

# GWIRE

WEEKLY DIGEST  
JANUARY 15, 2021



**NEW POLICE CHIEF SAYS NO HONEYMOON PERIOD. 'VIOLENT CRIME IS NUMBER ONE.' »**

**CA EXPANDS VACCINE ELIGIBILITY TO ALL 65 AND OLDER »**

**TRUMP IMPEACHED FOR 2ND TIME IN BIPARTISAN VOTE »**



# NEW POLICE CHIEF SAYS NO HONEYMOON PERIOD. 'VIOLENT CRIME IS NUMBER ONE.'

January 11, 2021 | David Taub

Paco Balderrama thought he would have a honeymoon period as Fresno's new police chief. A recent surge in violent crime changed

**"Initially, I had a 30, 60, 90 day plan to kind of ease in and get to know everybody, not just the department members, but also the community. But that's kind of out the window right now because there's a lot of issues that need to be addressed immediately. And violent crime is number one," Balderrama told the media after his swearing-in ceremony.**

his mind. "Initially, I had a 30, 60, 90 day plan to kind of ease in and get to know everybody, not just the department members, but also the community.

But that's kind of out the window right now because

there's a lot of issues that need to be addressed immediately. And violent crime is number one," Balderrama told the media after his swearing-in ceremony. In the first four days of January, Fresno police were investigating five homicides. Outgoing chief Andy Hall initiated a violence suppression operation over the weekend.

Balderrama was sworn in as the 22nd police chief in the city's history and the first Latino chief. His twin brother Beto Balderrama, a captain with the Oklahoma City police department, performed the oath on top of City Hall's fountain — the water was turned off. His wife, Kyla, pinned the chief badge on his uniform. Coming from Oklahoma City, a veteran of 20-plus years — most recently as the police department's deputy chief — Balderrama said he's received a "warm" welcome from the Fresno community. "I'm settled in and I'm

ready to get to work," Balderrama said, who is now living in north Fresno.

## Several Meetings for New Chief

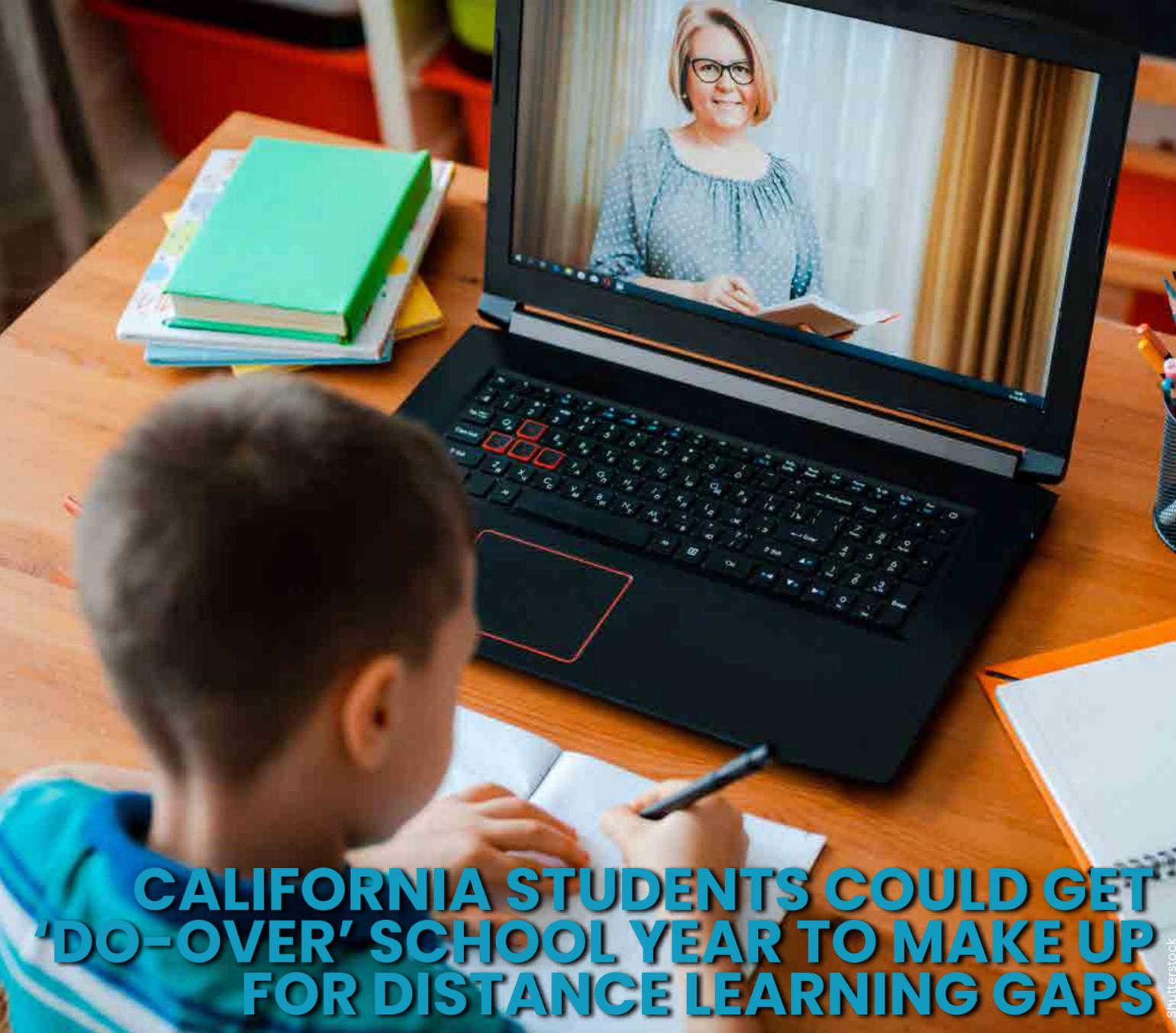
Balderrama said he's been busy in meetings "for hours and hours and hours," with his staff and with the community. "Community safety and community trust — those are everything that we're trying to do, because if we accomplish those two things, we accomplish everything. So I'm going to hang my hat on those two things," Balderrama said. He said listening is the best strategy. Balderrama said his goal is to stop crime before it happens. "If we are responding to a call after somebody has already been hurt, shot or killed, then that's not good enough, you know?" Balderrama said. "We want to gather the information needed so we can respond and we can be more proactive." The new chief made it a point to let his officers know they are supported by him and hope that leads to a safer city.

