

# [***Putin Vows To Bolster Military Amid Ukraine War; Biden Announces Sweeping Sanctions On Russia; State Of Ukraine Two Years After Russian Invasion; Filing Appears To Dispute Willis, Wade's Testimony; Haley and Trump Make Final Pitch Before SC Primary; Search For Suspect After Student Found Dead Near University of Georgia; Trump Holds Lead In New York Among Jewish Voters; Surge Of Chinese Migrants Cross SoCal Border***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BD9-94C1-JCS1-606B-00000-00&context=1516831)

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

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**Body**

JOHN ROBERTS, FOX NEWS HOST: Yes, Nikki Haley's going to join us tomorrow afternoon as will Senator Lindsey Graham, so we'll get different perspectives on where the ***politics*** is headed, but make sure you join us tomorrow 1:00 to 3:00.

SANDRA SMITH, FOX NEWS HOST: Looking forward to it. Thanks for joining us. I'm Sandra Smith.

ROBERTS: And I'm John Roberts. We will see you again tomorrow. "THE STORY" with Martha starts right now.

MARTHA MACCALLUM, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: And we will see you all tomorrow for the big day in South Carolina. Thank you guys, John and Sandra. But first, here, good afternoon everybody and Martha MacCallum, and this is THE STORY. We have breaking news out of Georgia where the Trump legal team claims that they have new information that could blow up the testimony that were heard last week from D.A Fani Willis, and Prosecutor Nathan Wade.

Now, this potentially could put their election case against the former president in some jeopardy. We're going to get you all the details on what they say they have found that they say is contradictory to what you heard on the stand from those two individuals. So, we will get to that in moments.

But first, Russia's Vladimir Putin, bolstered by the death of Alexei Navalny, his chief political opponent in Russia, has vowed today that he is strengthening his armed forces, sending a signal to the West that he may be entering the second year of his assault on Ukraine with a brand-new phase of aggression in a brutal war that Fox has covered from day one on the front lines.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TREY YINGST, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: This city is under attack as we speak. Those sirens that you just heard, a message to the Ukrainian people here in Kyiv to get underground as quickly as possible and that air raids are likely to take place by the Russians. Give me one second. Do we have a helmet here?

BENJAMIN HALL, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: There are women and children being called forward now because there just isn't enough room to get the men on. But no one knows where they're going now, they just want to get anywhere. And there are many people who simply will not get out.

MACCALLUM: Solomiia Stasiv joins us now from a bomb shelter in Ukraine, she says that she will not leave her country.

SOLOMIIA STASIV, UKRAINIAN CIVILIAN: We were woken up by calls and sirens and people telling us that we are being bombed here in the capital. So, that's where we all knew we wanted, we had to reach out for emergency suitcases. Just right now when I was waiting to get connected with you guys, I heard three loud explosions.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: We need to leave our homes to make our children safe. I never thought it would be like that. It's not a joke, but hell.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Stunning to look back at all of that and to remember the brutal beginnings as Russia attacked from the North, from the East and from the South, all around the country of Ukraine. So, in response, the Biden administration today said there are unleashing 500 new targets of sanctions in Russia. That's the response.

In moments, former U.S. Army intelligence officer Brett Velicovich, who spends a lot of time in Ukraine and has seen all of this from the front lines. Also, Benjamin Hall, our Fox News War Correspondent, who has seen it from the front lines as well, he suffered a near fatal injury while he was reporting back in Kyiv in 2022. First though, let's go to the White House response and reporting from there with Jacqui Heinrich. Hi Jacqui.

JACQUI HEINRICH, FOX NEWS CHANNEL WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: Hey Martha, critics say today's sanctions are more bark than bite. More than 500 targets were sanctioned including people close to Alexei Navalny's death, also Russia's defense sector and this network of backdoor entities that it's leaned on to evade U.S. sanctions. But the package did not designate Russia a state sponsor of terrorism, which Senator Lindsey Graham has been calling for. He tweeted: "These new so-called crushing sanctions will fail to deliver the intended results of making Russia a no-go zone. Doing business with a state sponsor of terrorism under U.S. law comes at a heavy price. Everything else is just talk."

