

Mourners at the Supreme Court honor the life of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

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WASHINGTON — By 11 a.m. on September 19, flowers, stones, signs and notes had started piling up near the Supreme Court of the United States. Supreme Court Police barricades blocked the steps to the Supreme Court Building as police officers directed where mourners could put the items they brought to honor the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. As the memorial to Ginsburg and her legacy grew, so did the questions about what her death means for the country she served.

According to a statement from the court, Ginsburg died in her home, surrounded by family, on September 18 due to complications of metastatic pancreatic cancer. She was 87 and served on the court for 27 years.

As a champion of women's rights, Ginsburg gained a celebrity-like following during her time as a Supreme Court justice. This could be seen on Saturday as many in the crowd in front of the building sported shirts and masks with her face, quotes and iconic jabots. The crowd was filled with young and old, groups of friends and families, showing Ginsburg's life and work impacted a range of demographics.

"[Ginsburg] is just one of the greatest heroes of our time, of our country. She's just a warrior for women's rights and civil rights," said Catherine Guttman-MacCabe of Arlington, Virginia, on why she came to the supreme court on Saturday morning. Guttman-MacCabe was joined by her husband Chris and daughter Abigail to honor Ginsburg.

"She started something and I'm sad that she wasn't able to see the first woman vice president elected and I wish she could have passed at a more peaceful time," she said.

While many came just to pay



The memorial for Ginsburg near the Supreme Court. INGRID HARBO

their respects and lay flowers, others came with the intent to make a statement. A few people sat or knelt in front of the barricades with signs, one asking "What would RBG do?" while another highlighted controversial statements and rulings that Ginsburg had made in her life, specifically her remarks condemning Colin Kaepernick's NFL protests and a ruling earlier this year that cleared the way for a natural gas pipeline under the Appalachian Trail.

Amanda Moskowitz of North Potomac, Maryland, was one of the people with a sign, which read "When is this Congress gonna rise up," on one side, and "The world turned upside down," on the other, in reference to the award-winning Broadway musical "Hamilton." She brought her two young children, and expressed the importance of having them there with her.

"I want them to see the crowd, I want them to pay respects, I want them to have a memory of



Moskowitz and her children in front of the Supreme Court. INGRID HARBO

this moment," said Moskowitz. "There's so little we can do these days except for vote, but when we show up and pay our respects, we put this energy out into the world. What she did mattered and they need to know that and they need to be inspired to do the same thing for other people."

Ginsburg's death leaves a country wondering what happens next. In 2016, after the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, Republican senators refused to act on President Barack Obama's Supreme Court nomination, and instead waited until after the 2016 election in hopes of a nomination from a newly-elected Republican president. Scalia died in February, nearly 11 months away from the 2016 election, while Ginsburg's death was a mere 45 days from the 2020 election.

"President Trump's nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate," said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell in a statement on September 18. If this vote takes place before the November 3 election, it will break the precedent set by McConnell himself in 2016.

To stop a vote on a Supreme Court nominee, a majority of the Senate would have to refuse to vote on the nomination. The likelihood of this happening in a majority Republican Senate under a Republican president is unknown.

The Guttman-MacCabe hope that the precedent set in 2016 about nominating a Supreme Court Justice during an election year holds, and that a nomination can be made under Democrat Joe Biden if he is elected.

"We really hope that the youth come out and vote, that they take the opportunity to change their own future," said Chris Guttman-MacCabe. "Eighteen to 20 year olds can change the future of the country but they've gotta vote."

China, top global emitter, aims to go carbon-neutral by 2060

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
CLIMATE CHANGE
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UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Chinese President Xi Jinping says his country will aim to stop adding to the global warming problem by 2060.

Xi's announcement during a speech Tuesday to the U.N. General Assembly is a significant step for the world's biggest emitter of greenhouse gases.

Calling for a "green revolution," Xi said the coronavirus pandemic had shown the need to preserve the environment.

"Humankind can no longer afford to ignore the repeated warnings of nature," he said.

Citing the Paris Agreement that he and former U.S. President Barack Obama helped forge in 2015, Xi said his country would raise its emissions reduction targets with "vigorous policies and measures."

"We aim to have CO2 emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060," he said.

The term "carbon neutrality" means releasing no additional CO2 into the atmosphere, though technically it allows countries to keep emitting if they ensure that an equal

amount is captured again in some form.

The announcement was cheered by climate campaigners. Greenpeace executive director Jennifer Morgan called it "an important signal" that showed climate change is "top of agenda for China."

"A big shift for curbing emissions and a significant step forward in international cooperation" U.N. climate chief Patricia Espinosa said.

The goal will be a challenge for China, which relies heavily for its electricity on coal, one of the most carbon-intensive fossil fuels.

China released the equivalent of 10 billion tons of carbon dioxide, or CO2, into the atmosphere in 2018, according to the Global Carbon Project that tracks emissions worldwide. That was almost twice as much as the United States and three times as much as the European Union.

Several other major emitters have set earlier deadlines, with the EU aiming to be carbon neutral by 2050. Frans Timmermans, who leads the EU executive's efforts on climate change, welcomed Xi's announcement.

"We need decisive action

from every country to keep temperatures under control, tackle climate change and keep our planet inhabitable," he said.

The United States has so far not set such a goal. President Donald Trump, who once described climate change as a hoax invented by China, has started the process of pulling the U.S. out of the Paris accord.

If China fulfills Xi's goal, it could prevent 0.4 to 0.7 degrees (0.2 to 0.4 degrees Celsius) further warming for the world, according to "very rough estimates" by MIT management professor John Sterman, who models and tracks emission reductions and pledges with Climate Interactive.

But much depends on how they do their emissions reduction and how soon they cut them, he said, adding he has to do a more thorough analysis.

"That's a lot," Sterman said. "China's by far the world's big emitter. They're emitting more than the EU and US together."

"It puts a lot more pressure on the United States," Sterman said.

Perhaps even more important than the carbon neutrality pledge is the effort to peak carbon dioxide emissions be-

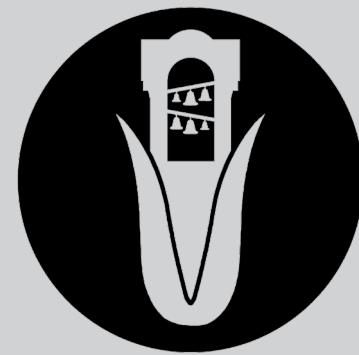
fore 2030 instead of by 2030, Sterman said. Carbon dioxide's more than 100-year lifetime in the air makes earlier emission cuts more effective than promises in the future, he said.

"Emissions that don't happen between now and 2030 are going to reduce warming a lot more than the same emission reductions after 2060," Sterman said.

However, pledges are not the same as actions. What's needed is signs of action, such as eliminating plans to build new coal-fired power plants, cutting subsidies for coal power and getting off coal entirely, Sterman said. Coal is the biggest carbon dioxide emitter of power sources.

Twenty-nine nations before China have pledged to achieve climate neutrality in different years, according to the Carbon Neutrality Coalition.

With China, the 30 countries that have some kind of carbon neutrality pledges, account for about 43% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. The largest polluting countries not on the list are the United States, India, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, South Africa, Turkey, Brazil and Australia.



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