



# Justices give presidents wide immunity

Decision is latest political triumph for Trump

BY MARIANNE LEVINE

The Supreme Court's Monday ruling on presidential immunity was the latest in a string of favorable developments for Donald Trump, who once faced mounting questions about how he'd balance time in court with campaigning for a return to office.

The 6-3 decision, which pointed to further legal delays for the former president, came as his opponent, President Biden, confronted a campaign crisis after a widely panned debate performance last week. Less than 24 hours after that debate, the Supreme Court ruled that federal prosecutors improperly charged a defendant over the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol and overturned a 40-year-old legal precedent that conservatives have long targeted.

Monday's ruling sparked some concern from critics about potential implications in a second Trump term. But with two weeks until the scheduled start of the Republican nominating convention, Trump confidently embraced the decision — with three justices he nominated helping form the majority opinion — after months of griping about his legal cases.

"Trump has had a lot of really good luck. His campaign couldn't have written a better few days," Republican strategist Alex Cohnant said. "Legally he still has issues, but politically he's able to claim vindication and nobody will see him in a federal court before the election."

Trump still faces some challenges. He is in uncharted territory running as a felon facing a polarized electorate and has alienated many voters with his false claims and combative tone on the campaign trail. He has repeatedly claimed that he is the victim of a weaponized judicial

SEE POLITICS ON A6

**What to know:** How will the ruling affect Trump's legal cases? A5

**Outside court:** In D.C., cheers turn into confusion and anxiety. B1



Roberts



Kavanaugh



Gorsuch



Thomas



Alito



Barrett\*

"A former president is entitled to absolute immunity from criminal prosecution for actions within his conclusive and preclusive constitutional authority. There is no immunity for unofficial acts."

Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., writing for the majority

\* Justice Amy Coney Barrett largely sided with the majority but wrote a separate concurrence



Sotomayor



Kagan



Jackson

"Today's decision to grant former Presidents criminal immunity reshapes the institution of the presidency. It makes a mockery of the principle, foundational to our Constitution and system of Government, that no man is above the law."

Justice Sonia Sotomayor, in dissent

## Second look ordered for states' social media laws

BY WILL OREMUS, CAT ZAKRZEWSKI AND JUSTIN JOUVENAL

The Supreme Court on Monday ordered lower courts to take a second look at a pair of laws in Texas and Florida that would have prevented social media companies from removing certain political posts or accounts, saying the

courts had not fully addressed the First Amendment issues involved.

The justices voided the judgments of separate appeals courts that had reached opposite conclusions about whether the laws were constitutional, ordering both to perform a much broader analysis of whether the statutes violate the right to free speech. The justices said they did not have enough

information to make that determination sought by social media companies.

The high court dealt a blow to conservative critics of social media companies by signaling that key parts of the Texas law in particular are unlikely to withstand constitutional scrutiny.

Justice Elena Kagan wrote that social media sites such as Face-

book and YouTube have First Amendment rights to curate and moderate the posts in users' feeds.

The judgment on procedural grounds was unanimous, but the complex cases elicited five separate opinions. Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Brett M. Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett joined

SEE SOCIAL MEDIA ON A12

### EXECUTIVE SHIELDED FOR OFFICIAL ACTS

Ruling will further delay Trump's Jan. 6 trial

BY ANN E. MARIMOW AND DEVLIN BARRETT

Donald Trump is immune from prosecution for official acts as president but can face trial for private conduct, a divided Supreme Court ruled Monday, declaring a broad new definition of White House power that may stand for generations and will further delay Trump's election interference case in D.C.

The 6-3 decision along ideological lines makes it highly unlikely that the 45th president will go to trial on charges of trying to subvert the 2020 election before voters cast ballots in this year's presidential contest, in which Trump is the presumptive Republican nominee.

Because of court procedures and the particular way in which the decision was rendered, the lower court will probably not be able to resume work on the case for 32 days; when and if the trial does proceed, it may be with a significantly whittled-down set of evidence.

The high court specifically barred prosecutors from using one swath of evidence in any such trial: Trump's conversations with Justice Department officials after Joe Biden's 2020 election victory. The majority of the court also signaled that other significant parts of the prosecution case could be tossed out.

Writing for the majority, Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. said that a president "may not be prosecuted for exercising his core constitutional powers, and he is entitled, at a minimum, to a presumptive immunity from prosecution for all his official acts."

