



Melania Trump, right, looks on as her husband President-elect Donald Trump talks to reporters during a New Year's Eve party at Mar-a-Lago, Saturday in Palm Beach, Fla.

# Obama boosted White House technology; Trump sees risks

By JULIE PACE  
AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON — As Barack Obama began preparing to leave office, the first smartphone-toting U.S. president ordered his team to upgrade the White House's aging technology for his successor. New computers were purchased and faster internet was installed.

Not included in the modernization plans? A courier service.

But that delivery method of a bygone era may be in for a comeback under Donald Trump. Despite his voracious use of Twitter, the president-elect appears to be leaning toward old tech to ensure the security of sensitive messages.

"It's very important, if you have something really important, write it out and have it delivered by courier, the old-fashioned way because I'll tell you what, no computer is safe," Trump told reporters Saturday in response to questions about Russia's alleged hacking of Democrats during the presidential election. Trump, who doesn't email or surf the internet, said days earlier that computers "have complicated lives very greatly."

Trump's skepticism of some technology marks a sharp contrast from the president he'll replace on Jan. 20. Obama, who was a youthful 47 years old when he took office, carries a specially outfitted BlackBerry, emails with a small number of friends and aides, and has received some of his daily security briefings on an iPad. He celebrated technological innovations at an annual science fair, created the job of chief technology officer in the White House and viewed technology as key to making the sprawling federal government more efficient and responsive to the public.

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loose Sunday with a volley of tweets highlighting some of his accomplishments as president: boosting clean energy, bringing troops home, delivering "the longest streak of job growth in our history," passing a law to make health care affordable, reducing dependence on foreign oil and working "to reaffirm that all are created equal."

But technology has also been a burden for Obama. Online sign-ups for his health care law were crippled by massive technical issues, resulting in one of the most embarrassing episodes of his presidency. National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden stole classified information that he leaked to journalists, revealing the Obama administration's bulk collection of millions of Americans' phone records, as well as U.S. spying on some friendly foreign leaders.

Trump, 70, rarely uses a computer and sifts through stacks of newspapers, magazines and printed articles to read the news. He panned candidates' reliance on data and technology in presidential campaigns, preferring to make decisions in part based on the reaction from audiences at his rallies. While Trump's tweetstorms are already legendary, he utters some of his messages out loud and leaves the actual typing to aides.

Incoming White House press secretary Sean Spicer said he expects Trump to continue using Twitter and other social media sites as president, casting it as an effective way to communicate with Americans.

"Absolutely, you're going to see Twitter," Spicer said Sunday on ABC's "This Week." "I think it freaks the mainstream media out — that he has this following of 45-plus million people that follow him on social media" and he "can have a direct conversation" with them.

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# Congress ushers in new era of all-Republican rule

By DONNA CASSATA  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress ushers in a new era of all-Republican rule.

On Tuesday at noon, with plenty of pomp and pageantry, members of the 115th Congress will be sworn in, with an emboldened GOP intent on unraveling eight years of President Barack Obama's Democratic agenda and targeting massive legacy programs from Franklin D. Roosevelt and Lyndon B. Johnson such as Social Security and Medicare.

In the election, Republicans kept their tight grip on the House and outmaneuvered the Democrats for a slim majority in the Senate. In less than three weeks, on the West Front of the Capitol, Chief Justice John Roberts will administer the presidential oath to Donald Trump, the GOP's newfangled ally.

First up for Republicans is repeal and delay of the health care law, expediting the process for scrapping Obama's major overhaul but holding off on some changes for up to four years. The tax code is in the cross-hairs. Conservatives want to scuttle rules on the environment and undo financial regulations created in the aftermath of the 2008 economic meltdown, arguing they are too onerous for businesses to thrive.

The only obstacle to the far-reaching conservative agenda will be Senate Democrats who hold the power to filibuster legislation, but even that has its political limitations. Twenty-three Democrats are up for re-election in 2018, including 10 from states Trump won, and they could break ranks and side with the GOP.

By the numbers. Vice President Joe Biden, in one of his final official acts, will administer the oath to 27 returning senators and seven new ones. Republicans will have a 52-48 advantage in the Senate, which remains predominantly a bastion of white men.

There will be 21 women, of whom 16 are Democrats and five, Republicans; three African Americans, including California's new Democratic senator Kamala Harris, and four Hispanics, including Nevada's new Democratic senator Catherine Cortez Masto.

