

Senate rejects limit on Caribbean attacks

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Republicans voted to reject legislation Thursday that would have put a check on President Donald Trump's ability to launch an attack against Venezuela, as Democrats pressed Congress to take a stronger role in Trump's high-stakes campaign against Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.

Lawmakers, including top Republicans, have demanded that the Trump administration provide them with more information on the U.S. military strikes against alleged drug-smuggling vessels in the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific Ocean. But Thursday's vote, on legislation that would essentially forestall an attack on Venezuelan soil without congressional authorization, suggested Republicans are willing to give

Trump leeway to continue his buildup of naval forces in the region.

"President Trump has taken decisive action to protect thousands of Americans from lethal narcotics," said Sen. Jim Risch, the Republican chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Still, the vote allowed Democrats to press their GOP colleagues on Trump's threats against Venezuela. The legislation failed to advance 49-51, with Sens. Rand Paul of Kentucky and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska the only Republicans voting in favor.

The U.S. is assembling an unusually large force, including its most advanced aircraft carrier, in the Caribbean Sea, leading many to conclude that Trump intends to go beyond just intercepting cocaine-running boats.

The campaign so far has killed at least 69 people in 17 known strikes, the latest carried out Thursday against a boat in the Caribbean.

"It's really an open secret that this is much more about potential regime change," said Sen. Adam Schiff, a California Democrat who pushed the resolution. "If that's where the administration is headed, if that's what we're risking — involvement in a war — then Congress needs to be heard on this."

Republican leadership pressed Thursday to make sure the legislation failed, but several senators still carefully considered their vote.

Sen. Thom Tillis, a North Carolina Republican, another Republican who voted against the resolution, said that he still has doubts about the campaign. He pointed out that it was expen-

sive to change the deployment location for an aircraft carrier and questioned whether those funds could be better used at the U.S.-Mexico border to stop fentanyl trafficking.

Tillis said that if the campaign continues for several months more, "then we have to have a real discussion about whether or not we're engaging in some sort of hybrid war."

Sen. Todd Young, an Indiana Republican, said in a statement that he voted against the legislation because he didn't believe it was "necessary or appropriate at this time."

But he added that he was "troubled by many aspects and assumptions of this operation and believe it is at odds with the majority of Americans who want the U.S. military less entangled in international conflicts."

Citing shutdown, military won't be in NFL events

The Washington Post

November NFL games are usually filled with gestures of military appreciation, with helicopter or fighter jet flyovers and hundreds of service members unfurling giant American flags as part of the league's annual Veterans Day "Salute to Service" celebrations.

Not this year.

This week, the Pentagon issued official guidance to the military that none of those activities can take place because of a lack of funding as a result of the government shutdown.

Service members and other Defense Department personnel are "prohibited from participating in official outreach activities," according to the Penta-

gon's press office — which, in a departure from the department's historical abstention from partisan politics, has also recently begun to blame Democrats for the shutdown and other issues.

Republicans control both chambers of Congress and the White House, and members of each party have sought to portray the other as responsible for what has become the longest disruption of government funding in U.S. history.

"Service members are permitted to wear military uniforms at Veterans Day events, in a personal capacity, as long as it follows their service-specific guidelines, and no official endorsement or involvement is

implied by the Department," the Pentagon said in a statement to *The Washington Post* on Thursday.

The ban includes any military outreach appearances that would be paid from appropriated funds — the Pentagon's annual budget — to include "jet and jump demonstration teams, bands and ceremonial unit appearances, port visits, service weeks and nonprofit and corporate leader outreach," according to a document viewed by *The Post*.

Last year there were about a dozen such events at National Football League games throughout November, including the flyover of UH-60 Black Hawks and AH-64 Apache hel-

icopters from the 10th Mountain Division at the Buffalo Bills vs. Kansas City Chiefs game in Western New York, one U.S. official told *The Post*.

In some cases, other organizations have stepped in for the canceled military appearances.

Last Sunday, the Tri-State Warbird Museum in Ohio joined the Cincinnati Bengals vs. Chicago Bears game to conduct a flyover with one of its restored B-25 Mitchell bomber aircraft — the warplane that was used in the historic Doolittle Raid over Tokyo in World War II — to honor military service members at the Bengals' Salute to Service game because the active-duty military was not funded to fly.

Democrats consider prolonging shutdown

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Republican senators are trying to end the government shutdown by preparing a bipartisan package of spending bills that they hope will win new Democratic votes. It is unclear whether their plan will work.

Democrats have voted 14 times not to reopen the government as they demand an extension of expiring health care subsidies, which are not expected to be part of the legislation. Many said Thursday they would continue to hold out until President Donald Trump and Republican leaders negotiate with them on an extension.

“That’s what leaders do,” said Sen. Ben Ray Lujan, D-N.M. “You have the gavel, you have the majority, you have to bring people together.”

Democrats will then have a crucial choice to make: Do they

keep fighting for a meaningful deal on extending the subsidies that expire in January, while prolonging the pain of the shutdown? Or do they vote to reopen the government and hope for the best as Republicans promise an eventual health care vote, but not a guaranteed outcome?

