted that even as he wages “another battle with Senate’s top Republican,” the President praised “McConnell’s wife, Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao.” Trump was shown saying, “She’s doing a very good job.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/9, Tau) covers Trump’s remarks in this morning’s edition.

[Townhall](#) (8/10, Barkoukis) reported White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders “said Thursday the president is somewhat frustrated with McConnell.” Said Sanders, “You can see the president’s tweets. Obviously there’s some frustration. I don’t have anything more to add.”

Sean Hannity said in his opening monologue on □ [Fox News’ Hannity](#) (8/10), “Now here’s a news flash for Sen. McConnell: get to work, Senator. You don’t seem to get that to you and your fellow Republicans, you are the ones that set those excessive expectations. ... To these Republicans, if you cannot get your job done, then and it’s time for you to step aside. We need new people in those positions.”

The [Washington Times](#) (8/10, Sherfinski), meanwhile, reports “the open verbal warfare between Mr. Trump and one of the two most powerful Republicans on Capitol Hill has riven their party, with rank-and-file lawmakers and potential candidates picking sides.” Sen. Orrin G. Hatch of Utah “backed Mr. McConnell, calling him the best Republican leader in decades, but a host of candidates plotting runs for office sided with Mr. Trump.”

NYTimes Analysis: Trump Failing To Show “Any Gratitude” Toward McConnell. The [New York Times](#) (8/10) reports that “by preventing President Barack Obama from filling a Supreme Court vacancy,” McConnell “secured...Trump the signature accomplishment of his young presidency: the confirmation of Justice Neil M. Gorsuch.” Yet “any gratitude President Trump felt for Mr. McConnell’s first-of-its-kind maneuver appears to be exhausted as the president, upset at the failed health care repeal, has turned his Twitter fire and fury on” him.

Ylan Mui also said on □ [CNBC’s Closing Bell](#) (8/10) that “it is worth remembering that McConnell actually delivered this Administration’s biggest win so far, and that is the confirmation of Supreme Court judge Neil Gorsuch. McConnell went nuclear in order to get Gorsuch confirmed. So, he’s put it on the line for this President.”

Senate Conservative Fund Chief Calls For McConnell’s Replacement. The [Washington Times](#) (8/10, McLaughlin) reports that “touting...Trump’s criticism of...McConnell, a conservative group said Thursday the time is ripe to remove the Kentucky Republican from his leadership post for failing to deliver on campaign promises.” The Times adds that “Ken Cuccinelli, the head of the Senate Conservative Fund, said Mr. McConnell recently showed his true colors when attributed part of the GOP’s failed efforts to repeal and replace Obamacare to Mr. Trump’s lack of governing experience.” Said Cuccinelli, “It isn’t unreasonable to expect Republicans to keep their promises and McConnell’s excuse is yet another example of why he should be replaced as the Republican leader. ... Tell Senate Republicans to replace him now!”

Trump Could Back Primary Challengers To Flake, Heller. Under the headline "Senate Primaries: How Far Will Trump Go For Revenge?" [The Hill](#) (8/10, Easley) reported, "Speculation is growing that... Trump will buck his own party and back primary challengers to" Sens. Jeff Flake (R-AZ) and Dean Heller (R-NV) next year, "an exceedingly rare event that would deepen divisions within a party that is already struggling to govern despite controlling the White House and both chambers of Congress. The White House is closely watching" the contests, which "have attracted pro-Trump primary challengers. A couple of other challengers in Arizona with close ties to Trump are still weighing bids and have visited the White House in recent weeks. Heller is not close with Trump, although his allies insist he has a good working relationship with the president. Flake is outright hostile to Trump."

Meanwhile, in an "exclusive," [The Hill](#) (8/10, Easley) reported, "Key figures from a major pro-Trump group are joining" the campaign of ex-state Sen. Kelli Ward (R), who is mounting a primary challenge to Flake – "the latest sign that President Trump's allies are gearing up for a serious push to oust the incumbent. Eric Beach, the founder and co-chair of the Great America PAC, and Brent Lowder, the group's executive director, will join Ward's campaign, according to a release." The move "comes as New York hedge fund billionaire and conservative donor Robert Mercer, a Trump supporter whose family is close with White House chief strategist Stephen Bannon, gave \$300,000 this week to an outside group supporting Ward's efforts."

