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CONGRESS

TRUMP: SENATOR ‘TOUGH TO LOSE’



VALENTYN OGIRENKO, REUTERS

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., speaks to the media after a meeting July 10 with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Lindsey Graham, key GOP lawmaker, dies at 71

**AKANKSHA KHUSHI,
THOMAS DERPINGHAUS
AND TIM REID**
Reuters

WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican who went from a vocal critic of Donald Trump to one of his most loyal allies after Trump became president, has died, his office announced on Sunday. He was 71.

The South Carolina lawmaker died after a “brief and sudden illness,” his office posted on X. U.S. media said emergency personnel responded to a call for cardiac arrest Saturday night at his Capitol Hill home in Washington.

The contest to succeed Graham will not impact the broader fight for control of the Senate in November between Republicans and Democrats, as South Carolina is a reliably

Republican state.

However, his death robs Trump of a dependable Senate vote as the president seeks to push his agenda in the closely divided Senate.

“He’s a tough one to lose,” Trump told NBC’s “Meet the Press” program. “He was great. He was unique in every way.”

Another senior Republican in the upper chamber — Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky — remains hospitalized for undisclosed health problems.

Speaking on CNN’s “State of the Union” program, Trump said Graham, who had just returned from a trip to Ukraine, called him on Saturday night. “Other than being tired, he was fine,” Trump said.

The president said he received news of Graham’s death early Sunday morning.

Under South Carolina law,

the state’s Republican governor, Henry McMaster, can immediately appoint a temporary replacement to fill Graham’s seat.

South Carolina Republicans must then also hold an expedited primary election to pick a nominee for the November midterm election. That nominee does not have to be the same person McMaster picks as a temporary replacement.

Graham, a defense hawk, was a prominent supporter of Israel and Ukraine and an opponent of Iran.

He was scheduled to appear on “Meet the Press” on Sunday morning, the network said.

Shortly after his death was announced, Trump called Graham “one of the greatest people and senators I have ever known” and a hard-working patriot.

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KEN RUINARD, USA TODAY NETWORK

Clemson University Provost Bob Jones, left, smiles as Sen Lindsey Graham gives two thumbs up at a Clemson University graduation May 20, 2011, in Clemson, S.C.

MIDEAST

Iran expands attacks in Gulf

Strait of Hormuz closed

**STEVE HOLLAND, PARISA HAFEZI,
PHIL STEWART AND YOMNA EHAB**
Reuters

WASHINGTON — U.S. and Iranian forces exchanged heavy missile and drone assaults Sunday, with Tehran targeting U.S. facilities in states across the Gulf and saying it had again closed the vital Strait of Hormuz.

The strikes were the latest in a cycle of attacks and counterattacks as Iran seeks to assert control over shipping through the strait. However, the barrage marked an escalation in pace and range.

The strikes extended to Qatar, a mediator in ceasefire talks that had not come under attack since April, while the United Arab Emirates, which had not been targeted since early May, said its air defenses engaged missiles and drones from Iran.

The renewed violence casts further doubt on the future of an interim U.S.-Iranian agreement signed last month that aimed to reopen the strait and end the war after a further 60 days of negotiations.

In the past week, U.S. President Donald Trump said he considers the ceasefire over, while leaving the door open to more talks.

The war that began with U.S. and Israeli strikes against Iran on Feb. 28 has destabilized the Gulf, while Iran’s effective blockade of the strait has driven energy prices higher, fueling global inflation.

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SURVEY

Data centers’ land, power use feared in rural America

LAUREN CROSS
Investigate Midwest

Data center construction is shifting toward rural America. At the same time, rural residents report greater concern than urban and suburban Americans about what those projects could mean for their electricity costs and farmland use.

That’s according to a survey released June 26 by researchers at the University of Illinois and Purdue University. The survey of about 1,000 U.S. adults, conducted in February, found rural residents expressed the highest average level of concern overall.

Their greatest concern was rising electricity costs, followed by the use of agricultural land for data centers and overuse of water.

“Many unknowns remain about the full impacts associated with data center growth and expansion,” according to researchers.

By 2030, the energy requirements for data centers are projected to more than double in Illinois and triple in Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, researchers added, citing the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service.

According to a separate April analysis of mapping data by the Pew Research Center, a major shift is underway. Nearly 90% of all existing data centers are in urban areas, but 67% of planned facilities are slated for rural communities and

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