


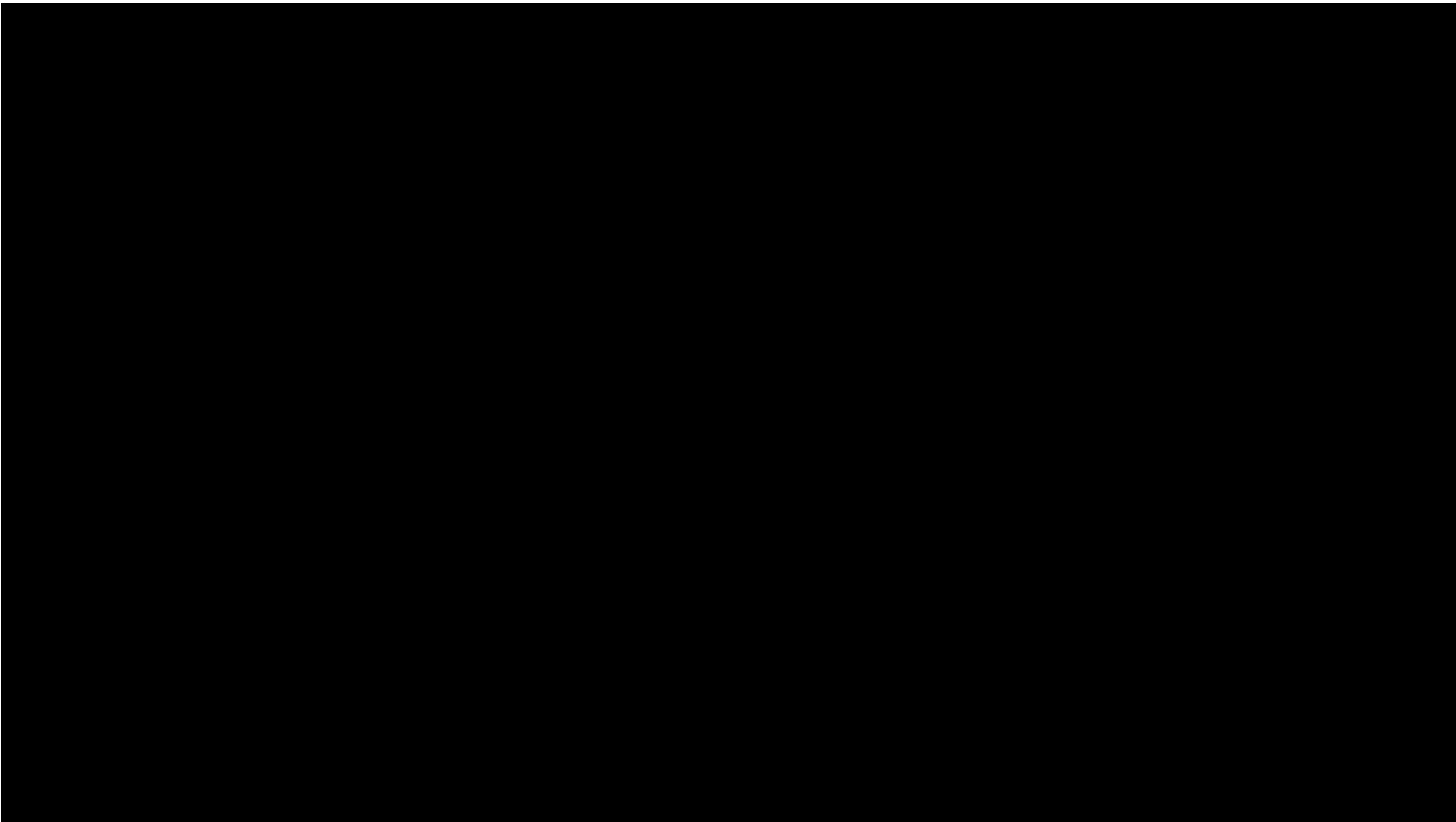
U.S. NEWS 04/02/2019 11:10 am ET | **Updated** 2 hours ago

Measles Cases This Year Surpass 2018’s Full-Year Total

In just the first three months of 2019, the U.S. has already logged a disturbing surge in the illness, which was proclaimed eliminated in 2000.