**In the first four days of January, Fresno police were investigating five homicides. Outgoing chief Andy Hall initiated a violence suppression operation over the weekend.**

## Seeks Support from Council

Balderrama said being an effective chief requires support from elected leaders. "Having the mayor's support, having the community support, having the city council's support, I mean, it's very important to me. That's what you need in 2021 in a major city for a police chief has to have the support of those around them," Balderrama said. Dyer, when introducing Balderrama

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## CALIFORNIA STUDENTS COULD GET 'DO-OVER' SCHOOL YEAR TO MAKE UP FOR DISTANCE LEARNING GAPS

January 13, 2021 | Nancy Price

California students who have been struggling academically because of distance learning during the pandemic could get a "do-over" year under legislation proposed by a San Diego Assemblywoman.

Assembly Bill 104 would let parents and students decide whether the student should repeat a grade because of learning losses during the pandemic, and would allow juniors and seniors to have a fifth year in high school to earn the credits needed to obtain a high school diploma. The bill's author, Assembly Member Lorena Gonzalez, D-San Diego, said the goal is to get students back on track after lengthy time

out of the classroom and in virtual classes. "Students won't magically catch up academically when they are back in classrooms. We need tailored programs that take into account the educational and emotional toll this crisis has had on our children," she said in a news release Wednesday.

AB 104 also would allow students to replace letter grades with pass/no pass without loss of eligibility for college financial aid. The California State University would be required to accept changed transcripts. Fresno Unified Superintendent Bob Nelson could not be reached for comment Wednesday. Joshua...

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## NURSES PROVIDE SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE CARE FOR RAPE VICTIMS

January 10, 2021 | Sponsored by Community Medical Centers

Veteran emergency department Nurse Karen Reid-Williams was at the end of a long shift, squinting through fogged-up goggles and sweating under her N95 mask and paper gown, when another nurse...

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## VALLEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL PREPARES TO TAKE IN ADULT PATIENTS DURING COVID-19 SURGE

January 11, 2021 | Jim Jakobs

Saying they've been planning for this possibility since day one of the pandemic, Valley Children's Hospital is preparing to take in patients up to 25 years old, "shortly." "Given the current widespread transmission of COVID-19 and the stress on adult facilities throughout the State and our region, our current surge planning accepts patients ages 25 and younger," says Dr. David Christensen, Valley Children's senior vice president of medical affairs said in a statement to GV Wire<sup>SM</sup>.

