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RULING REJECTS STATE'S LIMIT ON GUNS

Supreme Court upholds the right to carry weapons into stores, other venues.

By DAVID G. SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — Licensed gun owners have a right to carry a concealed firearm into stores and other private places unless the owner objects, the Supreme Court ruled Thursday.

The 6-3 decision extends gun rights and strikes down laws in Hawaii, California, New York, New Jersey and Maryland.

Those measures would have prohibited carrying guns onto private property that is open to the public unless the owner expressly authorized them.

"This regime hobbles what the 2nd Amendment protects: the right of Americans to carry arms for self-defense as they go about their daily lives. We hold that the law is unconstitutional," Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. said for the court.

The new laws would have imposed "severe restrictions on the daily activities of residents who have satisfied the state's rigorous requirements for the issuance of a carry permit. When these permit holders leave home in the morning, ... they may also be barred from entering many places that people routinely visit in the course of their daily routines, such as gas stations, convenience stores, restaurants, coffee shops, drug stores, grocery stores, 'big box' stores, home improvement stores, barber shops or hair salons, dry cleaners, and laundromats."

The three liberals dissented, saying the law would have protected property owners who didn't want guns in their stores.

"There is no constitutional right to enter private property without the owner's permission, let alone with a firearm," Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson said.

Trump administration lawyers had joined a coalition of Hawaii gun owners in urging the court to strike down these blue state laws in the case of *Wolford vs. Lopez*.

They said the laws, if enforced, would mean "a person carrying a handgun for self-defense commits a crime by entering a mall, a gas station, a convenience store, a supermarket, a restaurant or a coffee shop."

This litigation is part of much broader debate over where guns may be permitted or prohibited.

Four years ago, the justices ruled that law-abiding persons had a right to obtain a permit to carry a concealed gun when they left home.

They also agreed there are "sensitive places" where guns may be prohibited, [See *Guns*, A7]



Photographs by PEDRO MATTEY Associated Press
A WOMAN, top, walks by a damaged building in the hard-hit coastal city of La Guaira. Above, patients were evacuated from a hospital in Catia La Mar.

Venezuela races to find earthquake survivors

Powerful one-two punch flattens buildings and kills scores. Airport damage delays foreign aid.

By Mery Mogollón and Patrick J. McDonnell
REPORTING FROM CARACAS, VENEZUELA

Rescue workers and civilians scrambled to pull survivors from the rubble Thursday as Venezuela struggled to recover from a pair of earthquakes that toppled scores of buildings, leaving at least 188 people dead and thousands homeless, resulting in widespread panic.

The casualty numbers seemed certain to rise as officials reported that more than 200 people were trapped in debris and at least 157 were missing.

Many Venezuelans were combing through wreckage in search of loved ones, while others turned to social media in an effort to find relatives and friends who had vanished in the disaster.

"We don't know anything about what happened to him and are desperate," Denise Casique wrote on Facebook, seeking help to find a missing friend. "If you've seen him, please send information."

The main airport serving Caracas, the capital, shut down after it was heavily damaged, delaying the entry of aid crews from the United States, Mexico and other nations that have vowed to help.

"We are in a race against time to rescue" people trapped in the rubble, Jorge Rodríguez, president of the National Assembly, said in a message to the nation.

The double quakes — with magnitudes of 7.2 and 7.5 [See *Venezuela*, A3]

Temblors' devastating toll offers lessons for California

By Rong-Gong Lin II

The devastation from two massive earthquakes that struck Venezuela on Wednesday offers a stark warning for California and other seismically vulnerable areas of the toll that catastrophic shaking can bring to urban areas.

It will take days to assess the full scope of the damage; at least 188 people were dead and nearly 1,500 were injured and the numbers were expected to climb, the Associated Press reported early Thursday, with dozens of buildings collapsing in the state of La Guaira, about 20 miles north of Caracas, the capital. Videos show horrifying, but now predictable, images of entire blocks flattened and basic

infrastructure in shambles.

"This is one of the very damaging earthquakes, because you combined a very large event with residences of a lot of people," seismologist Lucy Jones, a Caltech research associate, said at a briefing.

The first images of the most severe damage in Venezuela appear to involve the collapse of "non-ductile concrete buildings," a type of construction that also exists in California, according to Maria Mohammed, president of the Structural Engineers Assn. of Southern California.

"Looking through the photos that have been coming [See *California*, A3]

Justices say U.S. can block asylum seekers at border

Ruling greatly limits right to seek refuge. Critics say it violates intent of Congress.