The [Washington Times](#) (8/10, McLaughlin) reports that businessman Danny Tarkanian (R), who is mounting a primary challenge to Heller, is "siding with President Trump in his public feud with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell." During a Thursday appearance on Fox News, Tarkanian said Trump was justified in criticizing McConnell "over his inability to muster enough support for a bill to do away with Obamacare. 'President Trump says we should repeal Obamacare and Mitch McConnell says well he has too high expectations,' Mr. Tarkanian said," adding, "Why would that be too high expectations when just two years ago most of the same GOP Senators voted to repeal it? Why would anyone think it is too high expectations to actually vote on it now that you have a president who will sign it? Of course I support the president's position."

Caddell: Senate GOP Prevented Trump Recess Appointments. [Breitbart](#) (8/10, Riehl) reports that in a conversation Thursday with Breitbart News Daily SiriusXM host Alex Marlow, pollster and political analyst Pat Caddell criticized Senate Republicans for not going into recess so President Trump could make recess appointments. Caddell argued, "Look at what the Senate did. It didn't even recess so he could appoint recess appointments. That's what the Democrats would have done. All these positions he can't move through the Senate, he could have appointed them the day they recessed. But they made sure he couldn't. They stayed in session, technically."

CNN Poll: Trump "Still More Popular Than Congress." On its website, [CNN](#) (8/10, Struyk) reported on what it described as "a silver lining for President Donald Trump: he's still more popular than Congress." The report said that in a CNN poll of 1,018 US "adults," taken Aug. 3-6, 68% of those surveyed judged "the Republican Congress a failure so far after last month's repeal and replace plan died in the Senate. Approval of the current Republican leaders in Congress has dropped from 39% in January to just 24% now." Meanwhile, 34% of those surveyed said "they approve of Democratic leaders in Congress." Trump's approval rating stands at 36%, according to the poll.

Trump Says He Has Given No Thought To Firing Mueller.

President Trump's claim Thursday that he has not given any thought to firing special counsel Robert Mueller, and his comments on the FBI raid of his former campaign manager Paul Manafort's home receive relative light media coverage amid heavy reporting on the ongoing north Korea crisis. Peter Alexander reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/10, story 4, 2:35, Alexander) that Trump "insist[ed] he has no plans to fire Special Counsel Robert Mueller," and [Reuters](#) (8/10) reports that he said "he has not given any thought to the possibility of firing" Mueller. However, the [New York Times](#) (8/10, Schmidt) says Trump's claim that he has not considered firing Mueller "contradict[s] private statements the president has made to his aides and friends about his desire to dismiss Mr. Mueller." According to the Times, Trump "has discussed both the possibility of firing Mr. Mueller and his concerns that the investigation will undermine his presidency."

[USA Today](#) (8/10, Korte) says Trump voiced support for "the ongoing Russia investigations, including those taking place on Capitol Hill, where multiple panels are also investigating possible collusion between Trump associates and Russians who sought to influence the 2016 presidential election." Said Trump, "I want them to get on with the task. ... But I also want the Senate and

the House to come out with their findings." According to the [Washington Times](#) (8/10, Boyer), Trump also "reiterated that he has nothing to hide," saying, "We have an investigation of something that never took place." [Politico](#) (8/10, McCaskill) also reports on Trump's comments, noting that he has "repeatedly dismissed the investigations as a 'witch hunt' and a 'hoax.'"

Also Thursday, Trump reacted for the first time to the FBI raid of former campaign chairman Paul Manafort's home, the [CBS Evening News](#) (8/10, story 5, 1:15, Mason) reported. Trump: "I thought it was a very, very strong signal, or whatever. They do that very seldom, so I was surprised to see it. I was very, very surprised to see it." [Politico](#) (8/10, Conway) reports that Trump described the raid as "pretty tough stuff." The [Daily Caller](#) (8/10, Ross) quotes Trump as saying, "I don't know, but I thought it was pretty tough stuff to wake him up, perhaps his family was there. I think that's pretty tough stuff." Asked if he had spoken to the Attorney General or the FBI about the raid, Trump said, "I have not, but to do that early in the morning, whether or not it was appropriate you'd have to ask them."

The [Washington Post](#) (8/10, Wagner, Hamburger) says Trump called Manafort "a very decent man" but added that "he hadn't spoken to him for a long time." [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/10, story 4, 1:10, Muir) showed Trump saying, "I know Mr. Manafort, haven't spoken to him in a long time, but I know him. He was with the campaign as you know, a very short period of time, a relatively short period of time. But I always thought he was a good man."

