

# [***House GOP Question James Biden In Impeachment Push; Democratic Representative Calls Biden Impeachment Probe A Circus; Ballerina's Ex- Mother-In-Law: Jail Will Be Torture; Trump Faces $450M Penalty Including Interest; Trump: I Have A Lot Of Cash; Trump Attorney On NY AG's Threat To Seize His Assets; Chicago Residents Slam City Over Migrant Crisis; Trump Eyes A 2024 Victory In New York State***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BCW-5301-JCS1-63PB-00000-00&context=1516831)

Fox News THE STORY WITH MARTHA MACCALLUM 3:00 PM EST

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**Guests:** Jack Barsky, Alina Habba

**Body**

AISHAH HASNIE, FOX NEWS HOST: I was debt free. So, thank you, Dad.

JOHN ROBERTS, FOX NEWS HOST: College was so cheap when I went to school.

HASNIE: I bought my first house at 25.

ROBERTS: Good for you. College was so cheap when I went to school that it didn't cost much at all. So, there you go. Hey, thanks for joining us today. I'm John Roberts. Good to be with you today.

HASNIE: And I'm Aishah Hasnie. Yes, good to see you too, as always. "THE STORY" starts right now with Martha MacCallum.

MARTHA MACCALLUM, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: All right, thank you very much, you guys. Good afternoon, everybody. I'm Martha MacCallum, and this is THE STORY. Remember this?

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I never discussed with my son or my brother or anyone else anything having to do with their businesses, period.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: OK, so those businesses, which we have talked a lot about, the relationships, which we've also dug into here, are what Republicans are probing this very moment behind closed doors on Capitol Hill. They are speaking with the man at the center of the screen there with the glasses on. He is younger brother James Biden, involved in many businesses that overlapped with Hunter and others of his business associates.

Now, Hunter Biden, he's up next. He will testify next week in the ongoing House impeachment probe. So, are they getting anywhere with all of this? That is one of the biggest questions that we will dig into this afternoon. James telling lawmakers today, "I never asked my brother to take any official action on behalf of me, my business associates, or anyone else."

So, we have parsed that statement. There's a few things in there that may be carefully worded. So, we'll talk about that in a moment. And remember just last week, Hunter's former business partner, Tony Bobulinski, who was completely ignored by the Department of Justice, even though he had lots of evidence that he wanted to present to them, he told Congress last week that Joe Biden was "the brand" being sold by the Biden family. So, former Federal Prosecutor Andy McCarthy, and Fox News Digital Political Correspondent Brooke Singman standing by. First let's go to correspondent, David Spunt, on Capitol Hill covering all of this live for us, brings us up to speed. Hi, David.

DAVID SPUNT, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Hi, Martha, good afternoon. Good to be with you. A long day for the president's younger brother, Jim Biden. This interview began at 10:30 and is expected to go into the early evening hours. Jim ignored questions walking into the building this morning.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SPUNT: Did you use your brother's name to help sell influence?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We're not commenting --

SPUNT: When it comes to Joe Biden?

REP. JIM JORDAN (R-OH): I think today we're largely going to focus on that pre-candidate time. I call that the money, the business, the brand. That'll be the focus, I think, of today's questioning, specifically relative to Jim Biden's involvement, James Biden's involvement with CEFC, AmeriCorps.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SPUNT: CEFC is that Chinese energy company that has ties to both the Communist Party in the country and Hunter Biden, the president's son. In his opening statement today, Jim Biden also said, I have had a 50-year career in a variety of business ventures. Joe Biden has never had any involvement or any direct or indirect financial interest in those activities, none.

Democrats downplayed Jim Biden's testimony so far in the overall impeachment probe, pointing to a court filing from yesterday, Martha, alleging that Alexander Smirnov, the former FBI informant charged with lying about Hunter and Joe Biden, accepting millions in bribes, had contact with Russian intelligence.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I think it's time for Chairman Comer and the Republicans to fold up the circus tent and we should get back to work for the American people.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SPUNT: But there is no any indication that that's going to happen. Hunter Biden will be here one week from today and we expect a much bigger presence outside. Martha.

