



# GWIRE

WEEKLY DIGEST  
MARCH 6, 2020

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AP File

# CALIFORNIA DECLARES EMERGENCY AFTER 1ST CORONAVIRUS DEATH

March 4, 2020 | AP News

LOS ANGELES — California's first coronavirus fatality — an elderly patient who apparently contracted the illness on a cruise — prompted Gov. Gavin Newsom to declare a statewide emergency

The measure makes California the third U.S. state to declare a state of emergency. Washington and Florida are the other two.

on Wednesday as six new cases, including a medical screener at Los Angeles International Airport, were confirmed. The measure makes California the third U.S. state to declare a state of emergency. Washington and Florida are the other two. The state currently has 53 confirmed cases of coronavirus.

## Intended to Help Procure Resources Quickly

Newsom said the emergency proclamation is intended to help procure supplies and resources quickly. He announced the move Wednesday afternoon during a news conference, hours after the patient's death in Placer County was announced. The governor said the state is particularly focused on senior centers, nursing homes and other care facilities where people live together in light of the outbreak in Washington state that has already killed 10 there.

## Cruise Ship Under Investigation

The cruise ship is now under investigation as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention probe a "small cluster" of coronavirus patients who were aboard, according to the cruise line. Another passenger who contracted the COVID-19 virus is now in stable condition at a hospital in Sonoma County, north of San Francisco. It was unclear if the airport medical screener contracted through their work at the airport or from so-called community transmission, according to a statement from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. No travelers

screened at the Los Angeles airport have tested positive for the virus.

## New Coronavirus Cases Confirmed

Earlier Wednesday, officials in Los Angeles County announced that six new cases of the coronavirus had been confirmed, up from one previously. The airport screener is one of those six patients. Across California, more than 50 people have tested positive for the virus, including several who got it through community transmission, according to the state Department of Public Health. More than 500 people have been tested for the virus. The elderly patient had underlying health conditions and died at a hospital in Roseville, near Sacramento, according to Placer County health officials. The person was not identified, with officials disclosing only that the person was a Placer County resident who tested positive for the virus Tuesday.

## 2,500 Cruise Passengers Will Be Assessed

Health officials believe both cruise ship patients were exposed while they were on the Grand Princess cruise from San Francisco to Mexico from Feb. 11 to Feb. 21. Newsom said more than half of 2,500 aboard the February cruise, which docked in San Francisco, are California residents.

Newsom said California will be flying thousands of test kits out to the ship. The tests can be conducted in a San Francisco Bay Area lab. "There's a reason that we didn't want the ship in the Port of San Francisco and in the state of California at this time," Newsom said. The Placer County person had symptoms as early as Feb. 19, according to Placer County...

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# ROCK & ROLLER AND OTHERS CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR FUTURE UNDER AB 5

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March 5, 2020 | David Taub

The future of labor is leaving many question marks and much concern among those who attended a workshop about a controversial state law that went into effect this year. State Senator Andreas Borgeas (R-Fresno) held the event last week to answer question about the impact of AB 5, the law that redefines what an independent contractor is. More than 100 people filled an auditorium at Clovis Community College eager to hear how their livelihood could change.

“It is designed to squeeze out freelancers and independent contractors from the workforce,” Borgeas said describing AB 5. The bill, authored by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego), created standards that define who is an independent contractor, and who is an employee subject to state labor laws. While the focus has been on how it will af-

fect “gig economy” workers such as Uber and Lyft, there are many other industries and workers the law reaches. Don Davis plays bass for [Executive Rockers](#), a local band that plays gigs at nightclubs. Their motto, listed on the band’s website: “The Friendliest and Most Versatile Band in All the Land.”

He’s concerned about his future if he is no longer considered an independent contractor. It’s a concern other musicians are facing he said. “Everybody is really in the dark exactly how it will affect us,” Davis said. Yvonne Schwemmer is also in the performing arts of a sort. The Coarsegold native narrates medical and tech textbooks as a voiceover artist. She took a pause from her business, but is looking to get back in. “It doesn’t make any sense to even pursue California clients at this time,” she said. “That was the low-hanging fruit.” She’s noticed...