To date, U.S. sanctions have focused on the long run, limiting Russia's access to technology and equipment its military needs, going after the central bank and capping oil prices. But China, India, and Brazil have been buying cheap Russian oil in record amounts, and the U.S. has not only avoided friction with countries partnering with Russia, but also failed to confront countries like Turkey and the UAE, who are serving as alternative supply chain middlemen for banned technology. And Russia's used this money to prop up its war machine and stimulate its economy.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEN. JACK KEANE, FOX NEWS CHANNEL SENIOR STRATEGIC ANALYST: To give you a sense of it, Russia's GDP growth is in excess of three percent. That is staggering when we're supposed to put them on their heels and in the tank. Also, they're spending nine percent of GDP, nine percent of their GDP is on defense. They're on a war footing. That's almost twice as much as what the United States is spending. We've got a lot of work here.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HEINRICH: Today's sanctions hit entities in 26 other countries, including China, but the impact maybe felt less inside Russia than on people, Russian people, traveling outside of Russia. And the President, again today, made a push for what he said will make a difference, which is more Ukraine aid.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: There's no question, none, none, if the speaker called for a vote in the House, it would pass easily today. Instead, they went on vacation. I mean it's just -- look, folks, all kidding aside, history's watching, the clock is ticking. Brave Ukrainian soldiers and civilians are dying.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HEINRICH: I asked John Kirby today why the U.S. won't designate Russia a state sponsor of terrorism, and his answer was that they want to focus on what they think will make an impact and not cause undue harm to the Russian people, Martha.

MACCALLUM: OK, well, let's talk about what would actually make an impact and not cause undue harm to the Russians or the Ukrainians. Jacqui, thank you very much. So, let's bring in national security analyst, Brett Velicovich. He joins us now from Poland. He has recently been in Ukraine. He's a former U.S. Army Special Ops Intelligence Officer and a Fox News Contributor with deep understanding of this conflict. You know, history is watching, says President Biden, Brett, as he lays 500 sanctions on that there is a lot of skepticism about, is this going to resolve this? Is this going to get us further? Will this put ammo in the hands of Ukrainian soldiers?

BRETT VELICOVICH, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Unfortunately, I don't think it's going to move the needle much. I'm all for a creative ways for us to punish the Putin regime, but it's clear previous sanctions are -- they're not achieving the intended effect. I mean, these sanctions are supposed to stop the Russian war machine their ability to build, to finance more weapons. This is about stopping Russia from its incursions in Ukraine further advances into Europe, but it's not enough. These sanctions have not made way -- efficiently costly to the Russian regime. And if you look at the numbers, their economy is still growing.

MACCALLUM: Absolutely.

VELICOVICH: And they've been able to successfully evade these sanctions largely due in part to China and they're spending heavily on defense and the industrial base. And let's face it Russia right now is the most sanctioned country in the world. By my estimates, we have over 16,000 sanctions on Russian individuals and entities currently in place, that's nearly six times the amount compared to before the full-scale war but there are, there are very few key entities or sectors that have not already been the subject of U.S. and European restrictions. But it's not working -- it's not enough, we have to do more.

MACCALLUM: Yes. I mean, I think it tells you a lot that their GDP is looking to be stronger than ours in 2024. They have plenty of countries, including the big one, China, who are willing to play ball with them and cut around these sanctions. So, they seem to be very ineffective. And the Wall Street Journal said as much today.

Bret Baier was in Ukraine near the front lines with Vladimir, with Volodymyr Zelenskyy, excuse me, over the last couple of days. Here's a bit of what he said about what he needs and why he thinks it's -- oh, apparently, we don't have that. So, let's take a little bit of a look here at what President Trump said, former President Trump, when he was asked about what he would do in this situation and the pushback that we see from some Republicans about further funding this war. Watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP, 45TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: What I would do is first thing I get on the phone is with the European nations who are in for 25 percent of what we're in. We're in for over $200 billion, they're in for $35 billion.

LAURA INGRAHAM, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: It's been about $100 billion so far, but it will be $160 billion --

TRUMP: It's a difference of $150 billion. They've got to start paying up. You know it affects them much more than it affects us.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Why are they not paying up Brett?

VELICOVICH: I don't know, I don't know, but we have to release this aid package. Enough is enough. I mean, you know, any of -- all these voices out there that are screaming against (INAUDIBLE), most of them have never been to the country. I'm actually seeing the suffering. I have, I've seen it firsthand. And you can't deny it, when, when you go there and travel to the country and see how much is needed. And let's be honest, you know, even if you forget the pain and suffering of all the innocent people at the hands of the Russian regime, Ukraine right now can serve as a sinkhole for modern Russian equipment.

They are destroying a lot of technology that the Russians are putting on the battlefield that they would otherwise use against us. So, at a minimum, this aid package, you know, allows us to go after one of our number one enemies and destroy some of their most technologically advanced pieces of equipment. So, I just don't understand what the holdup is. We have to, we have to get this aid package approved.

MACCALLUM: It's a tiny fraction of our defense budget. And this bill looks at 95 billion in aid for Ukraine. And, you know, you have to hit the fast forward button a bit and think about what you want to deal with in terms of a further threat from Putin who has now taken the city of Avdiivka, which is the first one that they've really successfully been able to take since Bakhmut. Brett, thank you very much for your continuing coverage of this story. Good to have you with us as always. Thank you, Brett.