The [Daily Caller](#) (8/10, Ross) reports that Trump attorney John Dowd, in a "notable shift from his praise for Mueller earlier this week," accused the special counsel of "a gross abuse of the judicial process" for conducting the raid, and argued that it was "employed for its shock value to try to intimidate Mr. Manafort." In an email to the Wall Street Journal obtained by Fox News, Dowd wrote, "These methods are normally found and employed in Russia not America." Kevin Corke reported on [Fox News' Special Report](#) (8/10) that Dowd reportedly said the raid was "invasive."

[Bloomberg News](#) (8/10, Berthelsen, Farrell) describes Mueller as "bearing down" on Manafort, and reports that his investigators have "sent subpoenas in recent weeks from a Washington grand jury to global banks for account information and records of transactions involving Manafort and some of his companies, as well as those of a long-time business partner, Rick Gates, according to people familiar with the matter." In addition, Mueller has "reached out to other business associates, including Manafort's son-in-law and a Ukrainian oligarch," in what was "characterized as an apparent attempt to gain information that could be used to squeeze Manafort, or force him to be more helpful to prosecutors."

Manafort Searching For New Legal Representation. The [New York Post](#) (8/10, Dugan) cites "a source familiar with Manafort's plans" who said that he is "searching for new legal representation as he faces an intensifying investigation." Reginald Brown of WilmerHale, "the same DC law firm that employed Mueller until he was appointed special counsel in May," has been representing Manafort, but the Post says the "search for a new lawyer also is motivated by a desire to avoid a potential conflict of interest at WilmerHale, and could lead to the firing of Brown, the source said."

Nation Report: Investigators Now Believe DNC Hack Was An "Inside Job." In a more than 4,000-word piece posted Wednesday on the [Nation](#) (8/9, Lawrence) website, Patrick Lawrence wrote that "forensic investigators, intelligence analysts, system designers, program architects, and computer scientists of long experience and strongly credentialed are now producing evidence disproving the official version" of last year's hack of the DNC. They believe the incident was not a hack but "a leak," an "inside job" undertaken "by someone with access to the DNC's system."

Trump Dossier Author Seeks To Avoid Deposition In Libel Suit. [Politico](#) (8/10, Gerstein) reports in its "Under The Radar" blog that attorneys for Christopher Steele, the former MI6 officer who authored "an unverified intelligence dossier at the center of the Trump-Russia controversy are fighting an effort to force him into a deposition in connection with a libel suit stemming from BuzzFeed's publication of the salacious document." Steele's lawyers on Thursday "asked a federal judge in Miami not to grant the request, but Steele's lawyers' motion was filed a couple of hours after U.S. District Court Judge Ursula Ungaro issued a formal request for Steele's testimony." Steele's testimony is being sought by "lawyers for Aleksey Gubarev, a Russian internet entrepreneur who was mentioned in the dossier and contends he was libeled by its claims about his ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin."

Trump Declares Opioid Abuse A "National Emergency."

Comments by the President on the opioid crisis generated widespread, generally favorable media coverage, including two brief mentions on the major network newscasts. The [Washington Post](#)

(8/10, A1, Wagner) reports Trump “declared the country’s opioid crisis a national emergency, saying the scourge exceeded anything he had seen with other drugs in his lifetime.” In a story covering remarks by the President on a variety of topics, [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/10, story 4, 2:35, Alexander) showed him saying, “I’m saying officially right now, it is an emergency, it’s a national emergency. We’re going to spend a lot of time, a lot of effort, and a lot of money on the opioid crisis. ... You know, when I was growing up, they had LSD, and they had certain generations of drugs. There’s never been anything like what’s happened to this country over the last four or five years.” The [CBS Evening News](#) (8/10, story 6, 0:20, Mason) also noted Trump’s statement in a brief report last night.

The [Washington Times](#) (8/10, Howell) notes that “declaring a national emergency was the ‘first and most urgent’ recommendation in the interim report that Mr. Trump’s commission on opioid addiction, led by New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, issued last month.” Yesterday, the [AP](#) (8/10, Covin, Lemire) reports, “Christie applauded Trump’s decision in a statement, saying the president ‘deserves great credit.’” [Bloomberg News](#) (8/10, Edney) reports Trump had “made the issue a key talking point during his campaign,” and [Politico](#) (8/10, Ehley) that he “handily won states like West Virginia and Kentucky that have been hit hard by the epidemic.”

