

**Obama Seals Legacy-Defining Iran Deal**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Overcoming ferocious opposition, President Barack Obama secured a legacy-defining foreign policy victory Wednesday as Senate Democrats clinched the necessary votes to ensure the Iran nuclear agreement survives in Congress.

The decisive 34th commitment came from Maryland Democrat Barbara Mikulski, who is retiring next year after three decades in the Senate. In a statement she said “no deal is perfect, especially one negotiated with the Iranian regime.” But she called the pact “the best option available to block Iran from having a nuclear bomb.”

Supporters now have the votes in hand to uphold Obama’s veto, if one becomes necessary, of a resolution of disapproval Republicans are trying to pass this month. GOP lawmakers who control the House and Senate ardently oppose the agreement, which curbs Iran’s nuclear program in exchange for hundreds of billions of dollars in relief from international sanctions.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., grudgingly acknowledged that his side would not be able to block the deal after Obama, in his words, secured “the tepid, restricted and partisan support of one-third of one house of Congress.” McConnell spared the accord no criticism, saying it leaves Iran “with a threshold nuclear capability.”

Israel also has railed against the deal, arguing that its conditions would keep Iran perilously close to developing nuclear weapons while enriching a government that has funded anti-U.S. and anti-Israel militants throughout the Middle East. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had personally lobbied U.S. lawmakers to block the pact, will continue fighting the agreement, an Israeli official said, while a spokesman for the pro-Israel lobby AIPAC said his group also would seek to build further opposition.

**Tensions Build At Urban Refugee Camp**

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Tempers flared among the thousands trapped in a makeshift refugee camp in the heart of Budapest on Wednesday as Hungary played hardball with its unwelcome visitors for a second day, blocking train ticket-clutching migrants from traveling deeper into Europe.

The migrants, who have swamped every nook and cranny of public space outside the city’s Keleti train station, threatened to walk the 105 miles (170 kilometers) to the Austrian border if police don’t let them board trains to their desired destinations in Austria and Germany.

“I will walk the whole way if I must,” declared 28-year-old Ahmed Shamoun, who deserted Syria’s army three months ago, leaving nine brothers and eight sisters behind in Damascus. “I could pay a taxi 500 euros (\$550) to take me to Austria, but the police might stop me. I could wait here forever before Hungary lets me take the train.”

Hungary tantalizingly opened the way Monday, allowing more than 1,000 migrants to pack westbound trains — and inspiring a migrant surge to the capital — before it withdrew the option 24 hours later. The question of how to defuse the human gridlock in Hungary is set to dominate meetings in Brussels on Thursday between EU leaders and Hungary’s anti-immigrant prime minister, Viktor Orban.

Hungary, which for months had permitted most applicants to head west after short bureaucratic delays, now says it won’t let more groups deeper into the European Union and has cited EU backing for the move. Police blocking migrants from entering the capital’s main international train hub also stopped them from marching around the station, sparking scenes of anger but no violence.

**Ferguson Offers Lessons On Protests**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The police response to unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, last summer offers lessons in how not to handle mass demonstrations, according to a Justice Department report that warns such problems could happen in other places roiled by mistrust between law enforcement and the community.

The report fleshes out a draft version made public in June, creating a portrait of poor community-police relations, ineffective communication among the more than 50 law enforcement agencies that responded, police orders that infringed on First Amendment rights, and military-style tactics that antagonized demonstrators.

The final version, which is to be released on Thursday, was obtained in advance by The Associated Press.

The report focuses on the regional police response in the 17 days that followed the Aug. 9, 2014, shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed black 18-year-old, by a white police officer. In a detailed chronology, it tracks missteps that began almost immediately after the shooting when police wrongly assumed that crowds would quickly dissipate, withheld information from the public and were slow to grasp community angst over the hours-long presence of Brown’s body beneath white sheets in the street.