"The state of California is currently developing transfer guidelines for adult patients at pediatric hospitals. We anticipate that these guidelines will be released shortly." The Associated Press reports that hospitals around the country are parking patients in ERs because they...

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# STATE

## CALIFORNIA EXPANDS VACCINE ELIGIBILITY TO ALL 65 AND OLDER

January 13, 2021 | AP News

California is immediately allowing residents 65 and older to get scarce coronavirus vaccines. Gov. Gavin Newsom's announcement Wednesday puts seniors in line before emergency workers, teachers, childcare providers and food and agriculture workers even as counties complain they already don't have enough doses to go around.

"There is no higher priority than efficiently and equitably distributing these vaccines as quickly as possible to those who face the gravest consequences," Gov. Gavin Newsom said in a statement. "To those not yet eligible for vaccines, your turn is coming. We are doing everything we can to bring more vaccine into the state."

While health care workers and those in nursing homes and other congregate living facilities can still be vaccinated, state officials are expanding to those 65 and up because they are at the greatest risk of being hospitalized and dying. California has seen virus cases and hospitalizations explode since Thanksgiving, though in recent days the numbers have flattened.

"With our hospitals crowded and ICUs full, we need to focus on vaccinating Californians who are at highest risk of becoming hospitalized to

alleviate stress on our health care facilities," said Dr. Tomás Aragón, director of the California Department of Public Health and the state's Public Health Officer. "Prioritizing individuals age 65 and older will reduce hospitalizations and save lives."

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# PROPOSED CORPORATE TAX HIKE IN CALIFORNIA WOULD AID HOMELESS

January 14, 2021 | AP News

SAN FRANCISCO — A California coalition is proposing legislation to boost taxes on wealthy multinational corporations to raise more than \$2 billion a year to house tens of thousands of homeless people, addressing what has become a worsening problem in the country's most populous state.

Supporters say Assembly Bill 71 would reinvent California's approach to solving homelessness — providing for the first time an ongoing, sufficient state funding source to get people off the streets. Opponents

say it would contribute to the perception that California is hostile to business. "Our state is facing an unprecedented homelessness crisis that's on the verge of becoming a full-blown catastrophe due to the economic impacts of COVID-19," Democratic Assemblywoman Luz Rivas of Los Angeles said Wednesday, noting that one in four Americans experiencing homelessness lives in California.

The state suffers from prohibitively high housing costs and wages that can't keep up, resulting in an...

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# IN FIRST KNOWN CASE, GORILLAS TEST POSITIVE FOR CORONAVIRUS

January 11, 2021 | AP News

SAN DIEGO — Several gorillas at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park have tested positive for the coronavirus in what is believed to be the first cases among such primates in captivity. The park's executive director, Lisa Peterson, told The Associated Press on Monday that eight gorillas that live together at the park are believed to have the virus and several have been coughing.

It appears the infection came from a member of the park's wildlife care team that also tested positive for the virus but has been asymptomatic. Veterinarians are closely monitoring the gorillas who will remain in their habitat at the park, north of San Diego, Peterson said. While other wildlife has contracted...

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# DEMOCRATS LIKEN NEWSOM RECALL EFFORT — A LEGAL OPTION IN CALIFORNIA — TO EXTREMIST 'COUP'

January 13, 2021 | CalMatters

When is a constitutionally outlined petition campaign to remove an elected leader actually a "treasonous" effort to subvert the democratic process? According to the California Democratic Party, when Republicans are on one side of the campaign and Gov. Gavin Newsom is on the other.

In a press conference Tuesday afternoon, the state's largest political party denounced the germinating effort to ask voters to recall Newsom, likening it to the mob laden with white supremacists and conspiracy theorists that stormed the U.S. capitol building last week in a fruitless effort to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election. "Some of the same individuals and groups who were encouraged by...

