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Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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## Biden, fellow Democrats back on campaign trail after third presidential debate

HOUSTON (Reuters) - Former Vice President Joe Biden returned to the campaign trail on Friday after a Democratic debate that largely reinforced his front-runner status for the party's presidential nomination, leaving his rivals searching for how to wrest away the top spot.

FILE PHOTO: Former Vice President Joe Biden speaks as South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Senator Bernie Sanders, Senator Elizabeth Warren and Senator Kamala Harris listen during the 2020 Democratic U.S. presidential debate in Houston, Texas, U.S., September 12, 2019. REUTERS/Mike Blake/File Photo  
The candidates who participated in Thursday night's debate in Houston, and those scrambling to try to qualify for next month's debate in Ohio, have less than five months to plead their case to voters before the first nominating contest in Iowa on Feb. 3, 2020.

Biden on Friday held campaign events in Houston, where a day earlier he clashed with liberal rivals Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders on healthcare, challenging the two U.S. senators to be honest about the cost of their plans.

Biden came under fire from former U.S. Housing Secretary Julian Castro, who incorrectly accused the former vice president of forgetting what he had just in an exchange seen as an attack on Biden's age. And Biden's comments about racial inequality in schools prompted a rebuke from rival U.S. Senator Cory Booker.

"We are at a tough point right now, because there's a lot of people concerned about Joe Biden's ability to carry the ball all the way across the end line without fumbling," Booker said on CNN after the debate. But the top 10 Democratic candidates, sharing the debate stage for the first time after the party toughened the rules to qualify, also stressed their shared opposition to Republican President Donald Trump and scaled down some of the bickering that marked the first two debates this summer.

Biden was sharper and more aggressive than in the earlier matchups, leaving him in a strong position as his rivals evaluate the best strategy in the race to pick a Democratic challenger to Trump in the November 2020 election.

Aside from Biden, Sanders and Warren, none of the other 17 Democratic contenders is regularly hitting double digits in support in opinion polls.

Several major events are on the campaign schedule in coming weeks. Biden, Sanders and at least three other candidates are expected on Monday to attend the Galivants Ferry Stump meeting in South Carolina.

The next weekend, 18 candidates will attend the Polk County, Iowa, steak fry, a regular stop for presidential contenders, and at least 10 candidates will participate in a forum on LGBTQ issues.

The Democratic National Committee announced on Friday the next debate will be held in Westerville, Ohio, on Oct. 15 and possibly Oct. 16 depending on the number of qualifying candidates.

At least one more candidate, billionaire activist Tom Steyer, has met the tougher qualifications for the next debate.



### CASTRO ON THE OFFENSIVE

Castro led the charge on Thursday against Biden by accusing him of flip-flopping in his description of his own healthcare proposal. "Are you forgetting what you said two minutes ago?" Castro, 44, asked Biden, 76, who has faced questions about his age. Later, he accused Biden of being quick to tie himself to former President Barack Obama when it suited him and walk away when it did not. Biden was Obama's vice president for eight years. "I'm fulfilling the legacy of Barack Obama and you're not," said Castro, who also served in the Obama administration. "That'll be a surprise to him," Biden responded. Biden, who served under the first black U.S. president and enjoys strong support from likely black primary voters, also drew criticism for his response to whether Americans had a duty to repair the slavery's legacy. He transitioned into an answer related to education that suggested bringing social workers into black families' homes to "help them deal with how to raise their children" and having a "record player on at night" to help with language acquisition. Booker said on CNN after the debate that Biden is sometimes "meandering in his speech." "He's talking about people in communities like mine listening to record players. ... There are definitely moments when you listen to Joe Biden and you just wonder," Booker said. Antjuan Seawright, a Democratic strategist in South Carolina, which hosts the fourth nominating contest next year and the first that will have a sizeable propor-

tion of black voters, said he did not think Biden's remarks would hurt him. Black voters have a "genuine love and affection" for Biden, Seawright said, and his decades-long political career speaks for itself. "They know who he is, there's no second-guessing his record," he said. Most candidates avoided the attacks that marked the first two rounds of the debates. Those exchanges had dismayed some Democrats, who urged the candidates to focus on laying out their own positive agendas. Biden praised former U.S. Representative Beto O'Rourke for his work after a mass shooting in his hometown of El Paso, Texas, drawing a sustained ovation from the debate audience. O'Rourke, who has called for gun licensing and a mandatory gun buyback for assault weapons, was asked if he was going to take away people's guns. "I am if it was a weapon that was designed to kill people on a battlefield," he said. "... Hell yes, we're going to take your AR-15, your AK-47." That response quickly drew criticism from Republicans. U.S. Representative Liz Cheney, a member of the House Republican leadership, on Friday called it "one of the most concerning moments that came out of a debate that had a lot of concerning moments."