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York has not yet weighed in. Sen. Brian Schatz, D-Hawaii, said Democrats are “obviously not unanimous” but “without something on health care, the vote is very unlikely to succeed.”

Still, some Democrats are feeling increased urgency to alleviate the growing crisis at airports, pay government workers and restore delayed food aid to millions of people now that the shutdown has become the longest in U.S. history. A small group has been working with Republicans on a deal that

would reopen the government with only an agreement for a future health care vote.

Republicans have been short five votes so far as they have held repeated roll calls to fund the government. Even a small defection from the Democratic ranks could break the logjam.

Democrats are “working on unity and working on health care,” said Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune’s decision to keep the Senate in session Friday, and perhaps over the weekend, came after Trump urged Republicans at a White House breakfast Wednesday to end the shutdown. Trump said he thought the six-week impasse was a “big factor, negative” for Republicans in Tuesday’s elections that were overwhelmingly favorable for Democrats.

The bipartisan package that

Thune is proposing would fund parts of government — food aid, veterans programs and the legislative branch, among other things — and extend funding for everything else until December or January. The three spending bills that would be included are the product of bipartisan negotiations that have continued through the shutdown.

The package would replace the House-passed bill that the Democrats have rejected repeatedly. It would only extend government funding until Nov. 21, a date that is rapidly approaching after six weeks of inaction.

It mirrors a tentative plan that moderate Democrats have been sketching out. The proposal would also take up Republicans on their offer to hold a vote on extending the expiring Affordable Care Act subsidies at a later date.

Administration seeks halt to ruling on SNAP

Associated Press

BOSTON — President Donald Trump’s administration asked a federal appeals court Friday to block a judge’s order that it distribute November’s full monthly SNAP food benefits amid a U.S. government shutdown, even as at least some states said they were moving quickly to get the money to people.

The judge gave the Trump administration until Friday to make the payments through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

But the administration asked the appeals court to suspend any court orders requiring it to spend more money than is available in a contingency fund, and

instead allow it to continue with planned partial SNAP payments for the month.

The court filing came even as Wisconsin said Friday that some SNAP recipients in the state already got their full November payments overnight on Thursday.

“We’ve received confirmation that payments went through, including members reporting they can now see their balances,” said Britt Cudaback, a spokesperson for Democratic Gov. Tony Evers.

The court wrangling prolonged weeks of uncertainty for the food program that serves about 1 in 8 Americans, mostly with lower incomes.

Travelers scramble as airlines reduce flights

Associated Press

Hundreds of flight cancellations spread across the U.S. on Friday as airlines began complying with the Federal Aviation Administration’s order to reduce service because of the government shutdown.

While the FAA order left some passengers scrambling to figure out backup plans, most were relieved to find their planes still on schedule as airlines slowly phase in reductions at the nation’s busiest airports.

The 40 airports selected for the slowdown by the FAA span more than two dozen states and include hubs such as Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles and Charlotte, N.C., according to the order.

More than 800 flights were called off nationwide, according to FlightAware, a website that tracks flight disruptions.

Airports in Chicago, Atlanta, Denver, Dallas and Phoenix led the way with the most disruptions, FlightAware said.

Both United and American airlines said Friday they were able to quickly rebook most affected travelers. United spokesperson Josh Freed said more than half were scheduled to reach their destinations within four hours of their original plan.

The airlines focused their cuts on smaller regional routes to airports where they have multiple flights a day, helping minimize the number of passengers impacted.

Court lets Trump set passport gender policy

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Thursday allowed President Donald Trump's administration to enforce a policy blocking transgender and nonbinary people from choosing passport sex markers that align with their gender identity.

The decision is Trump's latest win on the court's emergency docket, and allows the administration to enforce the policy while a lawsuit over it plays out. It halts a lower-court order requiring the government to keep letting people choose male, female or X on their passport to correspond with their gender identity on new or renewed passports.

The court's three liberal justices dissented.

The high court has sided with

the government in nearly two dozen short-term orders on a range of policies since the start of Trump's second term, including another case barring transgender people from serving in the military.

In a brief, unsigned order, the conservative-majority court said the policy isn't discriminatory. "Displaying passport holders' sex at birth no more offends equal protection principles than displaying their country of birth," it said. "In both cases, the Government is merely attesting to a historical fact without subjecting anyone to differential treatment."

The court's three liberal justices disagreed, saying in a dissent that those passports make transgender people vulnerable to "increased violence, harassment, and discrimination."

"This Court has once again paved the way for the immediate infliction of injury without adequate (or, really, any) justification," Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson wrote, saying the policy stemmed directly from Trump's executive order that described transgender identity as "false" and "corrosive."

Transgender and nonbinary people who sued over the policy have reported being sexually assaulted, strip-searched and accused of presenting fake documents at airport security checks, she wrote.

The Supreme Court majority said being unable to enforce the policy harms the government because passports are part of foreign affairs, an area of executive branch control. The dissenters, though, said it's not

clear exactly how individual identification documents affect the nation's foreign policy.