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# U.S. TRUMP IMPEACHED FOR 2ND TIME IN BIPARTISAN VOTE AFTER CAPITOL RIOT

January 13, 2021 | AP News

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House for a historic second time Wednesday, charged with “incitement of insurrection”

With the Capitol secured by armed National Guard troops inside and out, the House voted 232-197 to impeach Trump. The proceedings moved at lightning speed, with lawmakers voting just one week after violent pro-Trump loyalists stormed the U.S. Capitol, egged on by the president’s calls for them to “fight like hell” against the election results.

over the deadly mob siege of the Capitol in a swift and stunning collapse of his final days in office. Newly elected Congressman David Valadao (R – Hanford) was among 10 GOP votes in the House voting in favor of impeachment. With

the Capitol secured by armed National Guard troops inside and out, the House voted 232-197 to impeach Trump. The proceedings moved at lightning speed, with lawmakers voting just one week after violent pro-Trump loyalists stormed the U.S. Capitol, egged on by the president’s calls for them to “fight like hell” against the election results. The handful of Republicans who fled Trump and joined with Democrats on the vote said he needed to be held accountable and warned ominously of a “clear and present danger” if Congress should leave him unchecked before Democrat Joe Biden’s inauguration Jan. 20. Trump is the only U.S. president to be twice impeached.

**Republican David Valadao Votes to Impeach**  
“President Trump was, without question, a driving force in the catastrophic events that took

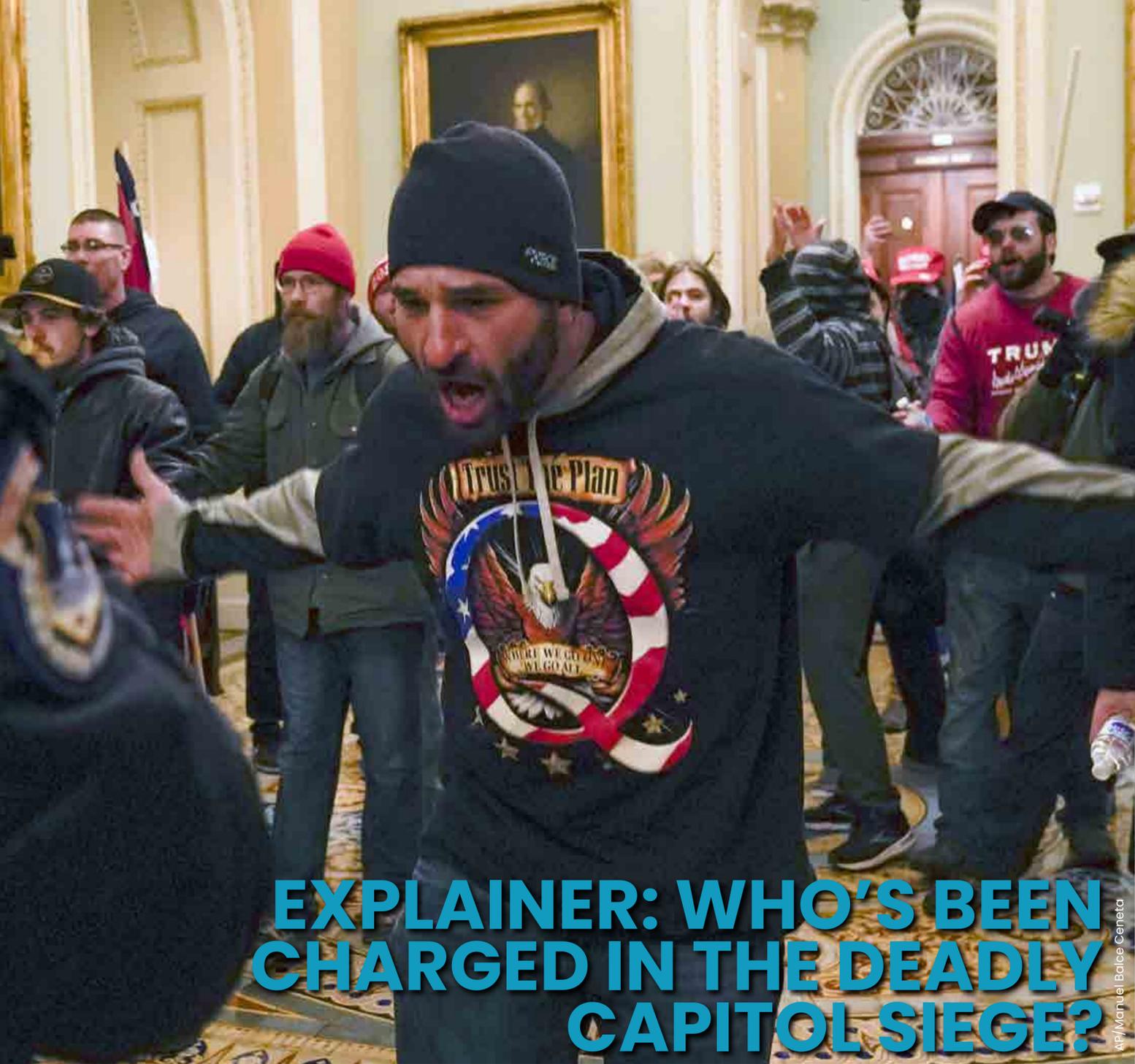
place on January 6 by encouraging masses of rioters to incite violence on elected officials, staff members, and our representative democracy as a whole,” Valadao said in a statement issued after the vote. He chided Speaker Nancy Pelosi for what he described as a “rushed political stunt” and said hearings should have been held. Nonetheless, Valadao said, “(b)ased on the facts before me, I have to go with my gut and vote my conscience. I voted to impeach President Trump. His inciting rhetoric was un-American, abhorrent, and absolutely an impeachable offense. It’s time to put country over politics.”

