

# [***Former Senator And Vice Presidential Nominee Joe Lieberman Dies; Joe Biden Allies Blast Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Amid Spoiler Worries; Closer Look At Moments Leading Up To Ship Crash In Baltimore Bridge Collapse; No Longer Welcome: Michigan Community Opposes Company With Communist Ties; Deadly Exchange: Seven Lebanese And One Israeli Killed In Border Clash; Rise To Occasion: Pope Francis Appears In Better Health Ahead Of Easter; Attorneys For Hunter Biden's Arguing In Federal Court That Federal Tax Charges Against Him Should Be Dismissed; Federal Appeals Court Denies Request To Allow Texas Law Take Effect Empowering State Authorities To Arrest And Prosecute People Suspected Of Illegally Crossing U.S.-Mexico Border; Former President Trump Leads President Biden In Recent Polling; Former U.S. Senator And Democratic Presidential Candidate Joe Lieberman Passes Away***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BNB-M6W1-F072-X2YP-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Guests:** Stef Kight

**Body**

JESSICA TARLOV, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: He thinks it's an invention.

DANA PERINO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Wow.

JEANINE PIRRO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL LEGAL ANALYST: That's an invention?

GREG GUTFELD, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: That's a beautiful story.

DANA PERINO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: You go, weirdo.

GUTFELD: It's a beautiful story.

JESSE WATTERS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: That makes us miss You Go Girl. That's how bad that was. Please, more you go girl.

TARLOV: Fine, I had a You Go Girl idea today actually. WATTERS: All right, we got to go. That's it for us. Have a great night.

BRET BAIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Hi, Jesse, congrats on the book.

WATTERS: Thank you very much, Bret.

BAIER: (INAUDIBLE) SPECIAL REPORT through over the top. All right, thank you.

WATTERS: You're right.

BAIER: Good evening. Welcome to Washington. I'm Bret Baier.

Breaking tonight, some sad news. Former Connecticut Senator and Democratic vice-presidential nominee in the 2000 presidential election, Joe Lieberman has died. Lieberman first joined the U.S. Senate in 1989. He was mostly viewed as a centrist Democrat. Most recently, Lieberman was the founding chairman of the No Labels movement, fronting the effort to try to get a third-party unity ticket on the 2024 presidential ballot.

Late breaking news today, Senior Congressional Correspondent Chad Pergram is on the Hill with this breaking news, reaction coming in fast. Good evening, Chad.

CHAD PERGRAM, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Bret, good evening. Joe Lieberman's family says he died in New York from complications after a fall, he was 82 years old. Lieberman entered the Senate in 1989 defeating Republican Lowell Weicker.

Lieberman ran as Al Gore's vice presidential candidate during the disputed election of 2000. Lieberman was Jewish and was just on Fox recently, he spoke out against the comments about Israel by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE) JOE LIEBERMAN, FORMER CONNECTICUT SENATOR: I think really, it was a case of a -- of a high elected official in the U.S. taking advantage of a friend. And you wouldn't do this with a casual ally, or certainly an enemy, but to call out one of our closest allies in the world, Israel, a democracy when it's at war, and tell its people they should dump their prime minister. Wow, talk about crossing a red line. That was a diplomatic red line that I have never in all my years seen cross and it's just -- it is outrageous.

PERGRAM (voiceover): But despite being Gore's running mate in 2000, he fell out of favor with Democrats. Lieberman lost the Democratic primary for the Senate to Ned Lamont in 2006. But he ran as an independent Lieberman won reelection as an independent, but he then endorsed GOP Arizona Senator John McCain for president in 2008. He also spoke at the Republican Convention in St. Paul.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PERGRAM (on camera): Now, Democrats tinkered with throwing him out of the Democratic caucus but allowed him to remain in as an independent and as a committee chairman, Bret.

BAIER: Chad Pergram live on the Hill. Chad thanks,

Connecticut Senator Chris Murphy just putting out a tweet moments ago. Connecticut is shocked by Senator Lieberman's sudden passing. In an era of political carbon copies, Joe Lieberman was a singularity. One of one. He fought and won for what he believed was right and for the state he adored. My thoughts are with Hadassah and the entire family.

Let's bring in Fox News Chief Political Analyst Brit Hume and Fox News Chief Legal Correspondent anchor of "FOX NEWS SUNDAY", Shannon Bream.

Brit, it's hard to characterize Joe Lieberman in any other way than an independent because he was in that independent mindset. He clearly was the Democratic Party's nominee in 2000. But then the shift eight years later dramatically to support Republican nominee and his friend John McCain was something we hadn't really seen in ***politics***.

