

### **Congress certifies Biden's Electoral College win**

Hours after pro-Trump rioters stormed the Capitol, causing an unprecedented lockdown of Congress, [members certified Joe Biden as the winner of the Electoral College and the next president of the United States](#). Republican members of Congress, turning their backs on a democratic system of government, challenged the certification of Arizona and Pennsylvania. The process required each chamber to hold two hours of debate before reconvening in a joint session to vote. The final votes in the Senate were a 93-6 rejection on the Arizona challenge and a 92-7 rejection of the Pennsylvania challenge, while the House rejected the Arizona challenge 306-121 and the Pennsylvania challenge 282-138. [House members also objected to the certification of Georgia, Michigan and Nevada, but those challenges died when no senators joined them](#). Several Republican [senators who had planned to object to the certification, including Marsha Blackburn and Bill Hagerty, changed their minds following the attack on the Capitol](#), and voted for certification. Every member of the Tennessee Republican House delegation supported at least one of the challenges to overturn the Presidential election.

### **Rioters storm Capitol leaving five people dead**

After being encouraged by the President at a rally, [thousands of supporters of President Trump, some armed, stormed the grounds of the U.S. Capitol](#), breaking into and vandalizing the legislative chambers in an effort to derail the joint congressional session where the 2020 election results were formally certified. Members of Congress were forced to shelter in place, and the Capitol went into lockdown as the rioters, who had earlier been encouraged by the President, clashed with unprepared law enforcement. The rioters were encouraged by the President, who has spent weeks falsely attacking the integrity of the election and had urged his supporters to descend on Washington to protest Congress' formal certification of Biden's victory.

While the President has condemned the attack, [he denies any responsibility for the riot](#). Officials at the Department of Justice have indicated [they may pursue charges against the President for inciting the riot](#). Members of Congress are [demanding an investigation](#) into how such a serious breach of security happened and why the Capitol Police were so understaffed and unprepared. Facing widespread criticism for the way he handled the situation, [Capitol Police Chief Steven Sund has resigned](#). [Also resigning are the Sergeants of Arms of both the House and the Senate](#).

[The chaos resulted in the death of five people, including a Capitol Police Officer](#), Brian Sicknick, who was injured while physically engaging with rioters. One woman trying to break into the Senate Chamber was shot by Capitol Police and the other died from injuries sustained during the violence. Several arrests have been made and [charges have been filed against the man who broke into Speaker Pelosi's office and a new elected state delegate from West Virginia who videoed himself in the Capitol](#).

+Jim [said](#), "Officer Sicknick was killed while defending our democracy. I pray for his friends and family, and support a full investigation into his death to hold those responsible accountable."

### **House moves to impeach the President, while others call for invoking the 25th Amendment**

Several Democratic lawmakers and one Republican called for [the President to be impeached for a second time](#) for inciting sedition and encouraging rioters who took over the Capitol. Representative Ilhan Omar of Minnesota has drawn up articles of impeachment. A vote on the article of impeachment is expected early next week, if not sooner. At the same time, some Administration officials have been discussing [the possibility of invoking the 25th Amendment](#) to remove the President from office. This would require the majority of cabinet secretaries to vote to have the President's power transferred to the Vice President as soon as possible. The Editorial Board of the [Wall Street Journal has called on the President to resign](#).

+Jim [said](#), "I supported impeachment before and agree we need it now more than ever."

+Jim also [said](#), "The fastest way for us to remove the dangerous president would be for [@VP](#) to [#InvokeThe25th](#). If he won't do that, we must immediately take up articles of impeachment. I've joined my colleague [@Ilhan](#) in co-sponsoring this resolution in the House."

### **Cabinet Secretaries resign in the aftermath of Capitol riot**

[Two Cabinet members have resigned in the wake of the Capitol riot](#). Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao resigned, saying she was "deeply troubled" by events at the Capitol. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos later resigned. In a sharply worded letter, [she accused the President of directly responsible for inciting the mob that attacked the Capitol](#). Both have served since the beginning of the President's term. [They are being criticized for resigning at the 11th hour, in part because they will not be able to participate in a vote to invoke the 25th Amendment](#) to remove the President from office after their resignations take effect.

### **Twitter and Facebook ban the President**

In unprecedented moves, [Twitter and Facebook suspended the President's social media accounts](#). Following the riot at the Capitol, Twitter initially locked the President's personal account for twelve hours following "repeated and severe" violations of its policies. They have now [permanently suspended his account](#) because they fear any additional tweets might incite further violence. [Facebook has taken a similar position and has suspended his account indefinitely](#). Both companies have been widely criticized for not taking strong steps to stop the spread of misinformation that many believe led to the violence at the Capitol.