So, let's bring in Fox Correspondent Benjamin Hall who reported in Ukraine during the early days of the war. As you, no doubt remember, he was gravely wounded by a Russian attack that tragically took the lives of beloved Fox cameraman, Pierre Zakrzewski, and young Ukrainian producer, Sasha Kuvshynova. Ben bravely shared his story in this Fox documentary that is titled, "Sacrifice and Survival."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HALL: We thought we were going five minutes around the corner to film these abandoned villages. There was a bombed-out gas station, filmed that for a little bit. Said, do you want to go see a little bit further? So, we went a little bit further. Interviewed some Ukrainian soldiers who were there.

The sound of shelling is constant just outside here in Kyiv.

We were filming outside one building that had been hit badly. We heard shelling in the background.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: Ben, welcome. Good to have you with us. Obviously, your experience in Ukraine changed your life dramatically. You have been an incredibly inspirational source for so many of us and good to see you back as a war correspondent in Tel Aviv in recent weeks. So, thank you for being here, Ben.

HALL: Yes, it's a pleasure. Thanks for having me on.

MACCALLUM: So, what would you say, you know, I spent some time yesterday going back and looking at some of the work that was done in the early days, and including looking at this 20 Days in Mariupol documentary, which is up for an Academy Award this year, and our work, and the things that were shot when you were there as well. And you know, one of the stunning images was a family that was shot dead as they were running with their roller suitcases through the street.

The brutality of this invasion, I think, gets lost over the course of a couple of years. So, how do you see where we are now? And what would you say to the American people about the importance of this? Or is it time for them to move on?

HALL: You're right, it does get lost. And I remember the scenes of that maternity hospital being bombed and the pregnant lady being carried across the courtyard. She lost her baby; the children were killed in that. And I know that many people watch the news and it feels far away and they're not sure, some people doubt how much is happening, but it is happening. And that's why we send our correspondents out there to tell the story is to do it. But what's fascinating about wars is they come in in different phases and this war happened as well.

Right at the beginning, we thought that Russia was going to capture the whole country, they were surrounding Kyiv and it felt they were going to win. And then Ukraine pushed them back to the east. But what has happened in the last few months is that has reversed again. And we find ourselves in a position right now where the Russians are back on the offensive. The Ukrainians are running out of everything they need. They are afraid that if they don't get anything in the next few months that the Russians will continue taking ground.

You mentioned the city of Avdiivka that they've taken. This could well bode for the future. And so, we say it many times, but it is a critical moment right now, that if Ukraine doesn't get the weapons that it needs, that Russia will continue to win. And sadly, it does come down to weapons. We talk about sanctions all the time, but the Ukrainians I've spoken to today say 500 sanctions against some bank managers and against stopping a couple of the sanctions exports getting out is doing nothing.

In fact, Putin is looking braver than ever. He was flying in a nuclear plane earlier yesterday, you know, really showing that he is on the offensive right now. And that's how it feels. The death of Navalny shows the same. He feels on the offensive. And he's looking at this right now, and he's seeing not a short war, he's seeing a long war. He can get as many soldiers as he needs. He can get a few hundred more thousand if he needs them.

And he's turned the Russian economy into a war economy, so they can get more weapons, they can get more soldiers. The Ukrainians don't have that option right now and we're two years in at the moment and that just sounds like an anniversary but you speak to people in Ukraine and day in, day out they are living in this war and it does continue. So, it's sad that we've reached it, it's sad that we've gone back to where, to where we were.

MACCALLUM: Yes, you know, so obviously, Zelenskyy in his interview with Brett talked about the fact that they're running low on ammunition, that they need better technology, but he also pointed out the gains that they have made in the Black Sea in terms of taking out a lot of the Russian warships. And he pointed to that as a sign of progress. Now, you also see, as you just pointed out, what happened with Avdiivka, the city that they have just taken. But we also hear that their army, that the Russian army has taken such severe hits that the professionals were taken out in year one. Ben, how strong is the Russian military? How long can they really sustain this in your opinion?

HALL: Well, they have actually -- they've shifted in a sense. At the beginning, they had some of their best soldiers up front. And you remember some of the Wagner fighters and some of those great private military groups that they had, who were great fighters, dispatch nuts, fighters, they were up at the front.

But what Russia has started to do, it reverted to just manpower. And it does send relatively untrained soldiers up to the front, and it just pushes them forward. So, they've learned not to risk their well-trained soldiers anymore. They've learned to push forward, the convicts, the people who they've taken from the vast corners of Russia.

And yes, the Zelenskyy talks about the successes in the Black Sea. He told me about that when I interviewed him as well. But that is, sadly when he goes back to whenever he's questioned on the advances that are being made.

Yes, it is -- it is progress, and it's good. But the battle here is really in -- on land. And then, in that sense, they are not winning. And so, I listened to Brett's interview with Zelenskyy, and it did seem as if he is saying the same things. And he's been saying the same things for quite a few months right now, when there's been no real progress.