MACCALLUM: OK, lots to dig into here David, thank you very much. Live right now, President Biden making a stop in Los Angeles. He flew there earlier today. He's with the city's mayor, Karen Bass. We'll see what we can hear here.

Obviously, we can't hear too much at this point, but it's interesting. This was not on the schedule and then we got word from the travel pool that he would be stopping at a cafe in Los Angeles. He's traveling there today with Karen Bass, he's in the state to do fundraising. That's what happens mainly on the coast when you see politicians heading to New York or to Los Angeles, raising money is obviously a big part of that equation for them.

It's also an interesting sort of distraction from what's going on, on Capitol Hill where his brother is answering questions, heated questions no doubt from some of the Republican lawmakers who have been trying to nail him down on his involvement in these businesses and whether or not they overlapped with sending any money to the president who we see there.

The president's also going to announce a $1.2 billion sort of workaround for people to be relieved of their student debt, which is an enormously controversial move and no doubt one that is designed to sort of help to ramp up his support among younger voters, which has deteriorated dramatically, especially on the issue of his support for Israel against Hamas.

So, lots of money going back in people's pockets who owe money on student loans. That's something that conservatives are very much against. They don't think it's fair. They want to know why people don't get relief from car loans, but they're getting them in the student loan area. It's an enormously popular issue with a huge group of voters who owe money on those loans.

So, very controversial. I do see him working the room here. If he says anything or if we get any good insight into the conversations that are happening there, we're certainly bringing those to you. With me here on set right now is Brooke Singman, Political Correspondent and Reporter for Fox News Digital, and Andy McCarthy, former Assistant U.S. Attorney and Fox News contributor. Great to have both of you here.

You know, obviously this testimony by James Biden, highly anticipated. He is there under oath, you know, to answer truthfully the questions that he's asked about his involvement with Joe Biden and their businesses. But Andy, I want to ask you first about what happened yesterday which is that David Weiss moved to charge one of the linchpins really in the investigation against the Bidens who was a former FBI informant.

They say that he was closely involved with Russian intelligence and have essentially discounted his testimony where he said that there were two $5 million bribes that were given to Joe Biden and to Hunter Biden as part of the dealings that they were involved in in Ukraine. So, you know, let's talk a little bit about that move by Weiss who hasn't been particularly aggressive against the Bidens, but suddenly has undercut one of the main tenets of the case that Republicans have built against the Biden business ventures.

ANDY MCCARTHY, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Yes, I still think, Martha, that Weiss's main job here is to protect President Biden. He went a long time without charging Hunter, then tried to disappear the case on a sweetheart plea deal. He's only charged Hunter in the two cases because he didn't get away with that. But when he pled the tax indictment against Hunter, he took pains to keep President Biden's name out of it, even though the income that Hunter got was from exploiting his relationship with the president. So, I'm always skeptical about whatever Weiss does in this case because of what his track record is.

A couple of things about Smirnov. First of all, I wouldn't refer to him. I think it's unfortunate that the Republicans in the House teed the thing up this way, but I don't think he's a lynchpin of the Burisma angle of their investigation but they had a men's evidence that there was corrupt activity involved in that before hearing that there was an FBI informant who said that there was $10 million in bribes. And Smirnov's information about that it was not, is not connected to what the House Republicans already had about Burisma.

I think the Democrats are trying to spread the idea that he's the key to the case, because now that his testimony has obviously been knocked down by the false statement charges, that makes it look like the case collapses. But it doesn't, for example, disappear the $24 million that went into the Biden's coffers from agents of corrupt and anti-American governments. Secondly, this whole business about whether, you know, Russian disinformation, I think this is a very peculiar complaint.

There's stuff in there at the end that says Smirnov was told that Hunter stayed in a place in Kyiv that the Russians had wired. There are no charges in the indictment or the complaint that relate to that information. It's like they just threw that in at the end and normally the FBI and the Justice Department would tell us, well, this you know this Russian intelligence stuff that's highly, highly classified we can't just like let that out into the public domain.

Yet it seems to me that he threw like a number of paragraphs in there at the end apropos of nothing else that was in the complaint just to get that out in public, which I think is peculiar from the Justice Department if you're not basing charges on it.