BRIT HUME, FOX NEWS SENIOR POLITICAL ANALYST: No, we hadn't for a long time. And we certainly haven't seen anything like that since. Joe Lieberman was is -- I noticed that -- it was noted that he loved his state while his state loved him.

And certainly, it had to, it isn't easy to get elected to a body as an independent, but he did that in Connecticut, and he was beloved there. And you know, won a number of state offices before he was elected to the Senate.

He was very much a true moderate, a centrist, always on the lookout for ways to work with the -- with the other party that sets him apart today. And of course, he's been active since he's been out of office, as has been noted he was involved in the No Labels movement, which a lot of Democrats didn't approve, and some Republicans didn't either.

He was a very hard man to dislike, he was an exceptionally nice man, gentle in his manner, friendly in his demeanor, always with a smile. He knew many members of the press, and always was able to call him by name.

People liked him, and well, they should have in my view. I always thought very highly of Joe Lieberman, and I'm very saddened to hear he died. It seemed awfully sudden, I guess it was from the aftereffects of a fall.

Anyway, my condolences to all and his family, he will certainly be missed.

BAIER: He really will. And I know him well too. I just talked to him at the alfalfa dinner here in Washington recently, he and his wife Hadassah, who we send our condolences to. Shannon, he was the first Jewish candidate on the national ticket of any major party, obviously, was the Democratic nominee.

But John McCain said later that he really did consider naming him the vice presidential nominee for that year in 2008.

SHANNON BREAM, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Yes, and he had in 2000, when they lost the case that ultimately went to the Supreme Court. He was one of those within that campaign at that point in such a prominent position, saying we should file as many as lawsuits as we think are legitimate. We should fight for this.

And he talks about at the time, he was told you're young man, you're going to have a long career. Don't blow it up with this fight here.

But in so many different places, he showed up as the first in many places and I totally agree, and you would as well with Brit that he was the kindest, one of the kindest people to ever come through Washington.

I saw him not long ago coming into the train station at Union Station, no big entourage, traveling by himself, doing his thing, kind and stopping to talk.

But about the Supreme Court, he accepted what happened there in 2000. Like, at some point, you have to shut this down for the good of the country, you have to move on. But he had so many interactions with that place. That's my primary, but he argued a case there in the 80s, he lost 8-1, was able to laugh about it later.

In the 90s with President Bill Clinton, he was actually on numerous list as a potential nominee to sit as a justice himself on that court. And in 2020, I remember I was struck by his defense of justice, Amy Coney Barrett, when she was just a nominee. He was a very faithful man. And he did not like that she was being attacked on the basis of religion. And he came to her defense.

BAIER: Very faithful. Chad Pergram still with us on Capitol Hill, in fact, so faithful that he would walk to the Capitol on Saturdays if there was something to be voted on on those days in respect of his -- of his religion.

Chad, interacting with Joe Lieberman on the Hill, I'm sure was -- as it was too many reporters, an easy thing, because he got along with a lot of people.

PERGRAM: Yes, I think Bret had it right there, talking about how gentle he was. And he always knew who everybody was, and would always make time for you to talk in the hall and always make sure he would do an interview with you on camera if necessary.

You're right about practicing Shabbat there, I remember there was something that came up in the 2000 election, where there was a recount or a meeting of some sort. And he actually walked, he would not take a car, he walked from his house downtown, because again, you know that Shabbat and you're not supposed to partake in those types of things. I thought that was striking.

I remember him working with Susan Collins, the Republican senator from Maine on a piece of legislation after 9/11 and how they were like texting one another and e-mailing one another from the Kennedy Center during a performance. So that's how they got the bill done.

Another thing that I remember about him too and you talk about this breadth of knowledge that he had, and also serving in the Senate was that, you know, he was somebody who was so well liked on both sides of the aisle. And you talk about him, you know, maybe being a vice presidential candidate for two parties. I mean, I think that was remarkable.

And I remember that day in 2008, when they thought about kicking him out of the Democratic caucus after the 2008 election. The reason they kept him is because everybody trusted Joe Lieberman, and they liked him as a senator and knew that he was a serious legislator.

BAIER: Brit, as we close up these thoughts, and we'll have more with the panel a little bit later. The question is will there be other Joe Liebermans in Washington? Can in this environment, someone like that in the center's mode surface again as we remember his life and legacy?

HUME: Well, this is not an atmosphere in which it's easy to be that person. Joe Lieberman had a remarkable personality. He was a genuinely genial man, very serious about policy. He was no slouch. He was no demagogue. He was honorable. And I think he was -- he was sort of a shining light in a way in an atmosphere of such bruising partisanship that grips both houses of the Congress now and in our ***politics*** in general.