It details more flaws over the next two weeks, including the improper use of police dogs, armored vehicles and snipers to monitor the crowds; the decision by some officers to remove their nameplates; arbitrary orders to demonstrators to keep moving after five seconds; and poor communication among agencies about which policy to follow and who was in charge.

**Biden Tests Waters In Florida**

MIAMI (AP) — Vice President Joe Biden came to Florida to lend a hand to Senate Democrats and the administration’s education agenda Wednesday on a trip watched for any hint that he’ll seek the presidency.

He may have dropped a hint at Miami Dade College, telling a crowd, “People who aren’t willing to risk failing never succeed.”

But the remark, at least on its surface, was about the courage it takes for students to go back to community college after being out for years.

Biden will also attend a fundraiser for Senate Democrats, mingling with the types of donors he’d need to challenge Hillary Rodham Clinton for the Democratic presidential nomination. Altogether, he’s kicked off a series of events in the next week allowing him to defend President Barack Obama’s record.

At Miami Dade College, Biden said he and Obama had sought to address the economic disparities between the wealthy and poor and that the nation was on the verge of an “economic renaissance.” He spoke about the Obama administration’s plan to provide two years of free community college to students as a building block for future generations.

**Judge Clears Way For Gender Reassignment**

DOYLESTOWN, Pa. (AP) — A judge on Wednesday cleared the way for a 48-year-old transgender woman to undergo gender-reassignment surgery, rejecting her parents’ effort to have the operation blocked because they say she is mentally incompetent.

Christine Kitzler demonstrated clear understanding of the three-hour procedure and its risks, Judge C. Theodore Fritsch Jr. said, dismissing her parents’ request that he appoint a legal guardian and subject her to an independent medical exam.

“I’m so happy,” Kitzler whispered as the judge ruled. Kitzler’s lawyers and Philadelphia-area surgeon were working to schedule the operation for Wednesday night. It had been set for Tuesday before Klaus and Ingrid Kitzler won a temporary injunction.

“The procedure is barbaric and they want to do it tonight. Why the rush? They should be ashamed of themselves,” Klaus Kitzler said after the ruling.



KIM HAIRSTON/THE BALTIMORE SUN/TNS  
Protesters gather outside Baltimore Circuit Court, as the first court hearing was set to begin in the case of six police officers criminally charged in the death of Freddie Gray, on Wednesday, Sept. 2 in Baltimore. Six police officers face charges that range from second-degree assault, a misdemeanor, to second-degree “depraved-heart” murder.

**Judge Refuses To Drop Charges Against Police In Gray Death**

BY JULIET LINDERMAN AND DAVID DISHNEAU  
Associated Press

BALTIMORE — A Baltimore judge on Wednesday refused to dismiss charges against six police officers in connection with the death of a black man from injuries he suffered while in custody. The judge also refused to remove the prosecutor in the case.

The death of 25-year-old Freddie Gray — who succumbed to injuries sustained after his arrest on April 12 — sparked protests, rioting and unrest that shook Baltimore for days. A demonstration Wednesday outside the Baltimore courtroom where a pretrial hearing on the charges took place attracted dozens, and resulted in just one arrest.

Defense attorneys failed to convince Circuit Judge Barry Williams that what they claimed was prosecutorial misconduct on the part of State’s Attorney Marilyn Mosby was reason enough to drop the charges against the police officers — which range from second-degree assault to second-degree murder.

Williams ruled that while Mosby’s public comments regarding initial statements made by the officers to investigators were “troubling,” they were not likely to prejudice a jury.

Andrew Graham, an attorney representing Officer Caesar Goodson, unsuccessfully argued that Mosby’s comments after filing charges

against the officers were “reckless and unprofessional,” and violated the rules of conduct. He likened Mosby’s comments on the case to a “pep rally calling for payback.”

Williams also ruled against another motion, one that sought to have Mosby removed from the case due to what the defense contended were conflicts of interest. He called the assertion that Mosby’s judgment was impacted by the fact that her husband Nick Mosby is a councilman in a district that experienced a disproportionate amount of violence “troubling and condescending.”