But, Roberts added, the president "enjoys no immunity for his unofficial acts, and not everything the President does is official. The President is not above

SEE IMMUNITY ON A4

**The Fix:** Four takeaways from the decision, for 2024 and beyond. A2

**'King above the law':** Sotomayor writes searing dissent on ruling. A4

## FTC inquiry escalates patent fight with pharma

BY DAN DIAMOND

The Federal Trade Commission has opened an investigation into Teva Pharmaceuticals, citing the company's refusal to take down about two dozen patents for its asthma and COPD inhalers, according to confidential agency documents reviewed by The Washington Post.

The FTC last week sent a civil investigative demand — effectively a subpoena — ordering Teva to provide internal communications, analysis and financial data related to the contested patents listed in a federal registry known as the Orange Book. The agency has argued that pharmaceutical companies such as Teva have wrongly made minor tweaks to their products to keep patents in the Orange Book and fend off generic competition. Teva charges hundreds of dollars for inhalers in the United States that the company sells for a fraction of the price overseas.

Teva has until July 24 to cooperate with the FTC's demand.

SEE FTC ON A12

## In Georgia, some Black men waver on Biden

Even a small shift from 2020 could flip the state back to red. Trump and his allies have noticed.

BY MAEVE RESTON

MACON, GA. — When the crush of inflation became too much to bear a year and a half ago, Rashad James and Justin Williams began hauling their smoker into an abandoned parking lot off Macon's Route 41, dishing out \$10 to \$20 platters of pork chops, ribs and chicken four days a week.

That side hustle formed with family and friends — Smoke's Grill — has provided a financial safety net for the two commercial truck drivers in an economy that has felt unrelenting. Both men cast ballots for Joe Biden in 2020, hoping he could usher in more opportunity, higher-paying jobs and less expensive health care for Black men like them. But this year they are undecided — frustrated by how little has changed nearly four years after Black voters helped Biden flip Georgia and gave Democrats control of the Senate by electing Raphael G. Warnock and Jon Ossoff in the 2021 Georgia runoff elections.

"Nothing's changing. It feels like the economy is getting worse," said James, 34, noting

SEE BLACK MEN ON A8



KENDRICK BRINSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**Walter Smith is a retired commissioner in Peach County, Ga. He worries that Donald Trump is convincing some Black voters and says President Biden's messaging needs to be more aggressive.**

### ELECTION 2024

## Biden team scrambles to calm donors after debate

BY MATT VISER, TYLER PAGER AND MICHAEL SCHERER

President Biden's senior advisers ramped up efforts to soothe skittish Democrats on Monday, placing a flurry of calls to lawmakers, contacting donors and circulating an internal poll suggesting he had not lost ground after his much-criticized debate performance. At the same time, party officials finalized a timeline to formally nominate Biden within weeks, a move that could limit talk of alternative candidates.

Taken together, the actions by the small circle of Biden's most loyal advisers were meant to reemphasize that the president has no plans to exit the race despite calls

SEE BIDEN ON A6

**The Take:** The French elections augur trouble for Democrats. A2

**Tricky math:** Biden needs votes from many who think he's unfit. A7

## IN THE NEWS

**Israel-Gaza war** Al-Shifa Hospital's director was released by Israel seven months after he was detained on accusations of working with Hamas militants. A10

**Hurricane Beryl** The storm made landfall on Grenada with Category 4 intensity, causing widespread damage. A3

**THE NATION** A Mass. judge declared a mistrial in Karen Read's murder trial after the jury deadlocked. A8  
A lawsuit in Wyoming could threaten access to millions of acres of public land. A16

**THE WORLD** France's leftist alliance senses a chance as the far right surges and Macron fades. A9  
Hungary taunts allies and touts the hard right as it takes the presidency of the E.U.'s council. A10

**THE ECONOMY** Boeing announced a deal to buy the 737 Max supplier involved in a midflight door blowout in January. A11  
E.U. regulators said Meta violated the law when it made users pay if they didn't want personal information used to generate ads. A11

**THE REGION** D.C.'s bid to host the NFL draft in 2027 would include staging some parts of the three-day event on the National Mall. B1  
Fairfax County schools will allow students to retake tests for full credit and will add a D-minus to their grading scale. B1

**STYLE** As "narcissist" has gained traction as a label in the past decade, so has another term: narcissistic abuse. C1

**HEALTH & SCIENCE** Evidence is mounting that excessive noise levels in restaurants are more than a minor inconvenience. E1

BUSINESS NEWS.....A11  
COMICS.....C6  
OBITUARIES.....B4  
OPINION PAGES.....A13  
TELEVISION.....C4  
WORLD NEWS.....A9

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