So, yes, he was a man set apart. I don't see his like right now. But no people -- people come along and times changed and the atmosphere could be different and sooner or later it will, maybe another Joe Lieberman will come along. We can all hope for that.

BAIER: Brit, Shannon, Chad, thank you. Joe Lieberman dead at the age of 82, more with the panel later.

Breaking tonight, other news, we have brand new Fox News polls on the current state of the presidential election. In a hypothetical five way ballot test which includes Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Cornel West and Jill Stein all candidates. Former President Donald Trump has narrowly favored over President Biden with a five-point edge. That five-point difference also carries over to our head-to-head matchup or man-to-man.

And on their favorable ratings, independent candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. tops Trump and Biden with 47 percent, 45 percent and 39 percent respectively.

Officials at the White House are taking notice of the Kennedy threat. White House correspondent Jacqui Heinrich following all of that live from the North Lawn. Good evening, Jacqui.

JACQUI HEINRICH, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Bret. Team Biden knows this is going to be a close election but they feel confident in a faceoff with Trump, but a new messaging strategy shows how nervous they are about their chances in a three-way race.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JAMIE HARRISON, CHAIR, DNC: He's an extremist. He is not in the mainstream of this country.

HEINRICH (voiceover): Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is polling better than any independent since Ross Perot in 1992. And Democrats are reliving their nightmares from 2016.

SEN. MALLORY MCMORROW (D-MI): You don't need significant support to throw an election to Donald Trump. We saw this play out in 2016, where Jill Stein, you know, got 50,000 votes and Hillary Clinton lost by 10,000 votes in Michigan.

HEINRICH (voiceover): Their strategy now, paint Kennedy as a stalking horse for Trump, claiming a financial connection.

LT. GOV. AUSTIN DAVIS (D-PA): The truth is that he was drafted into this race by Donald Trump's top supporters, and it's being financed in this race by Trump's largest donor. That isn't merely a coincidence.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: He's likely interested in trying to get Donald Trump elected. Maybe that's what this is about.

HEINRICH (voiceover): Trump rejects the characterization, writing RFK Jr. is the most radical left candidate in the race by far, but he doesn't deny RFK's candidacy is helpful. Adding, I guess this would mean he is going to be taking votes from crooked Joe Biden which would be a great service to America. I love that he is running.

Biden may need all the help he can get, a new Fox News poll shows 38 percent of voters listed nothing as his greatest accomplishment as president and other six percent said not being Trump. And Biden support has been sliding among key voting blocks. He still leads Trump with black voters, 71 percent to 26. But that's down from a 65-point advantage before the 2020 election.

HARRISON: The black vote will be there for Joe Biden in this election. He's the first person to appoint a black woman as vice president, first person to appoint a black woman to the United States Supreme Court.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HEINRICH (on camera): This month the DNC filed another complaint with the FEC alleging a pro-Kennedy super PAC broke federal laws by failing to disclose loans. They previously filed a complaint alleging the pack improperly collected signatures to get Kennedy on the ballot. They're hoping if the legal play doesn't work out, the messaging play will, Bret.

BAIER: Jacqui Heinrich live in the North Lawn. Jacqui, thank you. Investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board say they will analyze the data recorder that was recovered from the ship that crashed into the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore. Officials hope the device will help them piece together exactly what went wrong.

And we've just learned the bodies of two men were recovered from the waters below. Again, six believed dead in that accident. Correspondent Griff Jenkins is on Baltimore Harbor with the latest. Good evening, Griff.

GRIFF JENKINS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Bret. And that's right, right behind us, we watched as a recovery crews worked tirelessly to recover two of those six construction workers. The bodies now brought back to bring closure to those families. And we also got a closer look at the magnitude of the challenge here, trying to understand the final moments when that ship brought down this iconic bridge.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JENKINS (voiceover): At 1:04 a.m. loaded with nearly 5,000 shipping containers. The Singapore flag vessel named Dali departs Baltimore's port headed for Sri Lanka. Exactly 20 minutes later, the Dali appears to suffer power loss, a full blackout as all its lights go out.

CAPT. MICHAEL BURNS, MARITIME CONTROL FOR RESPONSIBLE ENERGY: Could mean the loss of steering, communications, loss of your bridge equipment. So, there really is a few things that are scarier.

JENKINS (voiceover): A minute later, the lights flicker back on and black smoke appears to rise from the ship. Sources say this is emergency power trying to kick in. But propulsion and control is not regained.

