



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

L.A. STUDENTS AGAINST ICE

Pupils from at least 12 high schools march through downtown on Wednesday to protest nationwide immigration raids as Archbishop José H. Gomez celebrated a "Mass for Peace" nearby. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS VOTING MAPS

Justices won't stop California's redrawn district lines, denying an emergency appeal.

BY DAVID G. SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that California this fall may use its new election map, which is expected to send five more Democrats to Congress.

With no dissents, the justices rejected emergency appeals from California Republicans and President Trump's lawyers, who claimed the map was a racial gerrymander to benefit Latinos, not a partisan effort to bolster Democrats.

"Donald Trump said he was 'entitled' to five more congressional seats in Texas. He started this redistricting war. He lost, and he'll lose again in November," Gov. Gavin Newsom said in response to the court's decision.

Trump's lawyers supported the California Republicans and filed a Supreme Court brief asserting that "California's recent redistricting is tainted by an unconstitutional racial gerrymander."

They pointed to statements from Paul Mitchell, who led the effort to redraw the districts, that he hoped to "bolster" Latino representatives in the Central Valley.

But the court turned down the appeal in a one-line order with no explanation.

It was unusual for the Justice Department and the U.S. solicitor general to intervene in a state election dispute, especially after staking out the opposite view in a similar dispute from Texas.

Trump's lawyers said the Texas redistricting favoring Republicans should be upheld, but the California redistricting favoring Democrats should be blocked.

The Trump arguments were met by silence from the court, including its six conservatives.

In defense of California's new map, the state's attorney

[See Court, A14]

L.A. Olympics head facing calls to resign

His apology on Epstein files doesn't lessen heat

By Dakota Smith

Casey Wasserman, the head of the LA28 Olympic committee, is facing growing calls to resign after the latest release of Jeffrey Epstein documents revealed racy emails between him and convicted sex trafficker Ghislaine Maxwell.

Wasserman, in Italy for the 2026 Winter Olympics, has not responded to demands from several L.A. politicians who say that the controversy doesn't align with the values of the Games and that he needs to step down.

He issued a statement over the weekend apologizing for the emails but hasn't directly addressed reporters in the U.S. or Italy, where Olympics officials are facing questions about Wasserman after his name surfaced in the files released by the U.S. Department of Justice in the Epstein case.

Epstein died by suicide in 2019 in New

York City's Metropolitan Correctional Center while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass declined to weigh in on the controversy around Wasserman, releasing a statement Wednesday that said LA28's board of directors is responsible for deciding LA28's leadership.

Calls and emails to representatives for several LA28 board members, including actor Jessica Alba and entertainment mogul Jeffrey Katzenberg, were not returned this week.

Wasserman is president of the board, which is made up of dozens of high-profile leaders in sports, business, labor and other fields.

Some of those seeking Wasserman's resignation emphasized how the scandal tainted the [See Wasserman, A6]



LA28 HEAD Casey Wasserman has not addressed demands that he resign.

IN MILAN: IOC officials lay out plans in new phase of the Games process and voice their support for embattled LA28 official Wasserman. **SPORTS, B10**

Cuts for homeless services

L.A. County will slash \$200 million from programs

BY ANDREW KHOURI

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved sweeping cuts to an array of homeless services, a move some advocates said will push more people onto the streets.

Though county voters in 2024 approved a sales tax increase to combat the homelessness crisis, county officials said they faced a more than \$270-million budget shortfall in trying to maintain current homeless service operations.

That's because the cost to run the entire system is

rising, while some state and federal funds that previously paid for certain programs are going away, according to the newly created Los Angeles County Department of Homeless Services and Housing.

"We are having to make extremely difficult decisions ... given our fiscal realities," Sarah Mahin, the department's director, told supervisors before the vote Tuesday.

Mahin described the new spending plan as one that tries to preserve as much interim and permanent housing as possible.

Instead, \$27 million will

be cut from outreach and navigation programs that help homeless individuals get into housing.

Other cuts are coming to some forms of rental assistance, as well as a program that funds the acquisition of apartment buildings to house homeless people.

Pathway Home, the county program that cleans up encampments and moves people into motels and shelters, will see a \$92-million cut in funding, according to the county homeless department.

