



Evan Vucci/AP Photo

President Donald Trump talks to reporters on the South Lawn of the White House.

Trump formally objecting to probe, won't say he'll cooperate

By ZEKE MILLER and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The impeachment investigation into President Donald Trump widened on Friday into a constitutional battle between the executive branch and Congress, as Democrats prepared to subpoena White House officials and the president signaled his administration would not cooperate.

Trump said he would formally object to the impeachment investigation, even as he acknowledged that House Democrats "have the votes" to proceed.

The White House was expected to send a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi arguing that Congress could not mount its impeachment inquiry without first having a vote to authorize it. The letter was expected to say the administration wouldn't cooperate with the probe without that vote.

Trump said the resolution would likely pass the House, but he predicted it would backfire on Democrats.

"I really believe that they're going to pay a tremendous price at the polls," he said.

Trump's comments came shortly before Democrats sent an extensive request for documents to Vice President Mike Pence about his contacts with Ukraine. Lawmakers have made Trump's request that Ukraine investigate former Vice President Joe Biden the centerpiece of the probe.

A whistleblower complaint said that Trump sought to use military assistance for Ukraine to push President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to investigate the 2020 Democratic hopeful. The West Wing was set to allow a similar request for documents from the president's staff to go unfulfilled Friday, likely forcing Democrats to make good on their threat to issue a subpoena for the records.

Pence spokeswoman Katie Waldman dismissed the new demand for documents, saying that given its wide scope, "it does not appear to be a serious

request." When Pelosi recently announced that the House was initiating the inquiry, she didn't seek the consent of the full chamber, as was done for impeachment investigations into former Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton.

But it is underway, and at a rapidly escalating pace.

Late Thursday, House investigators released a cache of text messages that showed top U.S. diplomats encouraging Ukraine's newly elected president to conduct an investigation linked to Biden's family in return for granting a high-profile visit with Trump in Washington.

The release followed a 10-hour interview with one of the diplomats, Kurt Volker, who stepped down as special envoy to Ukraine after the impeachment inquiry had begun.

Trump repeated on Friday that he was pressing Ukraine to investigate corruption, not trying to undermine Biden, who could be his 2020 presidential election opponent. He made a related request of China, specifying Biden and his son, on Thursday.

As Republicans search for a response to the investigation, the absence of a procedural vote to begin the probe has been a main attack line against Democrats.

Pelosi swatted the need for such a vote back as unnecessary, saying the House is well within its rules to pursue the inquiry without it.

"The existing rules of the House provide House committees with full authority to conduct investigations for all matters under their jurisdiction, including impeachment investigations," Pelosi wrote Thursday in a letter to House GOP Leader Kevin McCarthy after he, too, pressed for a floor vote.

Pelosi has sought to avoid a vote on the impeachment probe for the same reason she resisted, for months, liberal calls to try to remove the president: It would force moderate House Democrats to make a politically risky vote.

The White House, meanwhile, is trying to force the question on Democrats, as it seeks to raise the political cost for their impeachment investigation and to animate the president's supporters ahead of the 2020 election.

Trump allies have suggested that without a formal vote, the House is merely conducting standard oversight, entitling lawmakers to a lesser level of disclosure from the administration. The Justice Department raised similar arguments last month, though that was before Pelosi announced the impeachment investigation.

Two days after telling reporters, "Well, I always cooperate," Trump struck a different note on cooperating with the House probe. "I don't know," he said. "That's up to the lawyers."

Democrats have warned that the Trump administration's obstruction of the investigation is itself a potentially impeachable office. The administration was expected to miss various deadlines Friday to comply with House investigators' requests for documents.

There's no clear-cut procedure in the Constitution for initiating an impeachment inquiry, leaving many questions about possible presidential obstruction untested in court, said Allan Lichtman, a history professor at American University.

"There's no specification in the Constitution in what does and does not constitute a more formal impeachment inquiry or investigation," he said.

Rudy Giuliani, the president's personal attorney, dismissed the entire premise of the impeachment inquiry, which is centered on Trump asking Ukraine to investigate his possible political rival, Democratic former Vice President Biden.

"The president was not tasking Ukraine to investigate a political opponent," Giuliani told The Associated Press on Thursday. "He wanted an investigation into a seriously conflicted former vice president of the United States who damaged the reputation of the United States in Ukraine."