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## SPECIALTY DRINKS IN A VAULT: INSIDE ELECTION NIGHT PARTY

March 4, 2020 | David Taub

Progressives packed a party celebrating election night returns Tuesday for Andrew Janz for Fresno mayor and Tyler Maxwell for city council District 4. At The Vault inside the iconic Pacific Southwest building, hundreds partied for an apparent Election Night split decision — Maxwell was winning his race, while Janz was trailing. As the Fresno County clerk updated numbers, Maxwell maintained a consistent lead over Nathan Alonzo of about 6 percentage points. Janz continually trailed Jerry Dyer, but the county prosecutor chipped away at the retired police chief’s initial 59% share of the vote with each subsequent return. After day one counting, Dyer leads 54%-36%. If Dyer falls below 50%, there will be a November run-off.

### Janz a Late Arrival

His wife, Heather, and newborn daughter, Wilhelmina, preceded Janz to the party by hours. He didn’t show up until after 10 p.m., even though partygoers arrived before 8 p.m. Janz took the stage and thanked Assemblyman Joaquin Arambula and...

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GV Wire/David Taub



Community Medical Center

## CASTRO WILL SUCCEED RETIRING JOSLIN AS COMMUNITY MEDICAL CEO

March 3, 2020 | GV Wire

Saying he wants to “move on to the next chapter in life,” Tim Joslin announced Tuesday morning that he is retiring as president and CEO of Community Medical Centers. The 59-year-old Joslin has led the 8,600-employee healthcare system for 15 years. His retirement date is July 3.

### Castro Will Take Over Top Spot

Craig Castro, the healthcare nonprofit’s executive vice president and chief operating officer, will replace Joslin — first on an interim basis and then officially taking command in July. In a news release, CMC Board of Trustees Chairman Farid Assemi praised Joslin for “many bold accomplishments” during his tenure. “Thanks to Mr. Joslin, our healthcare system has greatly expanded patient services and capacity, added state-of-the-art facilities and electronic records systems, grown the physician network, created a local health insurance plan, achieved solid financial ratings, and added thousands of jobs,” Assemi said. Joslin has worked in hospital administration for more...

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# STATE LAW COULD PUSH MIDDLE CLASS OUT OF HOUSING

March 5, 2020 | AP News

Local planning officials are racing to implement a state law that could dramatically increase the cost of building new homes and businesses in many local communities. The law, which goes into effect July 1, changes the way planners evaluate the impact of vehicle trips generated by new development. The intent of the change is to encourage more infill development as an answer to concerns about air quality and sprawl. But, the building industry is concerned the law's goals will raise prices for consumers, especially those looking to buy a new home. One estimate predicts increases of \$40,000 per unit.

## Deadline to Implement 2013 State Law Nears

**SB 743** was signed into law in 2013. It was written by Darrell Steinberg — then a state senator and now the mayor of Sacramento. The law changes how a development project's traffic-related impacts are evaluated under the state's environmental law, known as

**"One estimate is that it (implementation of the new law) could add up to more than \$40,000 to the price of a new home."**  
— Mike Prandini, Building Industry Association

CEQA. The metric used now is known as Level of Service (LOS). That standard will change to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Under LOS, a city planning department might require a developer to widen streets or install a traffic signal to address anticipated vehicle congestion from new housing or business development. With VMT, encouraging the use of public transportation and other "greener" technologies would be among the available offsets. The new metric favors projects with lower VMT scores, meaning developments that are closer to jobs, schools, stores and other services. VMT is also reduced when alternate travel options such as public transit, biking, and walking are available. Public agencies at all levels are grappling with how best to implement the change as the deadline nears. One thing they all seem to agree on is that the new system is "confusing."

## Building Industry Raises Concerns

Mike Prandini, president and CEO of the Building Industry Association of Fresno/Madera, says the new calculation will almost certainly make projects more expensive. "The only thing we know right now is that it will cost more and we expect it to add significant cost," Prandini said. Officials at the Fresno Council of Governments (COG) — the regional agency in charge of Valley transportation planning — are creating maps showing current VMT levels across every local city. Final versions of the maps, based on census and other data, are expected in May.

"Our travel demand model provides estimated daily VMT for the base year and can also provide a forecast for future VMT," Fresno COG Deputy Director Kristine Cai said. "The travel demand model is validated with numerous data input such as census information, household travel survey, street network, general plan land use, transit service, bike/ped(estrian) infrastructure, population/employment growth, household income, vehicle availability, etc."

