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GV Wire File

# LOCAL

## REVENGE OF THE ARAMBULAS? BIG DONATION TO DEFEAT DYER.

December 11, 2019 | David Taub

Last December, then-Fresno Police Chief Jerry Dyer talked openly about the child abuse accusation against Assemblyman Joaquin Arambula. A jury later acquitted Arambula of the charge, but the residue of that case and Dyer's words are spill-

**"We are convinced that (Dyer) is the absolutely wrong person to lead our city." — Juan Arambula**

ing into the 2020 Fresno mayoral race. Arambula's parents, Amy and Juan, have contributed \$97,900 to an independent expenditure group opposing Dyer's bid to become mayor. "We made this contribution because of the strong feelings that we have about what is good for the future of Fresno," said Juan Arambula, a former assemblyman. "We are convinced that (Dyer) is the absolutely wrong person to lead our city."

**Related Story: Dyer Contradicts Arambula's Statement in Child Cruelty Arrest**

### Juan Arambula: Straw That Broke the Camel's Back

Arambula said his family has many motivations for the large contribution. But, when Dyer went on TV and talked about his son's case, that was too much. "Jerry has had a long history, and the incident ... was the straw that broke the camel's back," the elder Arambula told GV Wire. Arambula also served last year on the committee to pass Measure P, the Fresno sales tax initiative to benefit local parks. The measure did not receive the required votes to pass. Dyer opposed Measure P. "We believe that Fresno deserves better. Jerry broke his word and lied about the parks measure and actively opposed it," Arambula said. Arambula also cited Dyer's "bad management of the police department," which he said cost the city millions of dollars in lawsuits. "Some people think that they can do anything and

get away with it. We don't believe that's true for our president and we don't believe that's true for Dyer," Arambula said.

### Dyer Response

Dyer responded to the committee's formation. "I am disappointed to learn about this Political Action Committee established solely to inflict damage on my campaign for Mayor," Dyer told GV Wire via email. "After 18 years of making tough decisions to keep Fresno safe as your police chief, I knew that some people would oppose me."

Dyer continued: "But, wouldn't this money be better spent resolving our community's challenges rather than waging petty personal vendettas? Instead of raising money to promote division in our community we should be coming together to house our homeless, improve our parks, or provide assistance to our city's children and seniors. As your Mayor, that's where my focus will be."

