

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

Firefighter dies, thousands more take on California blaze

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — One of the thousands of firefighters battling a series of wildfires across Southern California has died, but authorities gave no hint of how.

San Diego-based Cory Iverson, 32, died Thursday while assigned to the blaze northwest of Los Angeles, which has become the fourth-largest in California history. He was an engineer with a state fire engine strike team.

Dozens of police and fire vehicles escorted a hearse carrying Iverson's flag-draped body to the county medical examiner's office in Ventura.

Iverson had been with the state since 2009, said Fire Chief Ken Pimlott of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Ventura County Sheriff Geoff Dean called for a moment of silence in Iverson's memory Thursday night at an informational meeting for residents of the rural town of Fillmore, near an eastern flank of the fire.

"As I was up in the canyon and I watched his fire brethren remove his flag-draped body from the canyon in the hills above where we sit right here, I couldn't help but think about his pregnant wife and his young

daughter who will never see their husband and father again," Dean said.

It was the second death linked to the fire. A 70-year-old woman was killed in a car crash while evacuating as the fire raged last week. Her body was found inside the wrecked car along an evacuation route.

Authorities said it had scorched more than 394 square miles by early today. Containment was estimated at 35 percent.

GOP leaders move to appease Rubio, finalize big tax bill

WASHINGTON — Congressional Republicans finalized their sweeping tax package today, expanding its child tax credit to placate a reluctant GOP senator as they pushed to muscle the bill through Congress next week and give President Donald Trump his first major legislative victory.

Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida has been a potential holdout, though lawmakers have been working to appease him. Rubio wrote on Twitter earlier today that he was dissatisfied with the size of a tax credit that

low-income families can claim for their children.

"The #workingclass is always forgotten in D.C. We need to add more #taxcuts for #workingclass parents especially those earning 20k- 50K," Rubio wrote.

At the White House, Trump said he was confident that Congress would pass the legislation. The package would give generous tax cuts to corporations and the wealthiest Americans — Trump among them — and more modest tax cuts to low- and middle-income families.

Members of a House-Senate conference committee were signing the final version of the legislation today. They have been working to blend different versions passed by the House and Senate.

The tax package would double the basic per-child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000. The bill makes a smaller amount available to families even if they owe no income tax. The amount has been increased from \$1,100 to \$1,400.

Rubio has said he wanted the \$1,100 figure increased, but he hasn't said by how much.

Low-income taxpayers would receive the money in the form of a tax refund, which is why it's called a "refundable" tax credit.

Suspect in car attack faces new charge: first-degree murder

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — The man accused of driving into a crowd protesting a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville faces a new charge of first-degree murder after a court hearing Thursday in which prosecutors presented surveillance video and other evidence against him.

Prosecutors announced at the start of a preliminary hearing for James Alex Fields that they were seeking to upgrade the second-degree murder charge he previously faced in the Aug. 12 collision in Charlottesville that left 32-year-old Heather Heyer dead and dozens injured. The judge agreed to that and ruled there is probable cause for all charges against Fields, including nine lesser felony counts, to proceed.

Fields' case will now be presented to a grand jury for an indictment.

Authorities say the 20-year-old, described by a former teacher as having a keen interest in Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler, drove his speed-

ing car into a group of counterprotesters the day of the "Unite the Right" rally that drew hundreds of white nationalist from around the country. The attack came after the rally in this Virginia college town had descended into chaos — with violent brawling between attendees and counterdemonstrators — and authorities had forced the crowd to disband.

Surveillance footage from a Virginia State Police helicopter, played by prosecutors in court, captured the moment of impact by the car and the cursing of the startled troopers on board. The video then showed the car as it reversed, drove away and eventually pulled over. The helicopter had been monitoring the violence, and prosecutors questioned Charlottesville Police Detective Steven Young about the video as it played.

hotel room when she was 16 said today that she spent years in guilty silence and took pains to not dress suggestively in professional contexts because she assumed the incident was her fault.

Playwright Cori Thomas was a classmate of Hoffman's daughter in 1980 when she says she met the actor, who invited her to his New York hotel room to wait for her mother after dinner with the teenagers. After his daughter left, Hoffman went to take a shower, Thomas said.

"I was just sitting there waiting for my parents. He came out of the bathroom and had a towel around him and that was the first, 'Hmm, that is kind of weird,'" Thomas, now 53, said. "And then he dropped the towel, and I think I just like...I had never seen a naked man. I had never kissed a man."

Playwright alleges past misconduct by Hoffman

ROME — A playwright who says Dustin Hoffman exposed himself to her and had her massage his feet in a

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