By Nina Golgowski

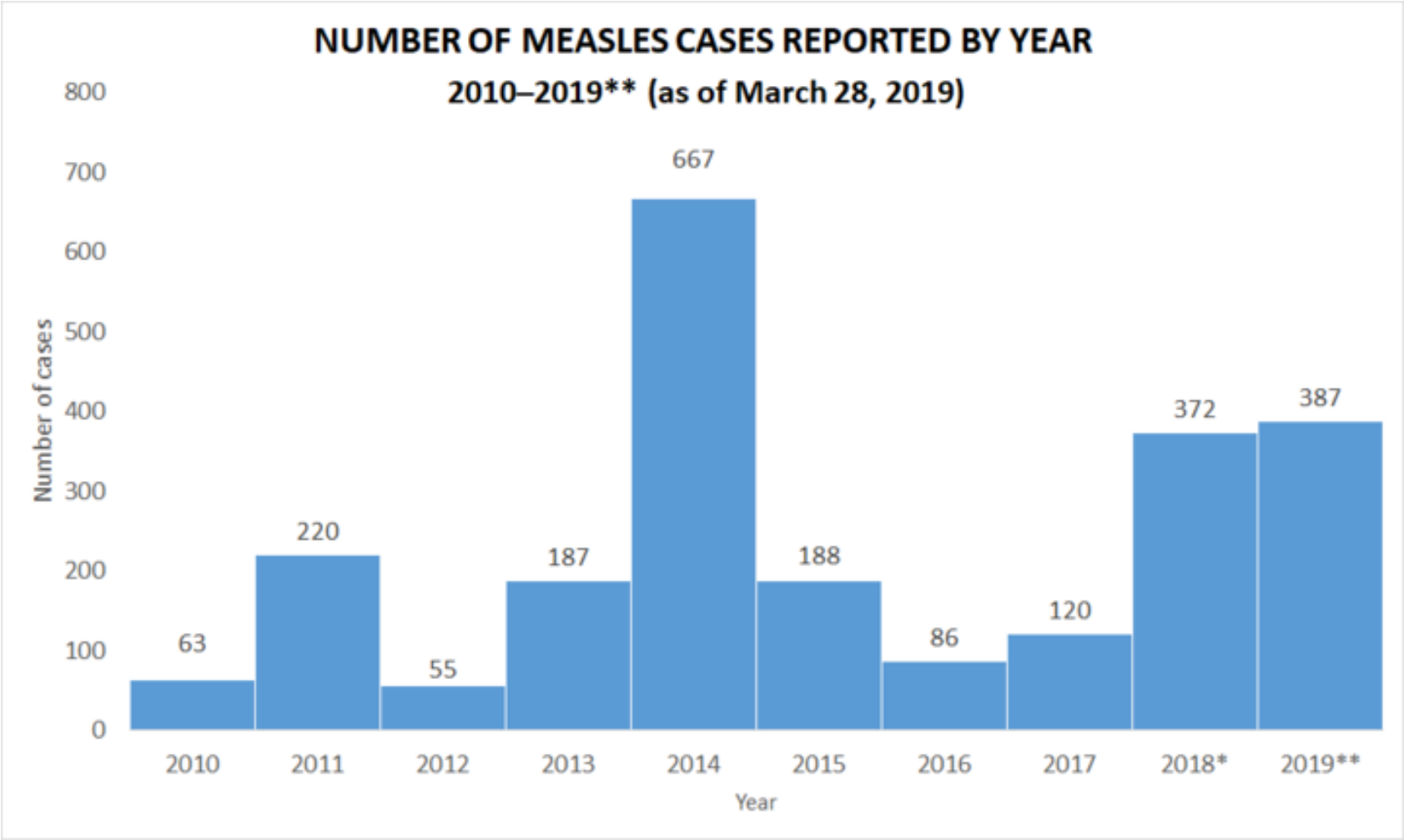


The number of measles cases continues to skyrocket, with more confirmed infections of the

highly contagious virus in the first three months of this year than in all of 2018, health officials said.

As of Thursday, there had been 387 cases of measles this year in 15 states, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) said, citing preliminary findings. That already eclipses last year’s 12-month total of 372. The 15 states with outbreaks are Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Texas, and Washington.

“This is the second-greatest number of cases reported in the U.S. since measles was eliminated in 2000,” the CDC said. The highest post-2000 number was in 2014, with 667 confirmed cases.