MACCALLUM: Yes, fascinating, I mean it's, it's sort of a question -- you're right, that these, this bribery issue came up very late in the game, but it certainly seemed to be a crucial piece of evidence in terms of actual money that was flooding to the Bidens.

But now, at this late hour, David Weiss says he's working with Russian informants and Democrats are claiming that that's the Jenga piece that makes the whole tower fall down. And you're saying that the tower could, could still be standing without it potentially.

Let me bring in Brooke Singman. Brooke, you know, you have been reporting today about people who are in this room, what they're learning from James Biden and how heated it may or may not be getting. What are you learning?

BROOKE SINGMAN, FOX NEWS DIGITAL POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT: Sure. So, there are sources in the room right now saying that this testimony, of course, has been going on since 10:00, 10:30 this morning. The president's brother came in with an opening statement which we obtained early this morning and he said that the president was never involved in his business dealings directly, which of course as you mentioned earlier in the show, it's very careful language as we saw the White House in the past several months say repeatedly, you know, the president was never involved in his son's business dealings, the president never spoke with his son, the president never benefited financially.

Do they all mean the same thing, which is the statement that they're all sticking with today. And that's something that I think is important to keep an eye on. But of course, sources in the room right now are focusing on these payments, these loan repayments that James apparently made to Joe Biden. There was a $200,000 check that he labeled as a loan repayment to his brother and a $40,000 check, again, loan repayment. So, I know Republicans are asking questions about this. We're waiting to hear what, what James Biden is saying. Hopefully we'll get a readout later.

MACCALLUM: Yes. I mean, one of the things that we looked into this morning is what is James Biden's business been? I mean, what does he do? What's his profession, right? And we looked into it in 1973, he was a nightclub owner right after his brother was elected to the Senate in Delaware. Then, he tried to drum up business for a legal firm at one point and then tried to gain investors. We have a list of these. Tried to get investors involved in AmeriCare Health, as a health consultant.

Those are -- it's pretty spotty. Those are the only things we could find on his resume in terms of what he has actually been doing. It's kind of dabbling in this and dabbling in that, which I think is kind of interesting in and of itself. So, we'll see where they take this in the investigation. Brooke will follow your reporting on this. Thank you very much for being here today. Andy McCarthy, thank you as always. Great to have you with us today.

MCCARTHY: Thanks, Martha.

MACCALLUM: So, still ahead, Karl Rove joins us, and Trump attorney, Alina Habba, after the town hall last night, how will the former president seek to pay this $355 million plus within 30 days? We're going to talk to her about that and a lot more on the Trump agenda.

And former KGB spy, Jack Barsky, about what is driving Putin to continue taking Americans, this is a dual citizen, into the prison system in Russia. That follows the arrest of Ksenia Karelina, the American Ballerina now jailed in Russia after making a small $50.00 donation, reportedly, in support of Ukraine. She's now in Russian custody.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: We need to take her out of the jail, because if we do not do that, she will spend the rest of her life there, and it's going to be torture. So, she will never get out of the jail.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: American ballerina Ksenia Karelina, now at least the fifth U.S. citizen imprisoned by Putin's regime in Russia.

These are images of her being hauled off, blindfolded to her cell. The Kremlin security service claims that the 33-year-old committed treason by donating $51 to a charity that supports Ukraine. Her family says she traveled to Russia to be with her family. Her 90-year-old grandmother, mom, dad, and sister, and they are pleading for her release.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ELENORA SREBROSKI, KARELINA'S EX-MOTHER-IN-LAW: Her family is not a well- off family. I don't think they can pay any money to bail her out or anything. So, it's going to be the end -- the end of her life, beautiful life of a beautiful person if we do not help her.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Former KGB agent Jack Barsky was recruited as a sleeper agent for the Soviet Union. He spent 10 years in New York collecting information, getting close to people who made foreign policy decisions in the -- in the U.S., discovered by the FBI in the 80s. He now speaks out publicly about his experience in the then-USSR.

Jack Barsky joins us now. Jack, good to have you with us today.

What's your reaction to the apprehension of this woman? She is a dual Russian American citizen. She manages a spa in California and is also a ballerina.

JACK BARSKY, FORMER AGENT, KGB: Yes, first of all, arresting Americans is nothing new. That happened during Stalin's time, all the way through today, because, you know, an American imprison is an asset that you can trade. OK? And this has been happening throughout history.