The [New York Times](#) (8/10, Shear) reports, however, that “in the last 48 hours,” Trump had “come under criticism from Democrats, who accused him of failing to adequately respond to the growing number of overdoses.” For example, “a spokesman for the Democratic National Committee said the president had ‘done nothing’ for the people affected by the drug crisis.” [USA Today](#) (8/10, Korte) says Trump’s comments “represented an about-face from earlier this week, when Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price all but ruled out an emergency declaration,” saying “said the administration has the resources it needs to combat the epidemic without formally invoking the emergency powers.” The [Washington Post](#) (8/10, A1, Wagner) also reports that at the time, “Price said that the administration can do the same sorts of things without declaring an emergency, although he said Trump was keeping the option on the table.” [NPR](#) (8/10, Naylor, Keith) likewise referred to “a change from earlier in the week.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/10, Radnofsky) similarly reports the President’s announcement in this morning’s edition. [Vice](#) (8/10, Hamilton) indicates that “it’s still unclear what steps Trump intends to take under the state of emergency,” but [Reuters](#) (8/10, Oliphant) says “the declaration could help unlock more support and resources to address the drug overdose epidemic, such as additional funding and expanded access to various forms of treatment, and it gives the government more flexibility in waiving rules and restrictions to expedite action.”

[Business Insider](#) (8/10, Ramsey, Jacobs) reported that “one potential benefit of declaring an emergency, according to Bradley Stein, a senior natural scientist at the Rand Corporation who studies substance-use disorders, is that Trump would be able to direct Price to alter or eliminate an obscure Medicaid rule that has been around since the 1960s.” Business Insider added that “the Opioid Commission recommended eliminating the exclusion as part of the national emergency.”

The [New York Daily News](#) (8/10, Greene) reports “a total of 52,404 people died of fatal overdoses in 2015 – a rate of 16.3 per 100,000.” The Daily News adds that “of those, more than 33,000 were attributed to opioids, including prescription painkillers as well as heroin and the even more potent fentanyl.”

Under the headline “Trump Wants To Prosecute More Drug Offenders To Solve The Opioid Crisis. Here’s Why That Won’t Work,” meanwhile, [Mic](#) (8/10, Provenzano) said that “in spite of...research” showing the approach to be ineffectual, “the Trump administration has repeatedly sought to combat the opioid epidemic with more law enforcement, rather than with a treatment-based approach.”

Ohio Attorney General: Opioid Makers Must Answer For Addiction Crisis. In a [Washington Post](#) (8/10, DeWine) op-ed, Ohio state Attorney General Mike DeWine explains why he is suing “five of the largest manufacturers of brand-name and generic opioids,” arguing that opioid makers have “flooded the market with prescription opioids” and offered “grossly misleading information about the risks and benefits of these drugs.” He notes that almost “80 percent of heroin users start with prescription opioids” and that opioids “caused 82 percent of all overdose deaths in Ohio.” He concludes by commending President Trump’s focus on the issue of opioid addiction and calling on pharmaceutical companies “to take responsibility for their actions and stop trying to deceive Ohio and America.”

Reuters Analysis: Treatment Of Pass-Throughs Impeding GOP Tax Reform Efforts.

[Reuters](#) (8/10, Morgan) reports that so-called pass-through businesses are “one of the thorniest issues” confronting Republican efforts to enact tax reform. While President Trump and Republican

lawmakers “want to give pass-throughs their own tax rate of 15-25 percent,” the “danger with this proposal is that high-income people who pay the top individual tax rate could reap enormous windfalls simply by reclassifying their wages and salaries as pass-through business income to qualify for the new low rate,” potentially “eras[ing] up to \$584 billion from government coffers over the next decade, the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center estimated.” Although “policymakers are looking at limiting how much of a business owner’s income should get pass-through treatment” to address the issue, it is “hard to define because pass-throughs range from sole proprietorships and partnerships to S-corporations.”

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

“Another Course Correction For City Policing.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (8/10) writes that Wednesday’s decision by district attorneys from Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens to move to dismiss 644,000 outstanding arrest warrants for minor offenses at least 10 years old – more than one third of the city’s backlog of outstanding summons warrants – was “another major step in the evolving effort to move the city’s police practices from an abusive past into a more enlightened future.” The Times adds that the district attorneys should follow the warrants expungement decision by expunging the records of those “who may have been unjustifiably caught” in the “zero-tolerance dragnet” in which law enforcement used to issue summons for most common petty offenses.