CDC

From Jan. 1 to March 28, there were 387 confirmed measles cases in the U.S, surpassing all of 2018.

International travel to areas where there are large outbreaks of the disease, like Israel and Ukraine, has been blamed for the recent rise.

Last year’s three largest outbreaks — in New York state, New York City and New Jersey — primarily affected people who were unvaccinated in Orthodox Jewish communities, the CDC

said.

“Eighty-two people brought measles to the U.S. from other countries in 2018 ... the greatest number of imported cases since” 2000, the CDC said.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Measles, mumps and rubella vaccines are seen in a cooler. The majority of those who have contracted measles were unvaccinated, the CDC said.

The majority of those who have contracted measles were unvaccinated, the CDC added.

The measles virus, which invades the nose and throat, spreads through coughing and sneezing. It causes fever and congestion, and can lead to disabling or fatal complications, including severe diarrhea, pneumonia and brain inflammation.

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The virus can live up to two hours in airspace where an infected person coughed or sneezed. The vaccine is 97-percent effective, authorities say.

“Measles is so contagious that if one person has it, up to 90% of the people close to that person who are not immune will also become infected,” [the CDC has said](#).

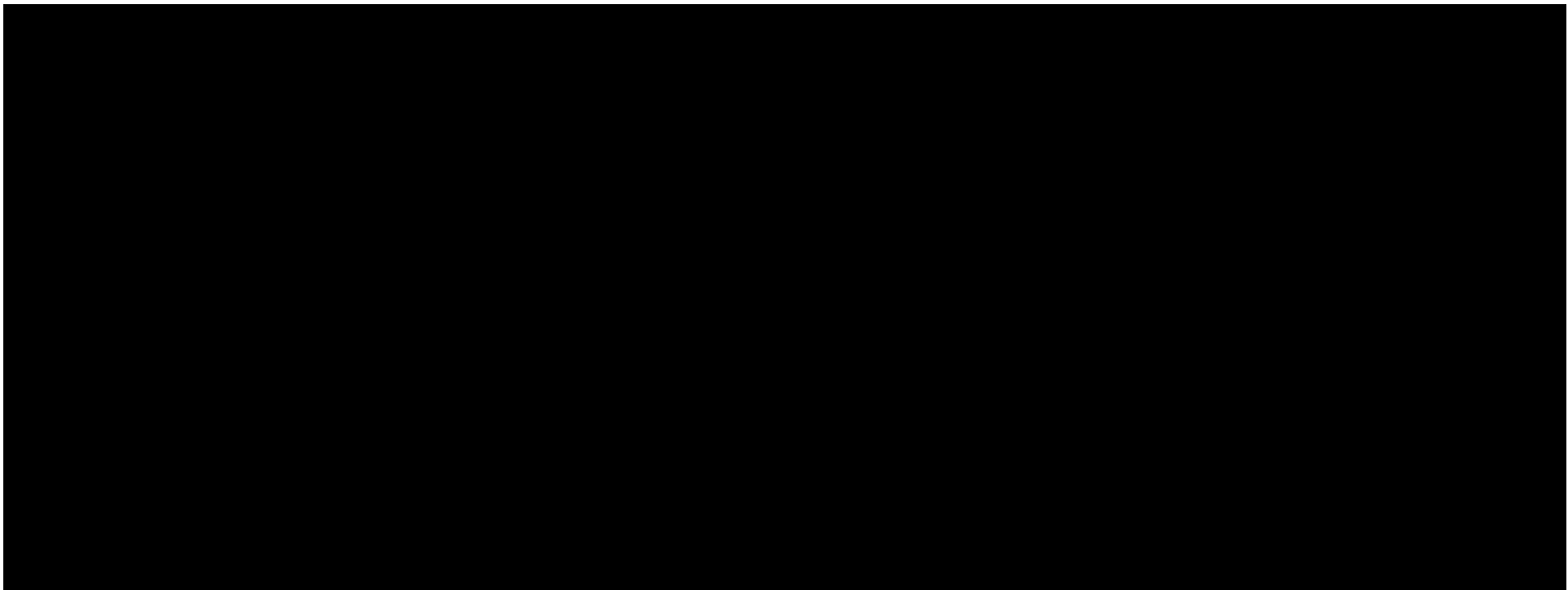
Before the measles vaccination program started in 1963, an estimated 3 million to 4 million people contracted measles each year in the U.S. About 400 to 500 of those died, 48,000 were hospitalized and 1,000 developed the brain inflammation encephalitis, the CDC said.