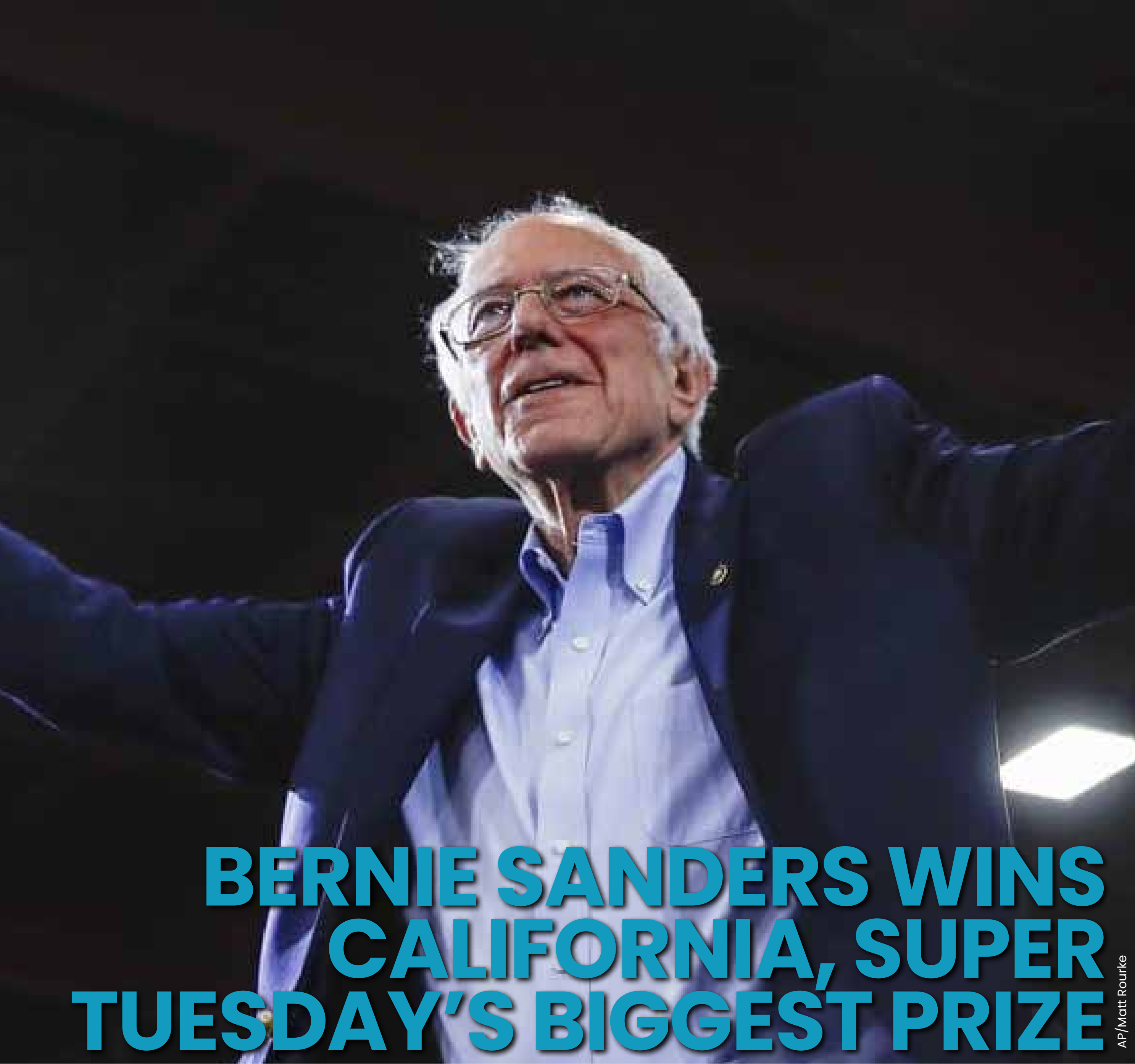
**Future widening projects on Highway 41, Highway 99 and other roadways will be affected by the new VMT metric and its underlying goal to reduce vehicle usage and emissions.**

## Cities Under Gun to Update Planning Rules

It is up to local jurisdictions to decide how to use Fresno COG's data in their project-review processes. Cities, like Fresno, are likely to use the maps to evaluate what mitigation methods, if any, would be required for a project to be approved. Preliminary data from COG shows an average of 17 VMT for county residents. A target, tied to the state law, is for new development projects to generate 15% less VMT than the county average. Those that do could be exempt from VMT mitigation requirements. Projects not meeting that goal would be required to offer a plan to lessen the impact of longer travel distances. Prandini offered...

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# BERNIE SANDERS WINS CALIFORNIA, SUPER TUESDAY'S BIGGEST PRIZE

AP/Matt Rourke

March 3, 2020 | AP News

LOS ANGELES —Bernie Sanders won Super Tuesday's biggest prize, taking California on a night he sought to blunt the momentum of a suddenly surging Joe Biden in the race for the Democratic presidential nomination.