CAPT. KLAUS LUHTA, FORMER MERCHANT MARINE CAPTAIN: They aren't sufficient for powering the propeller, so it's not really enough to stop the ship and do anything in those confined waters.

JENKINS (voiceover): 60 seconds after that, the lights go dark again. Industry insiders tell the Washington Post that the harbor pilots on board ordered the ship's rudder hard to the left, anchor deployed in an effort to slow the ship and change its course.

1:27 a.m., the Dali collides into one of the bridge's main support pillars and within seconds, major spans of the historic landmark buckle and fall into the Patapsco River.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: If we can stop traffic, just make sure no one's on the bridge right now.

JENKINS (voiceover): The harbor pilots warned Maryland transportation authorities the bridge was in danger and giving them about 90 seconds to shut down traffic at both ends. 24 hours after the collapse, NTSB arrives on scene, boards on the Dali and takes possession of the data recorder.

JENNIFER HOMENDY, CHAIR, NTSB: It records everything from speed to location of the vessel.

JENKINS (voiceover): The Army Corps of Engineers supporting recovery operations says it will take time to clear the channel.

LT. GEN. SCOTT SPELLMON, CHIEF, ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS: We have more survey work to do for the concrete and the twisted steel that's on the bottom of the channel.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

JENKINS (on camera): And in a few hours, we hope to hear from the NTSB at a press conference to learn hopefully more details about the contents of that data recorder. Bret?

BAIER: Griff Jenkins on Baltimore Harbor. Griff, thanks.

Please join Jesse Watters tonight as he will bring you that live news conference from the NTSB on the cargo ship collision with the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore.

Value stocks led the markets today as all three indices finished ahead after three days of losses. The Dow surged 478 today. The S&P 500 added 45 for a new record close. The Nasdaq gained 84.

Up next, with billions of dollars on the line, residents of a small Michigan town say they're not only battling local leaders but communist China too.

And later, a suspected illegal firearms trade in the U.S. arming Mexican cartels at the Southern Border. We'll bring you that.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: One small corner of America is now the epicenter of a billion-dollar battle. Residents of a Michigan town are fighting an energy firm with close ties to the Chinese Communist Party over a massive electric vehicle battery plant it plans to build.

Correspondent Garrett Tenney has our report from Green Charter Township.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BRUCE BORKOVICH, RESIDENT, GREEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN: We're not only at war with communist China, we feel like we're at war with elected officials.

GARRETT TENNEY, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: The small township of Green Charter, Michigan is fighting to block a multi-billion dollar battery plant that would bring 3200 good-paying jobs to their economically struggling community because of the company's ties to China.

BRUCE BAKER, MESA OPPOSITION GROUP: The lithium issue, the environmental issues, the CCP issues. This is not a good fit for our community.

TENNEY (voiceover): The U.S.-based company Gotion is a subsidiary of Gotion High Tech, one of the largest electric vehicle battery suppliers in China and whose leaders have close ties to the Chinese Communist Party. Those ties sparked outrage here when the board signed an agreement with the company last Fall. Voters recalled the entire board electing new membership with a mandate to stop Gotion from coming into their community.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: USA!

TENNEY (voiceover): Gotion is suing Green Charter Township for breach of contract and maintains the CCP has no presence in the U.S. subsidiary.

CHUCK THELEN, GOTION INC: There are currently 269 companies in the State of Michigan with Chinese ties, OK. That's a big number. They employ 32,500 people and none of them have a CCP designation as to what they do, and Gotion will be the same.

TENNEY (voiceover): But the company's ties to the CCP have raised alarms in Washington and within the Intelligence Community as well. Former CIA director Leon Panetta recently issued this warning about the project.

LEON PANETTA, FORMER DIRECTOR, CIA: They'll establish a manufacturing unit, they'll establish whatever they can, and then they will use that for their own intelligence purposes.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

TENNEY: Despite those national security concerns, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer's office says she still supports the project and stands by the $700 million in incentives the state offered to get the company here. Bret?

BAIER: Garrett, thank you.

The Federal Trade Commission is investigating TikTok over its data and security practices. In its probe, the FTC is looking into whether TikTok violated a portion of federal law that prohibits unfair and deceptive business practices by denying that individuals in China had access to U.S. user data. That's according to a person close to the investigation.

The social media company is already fighting against a federal bill that could ban the platform in the U.S. if it does not break ties with its Beijing-based parent company ByteDance. That bill is currently stalled in the U.S. Senate.

Up next, Hunter Biden's attorney is in court seeking the dismissal of Hunter's federal tax case. We'll take you there and we'll have the latest.