So, they're changing the top general, they are getting rid of people because of corruption. So, there's domestic issues in Ukraine they have to deal with as well.

So, you know, there is a lot they're dealing with, and it's not a good time for them unless they get more support.

MACCALLUM: We will continue to cover it with your help. Ben, thank you very much. Ben Hall in London today.

HALL: Thanks.

MACCALLUM: So, here is what we've got coming up for you. And dramatic testimony last week. I mean, who could forget Fani Willis, surprisingly, taking the stand. The Georgia D.A.

She hired this special attorney who turned out to be someone she had a romantic relationship with to prosecute former President Trump. And the timeline on when those things happened is very key in this case, OK?

Because did she hire him, and then he made money from the state, and the -- they're being accused of using that money in this relationship to fund a lavish lifestyle. But here's what they had to say about when the relationship began? This is the key point, which may be turned on its head today.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

When did your romantic relationship with Miss Willis begin?

NATHAN WADE, SPECIAL PROSECUTOR: 2022. Around March.

FANI WILLIS, DISTRICT ATTORNEY, FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA: I do not consider our relationship to have become romantic until early of 2022. I'm saying sometime between February and April of 2022.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: The stunning new claim just filed in court today that casts doubt on the timeline and puts Fani Willis under fire.

We're keeping a close eye also today on the race in South Carolina, where we expect that we will soon hear from former President Trump who is in Rock Hill, South Carolina just a short time from now ahead of his showdown tomorrow with the former governor of South Carolina, Nikki Haley.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: So, this could be a major development for the judge in Georgia, as he looks at whether or not he's going to remove Fani Willis from the Trump case over the Georgia 2020 election.

Cell phone data put forward by the former President Trump's legal team in Georgia claims to show that prosecutor Nathan Wade visited her home her condo at least 35 times in 2021.

Appearing to contradict the testimony that they both gave that they had no romantic relationship until after she hired him to do this job. So, you can see why the timeline is very important here.

Senior correspondent Steve Harrigan gives us all the details here, reporting from Atlanta. Hi, Steve.

STEVE HARRIGAN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Martha, it was attorneys for former President Trump, working with a private investigator. It's submitted cell phone records from that prosecutor Nathan Wade. It says they show more than 2,000 phone calls between Wade and Willis in 2021. And also, it shows more than 12,000 text messages between the two. And they say it shows that Wade's phone was stationary, around Willis's condo overnight on several occasions.

It's important because Wade and Willis, both under oath gave testimony that their relationship began only in 2022. That's after Wade was hired.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

WADE: 2022, around March.

WILLIS: I do not consider our relationship to have become romantic until early 2022.

I'm saying sometime between February and April of 2022.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HARRIGAN: Now, it's up to the judge whether he will admit these cell phone records as evidence. He scheduled the hearing for March 1st. That will determine whether or not he'll find Wade and Willis guilty of misconduct and potentially disqualify them from the case.

Martha, back to you.

MACCALLUM: All right, Steve. Thank you very much. Steve Harrigan in Atlanta. With that, we bring in John Yoo, former deputy assistant attorney general, and U.C. Berkeley law professor.

John, always good to have you with us. This was a big point during these hearings, trying to nail down whether or not they had any romantic relationship and whether that was the motivation for her hiring him. And then, being paid with state tax dollars, and then taking trips with the money that he made in that job. That's what's at issue here.

What do you make of this information? How reliable does it look? And does it prove anything?

JOHN YOO, FORMER DEPUTY ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE: This information nearly shuts the door on any claim that Willis and Wade have that there's no conflict of interest. It's very hard to see how the judge can't admit this evidence because it backs up with real facts, not testimony, real hard facts from cellphone data, what President Trump's lawyers are saying.

And then, if that's the case, how is this judge, going to say there is no conflict of interest? In a way it's not really important just when they start to have a romantic relationship. They already have a very intimate relationship 2,000 phone calls in just 11 months, 10,000 text messages in 11 months.

That already shows by the time she hired Wade -- Willis and Wade already had this intimate relationship. They're in a lot of trouble. It's not just going to be this disqualification. I bet that they're going to be investigated by the Justice Department, either the public integrity section, or the U.S. attorney in Georgia for not just perjury, for also acting unethically when they're receiving federal funds and support.

MACCALLUM: Yes, that seems to be the crux of the matter, because I think a lot of people look at this and say, well, what difference does it make, you know, if there was a relationship there? But the issue is, as you point out, they may have perjured themselves.

Now, this was not a trial. This was -- this was a hearing, do those rules hold up? And what do you think Judge McAfee does? He's got a hearing on March 1st, he's obviously in a very difficult position here. How do you think he will handle this based on what we know about how he's handled it so far?