OBITUARIES

Donald Dee Abrahams

Astoria

March 27, 1929 — Sept. 30, 2019



Donald Dee Abrahams, 90, of Astoria, Oregon, passed away peacefully Monday, Sept. 30, 2019, in Astoria.

He was born March 27, 1929, in Astoria, to Albert and Adriana Abrahams. He has one brother, Thomas.

Don attended elementary school in Knappa, and graduated from Astoria High School.

He married Evelyn Ruth Hendriksen in 1959; they later divorced. She resides in Astoria.

Don joined the National Guard after high school, and also attended a trade school for mechanics. He later owned and operated two log trucks. As a child, he grew up at Big Creek Camp 3 and wanted to experience the timber industry as an adult.

He spent the majority of his career in Astoria working for various companies such as Bumble Bee Seafoods, Crown Zellerbach and Dant & Russell. Before his adventure to Alaska, he worked for Claterbos as the master diesel mechanic in 1980, when Mount St. Helens blew. He later traveled to work for Cochran Electric and then Seley Corp. in Ketchikan, Alaska, where he retired in 1989.

After retirement, he kept himself busy working on miscellaneous projects, and was always willing to lend a helping hand to his family, friends and neighbors. If anything was mechanically broken, he loved figuring out

how to make it work again.

In 1997, Don renewed his acquaintance with Patricia Van Cleave, whom he originally met when he was 13 years old while his father was logging in Scio, Oregon, for a short period of time. They married in 2001 in Long Beach, Washington, and lived in their Svensen home until her death in 2016.

Don enjoyed working on his boat and any miscellaneous projects in his shop, fishing, camping, road trips, visits from his grandchildren and attending his grandchildren's events.

He is survived by his son, Mike, and daughter-in-law, Michele; his daughter, Judy, and son-in-law, Jon; his daughter Susie; his grandchildren, Brian, Jordan (Steven), Miranda (Kyle), Mykka (Brad) and Tessa (Casey); and his great-grandchildren, Jayden, Kaisa, Maverick and Sawyer. He is also survived by his brother, Thomas, and sister-in-law, Roberta.

A celebration of his life will be held Sunday, Oct. 20, at the Elks Lodge, second floor, 453 11th St. in Astoria, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Ocean View Funeral and Cremation Service in Astoria is taking care of the arrangements. The online guest book is OceanViewAstoria.com

Memorial contributions can be made to Sons of Norway Nidaros Lodge No. 16 and the Camp 18 Loggers Memorial.



Donald Abrahams

Brown bans flavored vaping products

A six-month restriction

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE

Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown has imposed a six-month ban on the sale of flavored vaping products.

Eight cases of respiratory illness associated with vaping have been reported in Oregon as of Tuesday.

In two of those cases, the patients died, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

More than 1,000 people across the nation have been struck with the severe lung illness connected to vaping, and at least 18 have died.

People vape by breathing in and out through electronic cigarettes or vape pens that heat liquid to create a vapor. That liquid can contain nicotine, THC and other ingredients such as flavorings. The industry has been criticized for promoting sweet-flavored products that appeal to children, such as bubble gum and crème brûlée flavors.

The ban does not cover unflavored vaping products.

"My first priority is to safeguard the health of all Oregonians," Brown said in a statement Friday. "By keeping potentially unsafe products off of store shelves and out of the hands of Oregon's children and youth, we prevent exposing more people to potentially dangerous chemical compounds, and help lessen the chance of further tragedy for any other Oregon family."

Brown added that the "safest option" for people right now is stop vaping altogether, in line with what

State Health Officer Dean Sidelinger advised.

"Until we know more about what is causing this illness, please, do not vape," Brown said. "Encourage your friends and family members to stop vaping immediately. Talk to your children about the dangers of vaping. The risks are far too high."

Neither state nor federal officials know the precise cause of the illnesses, although most victims reported using marijuana vape oils, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Last week, the state health agency had suggested a six-month ban as one of the policy options Brown could consider.

The governor's order does not say how the immediate ban will be enforced. There are does not know how many retail stores exist in the state, according to state reports. The estimate is approximately 3,000.

She is also ordering state agencies to develop "long-term solutions" for the legislature to consider.

