

# [***Family Of Soldier Killed In Attack Speaks Out; Three US Soldiers Killed In Mideast Escalation; Interview With Rep. Brian Mast (R-FL); Administration Face Criticism Over Its Approach To Iran; Biden's Policy Of Appeasement Under Fire; Former President Trump Bashes Border Deal; Border Deal Odds Shrink After Trump Opposition; Border Showdown On Capitol Hill; Interview With Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI); Biden Vows To Shut Down Border If Bill Passes; Border Talks, Mayorkas Impeachment Collide; SCOTUS To Review Colorado Ballot Ban On February 8; Bush's Husband's Role On Campaign Under Scrutiny; DOJ Launches Criminal Probe Into Rep. Cori Bush; South Carolina GOP Leaders Rallying Behind Trump; All Eyes On South Carolina Ahead Of February 24 Primary; Defending Voters From AI Disinformation; Pushing Policy To Rein In Artificial Intelligence; Murdaugh Denied New Trial After Clerk Controversy; Amelia Earhart Mystery May Have Just Been Solved; Punxsutawney Phil Declares An Early Spring***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B88-PSC1-JCS1-60KV-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

MARK LEVIN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Where they're standing in the schoolhouse door to prevent little Black kids from going to other schools, better schools that other kids are going to because they oppose school choice.

If you support all of that, well, Joe Biden's your man. God bless you.

I'll see you next time on LIFE, LIBERTY & LEVIN.

TREY GOWDY, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Good evening and thank you for joining us. I'm Trey Gowdy, and it is SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

The blood of American soldiers were spilled again this past weekend as three US servicemembers were killed and 40 more wounded during a drone attack at a base in Jordan. All Americans feel a sense of loss, but the burden of grief has shouldered primarily by family and friends.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ONEIDA SANDERS, MOTHER OF SPC. KENNEDY LADON SANDERS: Reality probably won't fit in until we actually travel to go receive her remains. That's the time that I'm really not looking forward. I am dreading it actually.

SHAWN SANDERS, FATHER OF SPC. KENNEDY LADON SANDERS: She was goal oriented and she loved the service. She loved serving our country.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Iran's fingerprints are all over the bodies of those dead and wounded Americans. Iran and its proxies have been attacking US troops and assets for months now.

President Biden promised a response, but many are wondering if a lack of response to previous attacks may have emboldened our enemies. So why has the US been so slow and measured when it comes to Iran?

Florida Congressman Brian Mast served our country in uniform. He's been clear about the threats posed by Iran and he joins us now.

Welcome, Congressman.

We'll start by recognizing the service and sacrifice of those killed and wounded in this attack, but I guess the best way to assign value to their lives is a proper military response worthy of their sacrifice, isn't it?

REP. BRIAN MAST (R-FL): I think that's a very appropriate way to put it, but everybody, you have to be infuriated about this.

You have to look at your servicemembers as your family, as your blood, and your blood, your family, what would you do if it was one of your kids? If it was one of your cousins, one of your nephews, one of your nieces? One of your -- you know, take -- you're picking your family tree. What would you want the response to be if that was your kin?

And that's what America's defenders are for all of us across this country, and we are not getting a response. That is literally , and the only comparison that I can make for President Biden is this. Because reputations are a very sticky thing, and especially for foreign intelligence agencies. For governments, your reputation matters.

And his reputation is essentially like a toddler trying to carry around a Louisville slugger. America is a massive bat, but Biden is just unable to even lift it up and swing it and that's what we deal with in foreign policy and our servicemembers pay the result of this failed policy.

GOWDY: Congressman, some are calling for a military response inside the country of Iran, while reporting suggests the US will hit targets outside the country of Iran. Other than symbolism, what is the significance of where those strikes are? And where do you come down?

MAST: The significance in my opinion is this. America doesn't deal with proportionality. America swings that Louisville slugger as hard as we can swing it every single time. You come to -- you come at us and we're going to come at you in the face with everything that we have and make sure that it never happens again. That has to be American resolve.

And whether that takes place with a target inside of Iran, or whether it's like what happened with Soleimani on the side of a tarmac in Iraq, when President Trump destroyed him, whatever that has to look like, to not worry about the proportionality, but the result to show, you better never do something like this again because this is what's going to happen and you don't want that.

You know, that ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure mentality, it goes so far beyond that when we're talking about the lives of Americans, but that's what we need to see.