The State Department changed its passport rules after Trump, a Republican, handed down an executive order in January declaring the United States would "recognize two sexes, male and female," based on birth certificates and "biological classification."

Transgender actor Hunter Schafer, for example, said in February that her new passport had been issued with a male gender marker, even though she's marked female on her driver's license and passport for years.

The plaintiffs argue those passports aren't accurate, and can be unsafe for those whose gender expression doesn't match what's on the documents.

High Court eyes appeal to same-sex marriage ruling

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A call to overturn the landmark Supreme Court decision legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide is on the agenda Friday for the justices' closed-door conference.

Among the new cases the justices are expected to consider is a long shot appeal from Kim Davis, the former Kentucky court clerk who refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples following the court's 2015 ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*.

Davis had been trying to get the court to overturn a lower court order for her to pay \$360,000 in damages and attorney's fees to a couple whom she denied a marriage license.

In urging the court to take up her case, Davis' lawyers repeatedly invoked the words of Justice Clarence Thomas, who alone among the nine justices has called for erasing the same-

sex marriage ruling.

Thomas was one of four dissenting justices in 2015. Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito are the other dissenters who also remain on the court.

Roberts has been silent on the subject since he wrote a dissenting opinion in the case. Alito has continued to criticize the decision, but said recently he was not advocating that it be overturned.

Justice Amy Coney Barrett, who was not on the court in 2015, has said there are times when the court should correct mistakes and overturn decisions, as it did in the 2022 case that ended a constitutional right to abortion. But Barrett has suggested recently that same-sex marriage might be in a different category than abortion because people have relied on the decision when they married and had children.

OpenAI faces 7 lawsuits citing suicide, delusions

Associated Press

OpenAI is facing seven lawsuits claiming ChatGPT drove people to suicide and harmful delusions even when they had no prior mental health issues.

The lawsuits filed Thursday in California allege wrongful death, assisted suicide, involuntary manslaughter and negligence. Filed on behalf of six adults and one teenager by the Social Media Victims Law Center and Tech Justice Law Project, the lawsuits claim that OpenAI knowingly released GPT-4o prematurely, despite warnings that it was dangerously sycophantic and psychologically manipulative. Four of the victims died by suicide.

The teenager, 17-year-old Amaurie Lacey, began using ChatGPT for help, according to the lawsuit filed in San Francisco Superior Court. But instead of helping, "the defective and inherently dangerous ChatGPT

product caused addiction, depression, and, eventually, counseled him on the most effective way to tie a noose and how long he would be able to "live without breathing."

"Amaurie's death was neither an accident nor a coincidence but rather the foreseeable consequence of OpenAI and Samuel Altman's intentional decision to curtail safety testing and rush ChatGPT onto the market," the lawsuit says.

OpenAI called the situations "incredibly heartbreaking" and said it was reviewing the court filings to understand the details.

Another lawsuit, filed by Alan Brooks, a 48-year-old in Ontario, Canada, claims that for more than two years ChatGPT worked as a "resource tool" for Brooks. Then, without warning, it changed, preying on his vulnerabilities and "manipulating, and inducing him to experience delusions."

Trump hosts Asian leaders as US seeks rare earth metals

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump hosted leaders of five Central Asian countries at the White House on Thursday as he intensifies his hunt for rare earth metals needed for high-tech devices, including smartphones, electric vehicles and fighter jets.

Trump and the officials from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan held bilateral meetings in the Oval Office before having a working dinner.

“These nations were once home to the ancient Silk Road connecting East and West,” Trump said, while noting that “sadly, previous American presidents neglected this region completely.”

He added, “I understand the importance of this region” but “a lot of people don’t know that.”

The White House visits followed Trump managing at least

a temporary thaw with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on differences between the United States and China over the export of rare earth elements, a key point of friction in their trade negotiations.

Early last month, Beijing expanded export restrictions over vital rare earth elements and magnets before announcing, after Trump-Xi talks in South Korea last week, that China would delay its new restrictions by one year.

Washington is now looking for new ways to circumvent China on critical minerals. China accounts for nearly 70% of the world’s rare earth mining and controls roughly 90% of global rare earths processing.

Central Asia holds deep reserves of rare earth minerals and produces roughly half the world’s uranium, which is critical to nuclear power production. But the region badly needs

investment to further develop the resources.

Central Asia’s critical mineral exports have long tilted toward China and Russia. Kazakhstan, for example, in 2023 sent \$3.07 billion in critical minerals to China and \$1.8 billion to Russia compared with \$544 million to the U.S., according to country-level trade data compiled by the Observatory of Economic Complexity, an online data platform.

Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon said his country has “very rich, boundless” critical mineral resources. But he also offered a nod to being in a tough geopolitical neighborhood, situated between Russia and China.

That makes partnering with the U.S. all the more important, Rahmon said: “We are very keen to continue closely our cooperation on security items, which we are so concerned for.”

Musk could be on track to be first trillionaire

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The world’s richest man was just handed a chance to become history’s first trillionaire.