YOO: I think he's going to find that there is a conflict effect. I think Wade, and Willis with this evidence, Wade should just disqualify herself now. But then, the judge will have to certify this needs to be moved to another D.A., another prosecutor, there's a Georgia body. That's going to be a charge of reassigning the case.

But I think at that point, Trump will have achieved this objective, which that would almost certainly delay this case. Beyond the November elections.

I don't see how this case could go to trial this summer and be consistent with the rule of law.

(CROSSTALK)

MACCALLUM: Yes.

YOO: If this judge finds a conflict of interest.

Why didn't these calls come out before in the discovery period here?

YOO: That's interesting. I think if you look at the testimony, which you play carefully, I think that they were very cagey. They might try to say, oh, there is no phone calls. There is no real evidence that I was there.

Now, there is evidence. It took a while for this private investigator go through thousands and thousands, of phone calls movements, geolocation data. So, it's not a surprise, it took them this long. But in a way, they create a trap for Willis and Wade.

MACCALLUM: Yes, you know, you can't get around the cell phone evidence these days. And they have tracked his phone going to her place, and then being stationary there, until the early hours of the morning, which obviously doesn't look good for the argument that they made. It contradicts it.

John, thank you very much. We'll see where this goes. Always good to see you, John. John Yoo.

YOO: Of course. Thank you.

MACCALLUM: So, we are waiting any moment now. Former President Trump is going to rally with voters in South Carolina as he gears up for tomorrow's GOP showdown against Nikki Haley in her home state. She is the sole opponent that remains in this primary process for the GOP.

And take a look at this. California Governor Gavin Newsom at the White House today with a bunch of other governors who are there today for a pre- governors' association meeting this weekend.

President Biden is dealing with his latest big setbacks in the polls. Clay Travis ways in next.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Is this about coming up with a Plan B for 2024? Does Gavin need to stand by?

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Are you ready?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes, sir.

BIDEN: Well, I'm looking for. I'm looking at you. We're looking at you.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: Busy day in South Carolina today. Former President Trump is about to begin a rally in Rock Hill, South Carolina, making his final pitch to voters less than 24 hours out from the Palmetto State's pivotal primary. Fifty delegates at stake, this is a winner take all state in South Carolina.

He holds a considerable 28 point lead in this latest poll over the former ambassador and former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley. With that, we bring in Clay Travis, Outkick founder. Clay, great to have you with us today.

I want to start with this because we spoke with Nikki Haley a couple of days ago and asked her if she would -- she's obviously still hanging in there. The path to the GOP nomination is very difficult. Is she considering any other alternatives? Watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: You 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 don't want it to be either of those two guys.

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

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: So, Clay, she said, my focus right now is running in the Republican primary. What do you think is going to happen here in South Carolina and what comes next?

CLAY TRAVIS, FOUNDER, OUTKICK: She's going to get smoked, Martha. Thanks for having me on. She's going to lose by 20 or 30 points in her home state. There is a 0% chance that she's going to be the Republican nominee. Even if something, God forbid, awful, happened to Trump and he couldn't run, the Republican delegates, which Trump would have a substantial majority of, are not going to pick Nikki Haley.

Surely there are people in her inner circle telling her all of this. So to me, Martha, she has two pathways right now. One, she can go ahead and withdraw, which she should have already done, or two, she can go third party and she can make a big money grab and try to destroy Donald Trump's chances of winning.

And I just -- look, strategically, if you look at this right now, Nikki Haley, if you're not going to be the nominee in 2024, are you trying to have a chance to win in 2028? Because I think she's moved to the point now where regardless of what happens in 2024, no one who supported Trump in 2024 is going to be inclined to support Nikki Haley in 2028. After New Hampshire, if she had a brain, Martha, I think she would have gone to Trump and she would have said --

MACCALLUM: Well, she have if she had the brain.

TRAVIS: -- OK, you're going to be the nominee.

MACCALLUM: Yes.

TRAVIS: Yes.

MACCALLUM: We only have a handful of delegates so far. Why the anger? I mean, why not just let her run through Super Tuesday and then you've got a lot of delegates that have been banked by then. And it's kind of hard to see how she's hurting anybody at this point and is committed, has a lot of money, you know?

TRAVIS: Well, you asked her. You asked her, Martha. She didn't say no, I 100% will not run for a third party candidacy. That's a pretty easy answer. When you asked her, I think it's the right question directly, what are you going to do here? She said, I'm running in the Republican primary right now.

Well, you saw, I'm sure, the VP discussion from Dean Phillips, who everybody's forgotten about, the Minnesota congressman who's running against Joe Biden. He floated the idea of being her VP on a third party ticket.

MACCALLUM: Yes.

TRAVIS: To me, I don't blame him, right?

MACCALLUM: You're right.