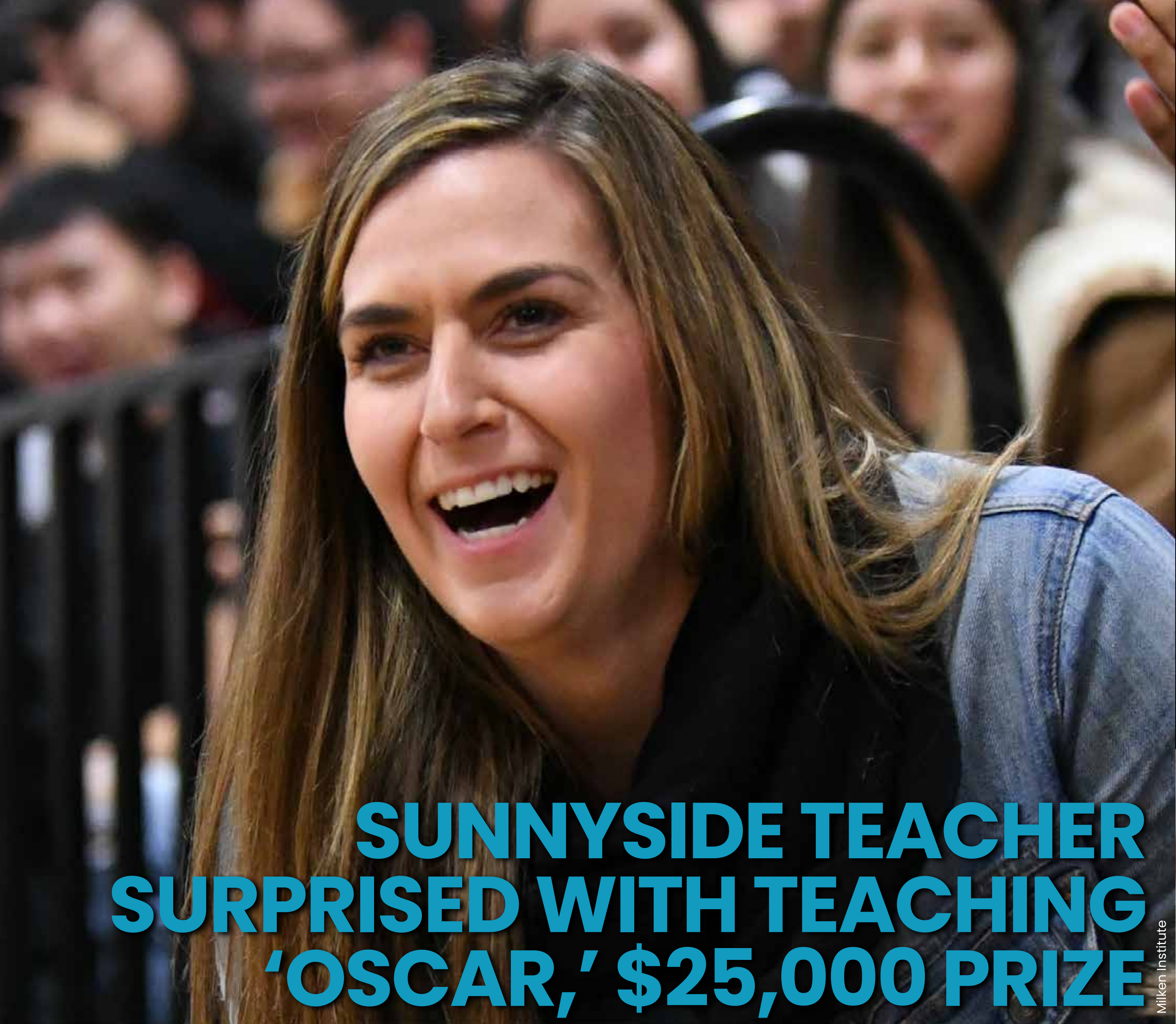
### A Political Hit

Dee Barnes, a civilian employee with the police department and longtime labor leader, organized the independent expenditure committee to defeat Dyer. Called "Rising Together, No on Dyer for Mayor 2020," the political committee is not subject to the same contribution limits as a candidate. The major rules governing an IE committee are: It must report contributions and meet paperwork deadlines, and it is forbidden from coordinating with a candidate. "It was a political hit job on Joaquin," Barnes said. She also said Arambula was targeted because of his support of local candidates opposed by the police...

**"Wouldn't this money be better spent resolving our community's challenges rather than waging petty personal vendettas?" — Mayoral candidate Jerry Dyer**

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## SUNNYSIDE TEACHER SURPRISED WITH TEACHING ‘OSCAR,’ \$25,000 PRIZE

Milken Institute

December 10, 2019 | Nancy Price

Sunnyside High School teacher Katie McQuone is used to being behind the camera as head of the school’s Video Production Academy. So McQuone was startled Tuesday morning to find cameras suddenly pointing at her during an assembly in the packed school gymnasium, where she was named winner of a \$25,000 [Milken Educator Award](#) for 2019-20. McQuone, a Sunnyside alum, is one of about 40 winners this year of what is called “the Oscars of teaching.”

She danced in joy after leaving her bleacher seat to accept the award as loud cheers of celebration rang out through the gym. But when it was time to make a speech, she was somewhat at a loss for words, other than to express her thanks. And how does she plan to use her award money? “Pay off my student loans, yay!” she told reporters with a laugh, adding

that she might also use it for a vacation or even Christmas presents. It wasn’t the first time she’d been ambushed in her old high school gym with a surprise announcement, McQuone said. “The last time I was in the gym like this, I got proposed to. There were cameras there for that, and I was sitting in the same spot. ...”

Winning the award at her alma mater is especially thrilling, McQuone said. “It’s really exciting to come here, and now work here with the kids, and show them you can be from southeast Fresno and love your job, and enjoy what you do, and have fun — and win awards!” School and district staff needed to keep McQuone’s award a secret until it was announced, so they told students and teachers that the assembly would recognize the school’s educational gains. Fresno...