Across the Capitol, the House is expected to re-elect Rep. Paul Ryan as Speaker, with all the campaign-season recriminations involving the Wisconsin Republican and Trump largely erased by GOP wins. Once sworn in, Ryan will then administer the oath to the House members.

The GOP will hold a hefty 241-194 majority in the House, including 52 freshmen — 27 Republicans, including Wyoming's Liz Cheney, daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, and 25 Democrats.

Confirming the cabinet. The Senate will exercise its advice and

## Independent ethics office gutted

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Republicans on Monday voted to eviscerate the Office of Congressional Ethics, the independent body created in 2008 to investigate allegations of misconduct by lawmakers after several bribery and corruption scandals sent members to prison.

The ethics change, which prompted an outcry from Democrats and government watchdog groups, is part of a rules package that the full House will vote on Tuesday. The package also includes a means for Republican leaders to punish lawmakers if there is a repeat of the Democratic sit-in last summer over gun control.

Under the ethics change pushed by Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., the non-partisan Office of Congressional Ethics would fall under the control of the House Ethics Committee, which is run by lawmakers. It would be known as the Office of Congressional Complaint Review, and the rule change would require that "any matter that may involve a violation of criminal law must be referred to the Committee on Ethics for potential referral to law enforcement agencies after an affirmative vote by the members," according to Goodlatte's office.

Lawmakers would have the final say under the change. House Republicans voted 119-74 for the Goodlatte measure despite arguments from Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., against the change. They failed to sway rank-and-file Republicans, some of whom have felt unfairly targeted by the OCE.

The OCE was created in March 2008 after the cases of former Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, R-Calif., who served more than seven years in prison on bribery and other charges; as well as cases of former Rep. Bob Ney, R-Ohio, who was charged in the Jack Abramoff lobbying scandal and pleaded guilty to corruption charges and former Rep. William Jefferson, D-La., convicted on corruption in a separate case.

There is a limit to what Democrats can do. Rules changes in 2013 allow some nominees, including Cabinet picks, to be confirmed with a simple majority, preventing Democrats from demanding 60 votes to move forward.

Supreme court vacancy. Justice Antonin Scalia died last February and Republicans refused to consider Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland, insisting that the next president should fill the high court vacancy that's now lasted more than 10 months.

Trump released a list of potential choices during the campaign that included Utah Sen. Mike Lee, who clerked for Justice Samuel Alito. Since the election, the president-elect also has met with Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, who clerked for former Chief Justice William Rehnquist, promptly talking about a possible nomination for the onetime presidential rival.

"The amendment builds upon and strengthens the existing Office of Congressional Ethics by maintaining its primary area of focus of accepting and reviewing complaints from the public and referring them, if appropriate, to the Committee on Ethics," Goodlatte said in a statement.

Democrats, led by Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, reacted angrily. "Republicans claim they want to 'drain the swamp,' but the night before the new Congress gets sworn in, the House GOP has eliminated the only independent ethics oversight of their actions," the California lawmaker said in a statement. "Evidently, ethics are the first casualty of the new Republican Congress."

Chris Carson, president of the League of Women Voters, said Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., should be ashamed of himself and his leadership team. "We all know the so-called House Ethics Committee is worthless for anything other than a whitewash — sweeping corruption under the rug. That's why the independent Office of Congressional Ethics has been so important."

PHOENIX — The full-throated bravado that made Sheriff Joe Arpaio a household name in debates over illegal immigration and the treatment of jail inmates was missing as he started his last news conference in a law enforcement career that spanned a half-century.

After being charged with a crime and booted from office by voters, the 84-year-old Arpaio looked tired and dispirited as he defended his investigation of President Barack Obama's birth certificate — a debunked controversy that critics say Arpaio exploited to raise funds from his supporters.

The sheriff mispronounced several words as he attacked the birth record of the president he blames for his political demise. The media-savvy lawmaker ended the news conference by uncharacteristically declining to mix it up with reporters about the credibility of the five-year Obama investigation by his volunteer posse.

He told his 75 supporters in the room that the investigation wasn't about whether Obama was born in the U.S. and instead focused on a claim that the birth certificate was fraudulent. "This is tough for me to say — believe me, all of you media know me," Arpaio said. "Sometimes I get diarrhea of

the mouth. But I am going to tell you, we are not going to answer any questions. There is more sensitive information that we have regarding this matter, and I am not going into it."