Elon Musk won a shareholder vote on Thursday that would give the Tesla CEO stock worth \$1 trillion if he hits certain performance targets over the next decade.

The vote followed weeks of debate over his management record at the electric car maker and whether anyone deserved such unprecedented pay, drawing heated commentary from everyone from small investors to giant pension fund managers and even the pope.

In the end, more than 75% of voters approved the plan as shareholders gathered in Austin, Texas, for their annual meeting.

“Fantastic group of shareholders,” Musk said after the final vote was tallied, adding “Hang on to your Tesla stock.”

The vote is a resounding victory for Musk, showing that investors still have faith in him as Tesla struggles with plunging sales, market share and profits in no small part due to Musk himself. Car buyers fled the company this year as he has ventured into politics both in the U.S. and Europe, and trafficked in conspiracy theories.

The vote came just three days after a report from Europe showing Tesla car sales plunged again last month, including a 50% collapse in Germany.

Still, many Tesla investors consider Musk as a sort of miracle man capable of stunning business feats, such as when he pulled Tesla from the brink of bankruptcy a half-dozen years ago to turn it into one of the world’s most valuable companies.

Typhoon rampages across Vietnam as Philippines prepares for another storm

Associated Press

DAK LAK, Vietnam — Typhoon Kalmaegi brought fierce winds and torrential rains to Vietnam on Friday, killing at least five people, flattening homes, blowing off roofs and uprooting trees. In the Philippines, where the storm left scores dead earlier in the week, survivors wept over the coffins of their loved ones and braced for another typhoon.

As the storm moved on, recovery work began in battered towns and villages in both countries. Across central Vietnamese provinces, people cleared debris and repaired roofs on their homes.

Jimmy Abatayo, who lost his

wife and nine close relatives after the typhoon unleashed flooding in the central Philippine province of Cebu, was overwhelmed with sorrow and guilt as he ran his palm over his wife’s casket.

“I was able to swim. I told my family to swim, you will be saved, just swim, be brave and keep swimming,” said Abatayo, 53, pausing and then breaking into tears. “They did not hear what I said because I would never see them again.”

In Cebu, 139 people died, mostly in floodings. Villagers on Friday gathered to say goodbye to their dead, including at a basketball gym turned funeral parlor where relatives wept before

a row of white coffins bedecked with flowers and small portraits of the deceased.

Across the country, Kalmaegi left at least 188 people dead and 135 missing, the Philippines Office of Civil Defense said, and more than half a million people were displaced.

Nearly 450,000 were evacuated to shelters, and over 318,000 remained there as of Thursday.

The weather bureau said Fung-wong would come early next week and predicted it would span about 900 miles before making landfall late Sunday or early Monday in northern Aurora province. It could also potentially affect the densely populated region of Manila.

Broncos' defense shines in 10-7 squeaker

Associated Press

DENVER — The Denver Broncos aren't collecting many style points, but as long as they keep racking up more points than their opponents on the scoreboard they don't care how ugly it looks.

"We've got to clean up some of the penalties. We've got to clean up the execution and that is an ongoing thing that probably never ends," coach Sean Payton said after the Broncos squeaked past the reeling Las Vegas Raiders 10-7 on Thursday night.

"You search for that Shangri-La. Right now, you know, we're sitting at eight wins. I think we're the only team sitting there."

They are.

At 8-2, they own the NFL's best record even though they didn't look anything like a top team on a windy night in the Rocky Mountains — save for their defense, which sacked Geno Smith a half-dozen times in pushing the Broncos' season total to 46, more than any team's had in its first 10 games since at least 1990.

Because of that defense, Den-

ver won its seventh consecutive game, the team's longest winning streak in a decade, and extended its home streak to 10.

"Yeah, we've got to do better," quarterback Bo Nix said after throwing for just 150 yards with two interceptions to go with a touchdown pass. "At some point 10 points ain't going to be enough. We've got to score more. ... We've got to find some juice somewhere."

Nix didn't pull out his usual fourth-quarter heroics and drew the wrath of the sellout crowd: "I've been booed before and I'll be booed again."

The Broncos collected more penalties (11) than first downs (10) and had seven three-and-outs in 13 possessions.

But Denver's defense didn't allow a first down during seven consecutive Raiders possessions and came up with a turnover on downs, an interception and a blocked punt. Las Vegas' last possession ended in a missed field goal that would have tied the game.

The Raiders, who just traded away top receiver Jakobi Meyers, fell to 2-7.

J.L. Skinner set up the win-

ning field goal by blocking AJ Cole's punt with his facemask late in the third quarter.

"I'm glad his face was there," linebacker Alex Singleton said.

Skinner said he didn't realize he blocked the punt with his facemask until "I saw my visor and it had the mark of the ball on it. A heads-up play for sure, a head-butt play, honestly, is what I say."

Skinner's block set up Denver's struggling offense at the Las Vegas 12, but the Broncos lost 2 yards on three plays and Wil Lutz nailed a 32-yard field goal with 5 seconds left in the third quarter to break a 7-all tie.