California was only one of 14 states that voted Tuesday, but its more than 400 delegates made it the most coveted primary in the narrowing Democratic field. But it is not clear how many delegates Sanders will claim from California, given the state's complicated process for awarding them. The final tally won't be sorted out for days as state officials still must count late arriving mail-in ballots.

In early returns, Sanders led with 29% of the vote. Biden was second with nearly 19% while former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg was third with just under 18%. Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren was fourth with 12%.

Sanders went all-in on California four years ago, hoping the deep-blue state would give him the surge he needed to defeat establishment candidate Hillary Clinton. He lost on election night in 2016, but his sophisticated campaign operation never left. He opened field offices across the state, including far-flung outposts in the state's Central Valley, areas traditionally ignored by presidential campaigns. He aggressively...

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CalMatters/Anne Wernikoff

## CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS BRACE FOR CORONAVIRUS DISRUPTION

March 3, 2020 | CalMatters

Early reports indicate children infected by the coronavirus experience a milder response than older adults. But as it arrives in Northern California, school and college officials are preparing for a growing likelihood that the highly contagious virus will disrupt learning and spark panic in young people and their naturally protective caretakers.

As dorms are being disinfected and exposed students are forced into quarantine, administrators are considering adding more cleaning staff while eyeing remote learning and independent study options to keep everyone from kindergartners to college seniors from veering off their academic schedules.

Already, community colleges have been asked to review emergency plans, and the California State University system is looking at repurposing its online learning system — built so students could take classes at sister campuses — in order to keep lessons going. In Solano County northeast of San...

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## RAIN, SNOW KINDLE HOPES OF 'MARCH MIRACLE' IN PARCHED CALIFORNIA

February 25, 2020 | AP News

It's looking a lot more like winter in California's parched mountains today. Snow fell across the Sierra and in the mountains of Southern California on Sunday. And, while the immediate forecast calls for a return of dry skies, the National Weather Service in Hanford says there is a possibility of rain on the Valley floor and snow in the mountains on Saturday.

### Record Dry Start to 2020

The early March turnabout followed two months that set records for dryness in parts of the state. Mammoth Mountain in the eastern Sierra reported that Sunday's storm delivered 9 inches to 11 inches of snow. The Bear Mountain resort east of Los Angeles said it received 6 inches to 8 inches of new snow. NWS-Hanford reported up to a quarter-inch of precipitation at mountain locations in the central Sierra. And Yosemite National Park received a dusting of snow. That was good news for the precipitation-starved state. According to the NWS, the first two months of 2020 were the driest on record in most...

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Facebook/Dale Goodmon





# HOW WINNING TURNED BIDEN INTO A CONFIDENT CANDIDATE

March 5, 2020 | AP News

LOS ANGELES — Joe Biden strode confidently to the podium, shutters clicking, a bank of cameras beaming to a national audience. “Those of you who have been knocked down, those of you who have been knocked out, this is your campaign,” Biden said Wednesday. “We welcome all of those who want to join us. We’re building a movement.” The former vice president has found his stride and his voice as he becomes a front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination. Gone is the sometimes mumbling, almost wistful 77-year-old, standing before small Iowa crowds full of voters lamenting the state of the union.

*Related Story: Bloomberg Out, Biden Resurgent After Super Tuesday Victories*

“What in God’s name is happening?” he’d ask, after deviating from anything approaching prepared remarks. Instead, there’s a confident candidate, jabbing at Bernie

**“Those of you who have been knocked down, those of you who have been knocked out, this is your campaign. We welcome all of those who want to join us. We’re building a movement.” — Joe Biden**

Sanders, his chief rival for the Democratic nomination, yet reserving his biggest swings for the Republican president he hopes to topple in the fall. “If we give this man another four years in the White House, he will forever and fundamentally change the character of this nation,” Biden said Wednesday. But Biden also tries to seem above the trenches, promising to unify a fractious Democratic Party and a general electorate

roiled by Donald Trump’s presidency. It’s part scrappy Joe Biden, the kid from Scranton, Pennsylvania, who learned to navigate a severe stutter but still talks of the searing humiliation. It’s part Delaware senator, the deal-maker promising to replace Washington churlishness with comity, dignity and diplomacy. It’s part two-term vice president, the national officeholder who be-

lieves “with every fiber of my being” that he can return in the top spot this time and “heal the nation.” And it’s part devoted husband and father, wearing personal loss as public grief.