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## STUDENTS IN PAJAMAS, GIFTS FROM SANTA AT KIRK ELEMENTARY

December 12, 2019 | GV Wire

Spontaneous joy erupted and never waned Wednesday morning at Kirk Elementary School in southwest Fresno. Inspiring happiness: Christmas gifts, wearing pajamas to school, and a visit from Santa Claus.

“Our kids look forward to it all year long,” says Kristina Rogers, a second-grade teacher.

### Every Student Receives a Gift

The school’s Santa Letter Writing Project celebration began nine years ago with six community sponsors. Now it is powered by nearly 400 donors, enabling all 420 students — preschool through sixth grade — to receive a gift.

“Not only are they getting a wonderful opportunity to be loved by the community, but they also are learning to write and write the way we want them to,” says Kirk Principal Denise...

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GV Wire/Jahz Tello

## COUNTY HOPES TEXT MESSAGES WILL HELP DEFENDANTS SHOW UP

December 11, 2019 | GV Wire

A new text message service in Fresno County aims to ensure clients represented by the public defender’s office show up in court. The service, called Uprust, sends personalized text messages to public defender clients reminding them of their scheduled court hearings and other legal appointments. The goal is to reduce the number of Failure to Appear incidents and technical violations that result in arrest warrants and incarcerations.

The company says local governments across the country spend more than \$9 billion on unnecessary pretrial incarceration. And, \$1 billion more goes to issuing and enforcing FTAs. The cost to Fresno County of \$2 a client is covered by a grant from the Bay Area-based [Heising-Simons Foundation](#) for 18 months. “FTAs are costly to taxpayers and to the public defender’s time,” said Uprust CEO Jacob Sills in a news release. “At the same time, too many people are sitting in jail who don’t need to be there. Fresno’s public defenders see the value in making a change and we are here to help.” Such violations can occur for reasons...

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# FARMWORKER REFORM BILL PASSES HOUSE. WHAT'S NEXT?

December 11, 2019 | Bill McEwen

The Republican-controlled U.S. Senate — and potentially President Donald Trump — is about to learn what it's like to take on America's farmers. The bipartisan Farm Workforce Modernization Act passed the House of Representatives, 260-165, on Wednesday. Ag groups immediately celebrated and then quickly pivoted to the challenges ahead. "Another hurdle in the race to save America's family farms has been cleared. Western Growers is grateful for the leadership exhibited by Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren and Congressman Dan Newhouse, and the statesmanship demonstrated by the bipartisan group of legislators who sponsored and voted for the bill," said Western Growers, an Irvine-based group representing farmers throughout the west. "But the race is far from over. Both the Senate and President

**"But the race is far from over. Both the Senate and President Trump must be willing to take the political stand that is required to ensure the continued production of an abundant, safe and affordable domestic food supply."**  
— **Statement from Western Growers**

Trump must be willing to take the political stand that is required to ensure the continued production of an abundant, safe and affordable domestic food supply. Our farmers are depending on the present actions of Congress and the Administration to make possible the future viability of the agriculture industry."

## Reliable Ag Labor Supply, Legal Status for Workers

In a nutshell, the legislation would provide a reliable supply of workers for farmers while establishing a path for undocumented ag workers to earn legal status through continued employment in the industry. It is the first farm labor reform bill passed by the House since 1986.

So, what's the rub? Critics call H.R. 5038 **an illegal immigration bill**. And Fox News is stoking nativists with headlines such as **"Farm bill panned as mass 'amnes-**

**ty' for illegal immigrants heads to vote in House."** Indicative of the tensions accompanying this bill, Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Tulare) split from his party leadership to back the bill. House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Bakersfield voted against it, as did Tom McClintock of Elk Grove, who represents some foothill and mountain regions of the central San Joaquin Valley. **You can see how the House voted at this link.**

**One question is whether Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is willing to anger Republican senators from farming states by refusing to bring the legislation to a vote.**

## Opponents Paint the Bill as 'Amnesty'

One question is whether Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is willing to anger Republican senators from farming states by refusing to bring the legislation to a vote. The other question: Who does Trump want to make happy? His base of anti-immigrant voters or farmers? Meanwhile, lawmakers from America's ag states are pretty happy with what they accomplished Wednesday.