Cornerback Kyu Blue Kelly's second interception set up the Raiders at the Denver 45-yard line in the waning minutes, but Daniel Carlson was wide right on a 48-yard field-goal try with 4:26 remaining.

Carlson has had a rough season. His game-winning field-goal attempt against the Bears was blocked in Week 4 and he missed an extra point last week in a one-point loss to Jacksonville.

"He's got to kick better," Raiders coach Pete Carroll said.

"I know it kills him, too. He wants to make every one of those."

The Broncos chewed up the rest of the clock with a methodical possession and ending up taking kneel-downs in victory formation inside the Raiders 20-yard line after Las Vegas ran out of timeouts.

The game was a typical Thursday night flag-fest with neither team able to get into an offensive rhythm. A steady stream of players — including Smith — retreated to the sidelines and the blue tent to have injuries checked out.

The Broncos' trend of slow starts continued as they managed just 6 yards in six first-quarter snaps and trailed 7-0 after allowing Ashton Jeanty's 4-yard touchdown run.

The Broncos finally got a first down on their fifth possession when J.K. Dobbins scampered for a 13-yard gain on first down. Four plays later, Nix found Troy Franklin for an 11-yard touchdown to tie it at 7.

Smith briefly left the game after getting tripped up by Nik Bonitto and smothered by Malcolm Roach.

Ex-NFL star Brown arrested on attempted murder charge

Associated Press

Former NFL star Antonio Brown has been arrested on an attempted murder charge stemming from a shooting after a celebrity boxing event in Miami, police confirmed Thursday.

Brown, 37, was taken into custody by U.S. Marshals in Dubai, said Miami police spokesman Mike Vega. He was flown to Essex County, N.J., where he

is being held pending extradition to Miami, Vega said.

It was unclear why Brown was taken to New Jersey first or how long he had been in Dubai, although he has posted several times on social media over the past few months from there.

According to an arrest warrant detailing the May 16 shooting, Brown is accused of grabbing a handgun from a security

staffer after the boxing match and firing two shots at a man he had gotten into a fistfight with earlier.

The victim, Zul-Qarnain Kwame Nantambu, told investigators one of the bullets grazed his neck.

It was not immediately known when Brown might be returned to Miami.

A second-degree attempted

murder charge carries a maximum 15-year prison sentence and up to a \$10,000 fine in the event of a conviction.

Brown, who spent 12 years in the NFL, was an All-Pro wide receiver who last played in 2021 for Tampa Bay but spent most of his career with Pittsburgh. For his career, Brown had 928 receptions for more than 12,000 yards and 83 touchdowns.

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James ready for contact basketball activity

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — LeBron James is ready for contact basketball activity, and he will be re-evaluated by the Los Angeles Lakers' team physician in one to two weeks as he prepares to begin his unprecedented 23rd NBA season.

James has yet to play this season or practice with the Lakers after being shut down early in training camp due to sciatica, a lower-body nerve problem. The next step in his recovery is five-on-five basketball work in prac-

tice, but it's unclear when that could begin because the Lakers are headed out on a five-game road trip beginning Saturday in Atlanta, and James isn't expected to travel with the team.

The 40-year-old James has been working out individually in recent weeks. The Lakers announced James' progression to contact basketball on Thursday, exactly four weeks after the team initially said the top scorer in NBA history would be re-evaluated in three to four weeks.

"We don't have a target date," Lakers coach JJ Redick said last week of James' progress. "It's just somewhere in that general timeline. We hope that he's kind of checked all the boxes and is going to be back sometime in that second or third week in November."

If James wants on-court work while the Lakers are on the road, he could conceivably join the Lakers' G League affiliate at the team's training complex in El Segundo. The Lakers' next home game is Nov. 18.

The Lakers have played remarkably well in James' absence, stoking fans' excitement about being a possible contender six seasons after James and Anthony Davis won the franchise's 17th championship in the Florida bubble.

Luka Doncic scored 35 points while the Lakers held off San Antonio 118-116 on Wednesday night for their fifth consecutive win, including three in four nights.

Los Angeles is 7-2, even with James sidelined all season.

Former NBA player pleads not guilty in gambling case

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Former NBA player and assistant coach Damon Jones pleaded not guilty Thursday to charges he profited from rigged poker games and provided sports bettors with non-public information about injuries to stars LeBron James and Anthony Davis.

Jones, a onetime teammate of James, said little during back-to-back arraignments in federal court in Brooklyn, letting his court-appointed lawyer enter not guilty pleas in a pair of cases stemming from last month's federal takedown of sprawling gambling operations.

Jones, 49, acknowledged he read both indictments and that he understood the charges and his bail conditions, which include his mother and stepfather putting up their Texas home as collateral for a \$200,000 bond that will allow him to remain free pending trial.

Jones' lawyer, Kenneth Montgomery, told a judge that they "may be engaging in plea negotiations."

Jones was among more than 30 people arrested in the gambling sweep. The others included reputed mobsters and prominent basketball figures, includ-

ing Portland Trail Blazers head coach and Basketball Hall of Famer Chauncey Billups and Miami Heat guard Terry Rozier.