## Capitol Insurrection Stunned Lawmakers

The Capitol insurrection stunned and angered lawmakers, who were sent scrambling for safety as the mob descended, and it revealed the fragility of the nation’s history of peaceful transfers of power. The riot also forced a reckoning among some Republicans, who have stood by Trump throughout his presidency and largely allowed him to spread false attacks against the integrity of the 2020 election. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi invoked Abraham Lincoln and the Bible, imploring lawmakers to uphold their oath to defend the Constitution from all enemies, foreign “and domestic.” She said of Trump: “He must go, he is a clear and present danger to the nation that we all love.” Holed up at the White House...

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# EXPLAINER: WHO'S BEEN CHARGED IN THE DEADLY CAPITOL SIEGE?

AP/Manuel Balce Ceneta

January 12, 2021 | AP News

Prosecutors have brought dozens of cases after the deadly attack at the U.S. Capitol, and more charges are expected in the coming days as investigators identify more members of the pro-Trump mob.

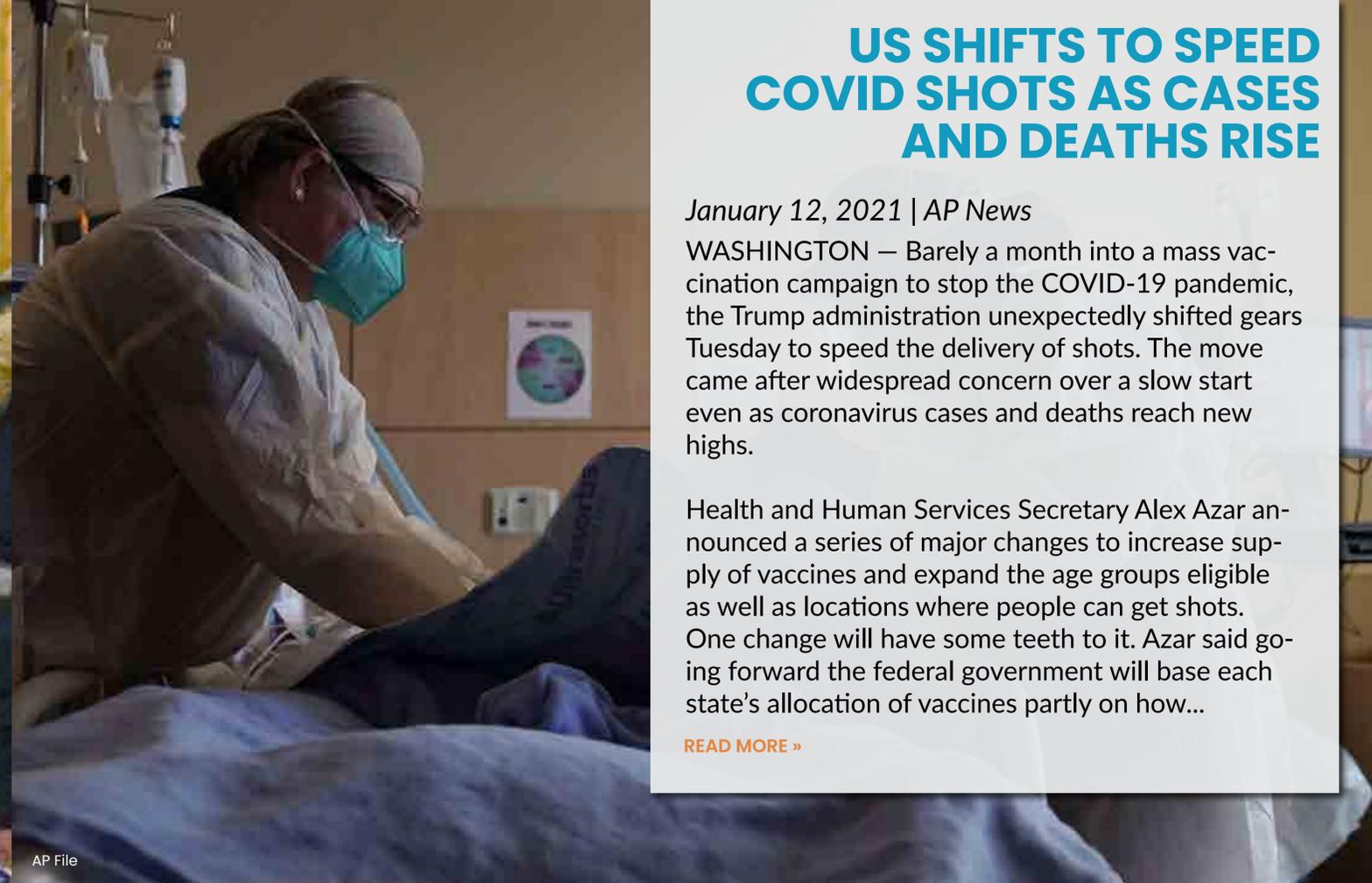
Investigators are collecting tips from the public, interviewing witnesses and going through photos, videos and social media accounts to collect evidence against the attackers who overran the Capitol to stop the certification of Democrat Joe Biden as the

