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U.S. energy companies fume over rejected steel tariff exemptions



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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## White House wobbles on U.S. flag after McCain death

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The White House lowered its U.S. flag to half-staff, raised it back up and on Monday lowered it again after the death of Senator John McCain, in an unusual and confusing break with protocol on the passing of a national leader.

McCain, a prisoner of war in Vietnam, longtime U.S. senator from Arizona and 2008 Republican presidential nominee, died of brain cancer on Saturday at age 81. That prompted many Americans to lower flags to half-staff, a traditional gesture of honor.

But President Donald Trump, who had clashed with fellow Republican McCain over various issues and said during his campaign that the senator was "not a war hero," wavered in his approach to what presidents normally treat as a gesture of courtesy and respect.

Trump's White House lowered its flag on Saturday, then raised it back following the minimum period under law. Trump also delayed issuing the customary proclamation for flags to remain at half-staff for longer than the two-day minimum.

Finally, under pressure from veterans and members of Congress, Trump said in a statement later on Monday that he respected McCain's service to the nation and had ordered flags to half-staff.

In a letter to Trump on its Facebook page, the American Legion veterans group had urged the White House "to follow long-established protocol following the death of prominent government officials." The Legion described McCain as a "cherished member."

After a day of ignoring shouted questions about McCain, Trump broke his silence during a gathering of evangelical leaders at the White House on Monday evening. "Our hearts and prayers are going to the family of Senator John McCain ... and we very much appreciate everything Senator McCain has done for our country," he told the religious leaders.

A combination of three photographs shows the U.S. flag atop the White House flying at half staff Sunday morning August 26 in honor of the death of Senator John McCain (L), back at full staff less than 24 hours later on Monday morning August 27 (C) and then back down to half-staff Monday afternoon (R) in Washington, U.S., August 27, 2018. REUTERS/Joshua Roberts, Kevin Lamarque and Leah Millis

Through most of Monday, confusion reigned across the federal government, with flags flying at half-staff over the U.S. Capitol and at hundreds of national parks, but at full-staff over the Pentagon and the U.S. Supreme Court.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security had issued a government-wide notification after McCain's death to lower flags at U.S. facilities but rescinded it on Monday, leaving the decision to staff at individual sites, according to an official.

'SOMEWHAT SHOCKING'

Presidents normally follow Congress' lead on the death of a prominent lawmaker and order flags lowered until sunset on the day of burial. Critics of the president saw his reticence as a final slight against McCain.

"I doubt you could find a comparable situation where the president doesn't order the flag flown at half-mast until the funeral," said John Lawrence, history professor at the University of California's Washington Center.

"The disparity between the Congress and White House policy is obviously noticeable and somewhat shocking."

McCain was a frequent Trump critic and his family has said he did not want the president to attend his funeral.

A family spokesman issued a farewell statement from McCain in which he said of the United States: "We weaken our greatness when we confuse our patriotism with tribal rivalries ... We weaken it when we hide behind walls, rather than tear them down, when we doubt the power of our ideals, rather than trust them to be the great force for change they have always been."

Flag atop White House flies at half staff Sunday in honor of Senator McCain, back to full staff Monday morning and then back to half-staff Monday afternoon in Washington



## Where Sears' layoffs in Harris County rank among other Texas businesses this year

The layoffs at a Harris County Sears rank among the most around the area so far this year.

Sears will layoff 100 employees after it announced that it would close its Memorial City Mall location.

The layoffs will happen on or around Nov. 25 after the retailer announced the store was closing.

Over the past decade, Sears has laid off roughly 175,000 workers around the country and closed many stores. Sears stock was trading at \$1.21

Tuesday morning. Around the same time in 2013, it was trading at \$33.

In Harris County, the Sears layoffs were the tenth most this year, right behind AT&T which announced it was laying off 117 people, according to analysis of data from the Texas Workforce Commission. The Sears layoffs did not rank among the top 20 in Texas.