We need to see the prevention through American strength and we're not getting that. I'll just go back to that analogy that I gave already: President Biden is like a toddler carrying a Louisville slugger and he just can't lift it. He can't swing it. He can't wield it against anybody and it renders the perception of America to be impotent.

GOWDY: Brian Mast from the great state of Florida, thank you for your service to our country and for joining us on a Sunday night.

What is Iran's endgame? How does it benefit that country to provoke the US, to attack and kill US soldiers? Iran is a closed country and the outside world rarely gets a glimpse inside. We don't know much about the religious zealots who run the country or even the Iranian people.

But our next guest is an exception to that. Brian Hook is a former State Department's Special Envoy for Iran and he joins us now.

Welcome Mr. Hook. What is Iran up to attacking US soldiers and assets? And is it likely US intelligence can directly link Iran? Or is there room for Iranian deniability in these most recent attacks?

BRIAN HOOK, FORMER STATE DEPARTMENT'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR IRAN: Trey, what Iran is up to is they are trying to get the United States out of the Middle East and that has been the objective of this theocratic regime for 41 years, ever since the Ayatollah Khomeini came into power. That has been their objective.

They are a revolutionary regime, and they are committing all of these acts, attacks against American forces in the region in order to get our troops out.

President Biden right now is conducting a failed foreign policy that is putting our troops in danger. There have been -- our troops have been attacked over 200 times in Iraq and Syria during the Biden administration and the five American troops who have recently died is tragic, and the President has got to reverse a failed foreign policy if for nothing else than to protect the 30,000 troops we have in the Middle East.

GOWDY: It's hard for many, if not most of us to grasp sitting down at the negotiating table with a country like Iran, but you've done it. I mean, you did it on nuclear weapons. You've done it on hostages. So what does work as far as deterring Iran?

HOOK: The only language that Iran understands is pressure and force, and President Trump put in place a campaign of maximum economic pressure. The president of Iran, while we were in office said that our sanctions cost the regime over $200 billion.

Now, the regime, if they had $200 billion, would have spent it on terrorism. They would have spent it on Hamas and Hezbollah, and their proxies in Yemen, Iraq, and Syria, but we denied the regime hundreds of billions of dollars, and that was very effective at constraining their sphere of action in the region.

And unfortunately, the Biden administration has taken the exact opposite approach where they have given the regime $6 billion and the regime uses that money to then support Hezbollah and other proxies to attack American troops, Israel, and our allies around the region.

So we were very successful at deterring Iran. There were no major attacks by Hamas or Hezbollah while we were in office. President Trump put in place a foreign policy that was very effective in the Middle East. He defeated ISIS, we took a number of terrorists off the battlefield, including Qasem Soleimani.

But now, the Middle East has gone back to the sort of the old Middle East of terrorism on an almost daily basis.

GOWDY: All right, the Biden administration is calling for a two-state solution with respect to Palestine. You served in more than one Republican administration if my memory serves me correctly. So what is the answer to the conflict more broadly in the Middle East, and in particular, with respect to a Palestinian state?

HOOK: Yes, when I saw that the State Department was considering unilaterally recognizing Palestine, I didn't quite know what that means.

I mean, right now, 72 percent of Palestinians supported the terrorist attacks of October 7th on Israel. And so, if the Biden administration were to recognize the state of Palestine, what are they recognizing? And what would they be emboldening?

I mean, right now, the territories of Palestine, half of it is controlled by Hamas, which is an organization we recognized as a terrorist organization. And then in the West Bank, you have something like over 80 percent of Palestinians supported the attacks on October 7th.

And so I think the Biden administration is getting dangerously close to endorsing terrorism at this point, I mean, in this context, coming very, very shortly after the October attacks. I think this is the last thing that they should be talking about.

If there was going to be an independent Palestinian state. It is only going to come through direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine. And right now, the Palestinians do not want a two-state solution. They want to destroy Israel.

GOWDY: Brian Hook, thank you for joining us. The message is somber, but thank you for joining us on a Sunday night and thank you for your service in multiple administrations. We'll see you next time.

HOOK: Great. Good to be with you, Trey.

GOWDY: Coming up, negotiations over a border agreement looked doomed on Capitol Hill. What happened and what's next as the House moves forward with the impeachment of DHS Secretary Ali Mayorkas.

Republican Ron Johnson from the great state of Wisconsin joins us next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: It's no good, and it is no good for the Republic. And frankly, any Republican that signs it should be ashamed of himself or herself.