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# Trump trade-war aid sows frustration in farm country

ROCHESTER, Minn. (Reuters) - The U.S. government is paying Texas cotton farmer J. Walt Hagood \$145 an acre for losses related to U.S. President Donald Trump's trade policies. But Minnesota soybean farmer Betsy Jensen will get just \$35 an acre.

Both farmers' sales have taken heavy blows in Trump's trade war with China. Neither understands why the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is giving Hagood so much more than Jensen - who grows the nation's most valuable agriculture export crop, of which China had been the biggest buyer.

"I'm grateful," Hagood, 64, said of the aid. "But honestly, I'm not sure anyone really understands how this is working right now."

Certainly not Jensen: "It makes no sense," she said, noting that soybean farmers in other counties have also been paid much more than her. At Trump's direction, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has rolled out \$28 billion in trade aid for farmers over the past two years - \$12 billion last year and another \$16 billion announced this July and being disbursed now.

The widely varying payouts in the second round have confused and irritated farmers nationwide, according to Reuters interviews with more than three dozen growers. Farmers also complained of software problems and poor training of local USDA employees, who have struggled to process applications and payments, farmers and government workers said.

The USDA acknowledged "glitches" in the application process in a statement to Reuters and said it was working to speed approvals and payments. The differing compensation rates result from changes in the USDA's complex farm-aid formula as the White House struggles to appease farmers

- a key voting bloc for Trump - who have seen their incomes fall in the trade war. Farmers have been among the hardest hit by retaliatory Chinese tariffs. Shipments of soybeans to China, for instance, dropped to a 16-year low in 2018.

In the first \$12 billion of trade aid, farmers were paid by crop, based on estimated lost sales to China: \$1.65 per bushel for soybeans; one penny for corn, which was not widely sold to China in 2017; and 6 cents per pound of cotton. The paltry payouts for corn, cotton and other crops infuriated farmers growing them, who argued the USDA paid soybean farmers at their expense.

Payments to corn and cotton farmers are expected to surge under the second round of aid. Estimated payouts to corn growers, when averaged across all U.S. counties, are 14 times higher than in the first round of aid, according to a USDA explanation of its methodology. Cotton producers' payments quadrupled.

Instead of paying different rates according to crops grown, the new methodology pays farmers based on the estimated impact of trade policy on all agriculture in their county - regardless of what an individual farmer plants.

Another twist: The estimated impacts on particular counties are based on their export potential over the last ten years - long before the trade war started. USDA said it needed to look at a bigger time frame to calculate potential trade related losses. USDA also said it was trying to avoid influencing planting decisions - such as farmers switching to soybeans in hopes of a bigger trade-aid check.

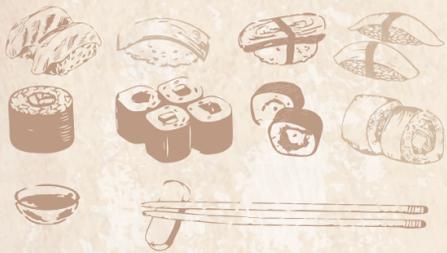
The agency also acknowledged, however, that some aspects of the new formula were crafted to make up for errors perceived to have short-changed certain farmers in the first round of aid. "There were a number of factors from last year's programs that we wanted to correct," USDA Chief Economist Rob Johansson said in a July call with reporters.



FILE PHOTO: Paul and Vanessa Kummer check the soybeans on their farm near Colfax, North Dakota, U.S., August 6, 2019. REUTERS/Dan Koeck/File Photo



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# Editor's Choice



Former Living Goddess Kumari Matina Shakya looks through the window of a Kumari House during the Indra Jatra Festival in Kathmandu



Anti-extradition bill protesters hold hands up to form a human chain during a rally to call for political reforms in Hong Kong, China September 13, 2019. REUTERS/Tyrone Siu TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY



Demonstrators protest U.S. President Donald Trump's speech to Republican members of Congress in Baltimore



Immigration protesters run onto the stage in front of the Democratic presidential candidates, interrupting the 2020 Democratic U.S. presidential debate in Houston, Texas, U.S., September 12, 2019. REUTERS/Mike Blake TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY



Democratic presidential candidates Klobuchar, Booker, Buttigieg, Sanders, Biden, Warren, Harris, Yang, O'Rourke and Castro pose before the start of the debate in Houston



Former Vice President Joe Biden stands between Senator Bernie Sanders and Senator Elizabeth Warren as they both raise their hands to answer a question at the 2020 Democratic U.S. presidential debate in Houston



German Chancellor Angela Merkel sits inside a Volkswagen car at the international Frankfurt Motor Show (IAA) in Frankfurt



A seal sits on a rock in front of the "Ile aux moutons" island in front of Loctudy, Brittany

## How The State Prepares For The Worst Emergency Management In Texas



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

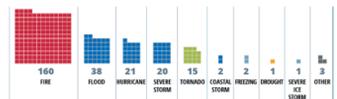
Some of Texas' greatest strengths spring from its sheer size and geographic diversity. But while these assets contribute to our thriving economy and create many opportunities, they sometimes increase our chances for natural disasters and other emergencies.