The top two Texas companies to shed the most employees so far this year laid off more than 950 people

each.

The TWC maintains the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, which requires businesses to provide notice 60 days in advance of plant closures or mass layoffs.

Swipe through and see which Texas businesses have laid off the most people so far this year.



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## U.S. energy companies fume over rejected steel tariff exemptions

HOUSTON (Reuters) - The U.S. Commerce Department recently granted a tariff exemption to oil major Chevron (CVX.N) for its imports of 4.5-inch Japanese steel tubes for oil exploration.

But the department rejected a similar request from Borusan Mannesmann Pipe to exclude 4.5-inch steel pipes imported from Turkey for casing used to line new oil wells. The reason: multiple U.S. steelmakers objected to Borusan's application, arguing they could supply the product, according to the department. Chevron drew no such objections.

When U.S. President Donald Trump slapped a 25 percent tariff on imported steel this spring, his administration allowed companies to apply for exemptions if needed metals were not available in sufficient quality, quantity or in a reasonable time. But the process for seeking relief is proving slow and controversial as a deluge of applications has buried the small staff initially assigned to the task, prompting the department to hire dozens of extra contract workers. The limited number of decisions made so far are drawing protests from rejected applicants and sparking disputes between U.S. steel mills and importers of products from their foreign competitors. Commerce has received more than 37,000 exemption requests, far more than it planned to handle. Although 130 employees and contractors are now evaluating the applications, the agency had only ruled on 2,871 of those requests as of August 20. The department has so far approved 1,780 of the applications and denied 1,091. Separately, the department turned back more than 6,000 requests for what it called "filing errors" by applicants, who can fix and

resubmit their requests.

Rejected applicants have criticized the department for taking sometimes misleading objections by domestic suppliers at face value and for not allowing importers a chance to rebut their arguments.

"The Commerce Department is now hard-pressed to spend more than a few minutes reviewing each application," said Bernd Janzen, a partner in Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, which is working with companies pursuing tariff exclusions. Commerce acknowledged its staffing issues and said it has requested permission from Congress to reallocate \$5 million of its own funds to accelerate the review process. Congress has so far only approved a reallocation of \$2 million, the agency said.

"We will continue to run behind unless we are allowed to divert more Commerce resources to the process," the department said in a statement to Reuters.

The agency is also revising its evaluation process.

"The Department fully acknowledges that the information provided in an objection may not be correct," the agency said. Twenty exemptions have been approved over the objections from U.S. steelmakers, a sign that its process is "balanced, fair and transparent," the department said.

### SUPPLIER OBJECTIONS

Companies seeking exemptions have complained that Commerce provides little detail on the rationale for denying applications beyond boilerplate language that the product a company wants to import is available from a U.S. supplier.

Joel Johnson, chief executive of Borusan Mannesmann Pipe, a U.S. subsidiary of a



Wind turbines in the Pappalote Creek Wind Farm near Taft, TX. Monday, Oct. 28, 2013.

Turkish steelmaker, said the department did not explain how it came to reject its application.

"We don't know for sure why they denied us, but we did have objections from our competitors who also make pipe," said Johnson, adding that letters of support from its suppliers did not appear to influence the decision.

Borusan expects to see its operating cost climb by \$25 million to \$35 million annually as a result of the tariffs.

Borusan's parent company will supply steel for Kinder Morgan Inc's (KMI.N) Gulf Coast Express pipeline, a \$1.75 billion project to move natural gas from West Texas to the U.S. Gulf Coast. Kinder, the second-largest North American pipeline operator, has submitted its own request to avoid the tariff on the Borusan order but has not yet received a ruling.

The Trump administration recently said it would double tariffs on steel from Turkey,

adding between \$60 million to \$80 million to the cost of Kinder Morgan's pipeline, analysts for Tudor Pickering Holt & Co wrote this month.

U.S. Steel (X.N), which objected to Borusan's request, said it only commented on requests for products it can make.

"We stand ready to assist both new and longstanding customers" who are hit by tariffs, spokeswoman Meghan Cox said in a written statement.