You're better off not having a deal than having a bad deal, and that's what they are negotiating.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Former President Trump is clearly not a fan of the bipartisan agreement aimed at finding a solution to the border crisis, which means even if something were to pass the Senate, it is not likely to even get a vote in the House.

Opponents of the proposed agreement argue there is no point negotiating new laws with an administration that won't enforce current ones. Supporters say the border crisis is the number one issue among many voters and this is a chance to do something constructive.

The House is not only unenthusiastic about the proposed deal, the House is planning to impeach DHS Secretary Ali Mayorkas.

Joining us now is the senator from the great state of Wisconsin, Mr. Ron Johnson.

Welcome, Senator. Thank you for being here.

The border is the number one issue in the minds of many voters especially or even above the economy, so is there a bill that could pass between now and the election or is this just the political reality of neither side wanting to give a victory to an opponent, especially one who is underwater on an issue?

SEN. RON JOHNSON (R-WI): Well, Trey, well, from my standpoint, President Biden and his Democratic colleagues in the Congress, their open border policy is a clear and present danger to America, so it should be our top priority. It should be what all of us are focused on. How do we actually get control over our border?

You know, our concern with the bill that's been negotiated is, will that actually secure the border? And even more importantly, will it not hamper or hinder or hamstring the next president who might actually want to secure the border?

You talk about these thresholds that are set at unreasonably high levels, that could really hamstring a future president. So that's what we need to evaluate as we're going through this bill.

GOWDY: Senator, let's listen in together at what is sometimes called the People's House.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. MARK GREEN (R-TN): We have not approached this day or this process lightly. Secretary Mayorkas' actions have forced our hand.

REP. ROBERT GARCIA (D-CA): The Donald Trump and MAGA plan is alligator moats, bombing northern Mexico, shooting migrants in the legs.

REP. JOSH BRECHEEN (R-OK): That Alanis Morissette song, and my youth is coming up, "isn't it ironic, don't you think?" This is about the rule of law in this country.

REP. BENNIE THOMPSON (D-MS): The sham impeachment of Secretary Mayorkas is a baseless political stunt by extreme MAGA Republicans.

REP. CARLOS GIMENEZ (R-FL): There is a raging fire happening at the border.

REP. DANIEL GOLDMAN (D-NY): You just want to make the allegations and concoct some crazy breach of public trust, which does not exist.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: All right, Senator, they are debating the impeachment of DHS Secretary Mayorkas. The reality or let me play the devil's advocate, he is doing nothing except carrying out Joe Biden's policies. So is the House really talking about impeaching the right person if a Cabinet secretary is simply doing what the president instructs him or her to do? Is that the right person to be impeaching?

JOHNSON: Well, you make good point there.

I would argue that probably the best thing the House has done so far on the border when they passed HR 2, but I think the Speaker laying out all the authority that President Biden has that he is not using, and let's face it, President Biden is just lying boldface to the American public when he said he's been asking Republicans since day one to give him the authority to close the border. No, he took over when we had the largest secure border.

President Trump secured it using existing law and President Biden went about dismantling all the successful programs that Trump put in place to secure the border.

So the problem that Senate negotiators have had dealing with this administration and Democrat senators is President Biden and those Democrats want an open border, they caused the problem. They are the root cause and from my standpoint, I think what this negotiation has been all about is just giving Democrats political cover now that the Mayors Adams and Johnson in New York City and Chicago are screaming about the fact that a small percentage of the six million people that Joe Biden has let into this country are going to destroy their cities.

Of course, they're not looking for a solution at the border, they are looking for more federal funding, to I guess, treat migrants better, which would just cause more migrants to want to come.

So the Democrat position here from my standpoint is absurd. This president has had all the authority he needs to secure the border. He is the one that caused this crisis, and that is just is almost an insurmountable problem in negotiating with them to actually secure the border.

How do you force the hand of a lawless president?

GOWDY: You know, you raise an interesting point, Senator, sometimes in ***politics***, the issue is more beneficial than the solution. I hope that's not true when we have a crisis like we have at the border, but sometimes politically, people benefit from the issue more than they do a solution.

Before I let you go, is there any prospect for getting something meaningful and constructive between now and the election? Or are we just going to have to wait and see who wins the next presidential race?

JOHNSON: That would be up to Democrats. I mean, Republicans want to secure the border. This is the top priority.