next president. And those who've been charged so far could lead investigators to others who joined in the violent siege on Capitol Hill. Some questions and answers about the investigation into the Capitol breach:

### How Many People Have Been Charged?

The U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia has brought federal charges against about 20 people so far, while 40 others have been charged in D.C.'s...

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AP File

# US SHIFTS TO SPEED COVID SHOTS AS CASES AND DEATHS RISE

January 12, 2021 | AP News

WASHINGTON — Barely a month into a mass vaccination campaign to stop the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trump administration unexpectedly shifted gears Tuesday to speed the delivery of shots. The move came after widespread concern over a slow start even as coronavirus cases and deaths reach new highs.

Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar announced a series of major changes to increase supply of vaccines and expand the age groups eligible as well as locations where people can get shots. One change will have some teeth to it. Azar said going forward the federal government will base each state's allocation of vaccines partly on how...

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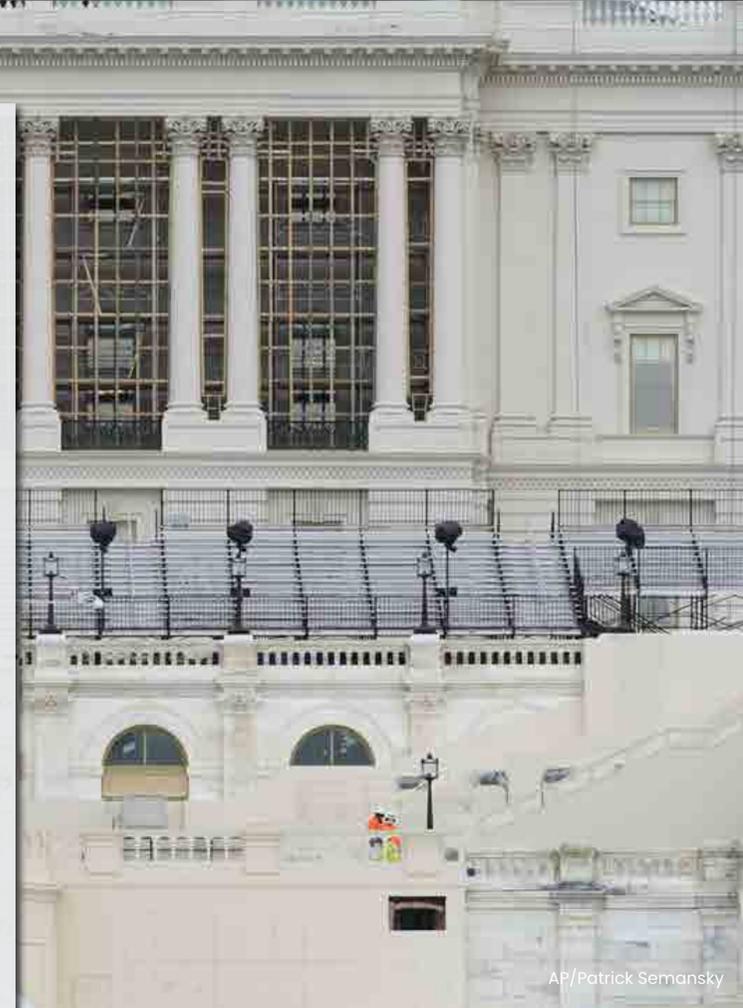
# LAW ENFORCEMENT: WE'LL BE READY FOR JOE BIDEN'S INAUGURATION