## Cox, Costa Weigh in

"It was a priority for me to be part of this bipartisan process because today there are people in my district who may go the rest of their lives without seeing their loved ones outside the U.S., for fear of getting picked up and being undocumented," said Rep. TJ Cox (D-Fresno). "There are also farmers in my district whose dairies will or already have gone under, partly because they don't have a steady source of skilled agricultural workers. We shouldn't accept this policy failure by our government as the status quo." Fresno Democratic Congressman Jim Costa took to Twitter to call attention to the bill before the vote. After the vote, Costa said: "This is a historic moment for farming communities across America, especially here in California and the San Joaquin Valley. Farmworkers are part of...

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# RUPAUL, TONY HAWK, MAYA ANGELOU JOIN CALIFORNIA HALL OF FAME

Twitter/Tony Hawk

December 11, 2019 | AP News

SACRAMENTO — Drag queen and TV star RuPaul, late poet Maya Angelou and skateboarding legend Tony Hawk were among 10 people inducted Tuesday night into the California Hall of Fame.

The others were Brandi Chastain, two-time Women's World Cup soccer champion and Olympic gold medalist; astrophysicist and National Science Foundation Director France A. Cordova; writer Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston; actor and comedian George Lopez; restaurateur and chef Wolfgang Puck; winemaker Helen M. Turley and the Rev. James M. Lawson, Jr., a civil rights activist. Hawk did a few turns on his skateboard

on a half-pipe erected outside the California Museum, where the event was held. "It's a huge honor," Hawk said. "When I started skating a long time ago, it was the furthest thing from cool. It was not something you chose as a career." "I'm a very proud Californian. All my dreams were born here, they were fulfilled here," Chastain said, noting that she used to drive two hours each way from San Jose to play for the Sacramento Storm women's soccer team.

Cordova's brother accepted her medal. She offered her thanks in a video from Antarctica, where she was preparing to head to the South Pole. Gov. Gavin Newsom and his...

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AP File

## CALIFORNIA CONSIDERS CALLING THC IN POT A RISK TO MOMS-TO-BE

December 11, 2019 | AP News

LOS ANGELES — More than three years after California voters broadly legalized marijuana, a state panel is considering if its potent, high-inducing chemical — THC — should be declared a risk to pregnant women and require warnings. Studies have indicated that a rising number of mothers-to-be have turned to marijuana products for relief from morning sickness and headaches, though it's effectiveness has not been backed by science.

Cannabis industry officials say too little sound research is available on THC to support such a move and warn that it could make marijuana companies a target for lawsuits with unverified claims of injuries from pot use during pregnancy. "That seems like an open-ended checkbook. How do we defend ourselves?" said Los Angeles dispensary owner Jerred Kiloh, who heads the United Cannabis Business Association, an industry group. Lawyers looking for a quick buck will say...

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## FRESNO BISHOP: AG'S REVIEW OF SEXUAL ABUSE BY PRIESTS 'WELCOMED'

December 10, 2019 | Bill McEwen

Fresno is among six Catholic dioceses expecting to be subpoenaed by the state attorney general as part of a probe into whether they've properly handled sexual abuse allegations against priests. All of the dioceses have been providing documents since May, church spokesman Kevin Eckery said Tuesday. The others are the archdioceses of Los Angeles and San Francisco, and the dioceses of Sacramento, San Jose, and Orange.

### Bishop Brennan's Statement

"I am committed to fully cooperating with the attorney general's examination to the best of our ability in accordance with the law," said Fresno Bishop Joseph V. Brennan in a statement released Tuesday. "To now undergo a review by the Attorney General's Office is a welcomed process that will help us to advance efforts towards greater transparency; to further learn from our past, scrutinize our current performance in...