I've said in conference that I would not only vote for, I would promote a bill that funds Ukraine to help the Ukrainian people, but also secures the border. But I'm not going to vote for a bill that is going to hamstring a future president by setting limits and thresholds before the president can actually do what the president already has authority to do.

So first, do no harm and my concern about the Senate bill, you're going to have to analyze it, is it will do more harm -- it will do more harm than good.

GOWDY: Senator Ron Johnson from the great state of Wisconsin, thank you for joining us on a Sunday night. I look forward to visiting with you again real soon.

JOHNSON: Have a great night.

GOWDY: Coming up, the Supreme Court hears oral argument this week on Colorado removing former President Trump from the ballot in what could be a seismic decision. Former DOJ prosecutor, Jim Trusty joins us next on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MARIANNE RAFFERTY, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Welcome to "Fox News Live." I'm Marianne Rafferty in Los Angeles.

The Senate unveiling details to its highly anticipated $118 billion border deal in foreign aid package. The long awaited bill requests tens of billions in aid for both Israel and Ukraine. It's also asking for more than 20 billion to improve security at the southern border. That includes imposing tougher immigration and asylum laws.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer plans to vote on the package this week. The House plans to vote on its own standalone bill for Israel aid this week as well.

And the US is vowing to take further action against Iranian-backed militias if American forces in the Middle East continue to be targeted. It comes after a weekend of US retaliatory attacks in response to a drone assault that killed three soldiers in Jordan last week. The US is attempting to deter attacks by those hostile groups.

I'm Marianne Rafferty. Now back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

On December 18th of last year, the Colorado Supreme Court kicked the leading GOP presidential candidate off the ballot citing the 14th Amendment. Colorado does not however, had the last word.

This Thursday, the Supreme Court of the United States hears oral argument in that case. A careful listener will be able to tell which way the court is leaning based on which justices ask which questions regardless it has the potential to be a monumental decision.

So does the 14th Amendment apply in the absence of a charge or a conviction? Will the High Court pass the buck and say it's up to Congress or are the people at the ballot box? This case has become something of an economic boom for constitutional lawyers as dozens of groups have filed, Friend of the Court Briefs arguing either for or against kicking Trump off the ballot.

And just across the street from the Supreme Court a member of Congress has caught the attention of DOJ. Missouri Congresswoman Cori Bush is perhaps best known for wanting to defund the police for you, but not for herself.

She spent a lot of money on her own security. Was it government money or campaign funds? Does it matter legally? What are the limits on spending public or campaign moneys? And can you have a family member on the payroll?

Joining us now to analyze everything from Con Law to speech and debate is former DOJ prosecutor, Jim Trusty.

Welcome, Jim. It is great to see you.

The Colorado Supreme Court is full of Democrats and even some of them don't think Trump should be kicked off the ballot. So what do you expect the High Court of the United States to do?

JIM TRUSTY, FORMER DOJ PROSECUTOR: I expect them to shut this all down, Trey, I really do.

I mean, there is a lot to look at. I think if you're Justice Roberts and you're trying to command a real strong majority, you know a seven-two, eight-one, nine-zero majority, you probably focus on what I would call the foundational or procedural aspects of the problems with the Colorado case.

That might mean for instance, that they decide, hey, Article III of the 14th Amendment doesn't mean the president when it refers to officers, or it's a federal question that states shouldn't be having these determinations of.

There is a lot that can be done on kind of this more procedural ground that always feels like safer territory for Justice Roberts than getting to the meat of the issue.

To me, I've got to say, the meat of the issue really is the due process of these ridiculous mini trials that they've held, whether it's in Maine, for instance, or this one in Colorado. And Trey, the trial was essentially two things and as an old prosecutor, old trial lawyer yourself, I'm sure you'll have the same reaction. One was, let's just adopt the J6 Committee report and consider that evidence of insurrection, which is rife with problems because of the political nature of that committee and the way they conducted it.

And then they brought in a sociology professor, to be the Trump dog whisperer interpreter, who said, well, I know President Trump said be peaceful and patriotic, Your Honor. But what he really meant was be violent and unpatriotic. I mean, this is the quackery that infected the Colorado process.

And so I'd love for them to get to the kind of due process, the substance of the hearing, but that would still allow all of these other states to kind of poke the bear and continue to litigate the issue of ballot eligibility. I think if they find a procedural basis, like it doesn't apply to the president, because of the legislative intent, which is what the district court in Colorado actually found, then you end it for all of the litigation across the country and I think that's probably where we're going.

