

ABC's *Good Morning America*

09/15/26

7:03:26 a.m.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: First, the breaking news overnight from the Supreme Court. It rejected President Trump's attempt to restrict mail-in voting with just seven weeks until the final midterm votes. Chief White House correspondent Mary Bruce starts us off. Good morning, Mary.

MARY BRUCE: Good morning George. And this is major blow to the President. The Supreme Court blocking his effort to restrict mail-in voting. It means that states will now be able to send out mail-in ballots using the same system that they have for years, which accounts for about a third of votes cast. Now, this caps a flurry of last-minute legal activity, with voting now already underway in some areas. The Court's majority writing that the administration's push to make changes this year was likely to lose in Court, though the emergency order didn't explain their reasoning. Democratic-led states and voting rights groups had argued that the President's attempt to have the Postal Service screen ballots would create chaos and confusion so close to the midterms. And while this is a big setback for the President, who has long argued without evidence that mail-in voting leads to widespread fraud, this fight has likely succeeded in sowing confusion about the system, as the President has cast doubt on the integrity of elections ahead of the midterms. The President is expected, though, to keep up this fight even as President Trump himself has voted by mail. Michael.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Ah, yes, he has! Quite frequently. Thank you for that, Mary. President Trump also dismissed the concerns about the dangers of AI getting out of control is "a hoax." Elizabeth Schulze is on Capitol Hill with the latest. Elizabeth, more AI executives and some lawmakers are urging guardrails on the technology. Good morning.

ELIZABETH SCHULZE: Exactly, Michael, good morning. And this is really a stark contrast. The biggest companies building AI and some lawmakers here on Capitol Hill are saying that AI could pose an existential threat to humanity if it does not slow down. But President Trump says it's all a hoax. This morning, President Trump, casting aside ominous warnings from top tech CEOs that AI is growing too powerful, too fast.

(...)

7:07:23 a.m.

SCHULZE: In a new statement, former President Obama says AI is advancing at a lightning speed and voluntary standards made by a handful of tech companies won't be enough. At an event later here in Washington, Senator Bernie Sanders will appear right before former Trump aide Steve Bannon to talk about guardrails on AI. A testament to how this moment is bridging ideologies, Robin.

ROBIN ROBERTS: That's a good point right there. You're right, Elizabeth, thank you to you for

your reporting.

(....)

7:10:42 a.m.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Now to the latest ethical controversy surrounding President Trump and his family. A Russian oligarch with ties to Vladimir Putin paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to help finance Donald Trump Jr.'s recent wedding celebration in the Bahamas, raising counterintelligence concerns. But the President and his son are defending the gift. Chief Washington correspondent Jonathan Karl has the story. Good morning, Jon.

JONATHAN KARL: Good morning, George. Donald Trump Jr. says the elaborate, two-day wedding party was merely a gift from a close friend. But the Russian oligarch who paid for it is raising questions about what he might expect in return. After ProPublica broke the story, Donald Trump Jr. has confirmed that his elaborate wedding party that was spread out over two private islands in the Bahamas was paid for by a wealthy Russian businessman with close ties to Vladimir Putin. The President's son had described his wedding as a low key affair on his podcast.

(....)

7:13:10 a.m.

KARL: In a statement put out by the White House, President Trump said he has no idea who Umar Kremlev is. But he added, "it was an 'afterparty' given in their honor. Not a big deal!" First Lady Melania Trump, however, is seeking to distance herself from the wedding party and the Russian oligarch who paid for it. She put out a statement saying, "Mrs. Trump played no role whatsoever in organizing the wedding event, and was not privy to any aspect of its financial planning." And Robin, the First Lady, did not attend either.

ROBERTS: All right. Our thanks to you for that reporting there, Jon. Now, the growing measles outbreak in Pennsylvania. Health officials are reporting 17 new cases since Friday as the state investigates the death of a 40-year-old woman. Stephanie Ramos is here with the latest. Good morning. Stephanie.

STEPHANIE RAMOS: Robin, good morning. Pennsylvania is now reporting 17 new measles cases since Friday, bringing the total to 693 cases across 38 counties and 133 people have been hospitalized.

(....)

7:15:10 a.m.

STEPHANOPOULOS: We're going to get the latest now on oil and gas prices spiking again

overnight, rippling through the economy as the wars in the Middle East and Ukraine grind on. Hannah Battah is tracking the fallout as we enter the home heating season. Good morning, Hannah.

HANNAH BATTAH: Yeah. Good morning to you, George. President Trump says there is a deal that could help lower costs as oil and gas prices continue to rise. Families that use oil to heat their homes could see a more than 30 percent increase in their bills this fall, as war with Iran continues to drive up prices. Those using electricity for heat could pay nine percent more. Nationwide, gas is now averaging 4.29 a gallon, and diesel, 6.19. If you're keeping track, that's up 32 cents in just the last week. Many families turned to big box stores for savings, but now Costco is rationing its Kirkland signature motor oil. President Trump has tried to temper Americans concerns, blaming the rising cost of diesel on the Russia-Ukraine war, not Iran. Trump announcing yesterday that Ukraine and Russia have agreed to stop attacks on energy and fuel supplies. But Ukraine's President Zelenskyy says that's only a proposal, Michael.

STRAHAN: All right, Hannah, thank you for that. And Sam has more on how car ownership costs are going up. And Sam, it's more than just the fuel prices that are going up.

SAM CHAMPION: You're exactly right, Michael. And I think you may have noticed it. A lot of people did that. Your car is getting a lot more expensive, and experts just proved you right. And by the way, as Michael just said, it's not just those gas prices that are rising. A new AAA study finds the average annual cost to own and operate a new car — these are 2024 numbers — are just \$12,900 a year, but that is about \$1,072 a month, and it's up more \$100 than the year before. With insurance, maintenance and fuel all costing you more, electric vehicles do continue to offer significantly lower fueling costs, as expected, but AAA says those savings are often offset by higher depreciation and finance charges. The study finds hybrids are the most consistent, affordable alternate, combining lower fuel bills with lower overall ownership costs in several vehicle categories. But here's the bottom line — and you know what we're going to say — when choosing a car: Experts say look beyond that sticker price because we're all thinking that's what it's going to cost you and factor in your insurance right now, maintenance, and fuel costs. Understand what that car is really going to cost you this year.

ROBERTS: That is a true price of ownership right there.

(...)

7:30:39 a.m.

WILL REEVE: A lot to get to — new at 7:30, beginning with the EPA saying it will repeal most limits on greenhouse gas emissions for power plants that burn fossil fuels, particularly coal and natural gas. EPA head Lee Zeldin claimed the regulations put in place during the Biden administration provided little benefit and drove up electricity costs. Environmental groups and climate experts condemned the decision. And Senator Mitch McConnell returned to Capitol Hill yesterday after more than three months away. The 84-year-old was hospitalized in June after a fall, then spent weeks in rehab. McConnell headed to the Senate floor to cast his first vote since

the accident, and his absence, telling reporters it was time to get back to work and finish the job for this Congress.