January 12, 2021 | AP News

WASHINGTON — This time, they'll be ready. The inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden will be held on the same risers in the same spot at the U.S. Capitol where a violent, pro-Trump mob descended last week. But the two events aren't even comparable from a security standpoint, said Michael Plati, U.S. Secret Service special agent in charge, who is leading the inauguration security.

The inauguration is designated as a "national special security event," which clears the way for communication, funding and preparation between multiple agencies in Washington, like the Capitol Police, Pentagon, Homeland Security and District-area police. Other such events are the State of the Union...

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AP/Patrick Semansky



AP File

# WORLD

## MERKEL: TRUMP'S TWITTER EVICTION 'PROBLEMATIC'

January 11, 2021 | AP News

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel considers U.S. President Donald Trump's eviction from Twitter by the company "problematic," her spokesman said Monday. Twitter permanently suspended Trump from the microblogging platform on Friday, citing a "risk of further incitement of violence" in the wake of the storming of the U.S. Capitol by supporters of the outgoing president. Asked about Twitter's decision, Merkel's spokesman, Steffen Seibert, said the operators of social media platforms "bear great responsibility for political communication not being poisoned by hatred, by lies and by incitement to violence."

### Facebook on Thursday Suspended Trump's Account Through Jan. 20

He said it's right not to "stand back" when such content is posted, for example by flagging it.

Twitter permanently suspended Trump from the microblogging platform on Friday, citing a "risk of further incitement of violence" in the wake of the storming of the U.S. Capitol by supporters of the outgoing president.

But Seibert also said that the freedom of opinion is a fundamental right of "elementary significance." "This fundamental right can be intervened in, but according to the law and within the framework defined by legislators —

not according to a decision by the management of social media platforms," he told reporters in Berlin. "Seen from this angle, the chancellor considers it problematic that the accounts of the U.S. president have now been permanently blocked." Facebook on Thursday suspended

Trump's account through Jan. 20, the day of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration, and possibly indefinitely. Merkel herself does not have a Twitter account, although Seibert does and many German government ministers do.

Facebook on Thursday suspended Trump's account through Jan. 20, the day of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration, and possibly indefinitely.

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# VOLKSWAGEN SOLD 9.3 MILLION CARS IN PANDEMIC YEAR, DOWN 15%

January 14, 2021 | AP News

FRANKFURT, Germany — German automaker Volkswagen said its global sales fell 15.2% during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic but showed significant recovery toward the end of the year. The company more than tripled its sales of battery-only vehicles.

Global sales for all of Volkswagen's brands amounted to 9.3 million vehicles. The fourth quarter showed a smaller decline of 5.7% and within that quarter the month of December was still further improved,

showing a shortfall of only 3.2% from the same period the year before. Volkswagen said Wednesday that sales fell the most in Western Europe, by 21.6%, while China, the company's largest single market, was down 9.1%

Sales of battery-only cars jumped 214% to 231,600 from 73,700 across all the company's brands. The company's electric sales leaders included the Volkswagen ID.3 compact with 56,500, the Audi e-tron SUV with 47,300, and the high-end Porsche...

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# ISRAEL ANNOUNCES NEW SETTLER HOMES, RISKING BIDEN'S ANGER

January 11, 2021 | AP News

JERUSALEM — Israel on Monday advanced plans to build 800 new settler homes in the occupied West Bank, a move that could strain ties with the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office announced the move, saying it would include 100 homes in a settlement where an Israeli woman was killed last month in an attack allegedly carried out by a Palestinian assailant.

The announcement will burnish Netanyahu's right-wing credentials in a tough campaign ahead of March elections, but it could anger Biden, who is opposed to settlement expansion and has clashed...

