



Trump to make court pick by Saturday, before Ginsburg burial

By Lisa Mascaro, Jonathan Lemire and Alexandra Jaffe
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Monday he expects to announce his pick for the Supreme Court by week's end, before Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is buried, launching a monumental Senate confirmation fight over objections from Democrats who say it's too close to the November election.

Conversations in the White House and Senate Majority

Leader Mitch McConnell's office are increasingly focused on two finalists: Amy Coney Barrett, who was at the White House on Monday, and Barbara Lagoa, according to a person granted anonymity to discuss the private deliberations. Trump himself confirmed they were among the top contenders.

Barrett has long been a favorite of conservatives and was a strong contender for the seat that eventually went in 2018 to Brett Kavanaugh. At the time, Trump told confidants he was "saving" Barrett

for Ginsburg's seat.

Trump said he is planning to name his pick by Friday or Saturday, ahead of the first presidential election debate. Ginsburg's casket is to be on view mid-week on the iconic steps outside the court and later privately at the Capitol. She is to be buried next week in a private service at Arlington National Cemetery.

Democrats, led by presidential nominee Joe Biden, are protesting the Republicans' rush to replace Ginsburg,

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President Donald Trump wraps up his speech at a campaign rally Saturday at Fayetteville Regional Airport in Fayetteville, N.C. [EVAN VUCCI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]



People enjoy the spring break weather at Crescent Beach, in March 2018. [LAUREN BACHO/GAINESVILLE SUN]

UF proposes to nix spring break out of COVID-19 concerns

By Sarah Nelson
Gainesville Sun
USA TODAY NETWORK

The University of Florida is en route to join other higher education institutions across the country in forgoing traditional spring break next year out of concern for COVID-19 transmission.

In a Faculty-Senate meeting Thursday, officials overwhelmingly voted to cancel the week-long vacation in March and fold the time into a longer winter break.

UF officials said the decision was made in consultation with UF Health.

"The primary purpose is to avoid a situation in which students would travel in March,

potentially become infected with COVID-19 and return to campus and the Gainesville community to spread the infection as occurred with the 2020 spring break," the announcement read.

Under the proposed plan, classes would begin Jan. 11, as opposed to Jan. 5 in the original academic calendar.

Officials also said the extra week in January would allow for a potential winter surge in COVID-19 to subside. And, if a vaccine becomes available, the cushion week would allow more students to get a vaccinated.

Other universities across the country have made the change as well, including the University of Tennessee, Kansas State University, Ohio

State University, Iowa State University, the University of Kentucky and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Researchers from Vanderbilt and Ball State University found in a June study that altering academic calendars may lower the chances of student travel, and therefore could mitigate infection rates. In the study, COVID-19 rates grew in counties where students returned from spring break before campuses shut down in-person classes, in the two to three weeks following the vacation time.

Using GPS data from nearly eight million students' smartphones, researchers determined that students

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Bank shares slide on reports of rampant money laundering

The Associated Press

The financial sector was hit hard Monday following a report alleging that a number of banks — JPMorgan, HSBC, Standard Chartered Bank, Deutsche Bank and Bank of New York Mellon among them — have continued to profit from illicit dealings with disreputable people and criminal networks despite previous warnings from regulators.

According to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, leaked government documents show that the banks continued moving illicit funds even after being warned of potential criminal prosecutions. The documents were obtained by BuzzFeed News and shared with the ICIJ.

The report compounded a massive sell-off across global markets because of gloom and doom over COVID-19 infections and the economic damage from the pandemic.

The consortium reported that documents indicate that JPMorgan moved money for people and companies tied to the massive looting of public funds in Malaysia, Venezuela and the Ukraine. The bank also processed more than \$50 million in payments over a decade for Paul Manafort, the former campaign manager for President Donald Trump, according to the documents, which are known as the FinCEN Files.



In this Aug. 16, 2019, photo, the logo for JPMorgan Chase & Co. appears above a trading post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York.

[RICHARD DREW/ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO]

Shares of JP Morgan closed 3% lower on Monday.

The consortium's investigation found the documents identify more than \$2 trillion in transactions between 1999 and 2017 that were flagged by financial institutions' internal compliance officers as possible money laundering or other criminal activity, and \$1.3 trillion of that activity took place at Deutsche Bank. Shares of Deutsche Bank dropped 8.3%.

Deutsche Bank has been under scrutiny for years. The bank, based in Frankfurt, Germany, agreed to pay the state of New York \$150 million to settle claims that it broke compliance rules in its dealings with the sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. Epstein killed himself last August in a Manhattan federal jail

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Biggest unknown with Beta is how much rain it will bring

By Juan A. Lozano
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — As Tropical Storm Beta neared the Texas coast Monday, the biggest unknown was how much rainfall it could produce in areas that have already seen their share of damaging weather during a busy hurricane season.

Beta's winds were weakening as it got closer to making landfall sometime Monday evening and the storm was not expected to strengthen into a hurricane. But its path along the Texas coast over the next couple of days once

it gets inland could produce bands of showers with heavy rainfall, forecasters said. Rain from Beta was already coming down Monday in the Houston area.

"This still is probably the most uncertain part of the forecast," Dan Reilly, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in the Houston-Galveston office, said about rainfall from Beta.

Earlier predictions of up to 20 inches (51 centimeters) in some areas were downgraded Monday to up to 15 inches (38 centimeters). Texas coastal counties were most likely to see 4 to 6 inches (10 to

15 centimeters) with 2 to 4 inches (5 to 10 centimeters) farther inland, Reilly said.

Forecasters and officials reassured residents Beta was not expected to be another Hurricane Harvey or Tropical Storm Imelda. Harvey in 2017 dumped more than 50 inches (127 centimeters) of rain on Houston, causing \$125 billion in damage in Texas. Imelda, which hit Southeast Texas last year, was one of the wettest cyclones on record.

Beta's maximum sustained winds were 45 mph (75 kph) Monday afternoon. Beta was

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A truck drives through a flooded street Monday in Galveston, Texas. [JENNIFER REYNOLDS/THE GALVESTON COUNTY DAILY NEWS VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]