Sports bettor Marves Fairley also pleaded not guilty Thursday to charges alleging he cashed in on information about injuries to NBA players, including some that prosecutors say Jones provided to him.

Jones, an NBA journeyman, earned more than \$20 million playing for 10 teams in 11 seasons from 1999 to 2009. He and James played together in Cleveland from 2005 to 2008 and he served as an unofficial assistant coach for James' Los Angeles Lakers during the 2022-2023 season.

Jones, a native of Galveston, Texas, who played college basketball at the University of Houston, is charged in both cases with wire fraud conspiracy and money laundering conspiracy. As part of his bail agreement, his travel is restricted to parts of Texas and New York City.

He was allowed to keep his passport to use as identification for flying until he obtains a REAL ID, which his lawyer said should happen soon.

Infantino: 'You will see' at draw if Trump gets new FIFA peace prize

Associated Press

MIAMI — FIFA has announced the creation of a peace prize, which it plans to award for the first time at the draw for the World Cup on Dec. 5 in Washington.

The award, called the FIFA Peace Prize, will "recognize exceptional actions for peace," soccer's governing body said Wednesday.

But FIFA President Gianni Infantino, who has a close relationship with President Donald Trump, would not tip his hand Wednesday when asked if Trump will be the first recipient of the award.

"On the 5th of December, you will see," Infantino said. He was speaking at the America Business Forum in Miami, shortly after Trump addressed the same event.

Infantino said earlier Wednesday that, "in an increasingly unsettled and divided world, it's fundamental to recognize the outstanding contribution of those who work hard to end conflicts and bring people together in a spirit of peace." FIFA said the award, which In-

fantino will present this year, will be bestowed annually "on behalf of fans from all around the world."

Trump was passed over for the Nobel Peace Prize last month despite lobbying from fellow Republicans, various world leaders and himself.

And Infantino made no secret of the ties between himself, FIFA and Trump in his remarks Wednesday.

"I'm really lucky. I have a great relationship with President Trump, who I consider really a close friend," Infantino said. "Of course, he's been very, very helpful in everything we do for the World Cup. ... He has such an incredible energy and this is something that I really admire. He does things. He does what he says. He says what he thinks. He says, actually, what many people think as well, but maybe don't dare to say. And that's why he's so successful."

FIFA recently added another link to Trump by appointing his daughter Ivanka to the board of a \$100 million education project part-funded by 2026 World Cup ticket sales.

Florida bounces back to beat North Florida

Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Alex Condon had 25 points and 10 rebounds, Micah Handlogten notched his second consecutive double-double and No. 3 Florida bounced back from a season-opening loss with a 104-64 drubbing of North Florida on Thursday night.

It was so lopsided that 7-foot-9 walk-on Olivier Rioux, the world's tallest teenager, made his collegiate debut. The 19-year-old Gators freshman got the loudest ovation of the night when he pulled off his warmup jersey and entered the game with 2:09 to play. Rioux didn't even touch the ball.

Coming off a five-point loss to 13th-ranked Arizona in Las Vegas, the Gators unveiled their national championship banner during pregame introductions and then put on a show in their home opener.

Condon dominated inside three nights after getting outplayed by freshman Koa Peat, adding four assists, three blocked shots and two steals. Florida (1-1) finished with a 64-24 rebounding advantage and outscored the Ospreys 66-22 in the paint. Handlogten finished with 17 points and 13 rebounds.

Thomas Haugh chipped in 12

points, eight rebounds and four assists for the Gators, who won their 35th consecutive home opener and improved to 12-0 against the Ospreys.

North Florida (0-1) was hardly a factor in its season opener, the first game under new coach Bobby Keenen. Kamrin Oriol led the way with 19 points on 8-of-17 shooting. But the rest of the team managed a combined 11 field goals.

No. 11 Louisville 106, Jackson State 70: Ryan Conwell scored 14 of his 19 points in the first half, Kasean Pryor returned to the court for the first time since he tore his ACL nearly a year ago, and the Cardinals cruised past the Tigers.

Mikel Brown Jr. had 18 points and the star freshman guard added nine assists for Louisville, which shot 52.2% from the field in scoring more than 100 points for the second straight game.

Louisville (2-0) played without J'Vonne Hadley, the lone returning starter from last season's squad, who's in the concussion protocol.

Pryor received a loud ovation as he came in with 16:27 left in the first half. The 6-foot-10 senior, who played just seven games last season before tear-

ing the ACL in his left knee in the Battle 4 Atlantis championship on Nov. 29 against Oklahoma, scored six points on 3-of-8 shooting in 16 minutes.

The Cardinals outrebounded the Tigers 49-29, including a 10 rebounds from Khani Rooths, who also scored 16 points. Sannanda Fru contributed 12 points on 6-of-8 shooting.

The Tigers (2-0), who are playing ranked teams in four of their first five games, were led by Daeshun Ruffin with 22 points.