After another pipeline operator, Plains All American, had its application denied, the company asked Commerce for an analysis from the International Trade Administration to explain the decision. None has been provided, incoming Chief Executive Officer Willie Chiang said at a congressional hearing called by Washington state Representative Dave Reichert last month.



主播高白

畢業於浙江傳媒學院新聞系播音與主持專業，中國國家級普通話測評員、中國國家級主任播音員。1986年至2009年任浙江衛視首席新聞主播，2010年至2015年任浙江衛視駐美國首席記者兼新華社駐休士頓記者（2016年卸任）。



主播高航

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美南國際電視15.3日前「電視廣播合為一體」全球直播上線，手機掃描二維碼就可24小時觀看該頻道，獲得廣大迴響。為服務早晨上班通勤觀眾，讓新聞播報更即時，美南國際電視STV15.3即將在6月18日全球直播晨間新聞「早安，休士頓」，新聞播報時間為上午7點至9點讓觀眾行車間也可以方便收聽，掌握國際和社區重大新聞資訊。美南國際電視15.3創下華人媒體創舉，將電視與廣播融為一體，帶給觀眾不同體驗。全球晨間新聞「早安，休士頓」將採用全新主播陣容，用專業新聞態度為社區觀眾帶來最即時多元的新聞報導。「早安，休士頓」囊括國際時事、社區動態、生活藝文資訊三大版塊，播報新聞同時也會穿插氣象和路況報導，觀眾可利用網站搜尋、微信連結或下載Apps方式，行車間連接到車載音響設備（數據機/藍芽設備），可收看及收聽該頻道。



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# Editor's Choice



A new free drinking water fountain is seen in London, Britain August 28, 2018. REUTERS/Peter Nicholls



A Syrian truck carrying Turkish goods enters from Bab al Salam point near the city of Azaz being tested for use in electric vehicles. REUTERS/Alexander Demianchuk (RUSSIA - Tags: SOCIETY SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY BUSINESS)/File Photo



Athletics - 2018 Asian Games - Women's Pole Vault, Final - GBK Main Stadium, Jakarta, Indonesia - August 28, 2018 - Li Ling of China celebrates after winning. REUTERS/Issei Kato



Protesters block a facility of Dutch gas production company NAM, in Farmsum



Students at the Tumo Center for Creative Technologies in Yerevan



A corpse candle stands next to a sign that reads "press freedom" at the foot of a statue of Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan during the art exhibition "Wiesbaden Biennale" in Wiesbaden



A statue of Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan is seen during the art exhibition "Wiesbaden Biennale" in Wiesbaden



FILE PHOTO: The company logo for Best Buy is displayed on a screen on the floor of the NYSE is seen in New York

# "Clicks To Bricks" Amazon, Online Retailers Open Physical Shops In The Galleria

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



Temporary walls surround the site of a new Amazon kiosk at the Galleria on Friday, July 27, 2018 in Houston. Shopping centers like the Galleria have seen more e-commerce companies opening physical brick-and-mortar locations.

Amazon on Saturday will open a store in The Galleria, becoming the latest and largest online retailer to open a brick-and-mortar location in Houston's top-performing mall. The so-called Amazon Pop-Up shop, located on the first floor near Macy's, will offer shoppers the opportunity to test-drive smart-home devices, tablets and e-readers, and learn from Amazon employees about the Seattle-based company's online services. "We have a great website, but sometimes, people want to test our products out themselves and talk to a real human," said Cameron Janes, Amazon's vice president of Amazon Pop-Up stores. Online retailers are increasingly opening stores to capture consumers who still spend most of their money offline. Despite the rise of e-commerce, online sales account for less than 10 percent of total retail sales in the U.S. "A lot of these companies that just started on the internet have realized they can increase sales by opening these pop-up locations in malls," said Ed Wulfe, chairman and CEO of Wulfe & Co., a Houston-based retail real estate firm.