## Biden Benefited From Party Moderates’ Fears About Sanders

Of course, Biden’s Super Tuesday surge was aided in part by the unceremonious fall of billionaire Mike Bloomberg, who entered the race because Biden appeared headed toward an uninspiring finish. Similarly, he benefited from party moderates’ fears about Sanders,

**“We know Joe, and more importantly, Joe knows us.” — Rep. Jim Clyburn**

whose democratic socialist identity mainstream Democrats see as a November albatross. That was enough for two competitors, Amy Klobuchar and Pete Buttigieg, to drop out and endorse Biden, with former candidate Beto O’Rourke making it an endorsement trifecta on Super Tuesday eve. Nonetheless, the former vice president put himself in position to take advantage of those dominoes, tapping personal and political strengths and muting at least some of his weaknesses to make a comeback unparalleled in modern presidential campaigns. Those close to him describe a candidate and campaign jolted into abandoning a “Rose Garden” campaign — the kind of effort an incumbent president might run by using the trappings of the office — that had come off as cautious and, worse, presumptuous.

“I wouldn’t disagree with that Rose Garden description,” said Rep. Cedric Richmond, one of Biden’s campaign co-chairmen. “It was very vice presidential ... cautious,” said another campaign chair, Eric Garcetti. The Los Angeles mayor recalled giving Biden some tough encouragement after he finished fourth in Iowa. “I said, ‘Just be you. Get rid of the ropes, the handlers, go be Joe,’” Garcetti recalled, and “start talking about the future...

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# WARREN ENDS 2020 PRESIDENTIAL BID AFTER SUPER TUESDAY ROUT

AP File

March 5, 2020 | AP News

WASHINGTON — Elizabeth Warren, who electrified progressives with her “plan for everything” and strong message of economic populism, dropped out of the Democratic presidential race on Thursday, according to a person familiar with her plans. The exit came days after the onetime front-runner couldn’t win a single Super Tuesday state, not even her own.

The Massachusetts senator has spoken with Bernie Sanders and Joe Biden, the leading candidates in the race, according to their campaigns. She is assessing who would best uphold her agenda, according to another person who requested an-

onymity to discuss private conversations. Warren’s exit all but extinguished hopes that Democrats would get another try at putting a female nominee up against President Donald Trump.

For much of the past year, her campaign had all the markers of success, robust poll numbers, impressive fundraising and a sprawling political infrastructure that featured staffers on the ground across the country. She was squeezed out, though, by Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who had an immovable base of voters she needed to advance. Warren never...

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AP/Jeff Chiu

## A RECORD LOW ON AVERAGE 30-YEAR FIXED MORTGAGE: 3.29%

March 5, 2020 | AP News

WASHINGTON — The average rate on a 30-year fixed mortgage has hit a record low of 3.29%, driven down by investors shifting money into the safety of U.S. Treasuries as the coronavirus outbreak has deepened. Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday that the average on the benchmark 30-year loan tumbled this week from 3.45% last week. The new rate is the lowest since Freddie Mac started tracking it in 1971, the company said.

The tumble in long-term mortgage rates came in a week when the Federal Reserve made a surprise emergency cut in its benchmark interest rate to support the economy in the face of the spreading coronavirus. Investors seeking safety and anticipating further rate cuts by the Fed have shifted money into Treasuries and other fixed-income securities that are perceived as safe havens. Long-term mortgage rates tend to closely track the yields on the 10-year Treasury. Lower...