### **Trump administration approves Tennessee's Medicaid block grant request**

[Today, after an eighteen-month delay and in the final weeks of Trump's term, the administration approved Tennessee's Medicaid block grant waiver](#). This greenlight from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) will allow Tennessee to fund their Medicaid program, TennCare, through a lump sum of federal funds in exchange for full autonomy to operate the program, without any intention of expanding eligibility. TennCare provides health insurance to 1.4 million Tennesseans including low-income individuals such as pregnant women, children, caretaker relatives of young children and older adults and adults with disabilities. Tennessee is one of 12 states that has repeatedly refused to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. By doing so, Tennessee is rejecting almost one billion dollars a year in federal funding to give 300,000 additional Tennesseans health care coverage and save rural hospitals. Tennessee is the first state in the nation to block grant its Medicaid program. In the past, Congress has previously voted against such proposals and [it is likely that the Biden administration will reject the waiver](#). The state legislature and Governor Lee began pursuing the waiver last year and it has been met with widespread opposition from Tennesseans. [Jim joined hundreds of people who showed up](#)

[to testify at public hearings against the proposal](#). The state also collected about 1,800 written comments on the block grant plan and only 11 were in support. Now that the Trump administration has approved the proposal, it will be sent back to the state legislature for final approval from lawmakers before it can be implemented. In a statement, Governor Lee said he intends to present a joint resolution on the plan for the General Assembly's "immediate consideration."

+Jim [said](#), "Tennessee is not getting any favors from the Trump Administration when they delay the waiver for 18 months, then give us leeway in the final week knowing that it will be reversed by the Biden Administration. Everyone in our state needs affordable health care."

### **Confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths, vaccinations in Tennessee**

Today, the [Tennessee Department of Health](#) reported 6,369 new cases, bringing the total to 640,606 confirmed COVID-19 cases statewide. There have been 7,618 deaths, an increase of 126 since yesterday. There are 3,249 people currently hospitalized with the virus. There have been 5,789,702 tests statewide, more than 33,593 since yesterday, with a 17.44% positivity rate. As of today in [Davidson County](#), there have been 74,528 confirmed cases, 995 new today, and 502 total deaths. Approximately [200,000 people in Tennessee have received a vaccination](#).

While counties around the state continue working to vaccinate health care workers and others in phases 1a1 and 1a2, [the Health Departments have started offering vaccination appointments to people 75 of age and older](#). Tennesseans can visit [this site](#) for county-level information about vaccines. You can also [use this tool](#) to find out when you will be eligible.

Yesterday, [more than 4,000 people died from COVID-19](#), making it the deadliest day of the pandemic so far. In some parts of the country, the number of people infected has pushed [hospitals to stop accepting patients because they have no capacity to provide them care](#). The CDC reports that more than 5.4 million people have received the first dose of the vaccine, far fewer than the 20 million that were expected to be vaccinated by the end of December. In response, [President-elect Biden has announced that he will distribute all available doses](#) in order to speed to the slow pace of vaccinations.

+Jim [said](#), "Today, [@NashvilleHealth](#) announced [#COVID19](#) vaccine distribution for Nashville residents 75+ begins Saturday, Jan. 9. You MUST make an appointment here: <https://redcap.link/ulocm01y> or by calling 615-862-7777. Visit <http://covid19.nashville.gov> for more info."

### **Ossoff and Warnock win Georgia Senate runoffs**

[Democrats Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock won Georgia's Senate runoffs giving Democrats control of the Senate](#). Each party has 50 seats in the Senate. Vice President-elect Kamala Harris will be the tiebreaker. This week's elections are expected to mark the formal end to the protracted 2020 election season. The two victories end nearly two decades in which Democrats have been shut out of statewide victories in Georgia. Biden became the first Democratic presidential candidate to carry the state since 1992.

### **FBI raids homes and offices of Republican members of Tennessee General**

Early this morning, [the homes and offices of four Republican members of the General Assembly were raided by the FBI](#). The exact nature and scope of the investigation remains unclear. House Speaker Cameron Sexton [says he has been fully cooperating with the FBI](#) since the fall of 2019. The raids came at the request of the U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Tennessee, Don Cochran, who was appointed by President Trump in 2017. Among those whose homes and offices were raided is former House Speaker Glen Casada, who was forced from that position following a vote of no confidence after the use racist and sexist language and inappropriate

behavior surfaced. In addition, Sexton has placed three legislative staff members, including his own chief of staff, on administrative leave.

**Biden announces more cabinet nominations**

[Biden nominated D.C. Court of Appeals Judge Merrick Garland for Attorney General](#). He also nominated former Homeland Security adviser [Lisa Monaco for deputy attorney general](#); [civil rights attorney Vanita Gupta as associate attorney general](#); and [civil rights attorney Kristen Clarke as assistant attorney general for civil rights](#). For Secretary of Commerce, [Biden has chosen Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo](#). Biden has picked [Boston Mayor Marty Walsh to head the Department of Labor](#) and Isabel Guzman, a California economic development official, [to lead the Small Business Administration](#).

**Police officer who shot Jacob Blake will not be charged**

[Local prosecutors in Kenosha dropped charges against the police officer who seriously wounded Jacob Blake](#). However, the Department of Justice's civil rights investigation into the shooting is continuing. The U.S. Attorney's Office and the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division are overseeing the federal investigation and "will make an independent charging decision," according to a joint statement. Blake was shot seven times in the back leaving him paralyzed.