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# US WILL REQUIRE NEGATIVE COVID-19 TESTS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVELERS

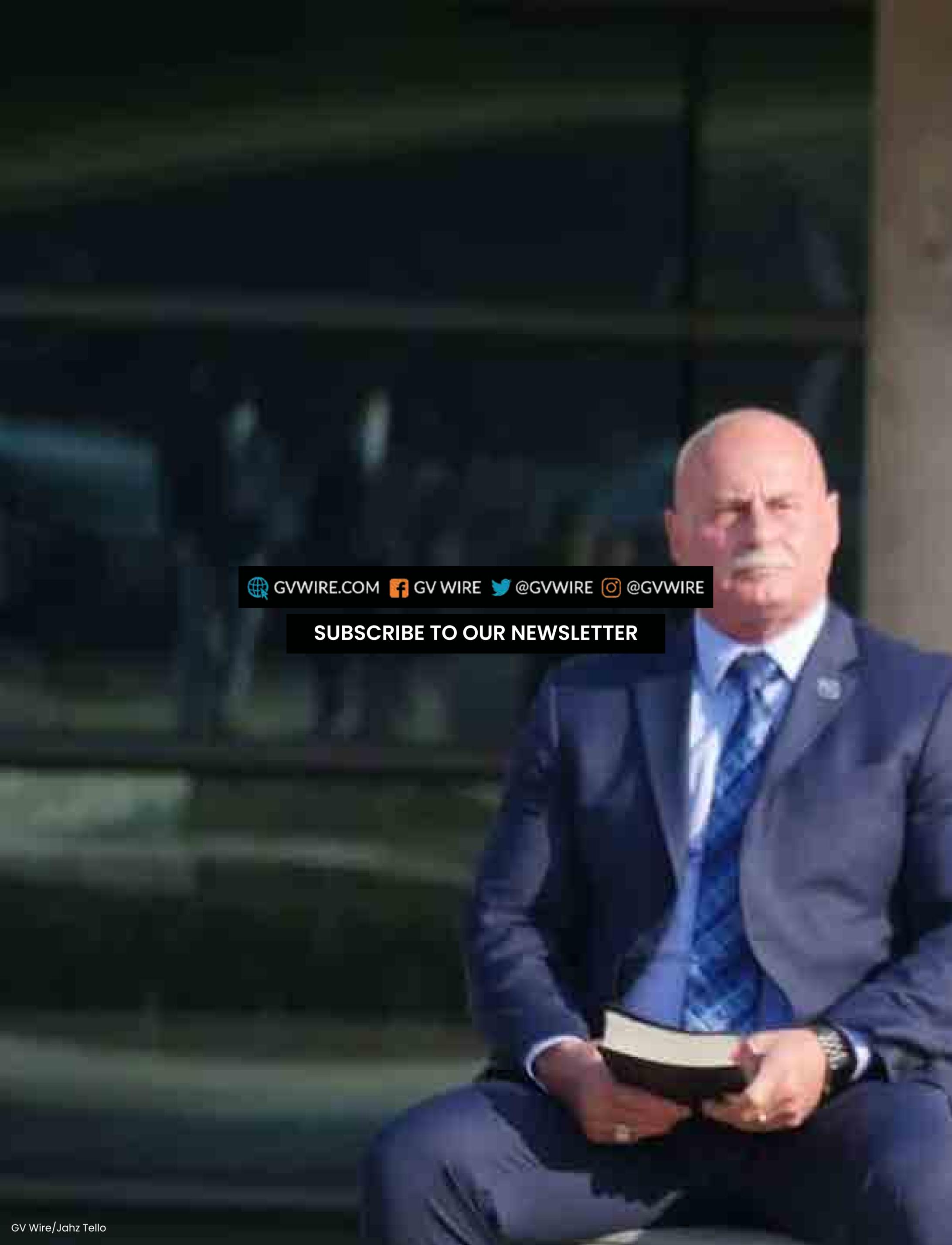
January 14, 2021 | AP News

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention approved a measure Tuesday that will require all international air travelers to obtain a negative COVID-19 test before flying to the states. The order goes into effect Jan. 26.

"Testing before and after travel is a critical layer to slow the introduction and spread of COVID-19," the CDC said in a statement. "This strategy is consistent with the current phase of the pandemic and more efficiently protects the health of Americans." All passengers entering the US will need to get negative test results within three days before flying, or provide documentation to the airline that they've recovered from COVID-19. If passengers don't...

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A man with a mustache, wearing a blue suit, white shirt, and blue tie, is sitting on concrete steps. He is holding a book in his lap. The background is a dark, out-of-focus building with many windows.

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