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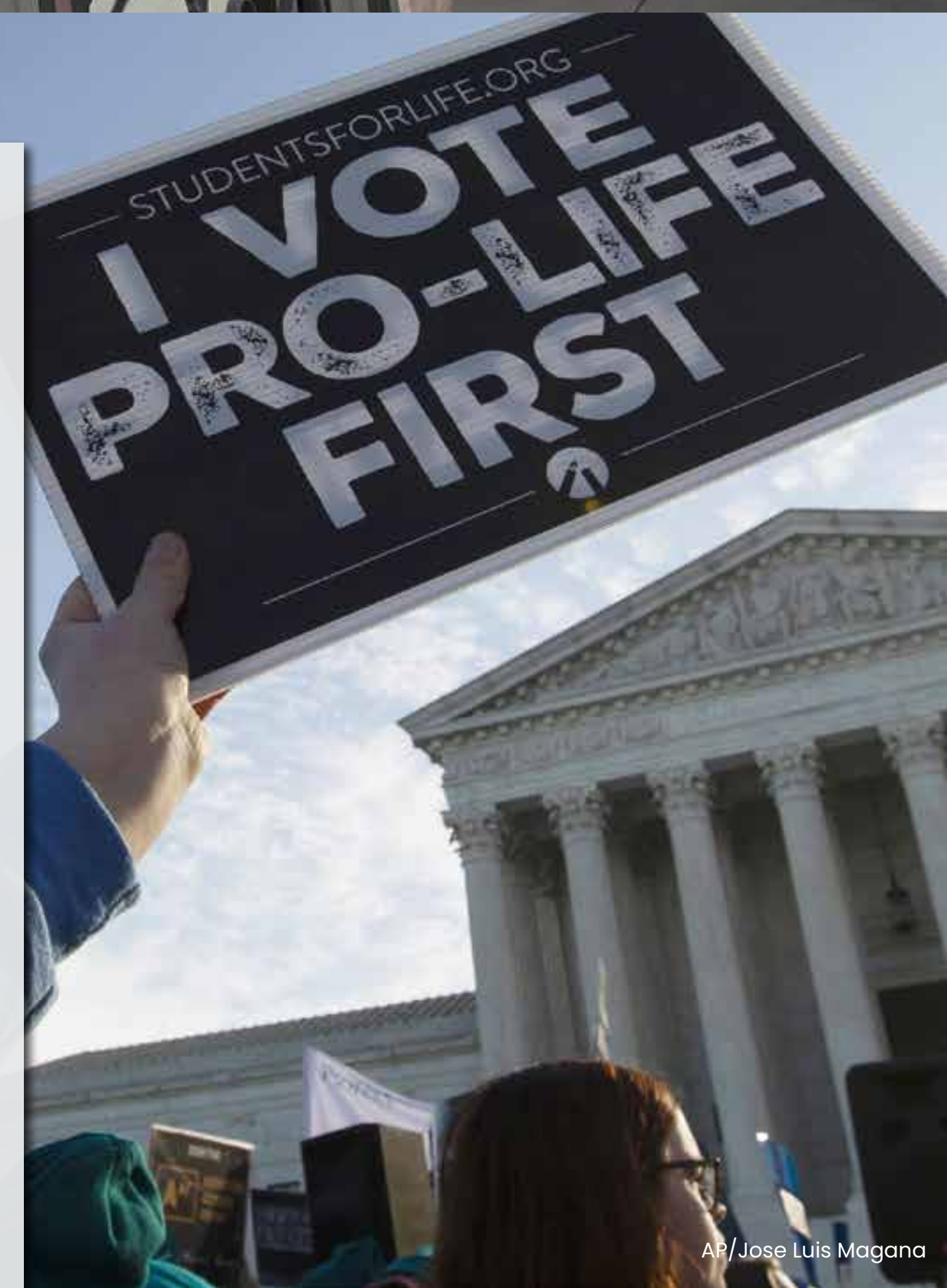
## SUPREME COURT DIVIDED IN 1ST BIG ABORTION CASE OF TRUMP ERA

March 4, 2020 | AP News

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court appeared divided in its first major abortion case of the Trump era, leaving Chief Justice John Roberts as the likely deciding vote. Roberts did not say enough to tip his hand in an hour of spirited arguments at the high court Wednesday. The court’s election-year look at a Louisiana dispute could reveal how willing the more conservative court is to roll back abortion rights. A decision should come by late June.

The outcome could have huge consequences at a time when several states have passed laws, being challenged in the courts, that would ban abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected, as early as six weeks. Abortion-rights protesters filled the sidewalk in front of the court Wednesday morning. A smaller group of anti-abortion demonstrators stood across the street, some blowing shofars, rams’ horns used in Jewish services, to try to drown out the other side’s speakers. The...

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AP/Jose Luis Magana





AP/Mahesh Kumar A.

# WORLD

## VIRUS RIPPLES THROUGH TRAVEL, ENERGY, FINANCIAL MARKETS

March 5, 2020 | AP News

### Travel

An industry group says the spreading coronavirus could cost airlines as much as \$113 billion in lost revenue. That figure, released Thursday, is four times the number released just two weeks ago by the The International Air Transport Association, which is imploring governments for assistance. The group says the industry urgently needs help from governments in waiving some requirements and fees. The struggling British airline Flybe collapsed Thursday as the outbreak quashed ticket sales. The British regional airline narrowly avoided bankruptcy in January, but the spread of the coronavirus sealed its fate, left passengers stranded, and is now threatening the viability of regional airports across the U.K.

