

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

US will execute inmates for first time since 2003

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department said Thursday the federal government will resume executing death-row inmates for the first time since 2003, ending an informal moratorium even as the nation sees a broad shift away from capital punishment.

Attorney General William Barr instructed the Bureau of Prisons to schedule executions starting in December for five men, all accused of murdering children. Although the death penalty remains legal in 30 states, executions on the federal level are rare.

The move is likely to stir up fresh interest in an issue that has largely lain dormant in recent years, adding a new front to the culture battles that President Donald Trump already is waging on matters such as abortion and immigration in the lead-up to the 2020 elections.

Most Democrats oppose capi-

tal punishment. Vice President Joe Biden this week shifted to call for the elimination of the federal death penalty after years of supporting it.

By contrast, Trump has spoken often — and sometimes wistfully — about capital punishment and his belief that executions serve as both an effective deterrent and appropriate punishment for some crimes, including mass shootings and the killings of police officers.

16 Marines arrested in migrant smuggling investigation

SAN DIEGO — An investigation into Marines accused of helping smuggle migrants into the United States led to the arrest Thursday of 16 of their fellow Marines at California's Camp Pendleton, just north of the U.S.-Mexico border.

In a dramatic move aimed at sending a message, authorities made the arrests as the Marines gathered in formation with their

battalion.

None of the 16 Marines were involved in helping enforce border security, the Marine Corps said. They are accused of crimes ranging from migrant smuggling to drug-related offenses.

The arrests came weeks after two Marines were arrested by a Border Patrol agent on suspicion of transporting three Mexicans on the promise of money after they crossed illegally into the United States.

House passes bipartisan budget bill with Trump support

WASHINGTON — Observing a rare cease-fire in their battles with President Donald Trump, the Democratic-controlled House on Thursday easily passed bipartisan debt and budget legislation to permit the Treasury to issue bonds to pay the government's bills and lock in place recent budget gains for both the Pentagon and domes-

tic agencies.

The measure, passed by a 284-149 vote, would head off another politically dangerous government shutdown and add a measure of stability to action this fall on a \$1.37 trillion slate of annual appropriations bills. The Senate is scheduled to approve the bill next week.

The hard-won agreement between the administration and Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi lifts the limit on the government's \$22 trillion debt for two years and averts the risk of the Pentagon and domestic agencies from being hit with \$125 billion in automatic spending cuts that are all that's left of a failed 2011 budget pact.

Democrats rallied behind the legislation, which protects domestic programs some of them have fought to protect for decades through extended stretches of GOP control of Congress. House GOP conservatives, many of whom won election promising to tackle entrenched federal deficits, generally recoiled from it.

US: Iran test-launched a medium-range missile

WASHINGTON — Iran test-launched a medium-range ballistic missile inside its borders, U.S. officials said Friday, defying Trump administration demands that it curtail the weapon program and demonstrating its intent to further push back against U.S. sanctions.

The test came amid heightened tensions between Iran and the West, mainly over the safety of commercial shipping in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

A White House spokesman called the test launch an example of Iran "acting out" as a result of intense pressure from U.S. economic sanctions.

Tensions have mounted with Iran over a 2015 nuclear accord it reached with world powers. Trump withdrew the U.S. from the accord last year, reinstating sanctions on Iran and adding new ones. Nations still party to the nuclear deal plan to meet in Vienna on Sunday to see to what extent the agreement can be saved.

LNG fight: Conflicts over energy policy are unlikely to disappear

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LNG supporters, who envisioned a return to an industrial past," the case study concluded.

"Opponents then capitalized on larger national and regional concerns — specifically related to terrorism and later to the potential impacts of future earthquakes and tsunamis — to align concerns about LNG to salient public issues."

Activists partnered with Columbia Riverkeeper, an environmental nonprofit that provided important technical, organizing and legal expertise, and targeted local elected officials who supported the projects for defeat at the ballot box.

"As established local leaders began losing elections to LNG opponents, the opposition could then count on local decisions to turn in their favor," researchers found.

The case study, funded in part by Oregon Sea Grant and published in January by the University of California Press, was based on local news articles, letters to the editor, transcripts of public hearings and interviews with nearly two dozen people involved in the LNG debate.

Researchers said concepts from social movements like the one against LNG in Clatsop County can help untangle arguments and strategies in other communities on the front lines of energy policy debates.

"I think the opponents in the Clatsop County case were quite effective in pushing forward a frame that wasn't just about environment," said Hilary Boudet, an associate professor in the sociology program at Oregon State, who was one of the authors. "It was, too, but it was also about potential economic impacts if the facility were to be built."

The case study described the majority of local opponents to LNG as retired, including many with experience in political engagement. Opponents also had a well-organized communication network.

After Oregon LNG withdrew from the Warrenton project, some local supporters blamed retirees

READ THE STUDY

To read the study, go to bit.ly/lng-study

resistant to development for costing the county jobs and an economic boost. But activists celebrated it as a victory for local grassroots organizing against wealthy corporate interests.

