

**BRIEFLY**

**Greece gets until Sunday for proposals to stave off collapse**

BRUSSELS (AP) — Frustrated and angry eurozone leaders fearing for the future of their common currency gave the Greek prime minister a last-minute chance Tuesday to finally come up with a viable proposal on how to save his country from financial ruin. Overcoming their surprise when Alexis Tsipras failed to present them with a detailed reform blueprint, the leaders reluctantly agreed to a final summit on Sunday, saying the days leading up to it could give both sides an opportunity to stave off collapse of the struggling but defiant member nation.

Underscoring the gravity of the challenge, European Union President Donald Tusk decided to call all 28 EU leaders to Brussels, because, for the bloc, it "is maybe the most critical moment in our history."

French President Francois Hollande insisted much was at stake. "It's not just the problem of Greece — it's the future of the European Union," he said.

Highlighting the rising anger with Tsipras over months of foot-dragging and surprising negotiating twists, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker had a stark warning for Greece.

"We have a Grexit scenario, prepared in detail," he said, apparently referring to the situation in which Greece would be forced out of the currency union.

Speaking to reporters late Tuesday, Tsipras made it clear he had gotten the message that there wasn't a moment to waste as deadlines for debt payments that Greece cannot afford draw near.

**NTSB: 2 killed when F-16, small plane crash; jet pilot safe**

MONCKS CORNER, S.C. (AP) — An F-16 fighter jet smashed into a small plane Tuesday over South Carolina, killing two people and raining down plane parts and debris over a wide swath of marshes and rice fields.

The two people aboard the smaller Cessna were killed, and the plane was completely destroyed, National Transportation Safety Board spokesman Peter Knudson said. The pilot of the F-16 ejected and "is apparently uninjured," he said.

A press release from Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter said the pilot, Maj. Aaron Johnson from the 55th Fighter Squadron, was taken to Joint Base Charleston's medical clinic for observation.

The fighter jet crash-landed into woods around the privately owned Lewisfield Plantation, an estate dating to 1750.

"We heard the plane crash. And then we took off from where I was at, I guess I was about a half-mile from it, when we saw a cloud of smoke," said Leo Ramsey, who's worked at the plantation for about 30 years.

He and two other co-workers went out to the flaming spot where the jet had crash-landed into some of the wooded acreage around the plantation, Ramsey said. They found burning metal, splintered trees and a crater where the

empty jet crashed, he said.

The NTSB is investigating the cause.

Debris was scattered across a wide swath of the sparsely populated area about 20 miles northwest of Charleston, though there were no reports of anyone being hurt or any homes being damaged on the ground, Berkeley County spokesman Michael Mule said.

**Senators quiz military chiefs, criticize U.S. fight against IS**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Facing blistering criticism from Republican senators, Defense Secretary Ash Carter acknowledged on Tuesday that the U.S. has only 60 trainees in a program to prepare and arm thousands of moderate Syrian rebels in the fight against Islamic State militants.

"That is a small class," Carter told the Senate Armed Services Committee. "This is the number that got through a very vigorous vetting and selection process that we have. ... We expect that number to improve."

Sen. John McCain, chairman of the committee and a persistent critic of Obama's foreign policy, wasn't convinced.

"I got to tell you that after four years, Mr. Secretary, that is not an impressive number," McCain, R-Ariz., said in one of several testy exchanges with Carter and Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

So far, Congress has approved \$500 million to train Free Syria Army fighters. The Associated Press reported last month that the number of trainees involved in the program at bases in Jordan and Turkey had dropped below 100, with dozens of recruits fleeing the program.

At the hearing, Carter agreed that 60 was not a significant number but said there were 7,000 prospective recruits in the pipeline. The U.S. goal is to train and equip 5,400 rebels a year for three years.

**Chicago group sues 3 suburbs over gun store regulations**

CHICAGO (AP) — Two mothers who lost sons to gun violence joined ministers and an activist group Tuesday in an unusual lawsuit against three Chicago suburbs, alleging that weak oversight of gun stores has allowed criminals to easily obtain weapons flowing into a metropolitan area besieged by gang violence.

The lawsuit accuses the communities of Lyons, Riverdale and Lincolnwood of violating the civil rights of residents in Chicago's largely African American neighborhoods by failing to take steps to make sure gun stores are not selling to people who should not be allowed to carry them.

"Those illegal firearms are flowing into a pocket of communities violating the civil rights of the individuals who reside there, who are afraid to go near their windows or let their children play in the park, much less their own yards," said Kathleen Sances, a member of the Coalition for Safe Chicago Communities, one of the plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

**S.C. Senate gives final OK to Confederate flag removal**

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — The South Carolina Senate gave its final approval Tuesday to removing the Confederate flag from the Capitol grounds, but across the hall in the House, Republicans quietly sought a way to make a last stand to preserve some kind of symbol honoring their Southern ancestors at the Statehouse.

The House was scheduled to begin debate Wednesday on the bill to take down the flag and its pole and send the banner to the state's Confederate Relic Room. Gov. Nikki Haley and business leaders support the proposal.

To stress the chamber's unity after Tuesday's 36-3 vote, senators invited the widow of their slain colleague Clementa Pinckney to the floor. She stood just inside the door in a black dress, only a few feet from her husband's desk, which was draped in black cloth with a single white rose on top. Every member stood as she entered and later walked up to her, offering condolences.

