

Wife Of Trayvon Martin Shooter Charged

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — The wife of the Trayvon Martin's shooter was charged with perjury Tuesday, accused of lying when she told a judge that the couple had limited funds during a hearing that resulted in her husband being released on \$150,000 bond.

Shellie Zimmerman, 25, was released on \$1,000 bond. George Zimmerman has pleaded not guilty to second-degree murder in the teen's slaying and had been out on the bond after the April hearing. However, Circuit Judge Kenneth Lester on June 1 revoked the bond and ordered Zimmerman returned to the Seminole County Jail. Lester in a strongly worded ruling said the Zimmermans lied about how much money they had.

An arrest affidavit for Shellie Zimmerman said that records show in April she transferred more than \$85,500 from her bank account into her husband's account. The affidavit also said that jail call records show that George Zimmerman instructed her to "pay off all the bills," including an American Express and Sam's Club card.

A state attorney investigator met with credit union officials and learned that she had transfer control of his account.

Zimmerman's attorney Mark O'Mara has said the Zimmermans were confused and fearful when they misled court officials about how much money they had.

Democrats Try To Hold Giffords Ariz. House Seat

PHOENIX (AP) — Gabrielle Giffords' hand-picked House successor squared off Tuesday in a special election in Arizona against the Republican that Giffords narrowly beat just months before she was shot. It was a hard-fought preview of the broader fall campaign to come.

Both the GOP and the Democrats were using the race to hone and test their political arguments for the November elections, when everything from the White House on down will be on the ballot.

Republicans, sensing a chance to capture the former congresswoman's seat in southern Arizona, sought to make the contest a referendum on President Barack Obama and his handling of the economy. They argued that Democrat Ron Barber, a former Giffords aide asked by the lawmaker to pursue the seat, would fall in line behind the White House.

Democrats, in turn, played to the senior vote by contending that Republican Jesse Kelly, who narrowly lost to Giffords in 2010, would not protect Medicare and Social Security.

The victor will complete the remainder of Giffords' term. Both candidates are promising to run for a full term in the fall, setting up a possible November rematch in a redrawn district that is friendlier to Democrats.

Obama Choses Not To Emphasize Health Care

BALTIMORE (AP) — Fighting for re-election, President Barack Obama is playing down his historic health care overhaul and the multi-billion-dollar recession-fighting stimulus — two landmark efforts of his first three years in office. Those signature policies are unpopular, and voters clearly want the candidates to focus instead on jobs.

Dealing with a slow-moving economy, Obama is imploring voters to stick with him through tough times while promising that better days lie ahead — with him, not Republican foe Mitt Romney. The selling of Obama's first term, however, isn't so simple.

The president can't tell voters about a grand economic comeback story because there isn't one to tell. In foreign affairs, he can't declare outright victory in Iraq and Afghanistan so he promotes the ending of a "decade under the dark cloud of war." Health care reform, his most prominent legislative achievement, is unpopular with many voters and could be struck down by the Supreme Court this month.

Obama's re-election slogan — "Forward" — aims to fit the times, offering a sober assessment of a nation trying to turn the page from war and economic turmoil under his watch while implying that Republican Romney would take the country backward.

The president offers a steady drumbeat about a "make-or-break moment" for the middle class and creating a country "where everybody gets a fair shot and everybody is doing their fair share."

Colorado Wildfire Obscures The Rockies

LOVELAND, Colo. (AP) — A northern Colorado wildfire 60 miles away wrapped Denver in a pungent cloud of smoke for several hours Tuesday and complicated the aerial offensive against the spreading mountain blaze, which has killed one person and destroyed more than 100 structures.

Downtown Denver was shrouded in an orange glow before a blanket of cold air trapping the fire pollution evaporated. The foothills stretching north to Fort Collins were virtually obscured by smoke, while closer to the 68-square-mile blaze, visibility on some highways was just a mile.

State health officials urged the elderly, children and those prone to asthma to stay indoors.

Smoke temporarily grounded the air attack on the High Park Fire, centered some 15 miles northwest of Fort Collins. Helicopters and tanker planes took to the skies by midday.

Gov't Report: Health Cost Relief Only Temporary

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation's been enjoying a respite from rising health care costs, but government experts say don't look for it to last.