Texas ranks high among U.S. states in its number and variety of natural disasters, ranging from flooding to drought and from wildfires to ice storms. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Texans have experienced 263 federally declared disasters since 1953.

Local governments, particularly those in sparsely populated rural counties, sometimes require assistance with emergency situations due to a lack of the equipment and staffing needed to launch an effective response. The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), a division of the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), is charged with coordinating state and local responses to natural disasters and other emergencies in Texas. It's not an easy job.

"With more than 1,300 jurisdictions, 254 counties, an international border and a long coastline, Texas is constantly faced with unique problems you don't find anywhere else," says Kevin Lemon, a TDEM technical operations special-

ist. "Therefore, we have to have unique solutions."



### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency management is the practice of formulating procedures with which communities and states can minimize the risk of hazards and disasters and cope with them more effectively.

Local governments, naturally, become the first lines of defense during a disaster. Mayors, county commissioners, municipal police and sheriffs' departments must alert citizens of imminent threats and take any actions within their means to ensure public order and safety.

For disasters exceeding their abilities and resources, however, a state may step in to provide logistical and financial assistance. In cases in which local and state resources prove inadequate, the state may request assistance from other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, or from the federal government.

In Texas, responsibility for emergency management lay solely with local jurisdictions until the Legislature enacted the Texas Civil Protection Act of 1951,

the first law creating a state emergency management organization and statewide emergency management plan. The legislation established a Disaster Relief Council chaired by the governor and comprising various agency heads, each responsible for particular emergency management functions.

The 1951 act was replaced with the Texas Disaster Act of 1975, which further increased the state-local coordination of emergency responsibilities. By 2009, after several phases of reorganization, the Disaster Relief Council had become the Texas Division of Emergency Management within DPS.



**The Texas Government Code requires the Texas Division of Emergency Management to prepare and keep current a comprehensive state emergency management plan.**

### TEXAS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Texas Emergency Management Council (EMC) includes 39 state agencies and nonprofit emergency assistance organizations (Exhibit 2). State law established the council to advise and assist the governor in all matters related to disaster mitigation, emergency preparedness, disaster response and recovery.

The State Emergency Management Plan assigns 22 emergency support functions to the EMC member organizations, which identify, mobilize and deploy resources to respond to emergencies and disasters (Exhibit 3). The type and extent of a hazard or disaster determines which EMC agencies will respond.



Hurricane Harvey as seen from satellite.

### DISASTER DISTRICTS

Initial state emergency assistance for

local governments is provided through one of 24 Texas disaster districts, which manage state operations within their designated areas. Each district is led by a disaster district committee (DDC) and a committee chair. DDCs include local representatives of state agencies, boards, commissions and volunteer groups represented on the EMC. Each DDC provides guidance and administrative support for disaster response.

### STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

In 1964, the SOC was established at DPS headquarters in Austin to serve as the state's disaster monitoring center. Its primary responsibilities include:

- continuously monitoring threats through communications with local entities, news outlets and social media;
- providing notifications and information on emergency incidents to government officials;
- coordinating assistance requests from local governments through the DPS Disaster Districts; and
- allocating and coordinating state personnel and resources to local governments that can no longer respond adequately to an emergency incident.

The SOC maintains four levels of emergency response, categories used to notify and gradually increase the readiness of state and local emergency responders based on the degree and progression of specific incidents. The SOC operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, regardless of its emergency response level.

"During a disaster, the SOC uses a wide range of resources from academia, private-sector companies and local entities," Lemon says.



### IN THE BUNKER

As Hurricane Harvey bore down on the Texas coast in August 2017, Gov. Greg Abbott commanded the state's emergency response efforts from an underground post beneath the DPS building in north Austin. Located three stories below

ground level, the State Operations Center has been headquarters for state emergency response for nearly 60 years.



The State Operations Center underground post beneath the DPS building in north Austin during Hurricane Harvey.

(Photo/Texas Division of Emergency Management.)

While some vestiges of the SOC's mid-20th century origins can still be seen (a shower turned storage closet still has a "decontamination" sign over the door, for example), subsequent construction and renovations have turned the center into a modern facility with state-of-the-art technology, safety features and communications capabilities.