After the flag was pulled off the Statehouse dome 15 years ago, it was called a settled issue. The banner was instead moved to a monument honoring Confederate soldiers elsewhere on the Capitol grounds.

But the flag debate swiftly gained urgency last month after Pinckney and eight other black people were fatally shot at a historic African-American church in Charleston. A white gunman who police said was motivated by racial hatred is charged in the attack.

Dylann Roof was indicted Tuesday on nine counts of murder, three counts of attempted murder and a weapons charge.

Haley and other conservatives have said they called for the flag to come down in part because of photos showing Roof posing with the Confederate symbol.

If the House goes along with the Senate's bill, the flag could be removed by the end of the week. But if the House changes the bill, either the Senate would have to agree with the changes or lawmakers would have to reconcile their differences in a conference committee, possibly delaying action for weeks. Several senators said the



Gerry Melendez/The State via AP

The South Carolina State House is seen through a Confederate flag held along Gervais Street, Monday in Columbia, S.C.

lopsided vote shows they do not want their bill to change.

Many Republicans in the House insist the flag will come down because of its association with racist groups. But they think lawmakers should at least discuss replacing it with a different flag that flew over Confederate troops.

Rep. Mike Pitts plans to propose several possible flags for the pole and believes he has a majority to pass them. Completely removing the flagpole, he said, would scrub history, which includes family members from his home and from the mountains of North Carolina and Virginia.

"I guess my plan for tomorrow is to be a lot like my ancestors were at the Bloody Angle," Pitts said, referring to part of a Virginia battlefield where fighting raged for nearly 24 hours in 1864, leaving Confederate dead stacked four deep behind their fortifications. "And fight until I have nothing left to fight with."

Pitts' favorite amendment would place on the pole the flag of the 1st South Carolina Volunteers regiment, which is a blue flag similar to the state flag with its Palmetto tree and crescent moon but with a wreath around the tree. Similar art is etched on a wall inside the Statehouse, Pitts said.

Any change to the Senate bill is unacceptable to the 46 Democrats in

the 124-member House — a critical number because some Democrats will have to support any bill to take down the flag to reach the two-thirds threshold required by law, Minority Leader Todd Rutherford said.

"It will become the new symbol," Rutherford said of any flag that goes up beside the monument to Confederate soldiers. "It will be the new vestige of racism."

Asked if the GOP was using the idea of an alternative flag simply to avoid bringing down the existing banner, Democratic Rep. Joe Neal, elected in 1992, said he thinks most Republicans are willing to remove the flag and pole entirely.

"I think a majority wants to do this. There is a minority that is dead set against it," Neal said. "We'll see when that vote comes up who they are."

Tuesday's Senate vote lacked drama, nearly matching the vote from the day before. But minutes after, the chamber hushed and all 45 senators stood up as Jennifer Pinckney entered.

On June 17, she locked herself in an office with one of the slain senator's two daughters as the gunman fired dozens of shots in her husband's Emanuel African Methodist Church. Since then, her only appearances have been at her husband's viewing and funeral.

**California right-to-die bill stalls in blow to movement**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — In a blow to the right-to-die movement, California lawmakers on Tuesday dropped one of the strongest legislative efforts in the U.S. to allow terminally ill patients to legally end their lives.

The move came despite pleas involving the case of Brittany Maynard, who moved from the San Francisco Bay Area to Oregon, which has a right-to-die law, when she was 29 so she could die on her own terms after a brain cancer diagnosis.

Aid-in-dying advocates had hoped the nationally publicized case would prompt a wave of new right-to-die laws. But no state has passed such legislation this year, with efforts defeated or stalling in Colorado, Maine, Hawaii, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and elsewhere.

The authors of the California legislation that would allow doctors to prescribe life-ending drugs lacked enough support to get through committees this year amid fierce religious opposition.

Democratic Assemblywoman Susan Eggman, a former hospice care social worker who co-authored the bill, said her colleagues in the Legislature were uncomfortable with the prospect of allowing people to end their own lives.

"The U.S. is a death-denying, death-defying culture, and one of the hardest things to change is culture," Eggman said.

Sponsors vowed to continue the fight in the Legislature. Meanwhile, aid-in-dying advocates have said they would take the issue to voters if the effort by lawmakers failed.

"We owe it to Brittany Maynard's family and terminally ill Californians to pursue every available remedy to give them relief from unbearable suffering," said Toni Broaddus, California campaign director for the right-to-die group Compassion and Choices.

Maynard's husband Dan Diaz, who has lobbied lawmakers on behalf of the right-to-die bill, said he's optimistic about the future of the movement after the influential California Medical Association dropped its opposition and bills were introduced in two dozen states.

"All of those things, I'd say, are enormous victories or huge steps, and those came about because of Brittany's story," Diaz said. "It is a very personal and very emotional topic, and that's fine. People need to think


about it and work through it."

The California measure was passed by the state Senate but hit a roadblock in the Assembly Health Committee. The panel includes at least two lawmakers who said they were reluctant to vote to allow patients to kill themselves after watching their own parents die from terminal illnesses.

Assemblyman Jimmy Gomez, D-Los Angeles, said he wanted to see advancements in treatment and prevention of diseases before allowing life-ending medication as a last resort.

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