The investigation was another questionable tactic in Arpaio's 24-year tenure as the sheriff of metro Phoenix that ended Sunday and was also marked by traffic patrols and business raids that targeted immigrants; decisions to house jail inmates in tents, dress them in pink underwear and make them work on chain gangs; round up dead-beat parents; and arrest animal abusers.

Arpaio's critics say he was a bully who was driven by a hunger for publicity and who treated powerless people harshly because it was popular with voters. Attorney Mike Manning, who filed several lawsuits against the sheriff over in-custody deaths, said the lawmaker will be remembered for bringing a "culture of cruelty" to his jails.

Arpaio stepped over the line when he treated inmates awaiting trial as if they were hardened criminals, even though the Constitution prohibits punishing people before they are convicted of crimes, Manning said.

Lydia Guzman, a Latino civil rights advocate who helped organize volunteers to video-record encounters between officers and motorists during the immigration patrols, said Arpaio turned his back on the Hispanic community by caving in to public pressure to crack down on illegal immigration.

Arpaio, through a spokesman, declined a request to speak about his legacy. "I built a reputation in this world," Arpaio said in an interview days after his defeat in November. "Everyone knows who the sheriff is. That's one advantage. I've worked hard in this life."

State Sen. John Kavanagh, an Arpaio friend and proponent of tough crackdowns on illegal immigration, said the lawmaker gained popularity because he created a law-and-order persona that connected with voters. "He wasn't afraid to speak his mind, even if it was politically incorrect," Kavanagh said. "He was an elected sheriff — he didn't have to worry about a town council firing him. He could be straight up with people, and he was."

That base of devoted supporters and impressive fundraising helped Arpaio get elected to six terms.



In this Feb. 4, 2009, file photo, Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio, left, orders approximately 200 convicted illegal immigrants handcuffed together and moved into a separate area of Tent City, for incarceration until their sentences are served and they are deported to their home countries, in Phoenix.

AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin, File

# Bully or modern-day Wyatt Earp? Sheriff Joe Arpaio's mixed legacy

By JACQUES BILLEAUD  
Associated Press

PHOENIX — The full-throated bravado that made Sheriff Joe Arpaio a household name in debates over illegal immigration and the treatment of jail inmates was missing as he started his last news conference in a law enforcement career that spanned a half-century.

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# Sen. Warren seeks to pull pot shops out of banking limbo

By STEVE LEBLANC  
Associated Press

BOSTON — As marijuana shops sprout in states that have legalized the drug, they face a critical stumbling block — lack of access to the kind of routine banking services other businesses take for granted.

U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren, a Massachusetts Democrat, is leading an effort to make sure vendors working with legal marijuana businesses, from chemists who test marijuana for harmful substances to firms that provide security, don't have their banking services taken away.

It's part of a wider effort by Warren and others to bring the burgeoning \$7 billion marijuana industry in from a fiscal limbo she said forces many shops to rely solely on cash, making them tempting targets for criminals.

After voters in Warren's home state approved a November ballot question to legalize the recreational use of pot, she joined nine other senators in sending a letter to a key federal regulator, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, calling on it to issue additional guidance to help banks provide services to marijuana shop vendors.

Twenty-eight states have legalized marijuana for medicinal or recreational use. Warren, a member of the Senate Banking Committee, said there are benefits to letting marijuana-based businesses move away from a cash-only model.

"You make sure that people are really paying their taxes. You know that the money is not being diverted to some kind of criminal enterprise," Warren said recently. "And it's just a plain old safety issue. You don't want people walking in with guns and masks and saying, 'Give me all your cash.'"

A spokesman for the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network said the agency is reviewing the letter.

There has been some movement to accommodate the banking needs of marijuana businesses. Two years ago, the U.S. Department of the Treasury gave banks permission to do business with legal marijuana entities under some conditions. Since then, the number of banks and credit unions willing to handle pot money rose from 51 in 2014 to 301 in 2016.

Warren, however, said fewer than 3 percent of the nation's 11,954 federally regulated banks and credit unions are serving the cannabis industry.

Taylor West, deputy director of the National Cannabis Industry Association, a trade organization for 1,100 marijuana businesses nationwide, said access to banking remains a top concern.

"What the industry needs is a sustainable solution that services the entire industry instead of tinkering around the edges," Taylor said. "You don't have to be fully in favor of legalized marijuana to know that it helps no one to force these businesses outside the banking system."

Sam Kamin, a professor at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law who studies marijuana regulation, said there's only so much states can do on their own.



Sen. Warren

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