

HOUSE PASSES BILL TO AVERT DEFAULT

Bipartisan vote of Biden-McCarthy deal to lift debt limit sends measure to Senate.

By ERIN B. LOGAN, CAMERON JOSEPH AND OWEN TUCKER-SMITH

WASHINGTON — The U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved a deal to suspend the debt limit late Wednesday, reducing the risk of a potentially disastrous default. To eliminate that risk, the Senate must pass the bill and send it to President Biden for his signature before the Treasury runs dry, which could happen as early as Monday.

The House approved the deal, which is a product of weeks-long negotiations between President Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Bakersfield), by a 314-117 vote after 9 p.m. EDT Wednesday. The legislation, which will cap some nondefense spending and suspend the debt ceiling for two years, will cut approximately \$1.5 trillion from the federal deficit over the next decade, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

The bill now heads to the Senate, where it has support from leadership in both parties and is expected to pass as early as Thursday.

Biden and McCarthy's compromise allowed the federal government to dodge a crisis, and was a political victory for both men. The president reinforced his brand as a bipartisan deal maker, and the speaker got Biden to bargain after he refused to do so for weeks.

Both leaders won something for their parties. Republicans, who had criticized Biden's repeated extension of a Trump-era pandemic pause of federal student loan payments, ensured that the president will not unilaterally extend that pause beyond the end of August. The deal also included another top GOP goal: A \$20-billion cut from the \$80 billion in new funding Democrats had sent to the Internal Revenue Service as part of an effort to rein in wealthy tax cheats.

Democrats secured a suspension of the debt ceiling, ensuring that Biden will not face this politically risky situation while he's running for reelection. In a surprise twist, they also appear to [See Congress, A7]



IN A RECENT UC Berkeley poll, 31% of California voters said they were somewhat or greatly affected by the heavy rain, snow and flooding that occurred this year. Above, a flooded vineyard in Corcoran in April.

ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

Majority of Californians fear worsening weather extremes



VILLAGERS gather for a 2022 visit by a U.N. official to Lomoputh, Kenya. The new climate study includes measures of "justice" for the planet's people.

BRIAN INGANGA Associated Press

'The Earth is really quite sick now'

Climate researchers say 7 of 8 safety limits have been breached, endangering people's well-being

By SETH BORENSTEIN

Earth has pushed past seven out of eight scientifically established safety limits and into "the danger zone," not just for an overheating planet that's losing its natural areas, but for the well-being of people living on it, according to a new study.

The study looks not just at guardrails for the planetary ecosystem but for the first time it also includes measures of "justice," which is mostly about prevent-

ing harm for countries, ethnicities and genders.

The study by the international scientist group Earth Commission published in Wednesday's journal Nature looks at climate, air pollution, phosphorus and nitrogen contamination of water from fertilizer overuse, groundwater supplies, fresh surface water, the unbuilt natural environment and the overall natural and human-built environment.

Only air pollution wasn't quite at the [See Earth, A12]

Poll shows nearly 70% expect volatile swings to become common due to climate change.

By HAYLEY SMITH

As California continues to experience swings from one weather extreme to another, a majority of residents say they are increasingly concerned about the state's changing climate, and some worry that weather impacts could force them to move in the future.

Nearly 70% of registered voters say they expect that volatile fluctuations between severe drought and periods of heavy rain and snow — what some call weather whiplash — will become more common in the future due to climate change, according to a new UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies poll co-sponsored by the Los Angeles Times.

The poll comes on the heels of a shockingly wet winter that ended three years of drought, killed nearly two dozen people and flooded the long-dry Tulare Lake Basin.

Although responses were sharply divided along political lines, they seemed to reflect a growing unease among residents about the current and future effects of global warming on California.

Thirty-one percent of voters said they were somewhat or greatly affected by the heavy rain, snow and flooding that occurred this year, including 8% who said [See Weather, A12]

Actor guilty on two counts of rape

Masterson convicted of assaulting women he met through Scientology church.