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Diocese of Fresno





# SANTA, SOLDIERS BRING JOY TO ALASKA TOWN FACING CRISIS

December 11, 2019 | AP News

NAPAKIAK, Alaska — A school employee wearing a traditional pink Alaska Native smock called a kuspuk breezed through the hubbub in the cafeteria adorned with murals of purely Alaska scenes, zigzagging through children clutching presents and past uniformed soldiers wearing Santa caps. “Napakiak is happy today,” she proclaimed to principal Sally Benedict. That’s a rare emotion of late for the 300 or so residents of this western Alaska community. “We’re falling into the Kuskokwim River,” Benedict explains, because of erosion that is forcing everyone to move their town further inland. But for one day earlier this month, the Alaska National Guard gave folks a reason to smile, thanks to its “Operation Santa Claus” program, which featured the jolly old elf himself distributing gifts to the children.

“This lightens the load,” said Benedict, a former Detroit educator who arrived last summer. “This is sunshine for us, it’s a brightening of our day.” Now in its 63rd year, Operation Santa Claus has become a rarity among National Guard units. Defense officials have shut down the program everywhere but Alaska, where the mission survives because the state is so large and some communities are so remote. The program started in 1956 when the residents of St. Mary’s, Alaska, had no money to buy children Christmas presents after flooding severely impacted hunting and fishing. Since then, Guard members try to visit at least two rural communities a year, delivering Christmas gifts and other needed supplies.

**“This lightens the load. This is sunshine for us, it’s a brightening of our day.” — principal Sally Benedict**

**The Guard Isn’t the Only Santa’s Helper** They’ve been to remote burgs with names like Koyukuk, Savoonga, Iliamna, Kwethluk and Tuntuliak. The visit to Napakiak involved two aircraft: a 400-mile trip in a small airplane from Anchorage, then a five-minute helicopter ride to the village. “We love this, we truly love

coming here,” said Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe, the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard who found himself topping ice cream sundaes with cherries for the revelers in Napakiak. “This is a proud tradition.” The Guard isn’t the only Santa’s helper in the nation’s largest state. The Salvation Army is celebrating its 50th year of helping the Guard, collecting gifts, book bags and other items to be distributed. Major corporate sponsors like Costco and Walmart contribute to the program, and Rich Owens for years has provided the ice cream from his Tastee Freez restaurant in Anchorage. “It’s a labor of love,” said John Brackenbury, the Alaska divisional commander of The Salvation Army. Erosion caused by the Kuskokwim, a 700 miles-long river that becomes an ice highway for travelers in the winter, has been an ongoing problem in Napakiak, but the pace has accelerated in the past few years.

**But at least for one day, the residents of Napakiak didn’t have to worry about the erosion creeping ever closer to their homes, and instead could focus on the smiles or even smudges of chocolate from the ice cream sundaes on their children’s faces.**

**At Least for One Day, Residents of Napakiak Didn’t Have to Worry About the Erosion** This year alone, erosion has been responsible for more than 100 feet of lost shoreline. In September, the village school’s 10 fuel tanks were relocated by barge across the river to the nearby town of Bethel after being threatened by aggressive riverbank erosion. Erosion also threatens the school, which sits less than 200 feet from the river. The Lower Kuskokwim School District needs to move the school, but local officials say finding money for a new school has been challenging. River erosion also threatened Napakiak’s firehouse and city garage, so those structures were moved in July. The village also has applied for permits to relocate the boat harbor, which was destroyed by storms in May. The five-year plan, Benedict said, is to move everyone to...