Although, you know, lawyers go poor, betting on the Supreme Court.

GOWDY: You know, Jim, I feel so stupid. It never once occurred to me to call a sociology professor as a witness in one of my trials. I always mistakenly like called witnesses or people who had firsthand knowledge. You mentioned a nine to zip opinion, which, you know, I say they're rare. They're certainly rare in high profile, contentious cases, but if it's a fractured opinion, along alleged ideological lines, then it's going to further undercut the legitimacy of the court and is going to be politicized once again, don't you think?

TRUSTY: Yes, and that's a shame. I mean, look, you've got a sitting president who is quite comfortable demonizing the Supreme Court, even when it's something like student loans where they said going in, we're going to lose at the Supreme Court.

So I hate to see one institution within the government, you know, savaging another for their own skin, and I think you'll get a lot of that, with obviously, a lot of media help as well. So if it is six-three on conservative lines, for instance, you know, you're going to hear the Supreme Court reform chorus jump in. Let's just stack the deck and add another 20 lawyers to the Supreme Court, and I think that's unfortunate.

I also think it's unfortunate that Roberts kind of -- is maybe a little too sensitive to criticism. I mean, I think they should be pretty bold about establishing what the Constitution says or doesn't say, and they should kind of damn the ***politics*** a little bit.

But process is going to be the safer territory than substance here. If they come out with a procedural bar that's going to end all the ballot litigation, and we can just move on to the criminal and civil litigation involving President Trump.

GOWDY: Before I'll let you go, I want us to listen to the gentlewoman from Missouri together real quick.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. CORI BUSH (D-MO): In recent months, right-wing organizations have lodged baseless complaints against me, peddling notions that I have misused campaign funds to pay for personal security services. That simply is not true.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Jim, I am sitting here wondering how a DOJ run by Merrick Garland qualifies as a right-wing organization. It is not the Heritage Foundation that's looking into her, it is Merrick Garland's DOJ.

TRUSTY: Yes, she is going with the ethics complaints that were filed in the House and those are from political organizations. One went her way, which is a mystery to me, the other one is still open. But that's, you know, again, totally independent of DOJ. Do I trust DOJ to vigorously pursue this case against Miss Bush? No, I don't. But there is some smoke at least. You know, there's $120,000.00 apparently of payments to what was a bodyguard, now her head of security/husband, who apparently had a history as a moving company person. And I think one other job, but nothing to do with security until real late in the game here, 2021-2022.

So it's at least that judgment. It may not be criminal, it may not be something that House acts on, but when you have that kind of nepotism, it's pretty embarrassing for her.

GOWDY: She is presumed innocent as a relates to the criminal process. ***Politics*** is a different story, but that's why I like having you on, Jim because we focus on the law.

Thank you for joining us on a Sunday night. Look forward to our next visit.

TRUSTY: Sounds good. Great to see you, Trey.

GOWDY: You too.

Up next, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster joins us to discuss the upcoming Republican presidential primary.

Plus, it's called artificial intelligence, but is it really intelligence if it's fake? Kara Frederick is a tech policy expert at Heritage and she joins us right after the break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

We're about three weeks away from the Republican presidential primary in my beloved home state of South Carolina. Nikki Haley is former governor of the Palmetto State and Trump's lone remaining rival and she sure sounds undeterred.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

NIKKI HALEY (R), 2024 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: He's made it chaotic. He's made it self-absorbed. He's made people dislike and judge each other.

The president should have moral clarity and know the difference between right or wrong and he is just toxic.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: The current governor knows our state well. He served as US attorney and attorney general and lieutenant governor. He is Henry McMaster and he joins us now.

Welcome, Governor. It is so nice to see you. You saw something in Donald Trump way back in 2016. You were among the very first to endorse him, so what did you see way back then?

GOV. HENRY MCMASTER (R-SC): Well, Peggy out I were invited to a dinner. They were having a series of them up in Greenville following all the candidates back in 2016. This was actually in late 2015 and we met him, got to know him and I endorsed him in February.

We liked him, and the crowd did, too. They went wild over him. He's got something different.

He's strong. He's experienced and of course, right now, he is the most experienced one out there, having already served four years as president.

But I think most people agree, today, things are even more dangerous than they were then in his absence. We have our enemies creeping all over the world. The border, of course, and we've got no border anymore. Military is depressed, not meeting their quotas. That's a bad sign.