Within three months, Brown wants state agencies to come up with plans with respect to consumer warnings about vaping, ingredient disclosure, testing vaping products and improving how vaping-related lung injuries are reported by health care providers to the state's health agency.

She also wants agencies to develop plans to increase access to federally approved cessation services and plans to set up a statewide prevention and education campaign to discourage vaping.

Brown also said she is

convening a special work group to deal with vaping, which will include representatives of state agencies, doctors, legislators and policy experts in cannabis and tobacco, as well as representatives of the tobacco and cannabis industries.

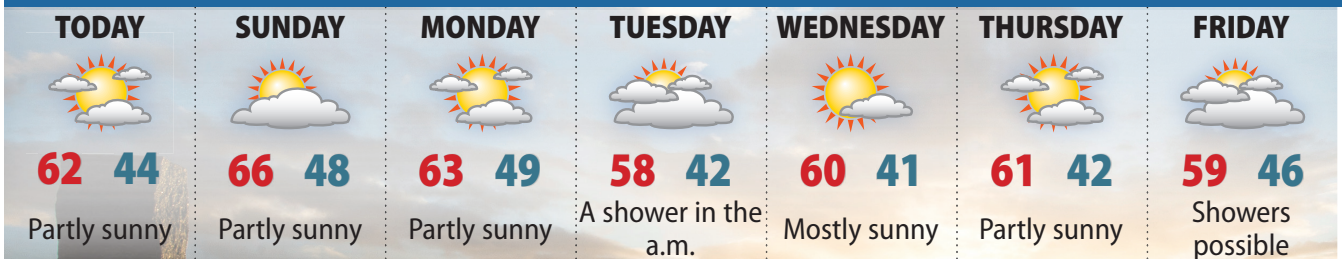
The Oregon Medical Association, Oregon Nurses Association and the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems said they approve of Brown's temporary ban.

"We strongly support the governor's proposed regulatory, legislative and educational actions to address the current health crisis around vaping, including an emergency ban on flavored vaping products," the groups said in a joint statement Friday. "We have known for some time that vaping products — particularly those that are flavored — threaten to increase the number of youth addicted to nicotine. Given the increasing vaping-related illnesses and deaths over the last several months, urgent action is critical."

Last week, state Rep. Cheri Helt, R-Bend, called for a temporary ban on vaping products to dig into the causes of illness and death that have resulted from vaping.

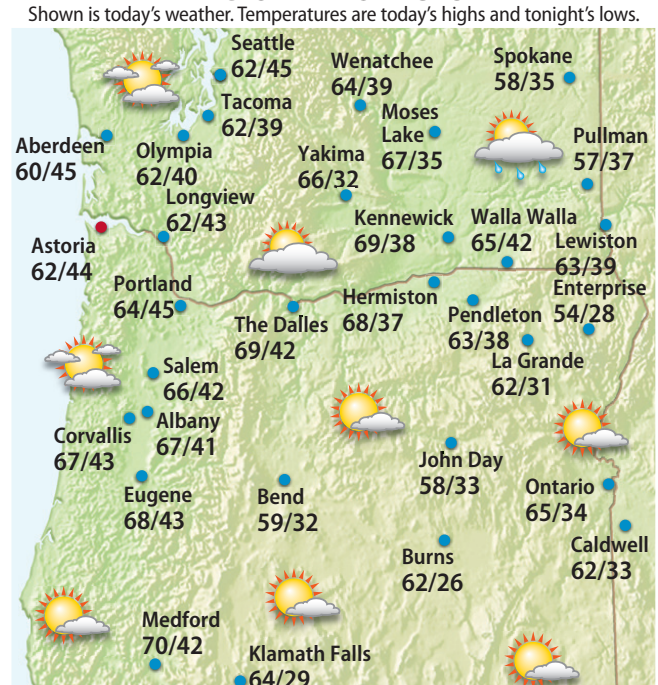
"Protecting young Oregonians from the dangers of flavored vaping products is the right decision," Helt said in a statement Friday. "I encourage the Oregon Health Authority to go further to understand and ensure the safety of all vaping products. Next year, I'll seek bipartisan legislation to protect the lives and health of Oregonians who use vaping products, including bans if necessary."

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Table with tide information for Astoria and other locations.

NATIONAL CITIES

Table with weather information for various national cities.