Health care spending will grow faster than the economy for the foreseeable future, says a report Tuesday from Medicare's nonpartisan economic analysts.

President Barack Obama's health care overhaul will add \$478 billion in spending from 2011-2021, the period covered by the projections. Some 30 million uninsured people will get coverage.

But the cost problem will not go away even if the Supreme Court overturns Obama's law.

By 2021, health care spending will be growing roughly 2 percentage points faster than the overall economy, about the same rate as the last 30 years. And that means hard choices ahead for government programs and private insurance.

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GOP Want Outside Prosecutor To Probe Leaks

PETE YOST AND DONNA CASSATA  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Eric Holder on Tuesday fended off Republican demands that he appoint a special counsel outside of the Justice Department to look into national security leaks.

Holder said both he and FBI Director Robert Mueller have already been interviewed by the FBI as part of a fast-moving Justice Department leak investigation.

At a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, Sens. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, said they want the attorney general to appoint a special counsel to look into the leaks, rather than Holder's choices, U.S. Attorneys Ron Machen and Rod Rosenstein, who hold political appointments.

Graham and Grassley were referring to a procedure by which a special counsel appointed from outside the Justice Department conducts the leak investigations.

Holder praised the two U.S. attorneys as experienced and highly respected.

"We have people who have shown independence, an ability to be thorough and who have the guts to ask tough questions," Holder told the committee. "And the charge that I've given them is to follow the leads wherever they are, whether it is — wherever it is in the executive branch or some other component of government. I have great faith in their abilities."

Machen and Rosenstein were appointed to oversee investigations into who leaked information about U.S. involvement in cyberattacks on Iran and an al-Qaida plot to place an explosive device aboard a U.S.-bound flight.

Holder pointed out that Rosenstein was appointed by a Republican president, George W. Bush. Rosenstein also worked for Independent Counsel Ken Starr in the investigation and prosecution of Bill and Hillary Rodham Clinton's real estate partners, helping to win convictions of both.

Not far from where Holder was testifying, Sen. John McCain, President Barack Obama's 2008 rival

and the harshest critic of the White House over the leaks, introduced a nonbinding resolution calling for a special counsel. He was joined by more than a dozen GOP senators in pressing for the measure.

McCain called it the "almost unprecedented release of information which directly affects our national security. I can't think of any time that I have seen such breaches of ongoing national security programs as has been the case here."

At the Senate committee hearing, Holder pointed out that the Obama administration has brought more leak prosecutions than any other administration. The Obama administration has charged six people under the Espionage Act for the alleged mishandling of classified information.

Holder told the committee that speed in carrying out the leak probes was an important factor in appointing the two prosecutors.

Holder cited the quick interviews of him and Mueller as one illustration of that speed.

"That interview was not some kind of pro forma take-it-easy interview. I mean, these were serious — a serious interview that was done by some serious FBI agents," said Holder. "The same thing happened to the director of the FBI as well because we were people who had knowledge of these matters," that were the subjects of the leaks.

Holder estimated that about 100 interviews have already been completed.

Finding a special counsel would take time, he said, and it would take more time to get an outside appointee up to speed on the details of the ongoing probe.

"There are clearly people around the president leaking stories that involve highly classified information" favorable to the Obama administration, Graham told Holder. If there is "ever a need" for an outside special counsel, it is now.

Graham said it was correct for the administration of former President George W. Bush to appoint a special counsel to investigate

officials for leaking the identity of CIA employee Valerie Plame.

The Plame leak was investigated by a U.S. attorney, "the same thing I have done here," Holder replied. The attorney general was referring to the U.S. Attorney in Chicago, Patrick Fitzgerald, who led the investigation and prosecuted Bush White House aide I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby.

Sen. John Cornyn said Machen, a contributor to Barack Obama's presidential campaign, was too politically partisan to handle the leak probes.

Republicans interspersed their criticism of Holder about the leak probes with criticism of his failure to turn over more documents to a House committee investigating a flawed gun-smuggling probe in Arizona, Operation Fast and Furious.

Regarding Fast and Furious, Cornyn called on Holder to resign. He said the attorney general had misled Congress in February by embracing a letter to Congress denying there were problems.

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For our upcoming July/August HerVoice Magazine

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