Eight e-commerce retailers, including Amazon, have recently staked out physical locations at the Galleria, the largest mall in Texas. They include Eloquii, a women's fashion retailer; Sugarfina, an upscale candy shop; and Untuckit, a menswear company. A shopper walks in front of the future location of Charles Tyrwhitt at the Galleria on Friday, July 27, 2018 in Houston. Amazon, which opened its first Pop-Up store in 2014, now has 66 in 19 states, including in several Kohl's and Whole Foods Market locations. The e-commerce giant has eight Pop-Up stores in Texas,



Shopping centers like the Galleria have seen more e-commerce companies opening physical brick-and-mortar locations.

including Baybrook Mall, The Galleria, The Woodlands Mall and Willowbrook Mall in the Houston region as well as North Star Mall in San Antonio. Other online retailers, such as menswear retailer Bonobos, bed-in-a-box company Casper and eyeglasses shop Warby Parker are opening physical stores across the country. At the same time, traditional retailers such as Walmart, Target and Best Buy are beefing up their online business. It's all a push to create "omnichannel" shopping experience to woo the most shoppers in today's competitive retail environment.

"Retailers want to approach it from every possible angle to ensure they're reaching all the customers out there," Wulfe said. Simon, the nation's largest mall owner, three years ago created a business development team at its New York office dedicated solely to attracting e-commerce companies to its properties, which include the Galleria.



Sugarfina now occupies space at the Galleria on Friday, July 27, 2018 in Houston. Shopping centers like the Galleria have seen more e-commerce companies opening physical brick-and-mortar locations.

Today, that team is one of the most active leasing departments in the company, said Greg Vlahos, senior vice president of leasing at Simon's Dallas office. "We're seeing a slowdown in the expansion and growth of traditional retailers we've done business with for many, many years," he said. "Mature retailers are maxed out with their store counts. The real growth in the fashion and soft-goods side of retailing is newer concepts, most of which started online." As a result, a significant portion of Simon's new retail leases today are e-tailers looking to get into brick-and-mortar retail, Vlahos said. Untuckit, which sells casual men's shirts, opened its first brick-and-mortar store in 2015. Since then, the company has grown its physical presence rapidly, opening more than three dozen locations including one at the Galleria.

The company, founded in 2011, has plans to open 100 stores over the next five years. Simon, which has signed 12 leases with Untuckit, is working on

Eloquii sales associate Shara Campbell returns a blouse to its spot at the new Eloquii location inside the Galleria on Friday, July 27, 2018 in Houston. Campbell graduated with a finance degree from the University of Houston and facing a slow job market, opted to work for the retailer. Shopping centers like the Galleria have seen more e-commerce companies opening physical brick-and-mortar locations.



six more, Vlahos said. Most e-tailers are looking for smaller spaces and shorter leases to test out their brick-and-mortar concepts. An e-tailer opening a fashion boutique at a Simon mall typically takes a space of 800 to 1,500 square feet, and will sign a lease for one to three years, Vlahos said. "As their brick-and-mortar concept evolves, their comfort level grows to expand their footprint and sign longer-term leases," he said.

Mariah Chase, the CEO of Eloquii, said she once scoffed at the idea of opening a physical location, wary of the fate befalling traditional retailers such as Sears and Toys R Us. But today, the online fashion retailer for women sizes 14 and up has five stores, including one in the Galleria. The company is set to open its sixth store next month in Miami. "Our web customers wanted Eloquii in a store," Chase said. "They told me, 'I'd love to be able to try things on, shop with my group of friends and feel the fabric.'"



A peek inside the new Quay sunglasses boutique at the Galleria on Friday, July 27, 2018 in Houston. Shopping centers like the Galleria have seen more e-commerce companies opening physical brick-and-mortar locations.

Chase and her team use both e-commerce data and multiple site visits to determine the best locations for their brick-and-mortar locations. "Where you have a large e-commerce market like Houston," Chase said, "you have to have a store footprint in that market, too." (Courtesy chron.com)

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The U.S. and Mexico struck a trade deal on Monday that paved the way to replace NAFTA, the current agreement between the two nations and Canada.