TRAVIS: I mean, that's at least getting his name out there in some way. But to me, that's what this looks like. It feels to me like Nikki Haley is sabotaging her chances not only in 2024 but in 2028 as well.

MACCALLUM: Well, at least she sees -- I'm sorry, go ahead.

TRAVIS: When I say if she had a brain, I think if she's trying to make a smart, strategic decision, she would have said after New Hampshire, you know what, it's not happening for me right now. Let me go ahead and get behind Donald Trump and I'll set the table. She's only 52 for 2028, nothing she's doing, Nikki Haley, right now other than setting up a third party run to me, Martha, makes any sense at all. She should be out of this race.

MACCALLUM: Well, you know, obviously she has the freedom to do what she wants to do in this country. If she wants to continue to run, she can continue to run. We'll see if she does decide to go another alternative route or whether she's just trying to be in place in case something shifts in this race. But we're going to be watching it, obviously very closely on Saturday.

I want to ask you about this. Axio's interesting report today on Joe Biden and the use of cheat sheets at some of these donor events. This is what they're reporting. Biden's reliance on note cards to help explain his own policy positions, on questions he knows are coming, is raising concerns among some donors about Biden's age. The staged Q&A sessions have left some donors wondering whether Biden can withstand the rigors of a presidential campaign, let alone potential debates with former President Trump.

He clearly relies on these cards more now than ever, Clay.

TRAVIS: We've seen all these, Martha. You know, they're basically cheat sheets that you might have tried to sneak in. I don't know. Surely you never did it but some of our viewers out there probably did back in the day in school to try to get a better grade on a test than you otherwise would, right? There are notes annotated there, you see them, to be able to provide him with what he needs.

This is an ominous sign, Martha, to me because this is coming from the donors. These are the people that are most committed to Joe Biden. They're telling the truth behind the scenes. The White House keeps telling us, Martha, that he's amazing and you wouldn't believe how hard he works. But all the evidence that we see doesn't support that that's true. This is part of that.

MACCALLUM: Yes. And I think some people are saying, oh, well, lots of people have notes in front of them. I mean, I have notes all over the place here that I've written before we do the show.

TRAVIS: Yes.

MACCALLUM: But it's the verbatim looking down, reading word for word, for word, for word, that just feels like, as they said in that piece, these are his own policy decisions. He ought to be a little more facile and able to discuss them extemporaneously than he appears to be.

So interesting, you know, you got Gavin Newsom hanging around the wings and Nikki Haley still in this race, and we'll see if there are any shifts to come in what looks like a pretty clear race at this point between Biden and Trump. Clay, thank you very much. Always good to talk to you.

TRAVIS: Keep up the good work, Martha, Thank you.

MACCALLUM: Thank you, my friend.

TRAVIS: All right. So why police in Georgia may be one step closer this hour to figuring out the tragic death of a nursing student whose body was found hours after she went out for a run yesterday, that's next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: This story breaking just a short time ago, Georgia police are now questioning a person of interest in the death of a nursing student who went out for a run yesterday morning and never made it home. Police say that the victim is 22-year-old Laken Hope Riley. She is a student at Augusta University, but she was jogging nearby the University of Georgia campus at the time. Officials say that they discovered Riley with visible injuries, suggesting foul play in her death.

Let's bring in Nicole Parker, former FBI agent and Fox News contributor. Nicole, thank you very much for being here today.

Tell me what you have learned about this case, potentially this person of interest and what stands out to you so far.

NICOLE PARKER, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Well, first of all, my condolences go out to her family, friends and loved ones. It's absolutely tragic. This woman had a very bright future. She had attended University of Georgia and then she had recently transferred, in spring of 2023, over to a nursing program. So she very much was very familiar probably with the campus and the area in which her life ended up being taken.

I would be very interested to understand who they are questioning. Was the person that killed her a complete stranger, a stalker, an ex-boyfriend, an ex-associate. It's going to be extremely telling when we get the information from law enforcement about who has been brought in for questioning. But more importantly, did the offender have an eye on her, what was her pattern of behavior, did she run near this lake every single day at the same time, and this person had been watching her?

You know, that's information that we do not yet know. But we have recently learned that there have been other students on the campus of University of Georgia who have complained about safety issues. Just one week ago, there was a student who had been held an armed robbery attempt. I mean, that's extremely dangerous and violent. So here we go again, one week later, and now there is a student who is dead.

MACCALLUM: Yes.

PARKER: So, I think it's an -- I'm sorry.

MACCALLUM: No, you go ahead.

PARKER: As an investigator and someone who -- I enjoy running. Look, I'm a female. I love to run and I always think it's not going to happen to me.

MACCALLUM: Right.