“Partners In Voter Suppression.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (8/11) says the Administration “moved deeper into the politics of voter suppression this week by reversing the federal government’s opposition to Ohio’s effort to purge tens of thousands of voters from the rolls simply because they vote infrequently.” The Times calls the case is “a major challenge to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 and the Help America Vote Act of 2002,” and while the Administration “claims Ohio acted responsibly,” opponents “see it as a subversion of democracy. The case could be a template for further electoral mischief, boosted now by a shamelessly politicized Justice Department.”

Washington Post.

“This Journalist Imprisoned In Syria Must Be Freed.” In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (8/10) calls for the release of Austin Tice, a former Marine captain and journalist who was captured in Syria five years ago covering the civil war when traveling with rebels fighting the government. The Post adds that CIA efforts to open a back channel to the Syrian government to help secure his release have so far failed, and concludes, “To those who imprisoned him, we repeat: He is a journalist who went only to record and report on the plight of people in a wretched war. His ambitions were noble, and he has already paid a very steep price for his courage and determination. It is long past time to set Mr. Tice free.”

“The Trump Justice Department Joins The GOP Crusade To Shrink The Vote.” The [Washington Post](#) (8/10) editorializes that “the idea that voting should be encouraged, and voter registration simple, has been a touchstone of federal law for decades,” but “is now under assault by Republicans in statehouses across the country and...in the Trump Justice Department.” On Monday, DOJ “political appointees...engineered an about-face in the government’s position on a key voting rights case before the Supreme Court, backing Ohio’s efforts to purge hundreds of thousands of infrequent voters from the state’s voter rolls.” Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted believes “it’s okay for a state to disqualify people from voting in the future if they haven’t voted in the recent past – specifically, in the past six years.” The Post notes that “a few other states...employ a process like Ohio’s,” but it argues that “there are better methods to maintain ‘clean’ and current voting rolls, such as using change-of-address forms filed with the Postal Service and death notices.”

“West Virginia’s Governor Wants A Coal Bailout. Republicans Should Ignore Him.” In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (8/10) writes that the Administration and Congress should “ignore” the recent proposal of West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice for a “massive” federal subsidy to the Eastern coal industry, arguing that subsidies would “punish the gas-production innovators who have been creating jobs that at least partially offset those lost in coal,” “impose unfair competition on more-efficient coal producers in Western states,” and “cost federal taxpayers...more than \$1 billion per year at current coal-consumption rates.”

Wall Street Journal.

“John McCain’s Defense Cut.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/10) writes Sen. John McCain’s vote to block the Senate bill repealing the Affordable Care Act helped further a problem he should appreciate: that of relatively declining defense spending. The Journal argues that because the ACA has exacerbated a federal budget already burdened by 60 percent mandatory entitlement spending, it will continue to place increasing pressure on lawmakers to decrease the percent of the budget allocated to military expenditures.

“An Aussie Terror Warning” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/10) writes that a thwarted terror attack in Sydney last month involving two brothers who almost successfully checked luggage in which they placed a meat grinder containing a bomb should serve as a warning to western authorities that the Islamic State is becoming dangerously close to blowing up passenger flights. The Journal concludes that the terrorists will be encouraged to replicate the attack and that the West must examine their screening policies.

“The Trump-McConnell Spat.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/10) editorializes that while Steve Bannon and his White House allies relish the feud between President Trump and Senate Majority Leader McConnell as part of their effort to rebrand the GOP, the ongoing dispute only helps Sen. Chuck Schumer and his party – and risks permanently stalling the President’s agenda.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Investor Benchmark Capital Sues Uber Ex-CEO Kalanick](#)
[Trump Warns North Korea To “Get Their Act Together”](#)
[FBI Says ISIS Used EBay To Send Terror Cash To US](#)
[Do Businesses Need Foreign Workers? Martha’s Vineyard Is Finding Out](#)

New York Times:

[Trump Doubles Down On Threats Against North Korea As Nuclear Tensions Escalate](#)
[Meet Kim Jong-Un, A Moody Young Man With A Nuclear Arsenal](#)
[Wrestling With North Korea, Trump Finds Perilous Options](#)
[Deepening Rift, Trump Won’t Say If Mitch McConnell Should Step Down](#)
[Gene Editing Spurs Hope For Transplanting Pig Organs Into Humans](#)
[Seeing Hope For Flagging Economy, West Virginia Revamps Vocational Track](#)

Washington Post:

