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In today's paper
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VOL. 314, NO. 37



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THE SACRAMENTO BEE

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Feds request information about delayed Next Gen 911 system

BY WILLIAM MELHADO
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California's effort to modernize its antiquated 911 system, which has been hampered by delays in recent years, has attracted the attention of the Federal Communications Commission.

In a Tuesday letter addressed to Gov. Gavin Newsom, FCC Chairman Brendan Carr said California had wasted hundreds of millions of public dollars to build out its Next Generation 911 system, which state leaders decided to redesign after facing obstacles that they deemed too difficult to surmount.

Carr demanded information about California's spending on Next Generation 911 and why the project had faced delays seven years after Newsom pledged in 2019 to update the state's legacy system.

Carr cited reporting from The Sacramento Bee that found the state previously spent over \$450 million to build out a new

911 system over several years, but the Governor's Office of Emergency Services decided in 2024 to scrap the project's design after encountering call-routing and reliability issues.

"These failures are the direct result of your mismanagement of peoples' hard-earned

SEE FEDS, 4A

Man detained in Nancy Guthrie's disappearance is released

BY NICHOLAS BOGEL-BURROUGHS, CHELSIA ROSE MARCIUS AND JILL COWAN

NYT News Service

A flurry of activity related to the investigation of Nancy Guthrie's disappearance ended early Wednesday with the release of a man detained during a traffic stop near the Mexican border and questioned for several hours by authorities in Arizona.

The man's release, hours after chilling video footage of a suspect was provided to the public, appeared to leave investigators no closer to solving the case that has mesmerized much of America since the mother of "Today" show anchor Savannah Guthrie vanished 11 days ago.

In an interview early Wednesday after he was released by authorities, the man, who identified himself only as Carlos, said he had not heard about the Nancy Guthrie case. "I hope they get the suspect, because I'm not it," he said, speaking on the doorstep of his wife and mother-in-law's home in Rio Rico, Arizona, about an hour's drive south of Guthrie's suburban home just outside of Tucson.

Earlier Tuesday, footage released by law enforcement authorities revealed a masked person on Guthrie's porch about the time that she is believed to have vanished from her neighborhood near Tucson early on Feb. 1. The person is wearing a ski mask, gloves and a backpack, and appears to be armed with a pistol.

Authorities have said they are investigating Guthrie's disappearance as a kidnapping, and Savannah Guthrie and her siblings have released a series of videos pleading with whoever is involved to reach out to them. They said they were prepared to listen to ransom demands.

Here's what else is happening: **Rio Rico search:** The FBI and the Pima County Sheriff's Department carried out what they described as a "court-authorized search" in Rio Rico, which had been completed by early Wednesday morning. A woman at the home being searched said that her son-in-law, the man detained for questioning in the case, had been delivering food when he was stopped by police.

Chilling video: The 44 seconds of silent, black-and-white surveillance footage released Tuesday shows a masked figure approaching Guthrie's house and raising a gloved hand to block a Nest doorbell camera.

SEE GUTHRIE, 5A



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U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi testifies before the House Judiciary Committee in the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington on Wednesday. Bondi defended her handling of the Epstein investigative files and traded barbs with Democratic lawmakers who accused her of overseeing a cover-up.

Lawmakers question Bondi over DOJ under her watch

BY GLENN THRUSH
NYT News Service

WASHINGTON

Attorney General Pam Bondi refused to apologize to survivors of the convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein who were seated in the House Judiciary Committee room on Wednesday - and instead demanded that Democrats apologize to President Donald Trump.

Bondi offered few answers,

no admissions of fault and many expressions of fealty and admiration for a president who has exercised direct control over her department's actions.

Rep. Jamie Raskin, the top Democrat on the panel, delivered a salvo of disgust in his opening statement, starting with criticism of Bondi's handling of the release of the investigative files involving Epstein, which has ushered in what was expected to be one of the most bruising days of Bondi's year on the job.



ALEX WONG ALEX WONG Getty Images

Jeffrey Epstein abuse survivors stand in the audience as U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi testifies before the House Judiciary Committee in the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington on Wednesday. Democrats sharply criticized Bondi over the release of Epstein-related documents, including the disclosure of victims' names that were supposed to be redacted.

"You're siding with the perpetrators, and you're ignoring the victims," he said. "That will be your legacy, unless you act

quickly to change course. You're running a massive Ep-

SEE LAWMAKERS, 4A

The politics behind California's billionaire tax proposal

BY LIA RUSSELL
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The leader of the union championing a controversial effort to tax California billionaires has over the past decade floated a series of ballot initiatives that

would benefit members, then later drawn back when lawmakers agreed to compromise or support similar legislation.

The Service Employees International Union-United Health Care Workers West union, led by President Dave Regan, has been organizing a

ballot measure levying a one-time 5% tax on billionaires to generate \$100 billion over five years and make up for a multi-billion dollar hole created by Congress' "One Big Beautiful Bill," which gutted federal funding for state medical programs and added barriers to accessing

public benefits.

Gov. Gavin Newsom and some in Silicon Valley oppose the tax effort, saying it will drive away top earners who already contribute much of their wealth in taxes. California is home to 85 of the 400 richest people in America, according to Forbes. The Teamsters union recently signed on in support of the wealth tax, as have gubernatorial hopefuls former State Controller Betty Yee and State Superintendent Tony Thurmond,

and U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vermont.

UHW and Regan are pushing the tax forward as a solution to staving off hospital closures and preventing millions of Californians' health insurance from lapsing.

"There's no solution out there to figure out this hole of \$20 billion per year," said UHW Chief of Staff Suzanne Jimenez in an interview last month.

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