First, "BEYOND OUR BORDERS" tonight. An Israeli air strike on a center linked to a Lebanese Sunni Muslim group killed seven of its members, triggering a rocket attack from Lebanon that killed one person in Northern Israel. The strike comes after a day of attacks between Israel and Hezbollah along the Lebanon-Israel border.

And this is a live look at Rome. One of the big stories there tonight, Pope Francis appears in better health ahead of a busy Easter week schedule. The 87-year-old pontiff's frail appearance has been a growing source of concern in recent weeks. Today, the Pope read out full texts for his weekly audience rather than delegating them to an aide as he has done in recent weeks, and made a few off-the-cuff remarks. He looks in good spirits.

Just some of the other stories beyond our borders tonight. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: Breaking tonight, Hunter Biden's attorneys in federal court at this hour are arguing all federal tax charges against the president's son should be dismissed. Correspondent David Spunt is in Los Angeles outside the courthouse with the latest on what is happening inside. Good evening, David.

DAVID SPUNT, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Bret, good evening to you. This began two-and-a half hours ago. It's still going on. Hunter Biden's attorney Abbe Lowell trying to provide the federal judge with eight reasons why this case should be thrown out. What the judge does is another story. We expect this to go on for a little bit tonight. Abbe Lowell Hunter Biden's lead attorney in the courtroom right now making those arguments. We've got him arriving about an hour before court began.

He told Judge Mark Scarsi the, quote, "one penetrating fact of this case is that after five years of investigating, then U.S. attorney David Weiss, who is now special counsel, believed a plea agreement was appropriate. Weiss and his office drafted one. It was announced last June." Lowell says then David Weiss changed his tune after bowing to public and political pressure, ripping up the plea deal last July and reneging on a promise that was made.

Hunter Biden waived his appearance, is not in the courtroom right now, but he lives here in Los Angeles. This is why he was charged here.

Leo Wise, an attorney with Special Counsel Weiss's office, says his office is under attack, being singled out as, quote, "rank partisans," given the filings from Hunter Biden's legal team. According to the special counsel, instead of paying his taxes, Hunter spent his money on women, clothing, health, beauty products, adult entertainment. The president's son is also charged with federal firearms violations in Delaware. He allegedly lied about his substance abuse on a federal firearm form about owning a gun in 2018 for less than two weeks.

That matter, Bret, set to go to trial tentatively the week of June 3rd in Wilmington, Delaware. On June 20th this case is set to go to trial. If they both go to trial, Hunter Biden will have two trials and potentially, Bret, two convictions under his belt before his dad accepts the nomination for the Democratic candidate for president at the convention at the end of summer in August. It's possible Hunter and the government could work out a plea deal on both of these cases, but inside this courtroom today, a lot of tempers flaring. It seems that both sides are very far apart. Bret?

BAIER: David Spunt outside the courthouse in Los Angeles. David, thanks.

A federal appeals court is denying a request to let a Texas law take effect that allows state authorities to arrest and prosecute people suspected of illegally crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. The news comes as federal officials bust an illegal arms trade suspected of filtering weapons to dangerous Mexican cartels. Senior correspondent Casey Stegall shows us tonight from El Paso.

(BEGIN VIDEO TAPE)

CASEY STEGALL, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: An additional 200 National Guard troops just arrived in El Paso, deployed to the sector under Operation Lone Star. It's in response to this now viral incident from late last week where a group of about 100 migrants bum-rushed guardsmen at the border barrier, trying to illegally enter the country.

EUSEVIO SALINAS, (D) ZAVALA COUNTY, TEXAS, SHERIFF: This is a different breed of people coming across. And it shows you right there what happened in El Paso the other day. When have you ever heard of people ramming the gates? Never. OK, so, I mean this is a different world we're living in.

STEGALL: Several Colombian nationals were recently arrested attempting to cross in El Paso. Border Patrol agents say the men have gang affiliations and extensive criminal histories ranging from murder to kidnapping.

SALINAS: The cartels know which way they are guiding their people to go to. Wherever the pressure is, they just avert their people to another area.

STEGALL: The DOJ says last week five people were arrested across south Texas for allegedly trafficking guns across the southern border to a Mexican drug cartel. In a statement, officials say "Stopping the trafficking of high caliber and military grade firearms to Mexico is a top priority for the Justice Department." Lawmakers, however, contend the cris won't end until tougher penalties are enforced.

REP. PAT FALLON, (R-TX): There's an inexhaustible supply of folks that have a desire to come here. And if we coddle the folks that come here across the border illegally, we're just going to get more and more.