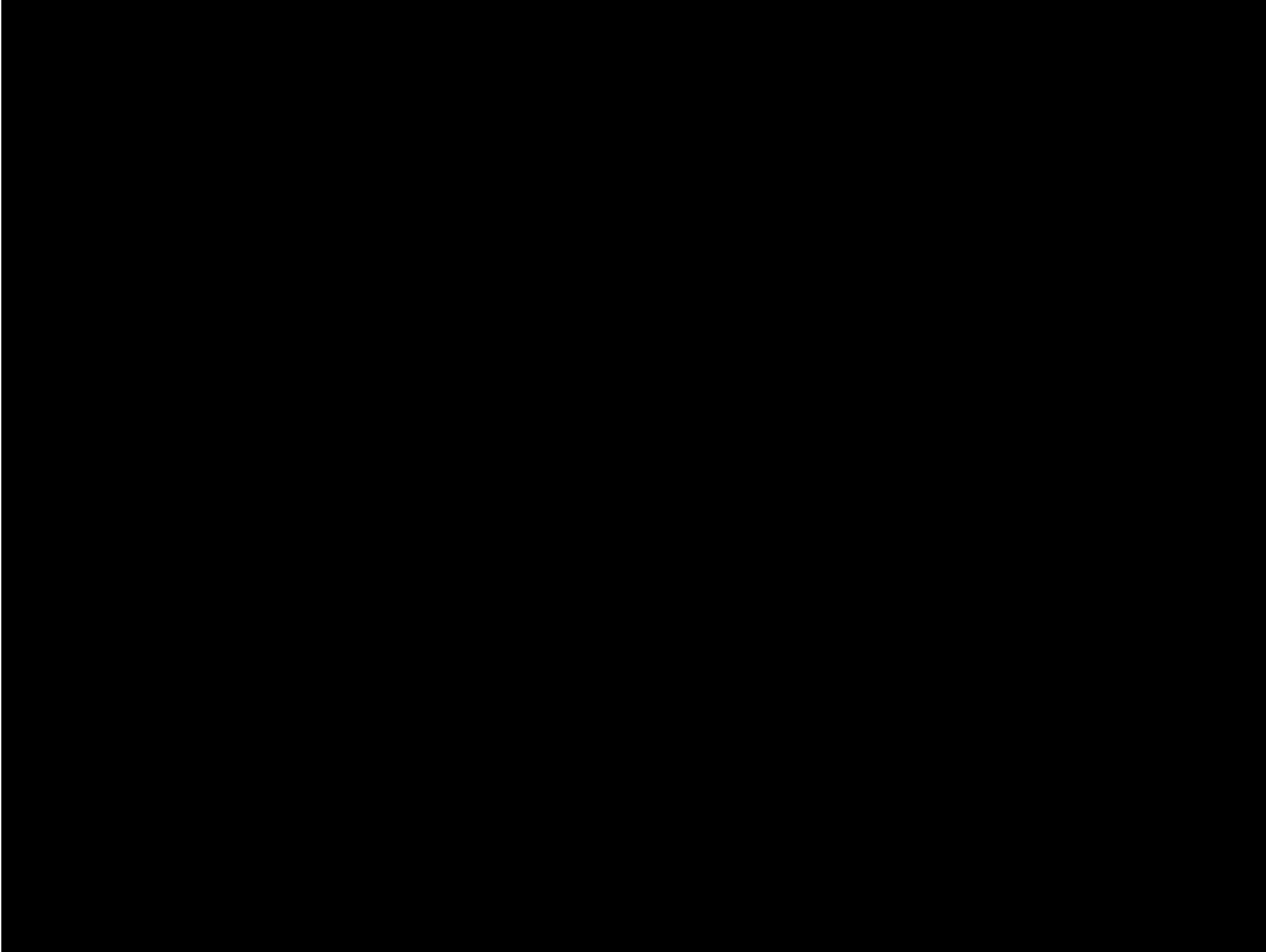
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General Assignment Reporter, HuffPost

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