"They're looking at their own bank accounts and they're not doing it for community welfare or longevity or anything like that," said Laurie Caplan, who was one of the leaders of Columbia Pacific Common Sense, which formed to fight LNG. "They're doing it to make a killing and then they'll go on to the next project and make a killing there. That's a whole different outlook."

Researchers believe that given the potential risks and benefits of massive energy projects, conflicts are unlikely to disappear.

The proposed Jordan Cove LNG terminal and pipeline project at Coos Bay, for example, has divided residents and business interests as it moves through the regulatory process.

Social movements against environmental regulations are also taking shape in Oregon and across the nation in the debate over climate change. #TimberUnity, with seed money from the owner of Stimson Lumber Co., has rapidly built a grassroots following in rural parts of the state in response to cap-and-trade legislation in Salem.

Caplan said the political climate today is different than during the LNG battle.

"I think it would be a different type of battle because it's almost being like you're anti-American or un-American and that was never the issue, but I think it would be now," she said. "And that changes what people are willing and able to speak up for. It's just difficult."

"It's harder if you think your connection with your friends and neighbors and family are at stake. Almost everybody I know has a family member who is totally opposed politically and it is really painful."

Sewer rate: No one from Westport came to public comment meeting

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"We did have a public meeting and had information provided to the public. No one came to those meetings, which is disappointing," he said. "We would like to inform them more and give them the information that we have, but no one came to those meetings, so we still need to have an opportunity this evening for public comment on this."

No one from Westport came to the county commission meeting on Wednesday for public comment.

"I guess I am concerned about the 35% first-year increase," Commissioner Pamela Nev said. "A 35% increase, that's not exactly an economically robust area. I think this can be pretty devastating for a lot of people. I know if my sewer bill went up 35%, I would notice it."

McLean said it has been a long time since Westport has had rate increases, but acknowledged

the steep increase is not an ideal solution.

"We really should have done it sooner," he said. "It would have been less of an impact. And those expenses have been continually climbing over the years."

"We are also tied to DEQ's requirements, so there's not a lot of options," McLean said.

McLean said a lot of the properties in Westport are rentals and they usually don't see sewer bills because it is included in their rent.

"I know there are various concerns for that area out there and what I'm hoping to put into the amendment is we continue to look for funding to support those ongoing infrastructure improvements," Commissioner Kathleen Sullivan said.

The rate increases were approved with the condition that the county continue to look for other sources of funding.



Christine Bridgens

A homeless camp in Warrenton.

Homelessness: Sweeps met with praise, criticism

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Workman believes the issues are still primarily seasonal. Officers have been out more actively enforcing no trespassing rules on private property and found numerous camps — especially in the wooded areas around the business hub off Ensign Lane, where Costco is located.

"There is a lot of vacant land that's flat and easy to access," Warrenton City Manager Linda Engbretson said. "There's a lot of property that they are using."

She has heard numerous complaints about theft and burglary, as well.

There are also what police call "the power line camps" between the Warrenton Kia and Ocean Crest car dealerships, where large power lines run across U.S. Highway 101. Police have only just scratched the surface there.

"We're hearing there's even more camps deeper in," Workman said. "It's very concerning to me safety-wise and resource-wise. ... If we send (officers) out into the woods half a mile from their car, who is responding to their other calls? No one. We have to plan these things."

Warrenton police conducted a massive sweep of a sprawling, established camp behind Goodwill last year. A new round of sweeps is in the works, Workman said.

Last summer, Astoria police fielded numerous complaints about homeless camps around the city and in the urban forest.

The complaints and the state of some of the camps police found led the Astoria City Council to close a loophole in city rules and ban camping in the woods. Crews ultimately cleaned up seven campsites in the woods near a residential neighborhood on the east end. They removed four large dumpsters worth of garbage and other items left behind, about 5 tons of material in total.

The sweeps met with both praise and criticism.

Police and public works employees coordinated with social service agencies to inform campers about available services and campers were warned far in advance. But few of the people whose camps were removed found housing or actively entered social service programs, advocates said. The sweeps just pushed the problem elsewhere at the start of the cold and rainy season, they argued.

Since the sweep, some people have moved back into the abandoned camps, including one man whose camp had generated a lot of garbage, said Kenny Hansen, the police department's homeless liaison officer.

"Some have gone to the (Astoria Riverwalk), some have gone outside the city and some have totally left the area," Hansen said.

He is seeing more people who are homeless on the Riverwalk, a shift that could be seasonal. He and other police officers have issued several warnings and a few citations for camping.

"So far, to my knowledge, it's been pretty quiet," Astoria Police Chief Geoff Spalding told the city's homelessness solutions task force at a meeting Thursday. Though volume remains high for homelessness-related calls, there is a sense overall that Astoria is not seeing the same kinds of problems the city saw last summer, he said.

Police are responding to complaints about camping in city limits, but they are not actively seeking out camps at this point.

"All of our concerns are still the same," Spalding said, "but most of the time we understand we're just relocating the problem."