What really makes me shake my head the brutality with which they proceed against this young lady who if he - and then, they go out in public and say that's $50.

So, there is nothing that Putin does -- and that nothing that's being done that isn't controlled by Putin -- and being done in this realm.

And so, and there is nothing that he does that he doesn't really think about. So, my guess is that he wants to scare more people -- to scare everybody that the world as well as, you know, the Russians, his own citizens.

So, it's mind blowing, and --

(CROSSTALK)

MACCALLUM: Yes, you make a great point, Jack.

The fact that they are going out there with this idea that $50 to the Ukraine cause will lead you to prison in the Soviet Union does send a very terrifying message.

And also, it sends a message to the United States where there's a lot of discussion over funding the war in Ukraine, and where all of this leads.

What did you think about what happened to Navalny and does all of this together, paint a picture of an emboldened Putin at this point?

He has Evan Gershkovich as well, who we want very much to be brought home.

BARSKY: No, he is -- he is ratcheting things up. And Navalny, as you probably remember, that game that they both played, and that has been going on for a long time when it ended in Navalny's death.

But initially, it was, you know, when he started entering ***politics***. And he was in opposition, there was maybe 10 days in jail, 20 days in jail, then a verdict overturned, and then, reinstated in and out, in and out. And at one point, he -- they tried to poison him, and now they killed him.

I think the reason is that he got too close to the corruption at the highest levels and in the government.

MACCALLUM: OK. Jack Barsky, always good to talk to you sir. Thank you very much. Good to have you with us today.

BARSKY: You're welcome. Thank you.

MACCALLUM: So, New York Attorney General Letitia James puts Trump's assets on notice until the former president forks over nearly $355 million in that case.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LETITIA JAMES, ATTORNEY GENERAL OF NEW YORK: If he does not have funds to pay off the judgement, then, we will seek, you know, judgement enforcement mechanisms in court, and we will ask the judge to seize his assets.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Trump attorney Alina Habba, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: So, New York Attorney General Letitia James says she will quote go after former President Trump's properties, if that's what it takes to get him to pay the penalty in his civil fraud trial. Close to half a billion dollars due in less than 30 days now, including interests, by the way, which is in the $90,000 a day range.

He says he did nothing wrong. He is outraged by this decision. He made that clear last night in his town hall with Laura Ingraham. The former president's attorney Alina Habba joins us in just a moment.

But first, to Fox Business correspondent Kelly O'Grady, reporting live outside of Trump Tower here in New York City.

Hi, Kelly.

KELLY O'GRADY, FOX BUSINESS NETWORK CORRESPONDENT: Hi, Martha.

That's right. Attorney General Letitia James making some very bold statements that she could be coming for New York properties of the former President Trump's just like the one behind me. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JAMES: If he does not have funds to pay off the judgment, and then, we will seek, you know, judgment enforcement mechanisms in court. And we will ask the judge to seize his assets.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

O'GRADY: Now, if former President Trump doesn't pay the fine, the state would have grounds to mount a case to see some of those New York properties, because until appeal was filed, the penalties do stand. He does owe $450 million, if you include that interest, which, by the way, he will have to hand over or post a bond simply to mount that appeal.

While Trump avoided last night answering if he would sell off real estate properties to fund that, he stood firm on its innocence, he would maintain that he's flushed with cash. And he teased one strategy his legal team plans to use on that crucial appeal, the size of that fine.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (R) AND CURRENT U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE (R): They say, it's the most egregious punishment anybody's ever seen. Tim Scott knows that. He sees it. The Eighth Amendment. Excessive bail shall not be required nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishment inflicted. That's the Eighth Amendment. Excessive fines.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

O'GRADY: So, Martha, essentially, one argument would be that, that fine is unconstitutional. We await that appeal within the 30 deadline -- 30-day deadline. Back to you.

MACCALLUM: OK, Kelly, thank you very much.

With that, we're bring in Alina Habba, attorney for former President Trump.

Alina, great to have you with us. Thank you for being here today.

I actually want to start with that piece of sound from the town hall last night with Laura Ingraham and the former President Donald Trump. Watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LAURA INGRAHAM, FOX NEWS CHANNEL ANCHOR: It's such a huge amount of money.