PARKER: It is extremely important be wise and do not run alone. What electronic devices did this individual have on her when she was killed? Many of us run with our cell phones, a Fitbit, an Apple Watch. Those are going to be key pieces of evidence that you can retrieve so much data from. When did her heart last have its last beat? A lot of times that's going to show up on an Apple Watch. Where was she at exactly? Very telling information will be retrieved if she had any sort of electronic devices, who was she, you know, in conversation with just prior to it occurring. So again, law enforcement has a very daunting task ahead of them, but it is crucial that this individual is brought to justice.

MACCALLUM: Wow, those are great points. I mean, we all, you know, like you say, you're going to run with your iPhone, you're going to run with probably AirPods or something that you're listening to your iPhone on, and potentially some of these other health record, you know, health meter devices that are on there.

It was during the day. I mean, most of us think too early in the morning, in the dark, or after dark at night. That's a time when you're going to be worried. She left, I think, 8:30-ish in the morning, according to her friend. And then when she wasn't back by noon, her friend called. And we do have aerials of this area. Once you get around the lake, it's probably very quiet over there, Nicole?

PARKER: I agree. I think this is a very brazen attack. If y'all remember, you know, a couple years ago, I believe it was, the woman in Memphis who was running, and she was attacked and killed. But again, it was dark outside. It was very, very early in the morning. My understanding is that, this was in broad daylight. How brazen is that?

But as an investigator, I would like to know, what did her body look like when she was found. The autopsy results are crucial, the manner of death and cause of death. Was she choked, was there blunt force trauma, was a sharp edged weapon used. Weapon selection is very critical when you're trying to determine who killed her and what their motive was. It's very, very telling. And law enforcement will get to the bottom of this.

We cannot have predators out attacking students who are out on a run. It's tragic. And again, my heart breaks for her family.

MACCALLUM: Absolutely. Nicole, thank you very much. Just an absolutely tragic case. This young girl who was going to be a nurse and help other people, help take care of other people. There's a lot we're going to learn when we get more information on this person of interest, I suspect. Nicole, thank you very much. Good to see you today.

PARKER: Thank you.

MACCALLUM: So we have some breaking news right now. The judge in the former president Donald Trump's New York civil fraud trial has officially signed off on the $450 million judgment against him. That number. Now, the lawyers had pushed back. They wanted to try to find any avenue that would give a little bit more time, a little bit more leeway in this situation, but he is holding firm on it.

Not only that, it comes with a 9% charge, $87,000 per day interest if the money is not brought forward. He has 30 days to file an appeal in this case, but the money has to come during that 30-day period.

So joining me now, Lee Zeldin, former New York congressman and former New York gubernatorial candidate. Lee, welcome. Good to have you here today. Your reaction to this breaking news just moments ago.

LEE ZELDIN, FORMER NEW YORK CONGRESSMAN: I think it's obvious that President Trump would be appealing this decision. This is a decision that impacts not just President Trump, his family as well. And President Trump has rights. And we have all been following this case so closely, where there were conclusions made before President Trump had a chance to present his first witness, to be able to cross examine any of the attorney general's witnesses, conclusions being made with regards to President Trump's assets that the rest of us all are able to with -- just a non- biased straight examination, say, obviously, Mar-a-Lago isn't worth, for example, $18 million.

So some of the decisions that were made by this judge really opened him and this case up for appeal. So I think that President Trump, not only will be appealing, but he has a lot to appeal and should see a final result in this case that is far more in his favor, if not totally.

MACCALLUM: Lee, you ran for governor in New York. It was an election where you did very well. You didn't win in the end. And I remember noting that about 600,000 votes that were the gap between you and your opponent, about 600,000 people had left New York and moved to Florida. There's been a big shift.

But we're seeing interesting things happening in New York in this -- in the polling for this race. The Sienna poll showed that President Biden is only twelve points ahead of former President Trump in New York. And then just looking at the Jewish vote in New York, because obviously, there's been a lot of attention to that vote given the Israel-Hamas situation, Trump is ahead by 53-44.

What's your characterization of what you see happening with the New York vote right now, Lee?

ZELDIN: There's been a massive shift to the right. New York's registration is about 22% Republican. I got just a few points less than the sitting governor. We've seen this move to the right that has continued after November of 2022. When I was running just a couple of years ago, the migrant issue, the border crisis wasn't even a top three issue back then. Obviously, it is now.

President Biden's numbers are worse. Kathy Hochul's numbers are worse. Eric Adams's numbers are worse, too. And people look at New York and they say it's a blue state because of these very populated blue counties in New York City. Staten Island, obviously excluded. But you look at the rest of the state and you're trying to understand how does New York elect a congressional delegation November 22 that has eleven Republicans? It's because a lot of the suburbs and rest of the state, they vote red. They're ready to vote for President Trump.

You just posted that stat as it relates to the Jewish vote in New York. We've seen this over the course of the last few administrations, from President Obama and the Iran nuclear deal to President Trump coming in and from moving the embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, withdrawing from the nuclear deal, signing Taylor Force Act into law, recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, signing an executive order to combat anti-Semitism.

