

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

At least 7 die as Greyhound bus, semitrailer collide

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — A blown tire on a semitrailer may be to blame for a deadly head-on crash with a commercial passenger bus along Interstate 40 in New Mexico near the Arizona border, according to authorities.

At least seven people were killed, and many of the 49 passengers aboard the Greyhound bus were injured.

New Mexico State Police said the semi was headed east on the freeway Thursday afternoon when one of its tires blew, sending the rig carrying produce across the median and into oncoming traffic, where it slammed into the Greyhound heading to Phoenix from Albuquerque.

The National Transportation Safety Board and New Mexico state police are investigating.

Passing motorists described a chaotic scene with passengers on the ground and people screaming.

Eric Huff was heading to the Grand Canyon with his girlfriend when they came across the crash. The semi's trailer was upside down and "shredded to pieces," and the front of the Greyhound bus was smashed, he said, with many of the seats pressed together. Part of the side of the bus was torn off, he said.

Trump cancels pay raise for federal workers

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is canceling pay raises due in January for most civilian federal employees, he informed Congress on Thursday, citing budget constraints. But the workers still could see a slightly smaller boost in their pay under a proposal lawmakers are considering.

Trump said he was nixing a 2.1 percent across-the-board raise for most workers, as well as separate locality pay increases averaging 25.7 percent.

"We must maintain efforts to put our Nation on a fiscally sustainable course, and Federal agency budgets cannot sustain such increases," Trump said. The president last year signed a

package of tax cuts that is forecast to add about \$1.5 trillion to federal deficits over 10 years.

As workers across the country head into the Labor Day weekend, Trump cited the "significant" cost of the federal workforce, and called for their pay to be based on performance and designed to recruit, retain and reward "high-performing Federal employees and those with critical skill sets."

Democrats criticized Trump for moving to cancel the scheduled pay raise, citing tax cuts he signed into law last December. That law provided steep tax cuts for corporations and the wealthiest Americans, and more modest reductions for middle- and low-income individuals and families.

Canadian court halts Pacific pipeline project

TORONTO — Canada's Federal Court of Appeal on Thursday halted the contentious Trans Mountain pipeline expansion that would nearly triple the flow of oil from the Alberta oil sands to the Pacific Coast — a setback that comes just as the government is buy-

ing the project.

The court ordered the country's National Energy Board to redo its review of the pipeline, saying the original study was flawed and lacked adequate consultations with First Nations peoples.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government approved Trans Mountain in 2016 and was so determined to see it built that it announced plans this spring to buy the pipeline. The sale will be finalized as early as today.

It faces stiff environmental opposition from British Columbia's provincial government and activists. Houston-based Kinder Morgan earlier halted essential spending on the project and said it would cancel it altogether if the national and provincial governments could not guarantee it.

In a written decision, the court said the energy board's review was so flawed that the federal government could not rely on it to approve the pipeline. The court concluded the federal government failed in its duty to engage in meaningful consultations with First Nations before approving it.

"Meaningful consultation is not intended simply to allow indigenous peoples 'to blow off steam,'" the decision said.

Clinic: 'We definitely want the support of the community'

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Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare and Columbia Memorial Hospital have partnered since June on a treatment option at a Warrenton clinic that combines behavioral counseling with Suboxone, a drug used to help lessen the cravings for heroin or prescription opioids.

Methadone is more addictive, and more likely to be abused, than Suboxone, which is why doses are mostly given daily at methadone clinics instead of prescribed once or twice a week for people to take at home.

Even as opioid abuse has reached epidemic proportions in the United States, the image of drug addicts lining up at a methadone clinic every day is too much for some communities.

"We definitely want the support of the community, as much of it as we can get," Ford said. "And we realize we're not going to get all of it."



Pamplin Media Group

A methadone clinic could offer treatment for opioid addiction in Clatsop County.

Substitution treatment

Warrenton Mayor Henry Balensifer does not want a methadone clinic in Warrenton.

The city is already home to the Suboxone clinic and the crisis respite center, which helps people in mental health crisis. The mayor believes a methadone clinic would place another layer of stress on police.

Balensifer also has ideological objections to substitution treatment — replacing heroin or prescription opioids with methadone, with no time limit

on a cure.

"I think that if we're going to invest money into getting people help, then it should be to get them out of addiction," he said. "And methadone has got a pretty bad reputation over the years, and it earned that reputation."

"So I'm not excited to bring additional potential problems to the city."

Balensifer said if the idea is "simply risk reduction, we're not doing anybody a favor other than subsidizing someone's

drug habit in a cleaner manner."

Astoria Mayor Arline LaMear said drug treatment options are worth pursuing, but she does not know the best place for a methadone clinic. She noted that Helping Hands, a Seaside-based nonprofit that works with people who are homeless or struggling with drug and alcohol abuse, chose a former Uniontown boarding house for a new facility because it is closer to other social services in Astoria.

"But I don't know that citizens are going to be thrilled about having it here in Astoria, either," she said.

Sheriff Tom Bergin and District Attorney Josh Marquis were skeptical last year about the county's needle-exchange program, but they agreed not to try to block approval. Needle exchanges and methadone clinics are practical approaches that treat drug addiction as a disease, yet can be in conflict with the zero-tolerance view of illegal drug use often expected of law enforcement.

Drug abuse, and the lack of

treatment available locally for people on the Oregon Health Plan, is intertwined with crime and contributes to overcrowding at the county jail.

"I'm for treatment as long as we can get people back on the track of being, I guess, productive citizens in our community. And if that's what it takes, then fine," Bergin said of a methadone clinic. "I'm not a big fan of methadone unless it's something that can be utilized to wean people off the addiction. I know it's a long, hard process, but it needs to be done, it's not something that should be just maintained."

"I think there needs to be goals involved with that type of treatment. In other words, you need to reach milestones. And they need to be reached methodically and clearly."

Marquis said CODA, which will likely run the methadone clinic, has an impressive reputation. The provider, which has been involved in methadone treatment for decades, has participated in national research on addiction and recovery.


"I am supportive of it," the district attorney said, "because I think it's unrealistic, when people are in addiction, to expect that the only alternative is abstinence."

Round trips

Round trips from the North Coast to the Portland metro area, and in some cases, Salem, for methadone can be disruptive for people trying to shake drug addiction. Spending eight times more money on travel than treatment is also unsustainable for the Oregon Health Plan, the state's version of Medicaid.

Geographically, Clatsop County is in the middle of the three counties under the umbrella of the Columbia Pacific Coordinated Care Organization. Ford said administrators are looking at locations from Astoria to Seaside for the methadone clinic, with an eye toward property that offers some sense of privacy.

"We're serious about doing it," she said, "because we think it's a really important addition to the addictions treatment ecosystem."



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