We do have good judges on the US Supreme Court. That's good. But he is a strong man. He is the strongest candidate we have and what we need right now is his strength and the experience that he has.

We are lucky that he is willing to run again for this office because the times right now, the threats that are facing America all over the world, and even in our border require the strength that he has.

GOWDY: Governor, some of the recent polling is very good for the former president, especially in swing states. There is other polling suggests that he has a problem with some female voters. So you've been on the ballot, you've been successful. What advice would you have for him on how to bridge whatever gap exists, perhaps among female voters?

MCMASTER: Well, I don't know where that gap comes from. I know there's a lot of misinformation out there. Every now and then I see things on other stations and other channels and other broadcasts that are way off base in the way they described him, and I think it's only natural that if you watch those stations and those people that you will get a bad impression.

But anyone who meets Donald Trump around South Carolina, the men and women are just crazy about him, but he is depicted so harshly. I think it's only natural that some people who don't see the other side, don't get to see other side or don't see the truth of the man himself, don't see the truth about him, they're not going to like him just based on what they hear.

But I'll tell you what? He lights up the room.

Trey, we had him in Pickens over the summer. We had him -- you know, Pickens, it is a small town in the upstate, you're familiar with it. Less than 4,000 people live there. We have somewhere between 55 and 70,000 people that turned out in the heat and stood there for hours to see the man, men and women.

It is a phenomenon. He came to the football game, the Carolina-Clemson football game and as soon as we got up in the stands where people could look and see him, everybody just went wild.

And in fact there was so much people taking pictures and hollering and cheering that we didn't even hear what the referees and umpires and the captains of the team were talking about when they're out there flipping the coin, and then he and I walked out on the field in halftime, it happened again.

He is a phenomenal strong candidate and leader and the people that see -- that get to see the truth about him are crazy about him.

GOWDY: All right, Governor, we lost that game, so I hope you take him over to Clemson next time and don't take him back to Williams-Brice.

Before I let you go, you've gone head-to-head with Nikki Haley before. She is tough. It is not wise to underestimate her. But realistically, does she need to win South Carolina to stay in this race, do you think?

MCMASTER: I would say if she were to win, that would be a big boost for her. I don't think that's going to happen. You'd have to talk to the experts and listen to how they say what would be good, what would be bad, but I don't think that -- I don't think that any candidate who would be running now is going to beat Donald Trump in South Carolina.

But she she's fierce, she's a strong competitor, but Donald Trump is a strong competitor. And not only is he a strong competitor, but he is a person, he is a leader that the world knows. And the last thing our enemies want out there is for Donald Trump to be president again.

And if Donald Trump is not president, again, and anybody else is president, again, I think we are not going to be -- if Joe Biden wins re-election, I cannot imagine the harm that is going to continue and going to come to this country through the policies at the border with the judges, with all the woke baloney that's going on.

The military is in depression, our unconstitutional mandates, all of those kind of things are going in exactly the wrong direction. We need a strong serious leader who can put this country back on -- back in shape, get it back working, get people working, get money in their pockets, and keep us safe from a very dangerous world.

GOWDY: Governor Henry McMaster from the great state of South Carolina. Thank you for joining us on a Sunday night. I'll see you around the state soon.

MCMASTER: My pleasure, Trey.

GOWDY: What if you received a message from a politician, but it was fake? It sounded just like your favorite or least favorite elected official, but it was a fraud?

It happened in New Hampshire, where voters received a call purportedly from President Joe Biden, except it wasn't him. It sounded like him. It even had one of his favorite phrases, but it was counterfeit.

So how does counterfeit information help voters make important decisions? Well, it doesn't. But artificial intelligence does make it easier to commit fraud on the public.

So whose job is it to regulate?

Joining us now is the tech policy director at the Heritage Foundation. Kara Frederick.

Welcome. It is so good to see you again, Kara. It's fake. It's false. It's misleading. But is it illegal?

KARA FREDERICK, DIRECTOR OF TECH POLICY, HERITAGE FOUNDATION: So far, it's not. In some cases, like you look at the deepfakes, which is synthetic media, digital forgeries of videos. In some states, it is illegal to do it for things like porn and child exploitation, but right now, when you're just generally talking about the information environment, it is not illegal. And that's why there are so many efforts, a groundswell if you will, and a lot of energy on the Hill, in the states to actually do something about this and make, let's say, impose costs on some of these companies and these actors who are propagating this synthetic information for ill, really.