**The struggling British airline Flybe collapsed Thursday as the outbreak quashed ticket sales. The British regional airline narrowly avoided bankruptcy in January, but the spread of the coronavirus sealed its fate, left passengers stranded, and is now threatening the viability of regional airports across the U.K.**

its fate, left passengers stranded, and is now threatening the viability of regional airports across the U.K. Smaller carriers are particularly at risk. The low-cost carrier Norwegian Shuttle canceled 22 long-haul flights between Europe and the United States from late March to early May. The national carrier Finnair is laying off its entire staff based in Finland for two weeks to a month due to the economic impact of the outbreak.

**Related Story: Virus Hammers Business Travel as Wary Companies Nix Trips**

### Close to Home

More companies are reporting workers with infections in the United States. Facebook says it's temporarily closing a Seattle office after a worker was diagnosed with the virus. The last time the employee came to the social network's Seattle office was Feb. 21, so Facebook said the office will remain closed until Monday, when the incubation period ends. The company is heeding

guidance from local authorities, however, and is encouraging Seattle staff to work from home until March 31. Amazon this week said one of its employees in Seattle, and two in Milan, Italy, had contracted the coronavirus. All were quarantined. Aflac said a worker at its call center in Kobe, Japan is infected. The individual had attended an event in Osaka where multiple participants also contracted the virus.

**Related Story: California Declares Emergency After 1st Coronavirus Death**

### Energy

The oil-producing countries of the OPEC cartel are considering slashing output to contain a price plunge intensified by the virus outbreak. Air travel has plunged since the outbreak emerged in China, sapping demand for jet fuel. Manufacturing has been idled in China as cities with millions of residents locked down to contain the spread of the virus. Major companies around the world have halted business travel out of precaution. Oil prices stabilized ahead of this week's meeting on expectations that OPEC and non-OPEC members would agree to deeper production cuts. Industry analysts believe the group will slash production by 1 million barrels per day, on top of existing cuts. Crude prices have fallen 25% since January.

**The oil-producing countries of the OPEC cartel are considering slashing output to contain a price plunge intensified by the virus outbreak.**

### Market Swings

Market volatility continued Thursday. After a huge swing into positive territory Wednesday, Dow futures tumbled almost 500 points. The Chicago Board Options Exchange Volatility Index, or VIX, climbed close to 36 Thursday. The VIX is also called Wall Street's fear barometer. It's been striking levels not seen in almost a...

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# TURKEY DEPLOYING SPECIAL FORCES TO BORDER AMID MIGRANT SURGE

AP | Emrah Gurel

March 5, 2020 | AP News

ANKARA, Turkey — Turkey said Thursday it would deploy special forces along its land border with Greece to prevent Greek authorities pushing back people trying to cross into Europe, after Turkey declared its previously guarded gateways to Europe open.

Thousands of refugees and other migrants have tried to cross into Greece from the Turkish land and sea border in the past week. Clashes have been frequent, with Greek police firing tear gas, stun grenades and water cannons to repel thousands of people trying to breach the border. Greek authorities say Turkish police have also fired tear gas at them

to disperse border guards. Turkey says Greek authorities were also firing live ammunition at the migrants, and Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly said Wednesday that Turkey would make a case in the European Court of Human Rights for a migrant it says was shot dead by Greek authorities on the border. The Greek government has denied any such incident occurred, calling it “fake news.”

Soyly, who visited the border area Thursday, said Turkey would deploy 1,000 special forces along its land border to prevent Greek authorities from pushing back those attempting to cross. “As of this morning ... we are bringing 1,000...

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AP File

# HALF OF WORLD’S SANDY BEACHES AT RISK FROM CLIMATE CHANGE

March 2, 2020 | AP News

BERLIN — Scientists say that half of the world’s sandy beaches could disappear by the end of the century if climate change continues unchecked. Researchers at the European Union’s Joint Research Center in Ispra, Italy, used satellite images to track the way beaches have changed over the past 30 years and simulated how global warming might affect them in the future. “What we find is that by the end of the century around half of the beaches in the world will experience erosion that is more than 100 meters,” said Michalis Voudoukas. “It’s likely that they will be lost.”

The study, published Monday in the journal Nature Climate Change, found that the extent to which beaches are at risk depends on how much average global temperatures increase by the year 2100. Greater temperature increases mean more sea level rise and more violent storms in some regions, causing more beaches to vanish beneath the waves. “The projected shoreline changes will substantially impact the shape...