(END VIDEO TAPE)

STEGALL (on camera): And next week, the Fifth Circuit of Appeals will hold a hearing to determine the legality of Texas's new immigration law. But, for now, it is on pause. Bret?

BAIER: Casey Stegall along the border in El Paso. Casey, thanks.

Well, it appears Washington, D.C., professional sports teams, the NBA's Wizards, the NHL's Capitals, will remain in the nation's capital. According to officials in Alexandria, Virginia, negotiations aimed and luring the teams to northern Virginia have ended, and the proposal to create a development district for a new arena will not move forward there.

Up next, the panel on our new FOX polls and the state of the presidential race.

First here's what some of our FOX affiliates around the country are covering tonight. FOX 59 in Indianapolis where NCAA President Charlie Baker, former Massachusetts governor, is urging lawmakers in states with legal sports gambling to ban betting on individual player performances. Baker says the prop bets threaten the integrity of competition and lead to student athletes getting harassed. Some states have already removed prop betting on college athletes.

And this is a live look, speaking of betting, at Las Vegas. One of the big stories there tonight from FOX 5, our affiliate, couples are flocking to the wedding chapel at the Tropicana Hotel ahead the iconic lodge's closure. The 67-year-old hotel will close on April 2nd. Officials there say they are receiving a surge in calls from couples hoping to secure a wedding date in that chapel.

That's tonight's live look outside the beltway from SPECIAL REPORT. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: President Obama and President Clinton strongly support President Biden's leadership and, obviously, his agenda. All three have agreed overwhelmingly on the issues that this president has been fighting for for the past three years.

KARL ROVE, FORMER GEORGE W. BUSH SENIOR ADVISER: Leading Democrat strategists are deeply concerned. They've got a problem, and they know it. And how they are going to get out of it is going to be interesting to see.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: There is concern in the Democratic Party. Our new polls, they are a flash point, a moment in time, but they do show the head-to-head, the former president leading President Biden by five points. And that same five-point margin, if you expand to it to a five-way race with Robert Kennedy Jr., Cornel West, Jill Stein as well.

That's why there are other party leaders coming to the rescue. This is "The New York Times", former President Obama, "fearing Biden loss to Trump is on the phone to strategize. Mr. Obama is making calls to his own Jeffrey Zients, the White House chief of staff, and to top aides at the Biden campaign to strategize and relay advice. This level of engagement illustrates Mr. Obama's support for Mr. Biden but also what one of his senior aides characterized as Mr. Obama's grave concern that Mr. Biden could lose to former President Donald J. Trump."

With that, let's bring in our panel, Katie Pavlich, news editor at Townhall.com, Byron York, chief political correspondent of "The Washington Examiner," and "Axios" political reporter Stef Kight.

OK, Byron, we have been talking about this level of concern about RFK Jr. But it's coming into kind of context as you see more and more of these polls matching our FOX News poll tonight.

BYRON YORK, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: And it was striking when we polled a two- way race and Trump is five points ahead of Joe Biden. And then we polled a five-way race and Trump is five points ahead of Joe Biden. It just didn't change.

I think one of the things that we haven't paid maybe enough attention to is Joe Biden's job approval rating is stuck in a very low range. His approval rating now is 41 percent. It has bounced around in a very narrow range between 40 and 43 percent since the summer of 2022. It's not going anywhere. People seem to have made up their minds what they think about Joe Biden. And unless it gets up to 50, he is not going to win, because you can look back at presidents who got reelected, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama. Their approval ratings pushed up above 50 percent before they won re-election.

BAIER: Stef, some other interesting things in this poll. This is extremely important to the 2024 vote, what these voters think about. Economy now at 61 percent. That's a bit of a shift. We saw immigration at the top in recent weeks. There you see election integrity 53 percent. Immigration at 48 percent. When you get to immigration, trust to do a better job on immigration, you can see the upside-down nature of this poll where the former president is at 57 percent to trust to do a better job, Biden at 39 percent.

When you see these cartels dressed in camo on the border and you see the video of all the people coming through, you see how immigration really affects some of those numbers.

STEF KIGHT, POLITICAL REPORTER, "AXIOS": We have seen immigration and the border issue really rise as a top concern for voters, not just along the border as has been the case in the past, but voters across the country. And this has been President Biden's worst issue for a long time, and they have really struggled to find a message that works for them. They have recently been able to go on offense a little bit with the failure of the bipartisan border deal. They feel like they have been able to go on attack towards Republicans over the border issue. But they are still not seeing the movement in the polls. Voters clearly aren't fully buying into that.

and I think it will be interesting to see whether we see this administration take more aggressive approaches on the border. I have reported that they are considering pretty significant executive action still to kind of show that they're taking this issue seriously, but right now it continues to be a vulnerability.