During major emergencies, the governor activates the members of the EMC, who assemble at the SOC where they join its daily operations staff and TDEM members to organize a coordinated response. The SOC monitors and manages about 3,000 to 4,000 emergency incidents per year.

It's no surprise that Texas frequently experiences emergencies of one kind or another, simply because of its size and variable climate. What's more noteworthy, however, is the state's ability to respond to a plethora of potentially life-threatening incidents. By integrating the efforts of dozens of organizations, both public and private, and managing the complex logistics from a centralized command post, Texas sets a national example for statewide emergency management. (Courtesy <https://comptroller.texas.gov/economy>)

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### Tariffs Threaten To Reshape Tech Industry

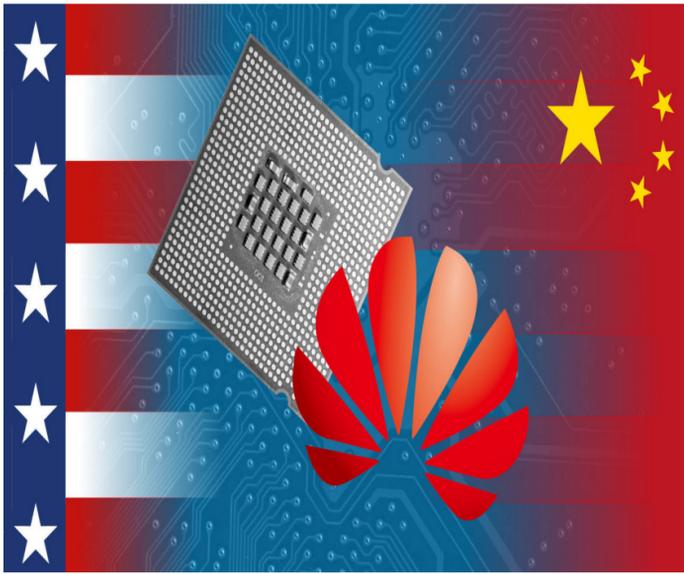


Illustration: Lazaro Gamio/Axios

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

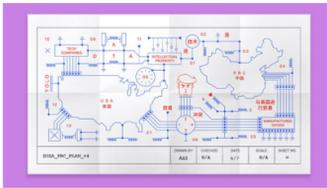
Even as businesses continue to protest the growing U.S.-China trade war, the tariffs are already causing companies in both countries to rethink how and where they do business.

**Why it matters:** For all their differences, the U.S. and Chinese tech industries remain very interdependent — each country contributes a great deal of business to the other's economy.

**Where it stands:** What tech companies want most is an end to hostilities, as evidenced by a letter issued Wednesday by more than 150 business groups calling for an end to the tariffs. However, the ongoing trade war has both sides eyeing how to lessen their dependence on the other.

Historically nearly all smartphones and most other consumer electronics have been made in China, but that is starting to shift. Google, for example, is joining the electronics makers looking at Vietnam as an alternative.

China is also likely to explore ways to reduce its dependence on U.S. technology for everything from software to chips and the tools to make them.



In the short term, there is a lot of pain for companies in both countries.

Apple remains highly dependent on China for manufacturing and it is also a key market for iPhone sales. Nearly all iPhones are made there, with the exception of phones sold in Brazil and India, where laws impose huge tariffs on imported electronics.

Huawei, subject to a near-total ban on business with the U.S., finds itself not only shut out of a key market, but scrambling to find new options for chips and operating systems, among other components.

The company faces the prospect of launching its first high-end smartphone without Google's apps and services.

Meanwhile, more than 130 companies have asked the Commerce Department for permission to continue selling components to Huawei, Reuters reported this week.

**Between the lines:** Trump has repeatedly argued that Apple and other tech companies should return manufacturing to the U.S. But that's considered wildly unrealistic, a point that Tim Cook has no doubt tried to make during his meetings with President Trump.



U.S. unemployment rates are already at record lows, the Trump administration's immigration policies actively discourage expanding the domestic labor force, and efforts (like Foxconn's deal with Wisconsin) to get overseas manufacturers to build new U.S. factories have been overhyped.

More importantly, the U.S. just doesn't have the type of workforce concentration that would allow for devices to be made at the kind of scale Apple and others need for smartphones. At most, tariffs will cause manufacturers to move production from China to other countries.

**The bottom line:** The tech industry's global supply chain took years to assemble, and it will not dissolve overnight. But even if the Trump administration's most bellicose trade-war scenarios don't materialize, the tariff fight has added a deep layer of uncertainty to how companies operate globally.

Wide-open world trade was the rock-solid foundation for decades of tech expansion. With that condition no longer a given, more defensive behavior and slower growth are likely. (Courtesy axios.com)



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