[More Threats From Trump](#)
[Trump’s Attack On GOP Ally Criticized](#)
[Opioid Crisis Is A National Emergency, President Says](#)
[“Detroit” And The Question Of Cultural Gatekeeping](#)
[Experts Playing Out North Korea Scenarios](#)
[Facebook’s Imitation Not Quite Flattery](#)

Financial Times:

[Lego Aims To Rebuild Performance With New CEO](#)
[France Urges “New Momentum” In Taxation Of US Tech Groups](#)
[North Korea Steps Closer To End-Game In Nuclear Quest](#)
[US Sounds Off Over Mystery Cuba Hearing Loss](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump: “Fire And Fury” Talk On North Korea “Wasn’t Tough Enough”](#)
[Trump’s Troops Want Action, Blame Liberal Media And Weak Republicans For Low Poll Numbers](#)
[Trump Vs. McConnell: Republicans Choose Sides](#)
[Critics Decry Hazy Projections As More States Raise Tobacco Buying Age To 21](#)
[Surge In Bitcoin Value Alarms Defense And Intelligence Agencies Fighting Crime On “Dark Web”](#)
[Kid Rock: “Devil” With A Cause Or Just A Midterm Side Attraction?](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night’s Network News:

ABC: North Korea Threats; North Korea Threats-Responses; Trump-McConnell Comment; Trump-Manafort Raid; Trump-Vladimir Putin Comment; Cuba-US Diplomats Sonic Attack; Penn State

Frat Death Investigation; Severe Weather; Wall Street News; California-Car Chase; South Carolina-Police Shooting; London-Jogger Pushes Woman; Jimmy Kimmel-Son Recovery; Cancer Patient-Neighbor Support.

CBS: North Korea Threats; North Korea Threats-China; North Korea Threats-Expert Comment; Trump-McConnell Comment; Trump-Manafort Raid, Putin, Sessions Comments; Opioid Epidemic; Cuba-US Diplomats Sonic Attack; Google-Internal Memo Controversy; Taylor Swift Lawsuit; Penn State Frat Death Investigation; Gene Editing Research; MLB News; College Pizza Store.

NBC: North Korea Threats; North Korea Threats-Guam; North Korea Threats-Responses; Trump-Policy Comments; Cuba-US Diplomats Sonic Attack; Penn State Frat Death Investigation; Taylor Swift Lawsuit; London-Traffic Accident; E-Cigarette Fire; Apple Bees Store Closings; Political Satire.

Network TV At A Glance:

North Korea Threats – 19 minutes, 55 seconds

Cuba-US Diplomats Sonic Attack – 5 minutes, 35 seconds

Trump-McConnell Comment – 3 minutes, 30 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: North Korea Threats; Trump-Vladimir Putin Comment; FBI-Manafort Raid; NOAA-2016 Weather Abnormality.

CBS: North Korea Threats; North Korea Threats-China; Trump-McConnell Comment; Cuba-US Diplomats Sonic Attack; New Orleans-Flooding; Severe Weather-Hurricane Franklin.

FOX: North Korea Threats; Trump-McConnell Comment; New Orleans-Flooding; NOAA-2016 Weather Abnormality.

NPR: North Korea Threats; Oklahoma-Cigarette Fee Lawsuit; Montana-Wildfire.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Participates in a workforce/apprenticeship discussion; meets with US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Delivers remarks at the Ten Point Coalition's Annual Luncheon; participates in a public ceremony for his official governor's portrait unveiling.

US Senate: 3:30 PM Senate convenes for pro forma session

On recess until 5 September.

US House: On recess until 5 September.

Other: No notable events scheduled.

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Jimmy Kimmel: "We have given Donald Trump a big red button that said 'Do not press' and we are hoping he doesn't press it. Where is Dennis Rodman when we need him?"

Stephen Colbert: "What is tougher than fire and fury? Lava and rage? A paper cut and a lemon? Rizzoli and Isles? Crate and Barrel? Key and Peele?"

Jimmy Fallon: "I read that the US has a plan to launch a cyber attack on North Korea. It's pretty serious. They say it could affect both of North Korea's computers."

Jimmy Fallon: "I read that you can now go on Airbnb and rent Trump's childhood home where he lived until he was four. So at least there's one house where he lasted four years."

Seth Meyers: "According to reports, President Trump has resisted giving his newly appointed White House Chief of Staff John Kelly veto power over his tweets. Though at this point, I'm not even sure President Trump has veto power over his tweets."

Seth Meyers: “Not tough enough? What would be tougher than fire and fury? Fire and fury and bees? Too fire, too furious?”

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