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Fauci: Vaccine boosters to tackle one variant first

BY MICHAEL WILNER
McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON

COVID-19 vaccine boosters will tackle one coronavirus variant at a time, focusing first on a mutation recently identified in South Africa that is alarming scientists, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading infectious

disease expert, told McClatchy in an interview.

The "ultimate solution" to the coronavirus pandemic may be a vaccine that protects against all mutations – but work on that project is just beginning, Fauci said.

The chief medical adviser on COVID-19 to President Joe Biden and director of the National Institute of Allergy and

Infectious Diseases said that vaccine manufacturers could develop the boosters quickly, and expressed confidence they could pass regulatory hurdles and reach the public within months.

But a longer-term goal – one that could end the cycle of variants, and the pandemic, once and for all – is a universal vaccine that could protect against



AL DRAGO Abaca Press

Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, speaks during a news conference Jan. 21 at the White House.

all types of mutations, Fauci said Monday evening.

Vaccines for COVID-19 first became available in December, but the new coronavirus continues to mutate, creating the risk

SEE VIRUS, 8A

Poll: Ga. voters split on ideas to safeguard elections

BY MARK NIESSE
Cox Newspapers

ATLANTA

Most Georgians support proposals requiring photo ID or other documentation to cast an absentee ballot, a broad consensus across the political spectrum for stronger election safeguards, according to a poll conducted for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

But the poll also showed that most voters don't believe there was widespread fraud in the presidential election, and they have little appetite for new restrictions. Both ballot drop boxes and no-excuse absentee voting enjoy substantial support.

Voting laws could change in Georgia following the contentious presidential election, when Donald Trump made unsubstantiated claims that the race had been stolen despite recounts and audits that verified the results. The majority-Republican General Assembly plans to consider voting bills after Democrats won Georgia's presidential and U.S. Senate elections for the first time in years.

Nearly three-quarters of voters said they want additional verification of voters who cast absentee ballots, according to the AJC poll. About 91 percent of conservatives and 55 percent of liberals backed proposals requiring a photo ID or another type of identifying information for absentee voting.

The AJC poll involved 858 registered Georgia voters and was conducted Jan. 17-28 by the University of Georgia's School of Public and International Affairs. The margin of error is 4.2 percentage points.

Michael Holland, a truck mechanic outside Chickamauga, said he doesn't think elections in Georgia are secure, and he's worried about the possibility of fraud. He supports a photo ID requirement for absentee voting.

"I've got to take off work most of the time just to vote and stand in line, so I think it's important enough for absentee voters to take some steps, too," Holland said.

Marcia Hendricks, who works in sales and marketing in Stone Mountain, said the use of some kind of identification with absentee ballots would protect voters. Election officials currently check absentee ballots by comparing voter signatures with their handwriting on file, and by making sure their registration information matches.

But Hendricks opposes pro-

SEE DEMOCRATS, 8A

SEE SAFEGUARD, 6A



PETE MAROVICH NYT file

President Donald Trump addresses a rally Jan. 6 to protest the presidential election results, before rioters stormed the Capitol in Washington. A legal brief says Trump bears "unmistakable" blame for actions that directly threatened the underpinnings of American democracy.

Democrats: Trump aimed 'loaded cannon' of supporters at Capitol

BY ERIC TUCKER AND MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON

Donald Trump endangered the lives of all members of Congress when he aimed a mob of supporters "like a loaded cannon" at the U.S. Capitol, House Democrats said Tuesday in making their most detailed case

yet for why the former president should be convicted and permanently barred from office.

The legal brief forcefully links Trump's baseless efforts to overturn the results of the presidential election to the deadly Jan. 6 riot at the Capitol, saying he bears "unmistakable" blame for actions that directly threatened the underpinnings of American democracy. It argues

that he must be found guilty when his impeachment trial opens before the Senate next week on a charge of inciting the siege.

"His conduct endangered the life of every single Member of Congress, jeopardized the peaceful transition of power and line of succession, and compromised our national security," the Democratic managers of the

impeachment case wrote. "This is precisely the sort of constitutional offense that warrants disqualification from federal office."

The legal brief lays out for the first time the arguments House lawmakers expect to present at the impeachment trial. It not only explicitly faults Trump for his role in the riot but also aims to pre-emptively rebut defense claims that Trump's words were protected by the First Amendment or that an impeachment trial is unconstitutional, or even unnecessary, now that Trump has left office. It says Trump's behavior was so egregious as to require permanent disqualification from office.

The Constitution specifies

SEE DEMOCRATS, 8A

DA seeking death penalty for 2 in prison killing

BY JOE KOVAC JR.
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Prosecutors have in recent days filed notice they will seek the death penalty for the alleged

killers of a Georgia prison inmate whose body was set on fire in his bunk and stabbed to death.

David Michael Watson, the victim of a June 5, 2019, attack at Baldwin

State Prison near Milledgeville, was killed the day before what would have been his 27th birthday.

The men accused of attacking him, Timothy Paul Dunigan, 21, and Trinity Wayne Bussler, 28,

have since been moved to the state prison at Jackson where they have been held in solitary confinement in what is known as the Special Management Unit.

Murder warrants for each man describe the

deadly 2019 attack on Watson at the Hardwick prison, saying it involved "choking the victim and then stabbing him about the face and neck and lower back multiple times causing death. ... At that

time David Watson was placed face down on his bunk and (then) set on fire."

What may have prompted the violence has not been divulged.

Bussler and Dunigan face murder, aggravated assault and aggravated

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