BAIER: Abortion, IVF, playing a role. A Democrat running on abortion and IVF access wins the special election in Alabama. Marilyn Lands flipped the statehouse seat in the deep red state by 25 percentage points, underscoring the continued political potency of reproductive rights. I don't know if that's a canary in the coalmine, but it is interesting in Alabama. If you look at our poll, Katie, best describes the issues view on abortion, always legal, 35 percent, mostly legal 24 percent. There you see the breakdown.

KATIE PAVLICH, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Well, when it comes to the issue of abortion, it's not the top thing that most Americans are going to the polls to vote on, but it is something that gets Democrats very excited about going to vote for Joe Biden. And, also, down ballot candidates for the Democrats. And it's an issue that Republicans have had a very hard time getting over Democrats painting them as extremists two years ago when the Roe decision was sent back to the states for them to handle the issue of abortion. They were painted as extreme on all the issues when the polling then and as recently as six months ago showed that the majority of Americans support abortion bans at 15 weeks. That is no longer the case, according to this polling.

And because a number of Republican candidates have decided not to address this issue head on and hoping it can just go away and push it back to as a states argument, now we are seeing it come up in the presidential race as something Donald Trump is talking about, and certainly something that the vice president has been on the trail trying to push as something to get their base voters out.

BAIER: Here is the former president and the current president on possibility of debates this cycle.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT: When you have the final Republican, the final Democrat, you have the two people, you have to debate regardless of polls.

LAURA INGRAHAM, FOX NEWS HOST: How many debates would you commit to?

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT: As many as necessary. I would like to do it starting now. I don't think he is going to debate, though. I really don't think so.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Mr. President, will you commit to a debate with former President Trump?

JOE BIDEN, (D) PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: It depends on his behavior.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: It depends on his behavior. If you look at our poll out tonight, the importance of a Biden-Trump debate or debates, 64 percent say extremely or very important. And there you see the breakdown of Democrats. Republicans, obviously, think it's very much more important at 71 percent, Byron.

YORK: I think people might be saying that because that's the way it's always been. We have seen Donald Trump prove that you didn't really need them. You didn't need to take part in a debate to win the Republican primary. So is it super important in a general election?

You have to remember the RNC, before Trump became the nominee, was really angry with the Commission on Presidential Debates, was going to pull out of the whole thing, was demanding some sort of entirely new structure. So now with President Biden obviously leaving himself a big out if Trump does something he doesn't like, then he won't take part in the debate. Trump thinks it's to advantage now, and I think if he felt it was too his disadvantage, he wouldn't take part. So I really, really doubt that we are going to see a debate between Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

BAIER: I don't know. I'm not sure, Stef. I think that there are -- if the Biden administration is going to say, and the Biden campaign is going to say that their man is ready for anything, at least one time you probably have to stand next to the opponent.

KIGHT: Yes, I agree. I think there is going to be immense pressure on Biden to actually say yes to a debate with Trump. And I think you look at the State of the Union where he came on strong, they want to repeat that.

BAIER: All right, panel, stand by, if you would. Up next, the panel returns on the life and legacy of Senator Joe Lieberman.

And later, an unsuspecting group of sorority sisters become lifesavers on spring break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Do you think barring this effort, Senator, that you could get on all of the ballots?

JOE LIEBERMAN, FORMER U.S. SENATOR: Let's face it, most of the people in our country are angry at both political parties, and they don't want to have to make another choice again between presidents Trump and Biden.

BAIER: your thoughts on where things stand right now?

LIEBERMAN: You know, this is very American. And I want to say there is a good side to it, which is that in America, we're a rule of law country.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Senator Joe Lieberman on our show talking about elections and his No Labels effort. He died today after complications from a fall, according to his family. Getting reactions pouring in from both sides of the aisle. His dear friend Senator Lindsey Graham from South Carolina, a Republican, saying, "I just heard of my dear friend Joe Lieberman's passing, as I'm just now leaving Israel, so many emotions, this is devastatingly sad. I feel fortunate to have been in his presence, traveling the world in support of America's interests as we saw it. The good news, he is in the hands of the loving God. The bad news, John McCain is giving him an earful about how screwed up things are. Rest in peace, my dear friend. From the Last Amigo."

Joe Manchin, Democrat from West Virginia, flirted with the No Labels ticket, "I always had the deepest admiration and respect for Senator Joe Lieberman and I was proud to call him my colleague and dear friend. Senator Lieberman always put our country first by working across the aisle to enact sensible, bipartisan solutions, including the creation of the Department of Homeland Security."