No. 16 Iowa State 102, Grambling 62: Joshua Jefferson scored 20 points to lead six Iowa State players in double figures, and the Cyclones defeated the Tigers.

Jefferson shot 8 of 10 from the field and had eight rebounds, three assists and a blocked shot as the Cyclones (2-0) won their 36th straight nonconference game at Hilton Coliseum.

Milan Momcilovic, Killyan Toure and Jamarion Batemon scored 11 points apiece and Dominick Nelson and Tamin Lipsey had 10 points each.

Lipsey also had four rebounds and six assists and he made five steals for a second straight game.

Iowa State outrebounded

Grambling 43-25, had 17 second-chance points off 19 offensive rebounds and scored 29 points off Grambling's 19 turnovers.

The Cyclones' only struggle came at the free-throw line, where they were 18 of 29 (62%).

Antonio Munoz led Grambling with 16 points, seven assists and four rebounds.

No. 20 Auburn 95, Merrimack 57: Keyshawn Hall scored 25 points to lead the Tigers to a win over the Warriors.

Hall also had 14 rebounds for his first double-double with Auburn. The 6-foot-7 UCF transfer has been the leading scorer for Auburn (2-0) in both games; he had 28 points in Monday's season opener, a 95-90 overtime victory at home against Bethune-Cookman in Steven Pearl's coaching debut.

The Tigers led 39-22 at halftime and held the Warriors to 6-of-31 shooting and a 4-of-18 mark from 3-point range. Merrimack went 8:20 without a field goal until Ernest Shelton connected on a 3.

Shelton scored 23 points to lead the Warriors, who opened their season with a 75-66 loss to South Dakota State. No other Warriors player had more than five points.

Teenager is tallest player in college basketball history

Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Florida coach Todd Golden had people yelling at him at halftime Thursday to get 7-foot-9 center Olivier Rioux in the game.

Golden relented with 2:09 to play — and made history in the process — after chants of “We Want Ollie” swept through the O’Connell Center.

Rioux became the tallest person to ever play college basketball when he made his debut in a 104-64 victory over North Florida. Rioux, a 19-year-old redshirt freshman from Canada

and the world's tallest teenager, drew so much attention from the Ospreys that he didn't even touch the ball.

“It felt great,” Rioux said. “The support from everybody was amazing, even on the bench and even the fans. I think everybody supported me. I'm very grateful.”

When asked about making history, Rioux quipped: “It's another day, I guess.”

Rioux made everyone in attendance smile. Even North Florida forward Trey Cady smirked when he measured

himself against Rioux. Cady was giving up more than a foot in the matchup.

“There's people yelling at me at halftime about playing him,” Golden said. “I'm like, ‘Listen, it will happen. The time will come.’”

Rioux is 2 inches taller than former NBA giants Gheorghe Muresan and Manute Bol, and 3 inches taller than popular big men Yao Ming, Tacko Fall and Shawn Bradley. He already owned a spot in the Guinness record book when he signed with Florida in 2024.

Golden gave Rioux the option of playing sparingly last season or taking a redshirt season and working on his game. Rioux chose the latter. Nonetheless, he was a walking viral video, from riding his bike on campus, to ducking under every doorway, to cutting down nets while standing flat-footed in Florida's NCAA Tournament run.

“He's put in a lot of great work,” Golden said. “To his credit, he's kept a great attitude without getting a lot of reward in terms of playing time and opportunity.”

Crosby, Rust lead Penguins past Capitals

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Sidney Crosby scored twice and Bryan Rust delivered the go-ahead goal midway through the third period as the Pittsburgh Penguins edged Alex Ovechkin and the Washington Capitals 5-3 on Thursday night.

The 39-year-old Crosby's two first-period power-play goals boosted his season total to an NHL-best 11. Rust's fifth of the season helped the Penguins avoid a second straight collapse.

Anthony Mantha scored his seventh goal of the year for Pittsburgh. Connor Dewar added an empty-netter in the final minutes.

Rookie Ben Kindel collected the first two assists of his young career for the Penguins. Arturs Silovs made 28 saves as Pittsburgh stopped a two-game skid.

Ovechkin fueled a second-period rally by collecting two assists the night after becoming the first player to score 900 career goals.

Devils 4, Canadiens 3 (OT): Jesper Bratt scored on a breakaway 1:33 into overtime as New Jersey beat visiting Montreal.

Ondrej Palat and Timo Meier each had a goal, and Cody Glass also scored in his return from an injury for New Jersey, which got its second victory in five games after winning eight straight. Jacob Markstrom stopped 16 shots.

Kirby Dach, Jake Evans and Oliver Kapanen scored for Montreal, and Noah Dobson had two assists. Jakub Dobes finished with 24 saves as the Canadiens lost their second straight and had their four-game (3-0-1) point streak snapped.

In overtime, Bratt stole the puck, raced up the ice, skated in on Dobes and put a backhand through his pads for the win.

With Markstrom pulled for an extra skater, Meier tied it for New Jersey from the side of the net with 1:10 remaining in regulation off a scramble in front.

Kapanen put the Canadiens ahead as he scored on a backhand in front on a rebound with 9:27 remaining.