TRUMP: Yes.

INGRAHAM: You have to decide whether you're going to put up that bond and escrow do to appeal.

TRUMP: I do. Yes.

INGRAHAM: Are you going to do that? And where are you going to get the money?

TRUMP: I tell you what we're going to do. Number one, well, I have a lot of cash. But that doesn't mean he can take it. I mean, you know what he did, I think he looked at my cash and he said, well, we'll take all of his cash.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: So, Alina, welcome. First of all, thank you for being here.

And does that indicate that the former president plans to pay this bond -- whether he's going to do the bond or pay this outright in cash? Because he says that he essentially has that much cash? Is that the case?

ALINA HABBA, TRUMP ATTORNEY: I actually agree with my client's sentiment, I just want to add something that most Americans don't realize. Miss James started out asking for $250 million when she got a glimpse of just how wealthy the Trump Organization is because they are a successful business in the state of New York, because they employ thousands of people and pay hundreds of millions of tax -- dollars and taxes to the state of New York.

She upped that. She upped that ask. Why? Because her goal was to try and hurt the president, try and hurt his family, his company.

And quite honestly, all I can say to that without breaking my privilege and giving her a glimpse, which I would never give her the courtesy of having into our strategy, is that she has no chance.

The appellate record is strong, the record is going to be very clear to the American public, and I look forward to having everyone see what we say and really got a glimpse of what happened in that 11 weeks in court.

MACCALLUM: But nonetheless, Alina, that amount, is there any Hail Mary pass that circumvents the reality that that money has to be paid, whether it's in a bond or in cash, before you can go to the appellate process? Is there any workaround at all?

HABBA: So there's a couple things, right, and I'll speak generally. You can post a bond, which is an option, you can tell the judge that you should set aside the verdict because it's insane, which this is.

MACCALLUM: Will you be asking him to do that?

ALINA HABBA: And all transactions are on the table. I will never show my cards, Martha. You know I'm too good to do that. But I will tell you that we have a great team. I'm proud of our team, and we're working around the clock to figure out what strategically is the best move. One thing I can tell you is that, her goal of tearing down the Trump Organization, her goal of tearing down the individuals that work so hard, including on his campaign, his family, and the list goes on and on, her goal is frankly not going to succeed. That's all I'm willing to say.

MACCALLUM: What did you make of the fact that she said, you know, when she was sort of guessing how he may come up with this money or what he might choose to sell off? She said, well, I look up at 40 Wall Street every single day.

HABBA: Yes. And that chip on her shoulder is why we're here today. Look, this is a woman who ran on getting Trump before she even knew anything about the Trump Organization. She made good on a campaign promise and she used Judge Engoron to help her facilitate that promise.

Martha, all I can say is this, President Trump is one of the smartest businessmen, one of the greatest presidents we have ever seen. If she thinks she is going to take him down. If that was her goal, which we all know very well it was, and she got a strong assist there in court. But I will tell you this, that goal will not be successful.

And that is the message I can give to everyone listening here. It will not be successful. We've seen it happen time and time again, look at what's happening in Georgia, look at what's happening with Ms. James going to Washington right before she files the complaint. We have proof of that now. We're not talking about it because it's so damaging.

This is all political. There's absolutely no factual basis to it. And I'm really looking forward to everybody seeing our record on appeal. I hope they take the time to read it so that they can get a window into what are the facts they've done nothing wrong, there were no victims, and everyone made money.

MACCALLUM: I mean, it's interesting, we're going to get into this later. But that, you know, the numbers in New York right now indicate that there are Democrats who are leaning towards Trump. I mean, he's still 12 points behind the current president. But I think it's interesting given how, perhaps, you know, the overreach of this, that maybe all people look at and try to figure out how this possibly makes sense.

Andy McCarthy wrote this in National Review, just a quick thought on this before I let you go, Alina, if I may. He said to my mind is unlikely that Trump's appeal will result in a clean win for either side. The realist in me is not banking on a sweeping appellate win for Trump. I anticipate that he will get material relief in terms of the dollar amount, but I wouldn't hold my breath on the rest of the penalties. And those penalties matter a lot. What do you say to that?