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# IMPEACHMENT TRIAL: TRUMP WANTS DRAMA, BUT GOP WANTS IT OVER

AP/Manuel Balce Ceneta

December 12, 2019 | AP News

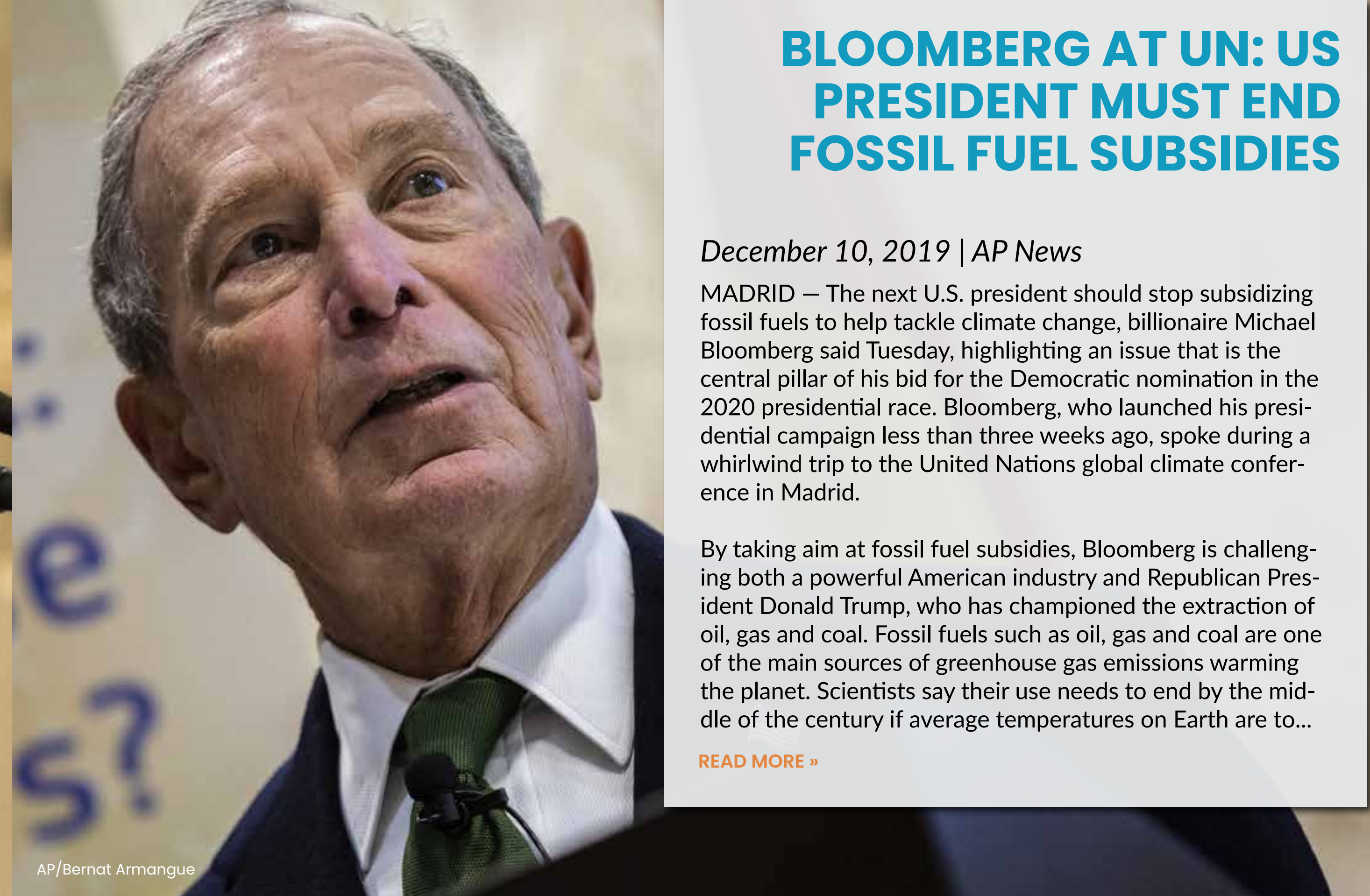
Washington — Donald Trump wants more than acquittal. He wants vindication. With impeachment by the House appearing certain, the president has made clear that he views the next step, a trial in the GOP-controlled Senate, as his focus.

The president sees the senators not just as a jury deciding his fate, but as partners in a campaign to discredit and punish his Democratic opponents. His Senate allies aren't so sure that's a good idea. In recent weeks, Trump has devised a wish list of witnesses for the Senate trial, relishing the opportunity for his lawyers to finally cross-examine his accusers and

argue the case that his actions toward Ukraine, including the July 25 call when he asked for a favor, were "perfect." Trump and his allies have been building up the likely Senate trial, an effort to delegitimize the Democratic-controlled House's impeachment process by contrast.