Evans tied it 2-2 just 59 seconds into the third, sending a shot along the ice into the right corner of the net as Markstrom failed to block it with his pad.

Bruins 3, Senators 2 (OT): Pavel Zacha poked in a rebound with 6 seconds left in overtime and Joonas Korpisalo made 20 saves on to lead Boston to a victory over visiting Ottawa, its fifth straight overall.

Morgan Geekie and Sean Kuraly scored in the second period to give Boston a 2-1 lead, but Claude Giroux tied it 2-2 for Ottawa midway through the third. Boston had a chance in the final 30 seconds but ex-Bruin Linus Ullmark turned aside a shot.

In overtime, though, Charlie McAvoy put a shot through Ullmark's pads, and Zacha skated in to slam it into the net.

Andrew Peeke had two assists for Boston, which has won six of seven since losing six games in a row.

Michael Amadio scored a goal, Giroux had a goal and an assist and Ullmark made 22 saves for the Senators, who have lost three of their past four games.

Blues 3, Sabres 0: Joel Hofer made 27 saves in his third NHL shutout and St. Louis got a short-handed goal and two assists from Mathieu Joseph to win at Buffalo.

Justin Faulk added a goal and an assist, and Nick Bjugsted also scored as the Blues won for just the second time in 10 games (2-6-2). It was their first shutout since the season opener.

Coming off a 6-1 loss at Washington the night before, St. Louis coach Jim Montgomery held a mandatory morning skate prior to playing the second game of a back-to-back and scratched top-scoring forward Jordan Kyrou to try and spark the struggling Blues.

Hurricanes 4, Wild 3: Nikolaj

Ehlers scored 46 seconds into the second period and goalie Frederik Andersen overcame a poor start to stop the final 18 shots he faced as host Carolina beat Minnesota.

Jackson Blake, Andrei Svechnikov and Sean Walker also scored for the Hurricanes, who have won three of their past four games. They've won back-to-back outings for the first time since Oct. 16 and 18. Blake and Walker each had an assist and Andersen made 20 saves.

Matt Boldy, playing in his 300th NHL game, scored two goals and Brock Faber had one for the Wild, who had won two in a row. Filip Gustavsson, who recorded a shutout last season in Raleigh, made 23 saves.

Ducks 7, Stars 5: Leo Carlsson's short-handed goal midway through the third period proved to be the winner as Anaheim rallied to win at Dallas.

Carlsson scored on a slap shot 10:38 into the third period to give the Ducks a 6-4 lead. Troy Terry had an assist on the goal.

Chris Kreider scored twice, Cutter Gauthier, Olen Zellweger, Ian Moore added goals and Mason McTavish added an empty-netter for Anaheim, which won its fifth straight and for the seventh time in eight games. Lukas Dostal finished with 21 saves.

Wyatt Johnston had two goals, Roope Hintz, Tyler Seguin and Mikko Rantanen also scored for Dallas. Miro Heiskanen had four assists and Jake Oettinger made 18 saves.

Flyers 3, Predators 1: Travis Konecny had a goal and an assist to lead visiting Philadelphia to a victory over Nashville.

Matvei Michkov and Noah Cates also scored for the Flyers, and Dan Vladar made 23 saves.

Ryan O'Reilly scored and Juuse Saros stopped 23 shots for Nashville, which had its three-game point streak snapped.

Vladar improved to 5-0-1 against the Predators. He beat Nashville 4-1 at home a week

ago in the opener of the two-game season series.

O'Reilly scored at 1:44 of the first period. Filip Forsberg's shot from the high slot deflected off Philadelphia defenseman Jamie Drysdale and then O'Reilly's shoulder before getting by Vladar.

Predators defenseman Nick Blankenburg also assisted on the goal, extending his point streak to a career-high four games.

Panthers 5, Kings 2: Brad Marchand scored two goals and Sam Reinhart got the go-ahead goal on his 30th birthday as Florida won at Los Angeles.

Anton Lundell got a short-handed goal in the third period and Sam Bennett also scored for the back-to-back Stanley Cup champion Panthers, who rebounded from a 7-3 loss in Anaheim to get their first victory on their four-game West Coast road trip.

Marchand has scored a goal in three consecutive games since returning to the Panthers from a one-game absence to travel to Nova Scotia to support a close friend who lost his daughter to cancer last month.

The veteran tied the game late in the first period after taking the puck from Anton Forsberg behind Los Angeles' net, and he added his ninth goal of the season in the third.

Lightning 6, Golden Knights 3: Nikita Kucherov scored two third-period goals and added an assist on a late empty-netter as Tampa Bay pulled away for a victory at Vegas.

Brandon Hagel also had two goals and an assist for the Lightning, while Gage Goncalves and Dominic James added goals. Andrei Vasilevskiy made 29 saves. James and Oliver Bjorkstrand each had two assists.

Ivan Barbashev had two goals and an assist for Vegas, while Mitch Marner had a goal and two assists.

Carl Lindbom stopped 21 shots for the Golden Knights.