HABBA: I say that I welcome him to be part of the legal team if he thinks he knows the case better than the team that tried it for 11 weeks. I've been on this case for the better of three years. I can tell you right now, there are truly no facts that support any of these decisions. And that again, I can say will be made very clear in our appeal.

MACCALLUM: Well, we look forward to seeing the next move in this very complicated game of chess that has a lot of people's attention. It's an absolutely extraordinary number. And it's really unbelievable that there isn't -- that there's not another step before that money has to change hands. So we'll see what happens. We'll be watching, Alina.

Thank you very much, Alina Habba, for joining us this afternoon.

HABBA: Thank you, Martha.

MACCALLUM: Always good to see you, thank you. So Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson meets the wrath of black residents in his city who say that the city is prioritizing migrants over people in their communities who need help themselves. We're going to play you some very fiery sound from this meeting that just happened. You'll hear it coming up next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: So we just got some brand new reaction from GOP presidential candidate Nikki Haley on the controversial Alabama Supreme Court ruling that frozen embryos should be considered children. Haley telling NBC, "embryos to me are babies." When you talk about an embryo, you're talking about, to me, that's a life. And so, I do see where that is coming from when they talk about that, says Nikki Haley. We'll talk more about her candidacy and where it is going as we get ready for South Carolina coming up in just moments with Karl Rove.

And in Chicago today, raw anger from some of the black residents there who are accusing the city of putting migrants ahead of their own communities. Watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ZOEY LEE, CHICAGO RESIDENT: Downtown has three to four legal families on every block begging for work and selling KitKat bars after a billion dollars was spent on them. Where is that money? Where is the money for the South side and the West Side communities, that should be the argument. If the crisis is so bad, the city council members who are so concerned to donate their salaries to the cause, like a real public servant should.

JESSICA JACKSON, CHICAGO RESIDENT: All this asylum=seeking lie, all this about refugees, that. No, no, no. What's happening is, they're emptying out the dregs of their jails and to the United States and to our communities. They are junking up our country. And yeah, we feel some kind of way about it because it's our country.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Wow. With that we bring townhall.com editor Katie Pavlich, a Fox News contributor. Katie, what goes through your mind as you listen to these residents of Chicago who clearly inhall.com editor Katie Pavlich, a Fox News contributor. Katie, what goes through your mind as you listen to these residents of Chicago who clearly, in that person's mind, have had enough.

KATIE PAVLICH, TOWNHALL.COM EDITOR: Well, Mayor Brandon Johnson, of course, as a Democrat of the sanctuary city of Chicago has tried really hard to blame this problem on a Republican governor Greg Abbott from Texas. He's politely called on Joe Biden to give them more money, not necessarily to stop the flow of illegal immigrants on the southern border.

But you listen to these residents, it's just common sense. This comes down to a basic resource management issue. And if you read about the way that Chicago schools, much like in New York City have been closed down to students who go to school there, whose parents pay taxes to send them there, what do you think about them being taken over by illegal immigrants, the literacy rate in Chicago Public Schools, Martha, is 25%, which means that the illiterate, people who cannot read, is 75%. They are 83% not proficient in math, these students, and yet they are seeing people coming into their communities, going into their schools, and the resources are being stretched at every single level, which is why you've seen this issue become a national issue across the board because it affects the economy.

It affects medical care, it affects education, it affects basic taxes, Chicago has a ballot measure coming up in March about raising property taxes to deal with the homeless crisis, which they of course still have as well, in addition to this issue. And that means that people's taxes are going to go up and in place where taxes already are very high and being spent as a young woman was discussing on things that they're not seeing a return on investment for.

MACCALLUM: Yes. I mean, it's extraordinary when you think about the fact that I'm focusing on when she said, you know, don't tell me they're asylum seekers, right? And you look at the people that Bill Melugin has been speaking to now in California, who are coming across the border. They're flying, buying plane tickets. He said that, you know, Griff Jenkins was like, they look like they just took a shower and arrived in the country on an airplane, which is exactly what they did. Flying in to Tijuana from China, from Kazakhstan, from all of these other countries, these are not triangle country asylum seekers who are pushing their way across the border.

But Governor Pritzker --

PAVLICH: Yes.