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# NORTH KOREA FIRES PRESUMED SHORT-RANGE MISSILES INTO THE SEA

March 2, 2020 | AP News

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea fired two presumed short-range ballistic missiles into its eastern sea on Monday, South Korean officials said, resuming weapons demonstrations after a months-long hiatus that may have been forced by the coronavirus crisis in Asia. The launches came two days after North Korea’s state media said leader Kim Jong Un supervised an artillery drill aimed at testing the combat readiness of units in front-line and eastern areas.

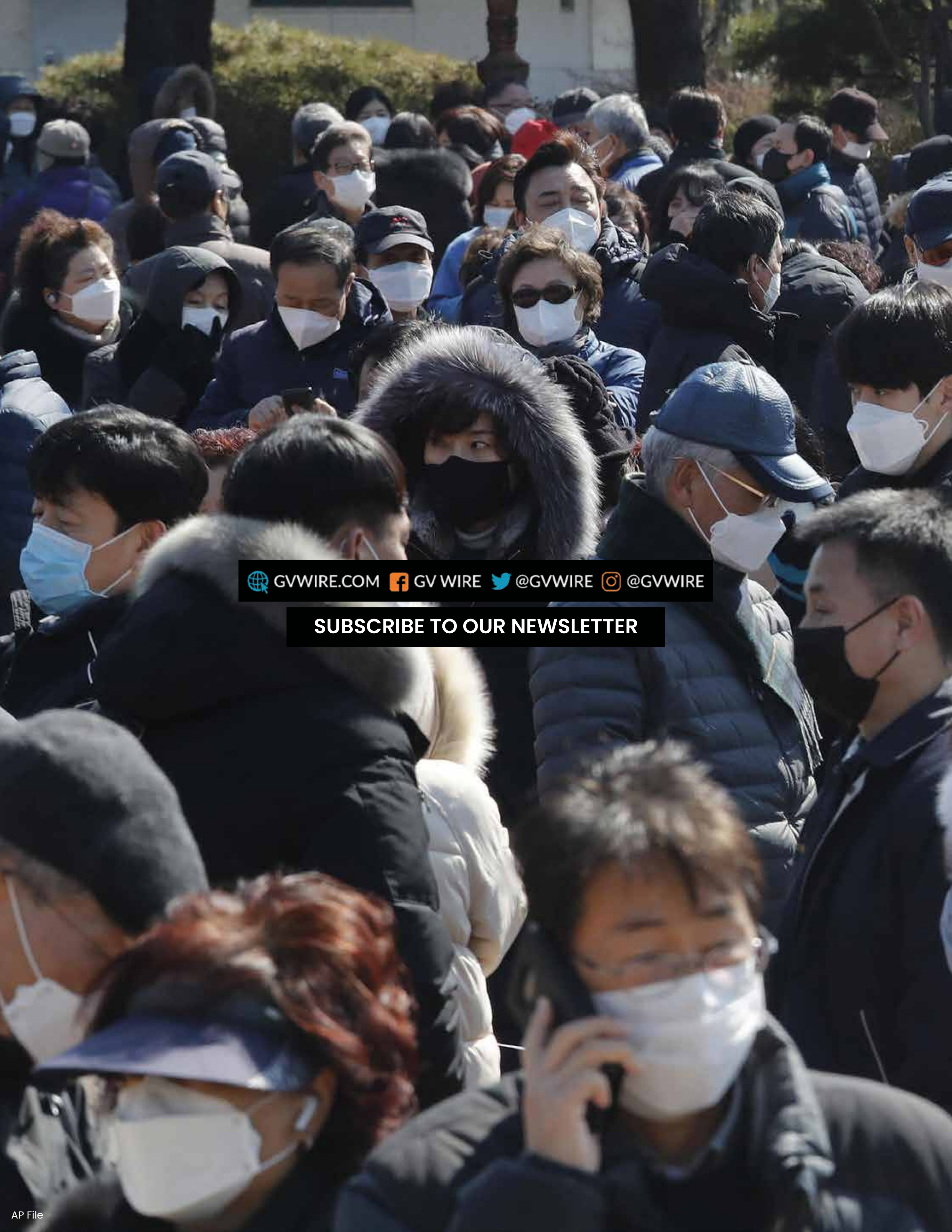
South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said the projectiles were fired from an area near the coastal town of Wonsan and flew about 240 kilometers (149 miles) northeast on an apogee of about 35 kilometers (22 miles). It said the South Korean and U.S. militaries were jointly analyzing the launches. JCS officials later told reporters that the weapons were presumed to be short-range ballistic missiles. North Korea likely tested one of its new road-mobile, solid-fuel missile systems or a...





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Korean Central News Agency/Korea News Service via AP, File





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