Rachel Kassenbrock, a spokeswoman for the de-

[See Homeless, A7]

Links among 4 slayings probed

Detectives investigate if an ex-NFL player's death is tied to others at Willowbrook homeless camp. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Taking stock of Bob Iger's legacy

Disney CEO, who steps down next month, has long been Hollywood's most respected studio chief. **BUSINESS, A9**

Figure skaters target medal haul

The stacked U.S. team bound for the Winter Olympics includes three reigning world champions. **SPORTS, B10**

Weather

Partly sunny and warm. L.A. Basin: 83/56. **B6**

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Fire report edits were ordered by Bass, sources say

The mayor insists she did not demand any changes in Palisades study to limit liability.

BY PAUL PRINGLE AND ALENE TCHEKMEDYIAN

For nearly two months, Mayor Karen Bass has repeatedly denied that she was involved in altering an after-action report on the Palisades fire to downplay failures by the city and the Los Angeles Fire Department in combating the catastrophic blaze.

But two sources with knowledge of Bass' office said that after receiving an early draft, the mayor told then-interim Fire Chief Ronnie Villanueva that the report could expose the city to legal liabilities for those failures.

Bass wanted key findings about the LAFD's actions removed or softened before the report was made public, the sources said — and that is what happened.

The changes to the report, which was released on

Oct. 8, came to light through a Times investigation published in December.

The sources told The Times that two people close to Bass informed them of the mayor's behind-the-scenes role in watering down the report. One source spoke to both of the people; the other spoke to one of them. The sources requested anonymity to speak frankly about the mayor's private conversations with Villanueva and others.

One Bass confidant told one of the sources that "the mayor didn't tell the truth when she said she had nothing to do with changing the report." The source said the confidant advised Bass that altering the report "was a bad idea" because it would hurt her politically.

According to the source, the two confidants said Bass held on to the original draft until after the changes were made. The source added that both confidants said they are prepared to testify under oath to verify their accounts if the matter ends up in a legal proceeding.

[See Report, A6]

California vows to protect elections

State leaders decry Trump's comments about 'nationalizing' the voting system.

BY ANA CEBALLOS AND KEVIN RECTOR

WASHINGTON — President Trump's repeated calls to "nationalize" elections drew swift resistance from California officials this week, who said they are ready to fight should the federal government attempt to assert control over the state's voting system.

"We would win that on Day One," California Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta told The Times. "We would go into court and we would get a restraining order within hours, because the U.S. Constitution says that states predominantly determine the time, place and manner of elections, not the president."

"We're prepared to do whatever we have to do in California," said California Secretary of State Shirley

Weber, whose office recently fought off a Justice Department lawsuit demanding California's voter rolls and other sensitive voter information.

Both Bonta and Weber said their offices are closely watching for any federal action that could affect voting in California, including efforts to seize election records, as the FBI recently did in Georgia, or target the counting of mailed ballots, which Trump has baselessly alleged are a major source of fraud.

Weber said California plays an outsize role in the nation and is "the place that people want to beat," including through illegitimate court challenges to undermine the state's vote after elections, but California has fought off such challenges in the past and is ready to do it again.

"There's a cadre of attorneys that are already, that are always prepared during our elections to hit the courts to defend anything that we're doing," she said. "Our election teams, they do

[See Elections, A6]

Interim USC chief becomes president

Board chair calls Beong-Soo Kim 'next generation' leader in a 'very changing time.'

BY JAWED KALEEM

When USC announced that Beong-Soo Kim would serve as interim president after the retirement of Carol Folt last year, he was not in the candidate mix to lead the sprawling 46,000-student campus.

But after seven months in the role, he has taken on weighty, controversial and ongoing issues: He confronted a \$200-million budget deficit, overseeing cuts and more than 1,000 layoffs. He's had to navigate pressures on higher education coming from several fronts, including the Trump administration, the growth of artificial intelligence, and national debates on the value of college.

Amid this climate, USC trustees said, Kim became their top pick for the job.

Kim, 53, is "a pivotal



JULIANA YAMADA Los Angeles Times

KIM says he values "intellectual curiosity and engagement with different viewpoints."

leader right now, he's next generation and, we believe, has all of the character and the skills to basically advance USC during a very changing time in our world, whether it's technologically, politically, demographically," said Suzanne Nora Johnson, chair of USC's board of trustees.

His new role begins immediately, Johnson said.

Kim follows Folt — who joined USC's faculty in July after six years at the helm — and confronts challenging

[See USC, A7]