And we have a statement from president George -- former President George Bush. "Joe was as fine an American as they come, and one of the most decent people I met during my time in Washington. We also pray that Joe's example of decency guides our nation's leaders now and into the future."

We're back with the panel. Byron, thoughts?

YORK: Well, one, it's a surprise, and a terribly sad surprise. I think his real legacy is his being a champion of bipartisanship, which is in a pretty bad way right now. It was interesting to see Lindsey Graham call himself the Last Amigo. He and Lieberman and Graham and John McCain hung out so much, made so many foreign trips that they were known as the Three Amigos.

And McCain really did want to put Lieberman on his ticket in 2008, was convinced by a lot of Republicans that the base wouldn't like it and that in our system it really doesn't work when the president and vice president are from different political parties. But Lieberman kept to this bipartisan ideal. And now with No Labels, they've had trouble finding a candidate. The Democrats are mad at him because they think they are undermining Biden. And it's -- the whole cause of bipartisan with the departure of Manchin and Sinema and everything else, is just in a pretty bad way now.

BAIER: Yes. Stef, we should point out No Labels is on 19 state ballots already. RFK Jr is only on one officially so far. That will increase. Interesting to see where No Labels goes. But on the life and legacy of Joe Lieberman, he was this centrist figure that is really rare and maybe getting extinct, breed in Washington.

KIGHT: Exactly. He was a rare centrist voice. And we do continue to see the loss of these more moderate voices in government. We repeatedly see these more moderate senators and House members leave Congress and we have seen this No Labels effort, which initially had a lot of excitement around it, seem to kind of struggle to find any real footing.

It's clear that the vast majority of Americans are unhappy with both parties. Neither candidate right now is really -- has very high approval ratings. But we are seeing it really struggle to have anyone lead that centrist movement, lead anyone towards this more bipartisan effort. This is another voice there that we are losing.

BAIER: I talked about this with Brit, Katie, but to go from vice presidential nominee on the Democratic ticket in 2000, and then eight years later deliver a speech at the Republican National Convention for John McCain, was quite something.

PAVLICH: Well, he's -- people say he was a centrist. He was a very principled man. And he published a book in 2012 called "The Gift of Rest." And he talks all about how his faith really led him to do the best that he could for his country. And people asked the question about how could he be -- have all these friendships with these people talking to him in terms ever policy but not having angry disagreements with him and how to move forward with that. He talked a lot about that in his book. And I took away from reading it that he really believed if he could focus on his faith without exception. You heard about him walking back and forth from the capital to his home in Georgetown in the rain with his security guards driving, asking him if he wanted a ride. He always said no. And I think people respected that he stuck to his principles even if wasn't fitting into a particular political party. And that's why you are seeing people rally around his family and people saying that they are heartbroken to see that he is gone.

BAIER: Yes, our condolences to Hadassah, his wife.

Byron, also, he was aggressive on foreign policy. He was forward leaning when it came to America with its foot forward overseas, and advocated for that really up until the end, stepped into even talking about Senator Chuck Schumer's speech about Israel on the Senate floor.

YORK: Absolutely. And that is another issue with the aftermath of the Iraq War that led to a lot of political splintering, first inside the Democratic Party and then later, with the rise of Trump, inside the Republican Party.

One last thing about it is when we talk about Al Gore having come within 537 votes of being president, Lieberman became within 537 votes of being vice president. And Al Gore seemed to kind of flip out afterwards. And Joe Lieberman really stayed on a very even-tempered path and continued what he was doing for the rest of his life, a very admirable model.

BAIER: Joe Lieberman, 82. Panel, thanks.

Finally tonight, a special day.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: He kind of like pulled over superfast, turned to go down this hill to this, like, boat ramp area. And we just see like this white minivan submerged underwater.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Five students on spring break from the University of Georgia being hailed as heroes after jumping into action to help a mother and her two kids from sinking in a minivan. The sorority sisters came across the submerged car, as you just heard, while on a girls' trip to Savannah. One of the women, Clarke Jones, used CPR skills she learned in lifeguard training to save a four-year-old boy who was trapped underwater. Kudos to you. That's one heck of a spring break.

Tomorrow on SPECIAL REPORT, President Biden, former President Trump head to New York for very different reasons. We'll bring that to you.

Remember, if you can't catch us live, set your DVR, 6:00 p.m. in the east, 3:00 p.m. on the west coast.

Thanks for inviting us into your home tonight. That's it for this SPECIAL REPORT, fair, balanced, and unafraid. Here's Laura.

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