“Being married to a councilman is not a reason for recusal,” he said.

Williams added that allegations of prosecutorial misconduct would have to be addressed by the state Attorney Grievance Commission.

Prosecutors introduced two pieces of evidence on Wednesday: a police communication recorder of White’s dispatches on the day Gray was arrested, and the redacted statements White, Nero, Miller and Porter gave investigators. Goodson did not make a statement, and Rice’s attorney objected to any redaction. Those materials were placed under seal.

Officers Edward Nero, Garrett Miller, William Porter and Goodson, as well as Lt. Brian Rice and Sgt. Alicia White, face charges in Gray’s death, though they did not appear in court Wednesday.

All six are charged with

second-degree assault, reckless endangerment and misconduct in office. Rice, Porter and White also face manslaughter charges, while Goodson faces an additional charge of second-degree “depraved-heart” murder.

After hearing arguments about whether the officers should be tried together or separately, Williams determined that each officer should get his or her own trial, siding with defense attorneys who argued that their clients would be prejudiced if their cases were joined.

Graham, Goodson’s lawyer, argued that his client — who faces the most serious charge — would face a great risk of “spillover effect and transference of guilt.”

Prosecutors wanted to try Goodson, Nero and White together. Prosecutor Jan Bledsoe argued that evidence to be introduced at trial was relevant to all three.

The Rev. Cortly “C.D.” Witherspoon, president of the Baltimore chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, praised the rulings that kept the cases alive and with Mosby running the prosecution.

“We wanted to make sure the indictments stuck,” he said.

Witherspoon said he wasn’t concerned that severing the cases will mean a longer wait until they are resolved, as long as the officers are tried in Baltimore.

“I think that sometimes when we’re too hasty we miss

some stuff. I would prefer for us to take that time and ensure that we get it right.”

Legal experts say Williams’ decisions Wednesday suggest that the unwieldy and high-profile trial is, indeed, on track.

“It was an impressive day for the criminal justice system in Baltimore,” said Douglas Colbert, a professor at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. Colbert added that the state’s passionate prosecution coupled with the defense’s thoughtful arguments showed “our city’s criminal justice system at its best: The lawyers were well-prepared, and the judge was ready to be decisive. Too often we see justice delayed, and I’m encouraged that matters are moving forward.”

Williams will hear arguments for a change of venue on Sept. 10.

Meanwhile outside the courtroom, dozens of protesters made their way about six blocks to the Inner Harbor before the pretrial hearing began. Dozens of officers responded and cleared protesters from the streets to keep traffic moving at the end of the morning rush hour.

Well-known activist Kwame Rose was arrested and charged with second-degree assault against a police officer, two counts of disorderly conduct and one count of making a false statement for blocking the road and ignoring warnings to return to the sidewalk.

**Hunt Widens For 3 Suspects In Officer’s Death After House-To-House Search Fell Flat**

FOX LAKE, Ill. (AP) — Authorities broadened the hunt Wednesday for three suspects wanted in the fatal shooting of a popular Illinois police officer, even as they acknowledged that they had no indication the men were still in the area where the slaying happened.

After an intensive 14-hour “grid search” of homes, railroad tracks and marshland in the village of Fox Lake, the second-day manhunt turned to the painstaking detective work of chasing down

tips, collecting and reviewing surveillance video and interviewing residents near the crime scene. Meanwhile, new search teams rippled out into subdivisions beyond the initial two-square-mile perimeter established on Tuesday. At least 100 investigators were on the ground.

A major challenge was the lack of a description of the suspects beyond the vague one that came from the officer, who told dispatchers he was pursuing three suspicious men — two white, one black

— moments before he was shot.

“That was the only description provided,” said Lake County Major Crimes Task Force Cmdr. George Filenko, the lead investigator on the case. “So of course we’re getting the public calling in every time they see that match of three individuals or even two individuals. We’ve closed out those leads completely as being unsubstantiated.”

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