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Biden commutes sentences of 1,500 Americans, a record

BY ZOLAN KANNO-YOUNGS AND MARK LANDLER
NYT News Service

WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden is commuting the sentences of nearly 1,500 people and pardoning 39 convicted of nonviolent crimes, the largest grant of clemency by an American president in a single day, the White House announced in a statement on

Thursday.

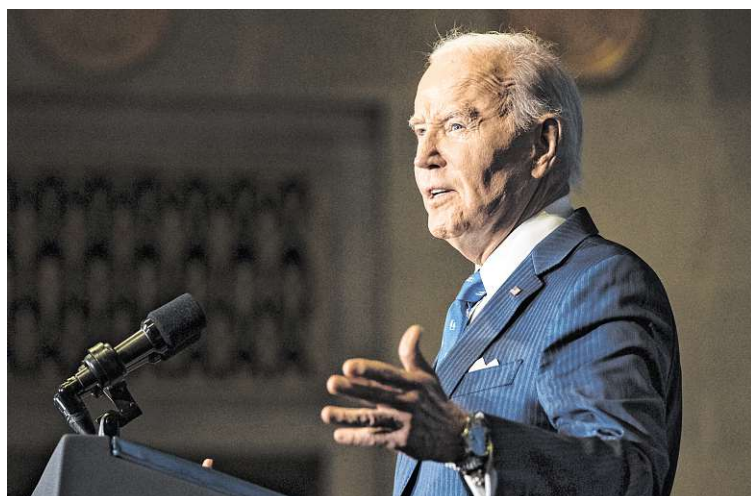
The commutations affect mostly those who had been released from prison and placed in home confinement during the coronavirus pandemic. The people who received pardons were convicted of nonviolent crimes, including possession of marijuana.

A pardon wipes out a conviction, while a commutation leaves the guilty verdict intact

but reduces some or all of the punishment.

The announcement came two weeks after Biden issued a pardon for his son, Hunter, who had been convicted of gun possession and income tax evasion. That decision was harshly criticized by both Republicans and Democrats because Biden had long ruled out clemency for his son.

The White House said that



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President Joe Biden delivers remarks at a Tribal Nations Summit on Monday in Washington, D.C.

the clemency announced on Thursday represented Biden's commitment to "help reunite families, strengthen communi-

ties, and reintegrate individuals back into society."

SEE BIDEN, 4A



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'TIS THE SEASON

Carter Morris, 9, from Merced pushes the button to light the California Capitol Christmas tree with Gov. Gavin Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom and their children during a ceremony at the state Capitol on Wednesday night. Carter, joined at left by parents Lynne and Karl Morris and sister Samira, was selected by the Central Valley Regional Center to light the

tree and represent the more than 450,000 Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities who receive services through the California Department of Developmental Services. The button also illuminated the 60-foot tall red fir outside on the Capitol grounds, marking the 93rd year of the traditional event.

Victim of California school shooting may not walk again

BY ISHANI DESAI AND MATHEW MIRANDA
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Doctors treating a 5-year-old boy shot last week at a faith-based elementary school in Northern California are unsure whether he will fully regain the use of his legs, family members said Thursday.

A gunman opened fire Dec. 4 at Feather River Adventist School, along Highway 70 in Butte County, and shot two kindergartners. Elias Wolford, 5, was taken to a hospital in critical condition along with a 6-year-old boy. Both survived.

Elias has undergone multiple surgeries since the shooting. But his grandmother, Debbie Wolford, wrote on social media Thursday that her grandson suffered damage to the outer edge of his spinal cord and has not retained full movement of his legs.

"We knew that there was some spinal damage," Elias' aunt Tawnee Preisner wrote in a separate message to The Sacramento Bee. "... but at this point, it looks like he is not going to regain it with the swelling going down, we are really asking for prayers and support."

The Wolford family created a GoFundMe to help raise money for the costs associated with his medical bills and recovery.

The second victim, Roman

SEE SHOOTING, 5A

Some lawmakers want to end state income taxes on tips



JOSÉ LUIS VILLEGAS jvillegas@sacbee.com

Waiter Cody Jie serves up sushi rolls to customers Travis Maley, right, and Chad Ortega, center, on Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2024, at Chef Frank Japanese Cuisine in North Natomas.

BY NICOLE NIXON
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Following in the policy footsteps of both major presidential candidates, some California lawmakers want to end state income taxes on tips.

"Working class Americans are working so hard and they're having a really hard time making ends meet," Sen. Rosilic Ochoa Bogh, R-Yucaipa, the bill's author, said in an interview. "They need relief."

Republican President-elect Donald Trump first proposed exempting tips from federal income taxes. It also became part of Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris' platform.

Ochoa Bogh called it "a great idea that both parties recognize Americans could benefit from."

The bill has one Democratic coauthor, Sen. Melissa Hurtado, D-Sanger, but it's unclear whether enough other Democrats - who hold a supermajority in the legislature - will support it.

Since Harris' defeat in the November election, top Legislative Democrats, Senate President pro Tem Mike McGuire and Speaker Robert Rivas, have pledged to work on making California a more affordable place to live during the next two-year legislative session. McGuire did not respond to a request for comment about the tips proposal.

California also faces a roughly \$2 billion deficit ahead of the next fiscal year. It's unclear how much the proposal would cut into state tax revenues if it's approved. A spokesperson for

SEE INCOME TAXES, 4A



via GoFundMe

Elias Wolford, a 5-year-old boy, suffered critical wounds during a school shooting Dec. 4 at Feather River Adventist School in which another boy, 6 years old, also suffered critical wounds. His family said Thursday that Elias may not fully regain the use of his legs.



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