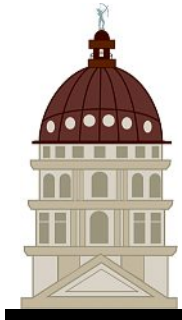




Study examines fluoride's cognitive impact

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Vance appeals to MAGA youth

VP acknowledges young voters' frustrations

Zac Anderson and Francesca Chambers
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – With the United States in an unpopular war and after two foreign policy setbacks, Vice President JD Vance acknowledged at a college campus April 14 that young conservatives who delivered the presidency to

Donald Trump are frustrated and need to be prodded to stay politically active leading into the midterms.

Left unspoken was the fact that the vice president – who is seen as a likely 2028 presidential contender and potential heir to Trump's MAGA movement – needs their support for his own political future.

He'd had a challenging few days. Peace talks he led with Iran failed to produce a deal, and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán lost his reelection bid after Vance campaigned for him.

At a Turning Point USA event at the University of Georgia, Vance said he recognizes that a "lot of young voters don't love the policy" in the Middle East.

Even so, Vance argued the administration has taken steps to secure the border and lower housing and electricity costs and reduce the murder rate. "I'm not saying you have to agree with me on every issue," he said. "What I'm saying is, don't get disengaged because you disagree with the administration on one topic."

The vice president is helping lead the

GOP's midterm push in a tough election cycle for the party that will set up the 2028 presidential race. He is under pressure to help turn the tide for the GOP – but has faced turbulence as he tries to establish himself as MAGA's future leader.

Trump has increasingly given his No. 2 challenging foreign policy assignments, and his performance is being closely watched.

The president sent Vance to Jerusalem last fall to help enforce a tepid

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Strait of Hormuz opened amid two-week ceasefire



Iran announced on April 17 that the Strait of Hormuz is opened to commercial vessels following a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Lebanon. REUTERS FILE

Trump says naval blockade to continue

Christopher Cann, Andrea Riquier and Michael Loria
USA TODAY

Iran declared the Strait of Hormuz "completely open" to all commercial vessels, the country's foreign minister said, meeting a central demand of the United States as the two countries teased another round of peace talks and the clock wound down on a delicate two-week ceasefire.

In his April 17 announcement, Seyed Abbas Araghchi said the declaration was made possible by a separate 10-day ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel implemented the day before, which appeared to be holding.

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Smoke rises following artillery shelling in Lebanon on April 11. Lebanon and Israel came to a 10-day ceasefire agreement on April 16. AMIR COHEN/REUTERS

National Mall to get Freedom 250 makeover

Event dubbed the Great American State Fair

Karissa Waddick
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – Livestock competitions, rodeo events and a 110-foot Ferris wheel are coming to the National Mall this summer as part of a White House-backed, "World's Fair-style" celebration marking the nation's 250th anniversary.

The 16-day event, dubbed the Great American State Fair, would transform the National Mall, temporarily remaking one of the country's most iconic civic spaces. It's among a slew of events, including an IndyCar race and athletic competition for high school students, being organized by Freedom 250, a nonprofit group President Donald Trump created to carry out his vision for the country's birthday.

In a statement, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum said the event would allow the mall to "serve as the stage for telling our nation's story."

Freedom 250 is working with the Department of the Interior and other federal agencies on logistics and permitting for the massive temporary buildout, Freedom 250 said. The efforts are separate from those planned by America250, the nonpartisan commission created by Congress to plan the signature celebration.

Organizers say the Great American State Fair will feature immersive exhibits from across the country. Each of the 50 states and six territories will design pavilions with interactive experiences highlighting their unique characteristics and contributions.

Arizona, for instance, is planning to use the space to create a "sensory journey" through the ways light defines the state, said Paul Behnen, a creative director who helped design the state's pavilion.

Visitors will walk through a space resembling the wavy sandstone walls of Antelope Canyon, with slivers of light shining on them from above.

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