And then President Biden comes in and rolls back a maximum pressure campaign against Iran, is a little bit trying to straddle both sides post October 7th, as he has an issue within his base, within the democratic base, as there are a lot of people who support the pro-Palestinian position and some of them outwardly supporting a pro-Hamas position. So that's something that President Biden is dealing with.

So the right word shift, you pointed out the Jewish population, we see with the Asian Americans, with the Dominicans and more. And the last thing I would say is you show that Sienna College poll for four consecutive months, this has shown a competitive race, Biden versus Trump statewide. So if there's one Sienna College poll that shows a close race, you say maybe it's an outlier. But there's been four consecutive Sienna College polls and they only poll 22% Republican, but the turnout is always higher. That would be by far the worst Republican turnout in the history of the state. Clearly, there's going to be more Republican turnout than that Sienna College poll showing a close race.

MACCALLUM: It's fascinating to watch. And we heard the former president the other night say that he wants to do a rally. He's going to talk to the folks at Madison Square Garden. I think that would be an extraordinary scene. A couple other venues that he's looking at for potential rallies in New York, we will cover it all as this election moves forward.

Lee Zeldin, always great to talk to you. Thank you very much, Lee.

ZELDIN: Thanks, Martha.

MACCALLUM: So it is an increasingly common occurrence at the southern border.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: China.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: China.

BILL MELUGIN, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Ma'am, where are you from?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: China.

MELUGIN: China?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: China.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: China.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: China.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: China.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: China.

MELUGIN: China?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MACCALLUM: You pick up a trend there, thousands of Chinese nationals streaming into the United States. But they're not coming through the airport. They're not immigrating here in the usual fashion. They are flying to Tijuana, flying to the airport, get off with their bags, and just make their way into the United States. But such a tiny number are being deported. Wait until you see these numbers.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MACCALLUM: So listen to these numbers. A surge of 24,000 Chinese migrants flooded across the southern border in California just this fiscal year, and Border patrol agents say that less than 300 have been deported, despite the fact that they came across at the southern border and making their way around the openings in the wall.

Security officials warn that this record influx raises national security concerns because of Beijing's espionage efforts, which are well documented against the United States. Correspondent Bill Melugin live in San Diego. He outlined these numbers for us and, yes, they are shocking. Hi, Bill.

MELUGIN: Hi, Martha. Well, by our count, we have had at least eight border patrol buses show up here today and mass release migrants by the hundreds to San Diego City streets. We are told more are coming this afternoon. We'll get right into the video and show you some of what we've witnessed.

This was one of those first buses that showed up earlier this morning, again, mass releasing illegal immigrants from all over the world. We talked to many of them, some from China, some from Senegal, some from Mauritania, Peru, Colombia, India, Ecuador, Haiti. Nobody from Mexico that we talked to. Take a listen to what they had to tell us.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MELUGIN (through translation): Where are you from?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Ecuador.

MELUGIN: Ecuador. Where are you going in the United States?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: New York.

MELUGIN: New York, going to New York. Where are you all from?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Costa Rica.

MELUGIN: Costa Rica. Where are you going in the United States?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Atlanta.

MELUGIN: Atlanta.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: New Jersey.

MELUGIN: New Jersey? Where are you going in the United States?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Chicago.

MELUGIN: Chicago. And where are you from?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Columbia.

MELUGIN: Columbia. Do you want to work?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: No.

MELUGIN: No? Asylum?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes.

MELUGIN: They say they want asylum, they don't want to work. Where are you from? Where are you from?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Senegal, Senegal. Africa.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I'm from Dominican Republic.

MELUGIN: Dominican Republic. Where are you going in the United States?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: New York.

MELUGIN: New York? Where are you from?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: From Mauritania.

MELUGIN: Mauritania, West Africa.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: West Africa.

MELUGIN: And why did you come?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Because I'm not free in there and I'm like homosexual, and they're Muslims. And they don't accept that in there.

MELUGIN: So you're going to claim asylum?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Exactly.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MELUGIN: And that right there sounds like it would potentially be a legitimate asylum case. There is capital punishment for homosexuality in that country. It's just been bizarre out here, Martha. We've talked to a man from Afghanistan earlier, a man from Mauritania. And just a few moments ago we had a group of Chinese men who were smoking and celebrating that they had been released from custody. It's really the whole world that has shown up here at the San Diego. We'll send it back to you.

MACCALLUM: (Inaudible) coming through narrow entrance in California, now that Texas is a little bit more shut down by the actions of Governor Abbott. Bill, thank you very much, Bill Melugin reporting. And that is THE STORY for this Friday, but I'll see you back here tomorrow, 7:00pm special coverage of the South Carolina primary with Bret Baier.

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