

Hunter Biden hit with 9 tax charges

L.A. indictment puts him back in the news during president’s visit for campaign events.

By MATT HAMILTON

As President Biden arrived in Los Angeles on Friday for a weekend of fundraising among Hollywood elite, his only living son was hit with his second grand jury indictment this year — with the special counsel accusing the younger Biden of various tax crimes.

Hunter Biden has long served as a political punching bag for his father’s opponents, and the latest indictment, in L.A., along with another in Delaware charging him with firearms violations, has the president’s son facing two trials on opposite coasts while his father makes the case for reelection to the country.

The younger Biden asserted in an interview for the podcast “MobyPod,” released Friday, that the onslaught by Republicans was part of a long-running effort to ultimately defeat his father.

“They are trying to — in their most illegitimate way, but rational way — they’re trying to destroy a presidency,” he told the musician Moby. It’s unclear when the interview was recorded.

“So it’s not about me,” Biden continued. “And [in] their most base way, what they’re trying to do is they’re trying to kill me, knowing that it will be a pain greater than my father could be able to handle.”

In the 56-page indictment unsealed late Thursday, Biden, who resides in Malibu, was accused of failing to pay his taxes on time from 2016 to 2019, filing false and fraudulent tax returns in 2018, and tax evasion.

The nine charges span a period when Biden, 53, was struggling with an addiction to alcohol and crack cocaine, which he documented in graphic detail in a memoir that also dwells on the 2015 death of his brother, Beau, along with the grief and depression that consumed him and his family. The brothers lost their mother and sister in a 1972 car crash that left the boys seriously injured.

Biden has since become sober and paid his taxes, along with penalties and interest. His lawyers are expected to point to his well-publicized addiction to explain his chaotic financial affairs.

But prosecutors contend that he “willfully” failed to file and pay his taxes to the Internal Revenue Service on time, and that he instead plunked down cash for a bacchanalia across L.A. featuring “drugs, escorts and girlfriends, luxury hotels and rental properties, exotic cars, clothing, and other items of a personal nature.”

Further, prosecutors allege that when preparing tax returns in 2020, in the early months of his sobriety, Biden misclassified a long list of personal expenses from 2018 as business expenses to reduce his tax burden. Those expenses include tuition for one of his daughters and a Venmo payment to an exotic dancer, according to the indictment.

[See Hunter Biden, A10]



Photographs by MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

DAIRY COWS feed at a farm in Tulare County. Some locals believe their health problems are owed to pollutants from the nearby facilities.

Methane strategy stinks, critics say

California has spent billions to capture gas from cows. Foes say the method spews pollution in local enclaves.

By TONY BRISCOE

BAKERSFIELD — At a massive dairy farm in the San Joaquin Valley, nearly 14,000 Holstein cows crane their necks through feeding stalls and gnaw leisurely on alfalfa.

Meanwhile, close to their hooves, a sprinkler system activates and flushes the herd’s manure into nearby sewer grates. From there, the waste courses through a network of pipes and into an enormous lagoon covered by a thick vinyl tarp.

This enclosed pool, which looks something like a giant whoopee



MARIA AREVALO opposes subsidies for digesters that harvest the gas from manure, arguing they reward farms for their pollution.

cushion, is known as a digester, and it’s the cornerstone of California’s bid to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from its \$7.5-billion dairy industry.

California — the nation’s leading dairy-producing state — is home to 1.7 million milk cows, which belch and excrete copious amounts of methane, a potent greenhouse gas capable of warming the atmosphere 80 times more than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period.

Instead of allowing methane from cattle waste to escape into the atmosphere, digesters harvest the gas from manure so it can be used to fuel heavy-duty trucks, generate electricity or supply gas furnaces and stoves.

It’s a strategy California has invested in heavily as dairy farmers try to meet the world’s growing appetite [See Manure, A8]



DANIA MAXWELL Los Angeles Times

JOVITA CUEVAS stands outside her apartment in Koreatown. She and her son, Leonardo, are the only tenants remaining in the six-unit, rent-stabilized building.

Mother, son repel Ellis Act eviction at historic building

Now that they’re the only ones left on site, they offer glimmer of hope to poor tenants.

By PALOMA ESQUIVEL

Jovita Cuevas comes home every day to her 83-year-old Koreatown apartment building, greeted by the signs of abandonment. She passes overgrown rose bushes lining the driveway, boarded-up bay windows on

the first floor, “no trespassing” signs and a notice, dated 2017, that the complex is set to be demolished.

On the second floor, she walks down a dark hallway to the door with a sliver of light through a crack in the upper right corner.

This is where Cuevas, 64, and her son Leonardo, 25, live as the last remaining residents of a historic, rent-stabilized building after years of fighting against the owners’ plan to build a more lucrative residential tower in its place.

One by one, the residents of Cuevas’ six-unit building reached settlements and left. But Cuevas and her son are determined to hold on to the spacious one-bedroom with wood floors where Leonardo has lived his entire life and where they pay \$975 a month in rent, an amount that’s impossible to match nearby.

The Cuevases won a rare victory in court this year, when a jury found that the owner failed to prove that it was acting in good faith [See Ellis Act, A6]

Preschools grapple with California law limiting expulsions

By JENNY GOLD

Kristin Hills is at her wits’ end with how to handle the behavior problems in her preschool classrooms.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, children at the state preschools she oversees in Mendocino County have been acting out. Biting has become more frequent among the 3-year-olds. Hitting and kicking are commonplace. A few children have started hurling wooden blocks and even chairs across the classroom. In at least a third of her 17 classrooms, she said, the behaviors may endanger other children and teachers.

In the past, Hills might have called a parent to come pick up their ill-behaved child early. Now her options are limited, and preschools like hers must manage difficult behaviors on their own.

California began passing a series of highly lauded laws that restrict state-funded child-care centers from suspending or expelling children two years before the pandemic. The legislation was part of a national wave that followed a 2014 Obama administration statement condemning preschool expulsion and clarifying that the practice was banned at federally-funded Head Start programs. At least 29 states [See Expulsions, A7]

Court narrows gag order on Trump

He may criticize special counsel and discuss others if it won’t interfere in 2020 election case. **NATION, A4**

Shooting upends UNLV’s semester

Campus cancels finals as students cope with trauma from the attack that killed three faculty members. **NATION, A4**

Weather
Mostly sunny.
L.A. Basin: 75/48. **B8**

From athlete to suspected killer

Jerrid Joseph Powell, 33, is accused of fatally shooting four men. **CALIFORNIA, B1**



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