In the Senate, the Trump team has argued, the president would get the opportunity to challenge witnesses and call some of his own, such as House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff, the still-anonymous intelligence community whistleblower, or even Joe Biden and Hunter Biden...

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## BLOOMBERG AT UN: US PRESIDENT MUST END FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES

December 10, 2019 | AP News

MADRID — The next U.S. president should stop subsidizing fossil fuels to help tackle climate change, billionaire Michael Bloomberg said Tuesday, highlighting an issue that is the central pillar of his bid for the Democratic nomination in the 2020 presidential race. Bloomberg, who launched his presidential campaign less than three weeks ago, spoke during a whirlwind trip to the United Nations global climate conference in Madrid.

By taking aim at fossil fuel subsidies, Bloomberg is challenging both a powerful American industry and Republican President Donald Trump, who has championed the extraction of oil, gas and coal. Fossil fuels such as oil, gas and coal are one of the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions warming the planet. Scientists say their use needs to end by the middle of the century if average temperatures on Earth are to...

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## PELOSI ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT ON NORTH AMERICAN TRADE PACT

December 10, 2019 | AP News

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Tuesday announced agreement on a modified North American trade pact, handing President Donald Trump a major Capitol Hill win on the same day that Democrats announced their impeachment charges against him. The California Democrat said the revamped U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement is a significant improvement over the original North American Free Trade Agreement, crediting Democratic negotiators for winning stronger provisions on enforcing the agreement.

"There is no question of course that this trade agreement is much better than NAFTA," Pelosi said in announcing the agreement, saying the pact is "infinitely better than what was initially proposed by the administration." Trump said the revamped trade pact will "be great" for the United States. "It will be the best and most important trade deal ever made by the USA. Good for everybody — Farmers, Manufacturers...

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# SAUDI STOCK OFFERING CREATES WORLD'S MOST VALUABLE COMPANY

December 4, 2019 | AP News

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Saudi Arabian oil company Aramco surpassed Apple as the world's most valuable public company Wednesday when its shares made their debut on the Saudi stock exchange, part of an ambitious shift away from the very fossil fuels the country's

**"A local Saudi offering is, by all accounts, a friendly audience of Saudi investors." — Gianna Bern, the author of 'Investing in Energy' and lecturer at the University of Notre Dame**

economy depends on. The shares' 10% rally brought state-owned Aramco's value to \$1.88 trillion. The 1.5% of the company that is listed has raised \$25.6 billion, a record for an initial public offering. As of

Tuesday's close in the U.S., Apple was valued at \$1.19 trillion.

**Related Story: Saudi Aramco Gains 10% in Debut to Clinch Top Seat at \$1.8T**

Despite the success of the sale, the kingdom's decision not to list the company on a larger foreign exchange points to concerns that a global flotation would raise. Listing shares outside Saudi Arabia would open up the company to greater disclosure rules and expose it to foreign laws at a time when the country is under scrutiny for its role in regional conflicts as well as for the killing of a dissident journalist. "A local Saudi offering is, by all accounts, a friendly audience of Saudi investors," said Gianna Bern, the author of "Investing in Energy" and lecturer at the University of Notre Dame.

She said the real test for Aramco will be a global offering, in another jurisdiction, such as London or Asia. Aramco, however, has said it will not sell more shares for at least another year. Wednesday's shares were sold mainly to investors in the region: a 0.5% stake to individual retail investors in Gulf Arab states and 1% to institutional investors. Non-Saudi investors contributed just 23% of the institutional investment generated in

the IPO, according to lead adviser Samba Capital. Saudi companies and government institutions raised 51% of the overall demand, Samba Capital said.

## The Sale Raises Capital for the Public Investment Fund

Some analysts said that the surge on the first day of trading suggests heavy buying from investors close to the crown prince to make the operation a hit. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman plans to use the money raised from the sale of a sliver of the kingdom's crown jewel to diversify the country's economy and fund major national projects that create jobs for millions of young Saudis entering the workforce. The sale raises capital for the Public Investment Fund overseen by Prince Mohammed, but it is only part of a much larger transformation program to move the economy away from reliance on oil exports for revenue.