By DAVID G. SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — Asylum seekers may be turned away without a hearing at the southern border, the Supreme Court ruled Thursday in a historic retreat from the promise of relief for those who say they are fleeing persecution.

The justices split over whether this was a simple dispute over legal wording or a moral question involving desperate families.

Siding with the Trump administration, the court's conservatives said the Refugee Act of 1980 offers a right to seek asylum to migrants who "arrive in the United States" but not those who are turned back when they approach a border crossing or a port of entry.

"This case presents a straightforward question" that turns on the word "in," Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. said. "In ordinary speech, no one would say that a person 'arrives in' a place — for ex-

ample, a house, a city, or a country — before the person enters that place."

The liberal dissenters agreed with immigration rights lawyers who saw this as a nonsensical reading of the law.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor said the asylum law arose from the "international moral reckoning that followed the Holocaust and World War II."

She cited the infamous voyage of the *MS St. Louis* in 1939. More than 900 Jewish refugees attempted to flee persecution in Nazi Germany by setting sail aboard the ship, which was turned away from Cuba and the United States.

Most of the passengers were returned to Europe, and several hundred died in the Holocaust, she said.

"Congress passed the Refugee Act in 1980 because it did not want this country to repeat the mistakes of its past. Yet if the refugees on the *M.S. St. Louis* were to walk up to a port of entry on our southern border today, the majority's interpretation would allow immigration officers to refuse even to consider their asylum applications by physically block-

[See *Migrants*, A7]

Court won't shield Haitians, Syrians

Justices let Trump end their legal status. Noncitizens from elsewhere also at risk.

By DAVID G. SAVAGE AND ANDREA CASTILLO

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court ruled Thursday that the Trump administration may end the Temporary Protected Status granted to more than 350,000 Haitians and Syrians whose home countries remain unsafe.

In a 6-3 decision, the court's conservative majority said Congress gave the administration, not judges, the power to cancel or renew this temporary protection for noncitizens who are living and working here.

Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. said the law closes the door to legal challenges when the administration decides to cancel the temporary protection.

It says that "there is no judicial review of any determination of the [secretary of Homeland Security] with respect to the designation, or termination or extension of a designation," he wrote for

the court. "This text is clear, and its plain meaning is very broad."

TPS holders have registered with the government and passed background checks to gain the protections. Many have been in the country for decades and have U.S. citizen children. They now stand to lose their jobs and could be detained and deported.

The court also ruled for the Trump administration Thursday in a separate immigration case, allowing the government to turn away asylum seekers at the southern border.

Although Thursday's decision on Temporary Protected Status dealt with Haitians and Syrians, its rationale could affect up to 1.3 million noncitizens. Advocates for immigrants swiftly condemned the decision.

"Today's decision is unconscionable, egregious and devastating," said Emi MacLean, senior staff attorney for the ACLU of Northern California, and will leave those noncitizens "at the mercy of the Trump administration's cruel and lawless deportation machine."

In 1990, Congress authorized this emergency human-

[See *Status*, A7]

Jury reaches impasse in Palisades fire trial

By BRITTNY MEJIA

Signaling a possible mistrial, a federal jury hearing the arson case against Jonathan Rinderknecht, a 30-year-old former Uber driver accused of setting what would become the deadliest wildfire in Los Angeles history, said Thursday that it was unable to come to a unanimous verdict after more than 13 hours of deliberations.

The jury sent a note at 2:30 p.m. to U.S. District Judge Anne Hwang, who read it aloud, suggesting the panel was deadlocked.

"We have people on both



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times
ANDREW GRINSFELDER, 18, works to save his mother's Pacific Palisades home from the 2025 blaze.

sides that are deadset," the note read.

After discussions with defense attorneys and prosecutors, Hwang sent the jury back a note saying: "Is there anything the court can do to assist in the jury's deliberations? For example, would an additional instruction or the rereading of any testimony help in the jury's deliberation. Do not disclose the vote count in responding."

The jury responded that nothing would help. "Unfortunately we cannot reach a unanimous verdict," they wrote in a subsequent note read by Hwang shortly after 3:20 p.m.

[See *Palisades*, A8]



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

A POST-FIRE STENCH

The blaze at a Boyle Heights cold storage warehouse may be out, but debris piles and the smell of rotting food are on the rise. CALIFORNIA, B1

GOP senators reverse course

After a war powers resolution passes, a second one fails following a harangue by Trump. NATION, A4

Weather

Turning sunny. L.A. Basin: 77/62. B6

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July 4 hazard for Big Bear eaglets

A nonprofit wants the city to cancel its plan for fireworks to protect the pair. CALIFORNIA, B1

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