MACCALLUM: -- in Illinois, he says, you know, what's happening here is not our fault, blame Governor Abbott. And he says, I will not join the chorus of people in this country who eagerly look to slam shut and immigration door that was once open to our ancestors. And he went on to say this. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JB PRITZKER (R), ILLINOIS GOVERNOR: Abbott will fully planned the arrival of these individuals in locations and at times that would engender the maximum chaos for the city of Chicago and for the asylum seekers themselves.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: I don't know what happened to we are a sanctuary state. Doesn't sound like it anymore.

PAVLICH: Right, exactly. They can have it both ways. I can't say that Governor Abbott sending refugees, a so called asylum seekers to their city is wrong, while also claiming that they're open to this type of illegal and irregular illegal immigration.

And one thing I will point out, Martha, that a lot of people don't talk about is that the city of Chicago has a lot of crime and some of the worst crime in the country because of the cartel issue and the drug problem in Chicago and the way they farm out their drugs throughout the country. And the gangs and turf wars that happen there. And parents are concerned, it's a city where the number one cause of death among young black men is homicide as a result of that kind of gang activity. And the cartels are at the root of that problem.

And they don't want to talk about it. They'd rather talk about Greg Abbott sending people they claimed were welcome in the city, in the state in the first place.

MACCALLUM: Yes. They need to figure out how to keep their city and their state safe. Katie, quick question for you. There's this report that President Biden will do an executive order to alleviate the pressure at the southern border, and that he will talk about it in the State of the Union Address. He said recently, you know, just give me the money, or it's not my problem, you know, I have to sign something from Congress. But now it turns out, he may be considering an executive order.

PAVLICH: Well, this is a political calculation, very cynical. He's going to go in front of the country and say, I signed an executive order to solve this illegal immigration problem. Republicans haven't done anything that rejected a piece of legislation so I had to take my pen out and do it myself when he could have done this long before allowing 10 million people into the country who are crushing the resources of every single city across, you know, from California to New York. So that's going to be the play that he's making, and we'll see if it works.

MACCALLUM: Katie, thank you. Katie Pavlich, always good to see you.

PAVLICH: Thanks, Martha. Good to see you.

MACCALLUM: So we are about to get some live remarks from President Biden this hour on a cash haul in California, and now saying that the President plans, through this program, to bail out nearly 153,000 student loan borrowers. A new poll shows former President Trump gaining serious ground in the blue stronghold of New York. So what is going on here? Where is all of this shift in the country moving. Karl Rove and Juan Williams next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: All right. Take a look here, President Biden leading former President Trump in New York by just 12 points. Now remember a Trump lost by 20 points in the last two presidential elections, OK, those numbers, according to the Fox News voter analysis. So the former president telling Laura Ingraham last night at their townhall in South Carolina, that he thinks he has a chance in New York, and he may even hold a big campaign rally even in Madison Square Garden. Watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP (R), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: I'm going to see about Madison Square Garden and we're going to go to the South Bronx, and we're going to go to Queens and other areas. I think there's a chance to win New York. The people are very, very unhappy.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Now that would be interesting, right? He would be the first Republican to win New York since President Reagan, who did it twice in 1980. And then his numbers actually went up in New York in 1984, four years after of having been president.

So President Biden is also out there today, in California. He is about to speak. He has now canceled more than a billion dollars in college loans, so that's a big boon for these students who won't have to pay that back. Now, that's hugely controversial. A lot of people say, well, you know, I had to pay mine back. Why shouldn't other people have do and where are you going to go next? You're going to start relieving auto loans for people. Some people would call it buying votes. He's not doing that well with young voters.

The Education Department says that that will bring the total student loan relief program to $138 billion for almost 4 million borrowers. Very, very popular with younger voters.

Let's bring in Karl Rove, former Deputy Chief of Staff for President George W. Bush and a Fox News contributor and Juan Williams, Fox News senior political analyst. We're waiting for President Biden to speak about the student loan issue.

But, Karl, let me ask you first about the New York story. Is there you know, is there hope for a Republican presidential candidate, namely Donald Trump, in New York?