GOWDY: I guess, my simple mind goes to two explanations, but your very complex mind may come up with more. I think, it is either, it is a lack of criminal sanction, because people think it is a First Amendment issue, which I don't get, or is a question of technology just happening faster than politicians can react? Or is there another explanation for the absence of a sanction?

FREDERICK: You know, I think it's mostly the second one. I have a saying, and it's technology development always outpaces attempts to govern it and the people who are building these technologies, they understand that as well, so they know they have the edge.

You know, working in these big tech companies, the ethos was build and ship and ask for forgiveness later. That's what's coming down. We know our legislators are outmatched, and so they are building these technologies.

And then the thing is, I think a lot of those founders in these companies, people building these technologies need to understand that they are -- you know, if they build it, then bad actors will exploit it.

So they need to start from that premise, build accordingly, and then frankly, there needs to be some retroactive legislation and policies that establish deterrence in a way.

Again, imposing those costs on bad actors who exploit and use these technologies even if they were created ostensibly for good and then you deter some of, I would say the bad effects, you at least mitigate the bad effects in our information environment.

GOWDY: Yes, you know, Kara, it is hard enough for some folks to separate what is true from what is false. I just think so-called artificial intelligence is making it all the harder. But thank you for shedding light on it and sharing your insight and I have the feeling it will not be the last time we talk about it.

FREDERICK: Thanks, Trey.

GOWDY: Coming up, we wrap up some of the biggest stories of the past week just in case you may have missed them, only on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

It's hard to follow every news story each week, so I've tried to do that for us, and here are a few of the things that perhaps were missed this week.

It's hard enough to get a conviction, but then you have to keep it. Prosecutors and cops came close to losing the murder conviction on Alex Murdaugh because a clerk of court wanted to sell books.

That's right. Murdaugh came pretty close to getting a new trial because Colleton County Clerk of Court Becky Hill wanted to sell books so badly, she allegedly tried to influence the jury.

The trial judge overseeing these allegations of improper contact with the jury is a former chief justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court, Jean Toal and she made a reference to the siren call of celebrity leading people to do unwise and improper things.

One member of the jury indicated Hill's comments may have influenced the jury but that juror also was deemed to have given conflicting answers. So the net result is Murdaugh remains in prison for life, for now, but it highlights just how hard it is to get a conviction and then keep it.

There was almost a new trial granted not because of something prosecutors or cops or the trial judge did, but because someone wanted to be famous, which highlights another cautionary tale: Be careful what you wish for. She wanted to be famous and now she is, for all the wrong reasons.

One of history's greatest mysteries may have finally been solved. Could it really be that Amelia Earhart's plane has been found after all these years?

Amelia Earhart was an aviation pioneer. She set too many records to cite including being the first female aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1937, she set out to fly around the world and she almost made it. She was last seen on July 2, 1937 headed for Howland Island. She did not make it and where her plane went down has been one of history's greatest mysteries, until perhaps now.

An ocean exploration company based in Charleston, South Carolina has found something resembling a plane on the floor of the ocean about a hundred miles from the Howland Islands. We don't know for sure if it is her plane. The company plans to go back and do some more exploration, but we are perhaps closer to solving one of history's greatest mysteries.

Lastly, I never thought my happiness would depend on a member of the rodent family. But when you spend one-fourth of your life wishing winter would end and spring would begin, you pay attention to a groundhog named Phil, whose first name I cannot pronounce.

I remember growing up, I really believed that early spring or more winter depended on what someone who is the first cousin to a rat saw or did not see.

For what it's worth, let's hope he is right this year. He is predicting an early spring, and more than a weather predictor, this annual ritual is a break from the chaos and the conflict that seems to consume our everyday lives.

It's a harmless ritual. No doubt not rooted in science, but a distraction if you will, from the things that tend to divide us. I dare say, most of us long for winter to be over and spring to come.

For those of us who spent a few days in sub-Arctic Iowa for the caucus, that is especially true.

So let us suspend science for a moment and place our collective happiness in the hands or rather the shadow of a groundhog and hope for spring and further hope that uniquely American rituals that unite us can remain untarnished.

Thank you for spending part of your Sunday night with us.

I hope you have a great week ahead. Until next week, you can find us online at Gowdy America or on "The Trey Gowdy Podcast."

Good night from South Carolina.

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