President Donald Trump said the deal would be called The United States-Mexico Trade Agreement, getting rid of the NAFTA name. "The name NAFTA has a bad connotation because the United States was hurt very badly by NAFTA," he said.

The new deal will last 16 years and will be reviewed every six years, according to U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer. It must also be approved by Congress and stipulates that a certain amount of steel and aluminum must come from North America.

"We're very excited about this agreement. We think it is going to lead to more trade, not less trade," Lighthizer said.



"Trump can't go bilaterally with just Mexico in trade promotion authority..." Former United States trade representative and chief NAFTA negotiator, told the media that Trump's announcement of the new trade deal between U.S. and Mexico has legal issues.

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President Donald Trump Says The Deal Would Be Called The United States-Mexico Trade Agreement, Getting Rid Of The Old NAFTA Name.

U.S. And Mexico Reach A Trade Deal, Paving The Way To Replace NAFTA

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



President Donald Trump says the deal would be called The United States-Mexico Trade Agreement, getting rid of the NAFTA name. Trump said Mexican officials promised the country would start buying as much U.S. farm product as possible.

gress and stipulates that a certain amount of steel and aluminum must come from North America. Lighthizer also said the plan will not cap imports of light vehicles from Mexico, but keeps the steel and aluminum tariffs that are already in place.



U.S. - Mexico trade deal has no "sunset provision," says Robert Lighthizer. Officials have been in Washington trying to work out the issues as the Trump ad-

ministration pushes to remake the 1994 agreement. There was hope that a new NAFTA could be solidified before Mexico's government turnover on Dec. 1, when leftist Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador replaces moderate President Enrique Pena Nieto.

"I'm certainly hopeful that we get a good agreement," Carla Hills, a former U.S. trade representative and chief NAFTA negotiator, said earlier Monday on CNBC's "Squawk Alley." NAFTA is "25 years old and it needs to be upgraded. I have my fingers crossed that we've done a good job and we get to NAFTA 2.0."

Trump said Mexican officials promised the country would start buying as much U.S. farm product as possible.

The negotiations have dragged on for months. Officials had hoped to wrap up last week but that was before the distract-



President Donald Trump speaking with Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto in the Oval Office on August 27. Trump announced that the United States and Mexico had reached a preliminary agreement on trade. (Photo/GETTY IMAGES)

Trump said that the name NAFTA "has a bad connotation because the United States was hurt very badly by NAFTA for many years."

NAFTA, struck and approved by Congress in 1994, still remains legally in force and the president's newest agreement with Mexico would require congressional approval. Congress is reportedly expected to weigh in in November.

The Trump administration will reportedly send a letter to notify Congress on Friday, and the Congress then has 90 days to review the matter.

Phil Elliott @Philip\_Elliott So the NAFTA letter goes to Congress on Friday, then a 90-day clock starts ticking, then... So, let's not pretend NAFTA is gone — especially because the President unilaterally CANNOT strike any brand-new deal without Congressional OK. (Don't believe me? How is TPP doing?) 11:00 AM - Aug 27, 2018 • 358

• 188 people are talking about this The new deal with Mexico reportedly requires that 75 percent of automobile parts be made in the U.S. and Mexico, an increase from the present 62.5 percent, according to Reuters. The prospective deal also requires that 40 to 45 percent of workers make a minimum of \$16 an hour. The president last year threatened to pull the U.S. out of NAFTA and has since continued his threats while claiming the U.S. was not receiving a fair shake from not only its North American neighbors but also the European Union and China. (Courtesy https://www.newsweek.com)

Advertisement for 雲天燒腊麵食家 (Yun Tian BBQ Noodle House). Features menu items like 京都肉排, 葱油鯧魚, 北菇雞, etc. Includes phone number (713) 988-5745 and address 9380 Bellaire Blvd, Houston, TX 77036.

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