By JAMES QUEALLY

Actor Danny Masterson was convicted of two counts of rape Wednesday after his second trial on charges that he sexually assaulted three women he met through the Church of Scientology, ending a years-long legal saga that marked a rare instance of the controversial faith's practices being dragged into a courtroom.

After a week of deliberations, jurors were convinced the 47-year-old actor — who rose to prominence as the mercurial Steven Hyde on the sitcom "That '70s Show" — had sexually assaulted two women identified as Jen B. and N. Trout in his Hollywood Hills home in the early 2000s.

The jurors hung on a third count stemming from allegations made by Chrissie B., who was once Masterson's longtime girlfriend. The jury foreperson said the panel was leaning toward a guilty verdict on that count but was deadlocked 8 to 4 in favor of conviction.

Masterson remained calm and even chatty in the hallways of the downtown L.A. courthouse during deliberations. He did not visibly react to the verdict. His wife, model and actor Bijou Phillips, let out a pained cry when the verdict was read and sobbed heavily as Masterson was led away in handcuffs.

Masterson faces 30 years to life in prison at sentencing. He is due back in court in early August. A spokeswoman for his defense team declined to comment on the verdict.

"I am experiencing a complex array of emotions — relief, exhaustion, strength, sadness — knowing that my abuser, Danny Masterson, will face accountability for his criminal behavior," N. Trout said in a statement. "I am disappointed that he was not convicted on all counts, but take great solace in the fact that he, the Church of Scientology, and others, will have to fully account for their abhorrent actions in civil court."

Jurors previously hung on all counts against Masterson during a trial in late 2022, with most leaning toward an acquittal. But [See Verdict, A9]

Davis killings renew focus on death penalty

ANITA CHABRIA REPORTING FROM WOODLAND, CALIF.

In Yolo County, just west of Sacramento, the decision on whether to pursue the death penalty rests with one man, Dist. Atty. Jeff Reisig.



Of course, the same is true in California's other 57 counties, where district attorneys ultimately make the call. But, as Reisig told me when I sat down with him recently, "It's absolutely fair to say that in 58 counties in California, every D.A. probably does it differently."

Reisig may soon be facing that decision yet again, for about the 30th time in his more than 16 years in office, in the case of the young man accused in a series of stabbings that terrorized the nearby college town of Davis. Over the course of a few days in April,

two men were killed and a woman was knifed through the fabric of her tent, leaving her alive but in critical condition.

The suspect in the unexplained spate of violence is 21-year-old Carlos Reales Dominguez, a former UC Davis student who has pleaded not guilty and remains in custody in the Yolo County jail.

It's the kind of frightening and inexplicable case that leaves many of us split on what justice could look like if Dominguez is eventually found competent to stand trial — especially in a state where the death penalty remains on the books but is impossible in practice since Gov. Gavin Newsom put a moratorium on it with an executive order in 2019 and shuttered the state's death chamber at San Quentin State Prison.

So I asked Reisig how he'll decide — and why.

Reisig can't speak in specific terms about the Dominguez case, of course, [See Chabria, A7]



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

JEFF REISIG may soon weigh whether to seek the death penalty in the Davis stabbings, a choice he's pondered in about 30 other cases in 16-plus years as D.A.

The death penalty moratorium 'has no basis, no influence on whether or not I'm going to do my job.'

— YOLO COUNTY DIST. ATTY. JEFF REISIG

Crime is on the decline in L.A.

Violent offenses have fallen 10% this year in the city, which plans to hire 1,000 additional police officers. CALIFORNIA, B1

Bowl game sues Pac-12 and UC

Lawsuit seeks \$3 million after UCLA backed out of 2021 Holiday Bowl in San Diego due to COVID outbreak. SPORTS, B10

Hotel workers closer to a strike

With tourism season at hand and contracts set to expire June 30, Unite Here calls for an authorization vote. BUSINESS, A8

Weather

Partial clearing, L.A. Basin: 69/57. B6

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