

Bonta chosen as next top cop

Criminal justice reform would remain top priority for state's first Filipino American attorney general

By Alexei Koseff and Nora Mishanec

Gov. Gavin Newsom nominated Rob Bonta, a progressive state Assembly member from the East Bay, to be California's next attorney general Wednesday, handing the role of the state's top law enforce-

ment official to a leading voice for overhauling the criminal justice system.

The Alameda Democrat could bring a new focus to an

office that has become increasingly enmeshed in the debate over police brutality and racial bias in public safety practices. Bonta will implement a law he helped shepherd through the Legislature last year that requires the attorney general to investigate

Bonta continues on A7



Noah Berger / Associated Press

Assemblyman Rob Bonta of Alameda speaks shortly after Gov. Gavin Newsom announced his nomination to be California attorney general.



Amy Osborne / Special to The Chronicle

Pedestrians cross at the top of the normally busy, winding portion of Lombard Street in San Francisco.

Pandemic's toll on S.F. tourism: \$8 billion

2020 saw huge drops in visitors, spending, tax revenues

By Roland Li

The coronavirus pandemic plunged San Francisco tourism into its worst financial crisis in modern history, gutting spending by \$8 billion in 2020 compared with the prior year.

Total tourist spending was \$2.3 billion, a 77.7% drop from the record-high \$10.3 billion in 2019, according to San Francisco Travel, the city's tourism bureau. Total

visitors were down 61%, to 10.2 million.

More than 65,000 jobs supported by tourism were lost during the pandemic, a drop of 75.8% in one year for the city's biggest industry.

Joe D'Alessandro, CEO of San Francisco Travel, said the year was "devastating."

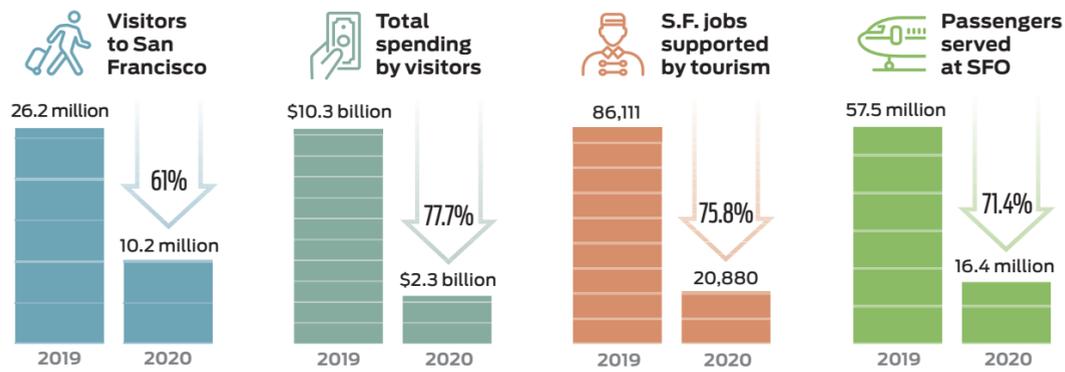
Every 2020 metric was awful compared to 2019: SFO passenger traffic dropped 71.4%, to 16.4 million. Hotel occupancy was 27.2%,

compared with pre-pandemic levels around 85%, as most buildings closed their doors. Tourism tax revenue, including hotel and property taxes, fell by two-thirds, to \$273.4 million.

Even in 2009, during the last major recession, 15.4 million people visited and spent \$7.8 billion, according to San Francisco Travel. For the next decade, those metrics grew every year until the pandemic.

Tourism continues on A9

'Devastating year' for San Francisco tourism



Sources: San Francisco Travel, Getty Images

Todd Trumbull / The Chronicle

State moving to reopen as virus surges elsewhere

By Erin Allday

More than two months past the peak of the deadly winter surge, coronavirus cases are still dropping in California even as the state unfurls from an extended lockdown, but the picture is starting to look grim again in other parts of the United States.

Daily cases are stubbornly holding in the 50,000 range nationwide, remaining higher than the lull between surges last fall. Cases are trending up in more than half of all states. And several hot spots have emerged in pockets around the country, fueled by the spread of a more infectious variant of the virus and people tossing aside their masks and abandoning social distancing protocols.

"I continue to be worried about the latest data, and the apparent stall we are seeing in the trajectory of the pandemic," Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said during a White House briefing on Wednesday. She noted that the seven-day average for new cases is up this week from last, and hospitalizations and deaths are flat after a long period of declines.

In the past, California has trailed a few weeks behind national trends. Before the winter surge, California was a standout along with one or two

Relapse fears: As restrictions ease in more Bay Area counties, experts remember the calm before the last surge. **A8**

Virus continues on A8

S.F. Pride Parade off again; other events scheduled

By Tony Bravo

Tell the Dykes on Bikes to stop their engines. In spite of progress made reopening in the Bay Area in 2021, the San Francisco Pride Parade will not be returning to Market Street on the last Sunday of June this year, nor will the traditional opening motorcycle procession.

Instead, the annual celebrations for LGBTQ Pride Weekend will be expanded into a month of programming with three socially distant, outdoor events anchoring the schedule, organizers announced Wednesday, March 24. In addition to being envisioned with pandemic safety measures in mind, the new format also gives the organization the opportunity to focus on renewed discussions around equity in the LGBTQ community.

"Pride every year is going to take into account

Pride continues on A9

Harris' first task a tough one: take lead on border, migration

By Tal Kopan

WASHINGTON — Vice President Kamala Harris will take the lead for the Biden administration on border and migration issues, the president said Wednesday, giving her a high-profile role on a controversial issue.

It's the first clear assignment for Harris since taking her job alongside President Biden, one that fits her ex-

perience but also puts her in the center of a brewing political storm.

Biden announced Harris' role coordinating diplomacy and border control efforts with Central America and Mexico in a meeting with his immigra-

tion officials at the White House. He pointed to Harris' experience as California's attorney general working on human rights and combating organized crime, saying there was "nobody who is better qualified" for the job.

The goal will be for Harris to help the administration's efforts to stem the flow of asylum seekers to the southern border by addressing condi-

Harris continues on A7

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Today: Tops at Fisherman's Wharf

Our critic lists her picks of the best places to try while visiting the iconic S.F. destination — water views included.

Weather



Sunny, breezy. Highs: 54-69. Lows: 38-50.

B8

Bay Area & Business



Lack of salmon puts recreational fishing season in question. **B1**