The share sale also has been an exercise in national prestige, with the 34-year-old crown prince looking for the flotation to value Aramco at \$2 trillion. Zachary Cefaratti, chief executive officer of Dalma Capital, which manages Saudi equity funds that invested in Aramco, said the company could on day two of trading become the first in the world valued at over \$2 trillion if the stock gains another 10%. The shares rose sharply in the first moment of trading Wednesday to hit the 10% limit on stock price fluctuation allowed by Saudi regulators. That pushed the price to 35.2 riyals, or \$9.39 a share, where it held until closing at 3 p.m. The \$2 trillion value was considered too...

**"A lot of international investors have felt that there should be a discount to Aramco shares due to perceived geopolitical risk. We actually believe geopolitical risk in Aramco is overstated and that the recent Sept. 14 attacks actually demonstrated Aramco's resilience." — Zachary Cefaratti, chief executive officer of Dalma Capital, which manages Saudi equity funds that invested in Aramco**

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# NOBEL WINNER'S ARMY DEFENSE BLASTED IN MYANMAR GENOCIDE CASE

AP/Peter Dejong

December 12, 2019 | AP News

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Lawyers seeking to halt what they allege is ongoing genocide in Myanmar have slammed leader Aung San Suu Kyi's defense of her country's armed forces, saying Thursday that the Nobel Peace Prize winner and former pro-democracy icon chose to ignore "unspeakable" crimes targeting Muslim civilians.

The United Nations' top court is conducting emergency legal proceedings to determine if military personnel committed genocide against Myanmar's Rohingya minority in 2017. The African nation of Gambia, acting on behalf of a large group of Muslim countries, requested the International Court of Jus...

tice hearings and alleges that human rights violations against the Rohingya continue. With maps, satellite imagery and graphic photos, Myanmar's accusers have detailed what they insist is a deliberate campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide — including the killing of civilians, raping of women and torching of houses — that forced more than 700,000 Rohingya to flee to neighboring Bangladesh.

Gambia wants the U.N. court to take "all measures within its power to prevent all acts that amount to or contribute to the crime of genocide." The U.N. court proceedings in The Hague produced the astonishing spectacle on Wednesday of Suu...

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AP/Malin Moberg

# IN SWEDEN'S ARCTIC, ICE ATOP SNOW LEAVES REINDEER STARVING

December 10, 2019 | AP News

KIRUNA, Sweden — Thick reindeer fur boots and a fur hat covering most of his face shielded Niila Inga from freezing winds as he raced his snowmobile up to a mountain top overlooking his reindeer in the Swedish arctic. His community herds about 8,000 reindeer year-round, moving them between traditional grazing grounds in the high mountains bordering Norway in the summer and the forests farther east in the winter, just as his forebears in the Sami indigenous community have for generations.

But Inga is troubled: His reindeer are hungry, and he can do little about it. Climate change is altering weather patterns here and affecting the herd's food supply. "If we don't find better areas for them where they can graze and find food, then the reindeers will starve to death," he said. Already pressured by the mining and forestry industry, and other development that encroach on grazing land, Sami herding...

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# SOLD TO CHINA AS A BRIDE, SHE CAME HOME ON BRINK OF DEATH

December 12, 2019 | AP News

MAZAIKEWALE, Pakistan — Sold by her family as a bride to a Chinese man, Samiya David spent only two months in China. When she returned to Pakistan, the once robust woman was nearly unrecognizable: malnourished, too weak to walk, her speech confused and disjointed. "Don't ask me about what happened to me there" was her only reply to her family's questions, her cousin Pervaiz Masih said.

Within just a few weeks, she was dead. David's mysterious death adds to a growing body of evidence of mistreatment and abuses against Pakistani women and girls, mainly Christians, who have been trafficked to China as brides. AP investigations have found that traffickers have increasingly targeted Pakistan's impoverished Christian population over the past two years, paying desperate families to give their daughters and sisters, some of them teenagers, into marriage with Chinese men. Once in China, the women are often isolated...

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AP/K.M. Chaudary





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