KARL ROVE, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Well, it's just one poll so we got to be careful. Let's see if there's another poll. But cutting the margin pretty dramatically is his ascent. It shows at least in New York, some of these issues like immigration and the cost our communities of illegal immigration is coming home.

Republicans came close in the governor's race last time around. I think it's a stretch in the presidential race but I wouldn't be surprised if the numbers tighten from where they were four years ago, because New Yorkers have seen it up close and personal. What's happening to the city of New York budget. And they've seen all those flights coming into Westchester County at night dumping people into New York.

MACCALLUM: Yes. What do you think about that, Juan? And what do you think a Madison Square Garden Trump rally would be like?

JUAN WILLIAMS, FOX NEWS SENIOR POLITICAL ANALYST: Well, you know, I guess all Trump rallies are pretty fun. He gets his base out there and they're pretty enthusiastic folks. But in some ways, I guess from a Democratic perspective, you'd hope he would do it because it's going to be an expensive party. And, you know, if you think about the recent special election for George Santos' congressional seat that did not go the Republicans way. And you just look at all the kind of elections that have been taking place in New York State.

And again, it's it would be an unlikely outcome. But again, I think what you've been pointing to, Martha, there are a lot of reasons for New Yorkers to be discontented at this moment.

MACCALLUM: Yes. You know, when you look at this race, we spoke with Nikki Haley yesterday. She is determined to stay in the race, but I want to play an exchange that I had with her about her overall intentions as a candidate. Watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: He said, you know, no matter what happens on Saturday, you are in this race and planning to stay in it. But it raised a lot of questions from people about whether or not you would ever consider any sort of third party race because you said you didn't want it to be either of those two guys.

NIKKI HALEY (R), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Even my focus right now is running in a Republican primary. It always has been.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Karl, my focus right now is running in a Republican primary. It always has been.

ROVE: Well, look, she knows she can't be a candidate for president. There are too many states in the country that have sore loser laws. If you're running as a candidate in a party primary for president, in many states of the country, you cannot appear on the ballot as an Independent or third party candidate in the fall. She knows that.

I think she's just focused on the here and now, and isn't really want to get into the whole issue of what happens if you come up short.

MACCALLUM: And you think that those rules would hold up against her if she decided to launch?

ROVE: Oh sure.

MACCALLUM: Absolutely.

ROVE: Absolutely.

MACCALLUM: I mean, they haven't really been tested.

ROVE: Yes. Well, they've been tested over the years because they apply not only to the presidency, but (inaudible) up and down the ballot. And they've constitutionality have been upheld. And no, I don't think anybody would seriously get into the contest. And I think they're 20 some odd states or more with such laws. I don't think anybody would say, I ran for president for under some party label and now I'm going to run in the general election as an Independent candidate and have any expectation they're going to get on --

MACCALLUM: Do you think she should get out, Karl?

ROVE: I think she should do exactly what she wants to do. I mean, look, we've had three contests or four if you, you know, include Nevada. Virgin Islands, New Hampshire, Iowa and Nevada and, you know, it's, you know, we're at the start. She's entitled to do whatever she wants to do.

MACCALLUM: Yes. What's your thought on that Nikki Haley issue, Juan?

WILLIAMS: Well, I just think that, you know, more than -- I think it's 50% of Republican voters in Iowa New Hampshire didn't vote for Trump and she's got the donors. The money people are still supporting her and look to be supporting her even after what I see as a predictable loss in South Carolina.

MACCALLUM: Well, that hasn't moved votes in the first few sessions here, but we look forward to covering all of it live. Bret Baier and I will be covering it with our great team here on Saturday night. We'll see what happens in South Carolina. I know you folks will be watching all this very closely as well.

Juan Williams, thank you very much. Karl Rove, always great to see you. Thank you, gentlemen.

WILLIAMS: Thank you.

MACCALLUM: So we're going to be live to President Biden in California as soon as he gets in front of that microphone running a little bit behind in Culver City. We'll be right back with more.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: That is THE STORY for today, Wednesday, February 21. But as always The Story goes on. And also, a new episode of The Untold Story podcast, George Washington University law professor Jonathan Turley. I sat down with him to discuss his take on the decision against former President Donald Trump, $355 million. Jonathan digs deep into that story. So check it out. "YOUR WORLD" starts right now.

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