

EPOCH INSIGHT



ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

DEPRESSION

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE
PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD)

DIABETES

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE

ORAL DISEASE

HASHIMOTO'S THYROIDITIS

ASTHMA

HEART DISEASE

CANCER

ARTHRITIS

OSTEOPOROSIS

AMERICA'S SILENT CRISIS

Nearly half
of Americans have
a chronic disease

By AUTUMN SPREDEMAN



Nearly Half of Americans

NEARLY HALF OF ALL AMERICANS NOW have a chronic disease.

This doesn’t just affect older people—around 40 percent of children and adolescents currently have at least one chronic disease.

All this not only comes with a high financial cost—chronic diseases and mental health conditions account for 90 percent of all health care expenditures—but also takes a massive toll on the population.

Many doctors are reporting a spike in chronic conditions, “especially those related to metabolic disorders, [like] Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression,” nurse practitioner Lola MacLean told The Epoch Times.

“The vast majority of chronic diseases in the United States are related to lifestyle choices, and contributing factors include dietary choices, lack of regular physical activity, [and] mental-emotional stress.”

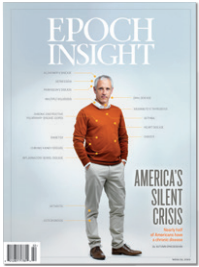
While the impact of chronic disease can be devastating, some have found a silver lining. One such person is 47-year-old Deb Borchert, who now knows most of her local emergency room staff by their first names.

She told Epoch Times reporter Autumn Spredemann that her struggles have inspired a new mission: spreading kindness.

“What’s most important is kindness and giving back. If I see someone struggling or having a rough day, I’ll do something nice. I’ll pay for their groceries if I’m ahead of them in line or buy their coffee,” Borchert said.

Jasper Fakkert

JASPER FAKKERT
Editor-in-chief



ON THE COVER

Chronic illness now affects nearly half of the U.S. population, creating a heavy medical and financial burden.

ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES, YURI_ARCURS/SHUTTERSTOCK

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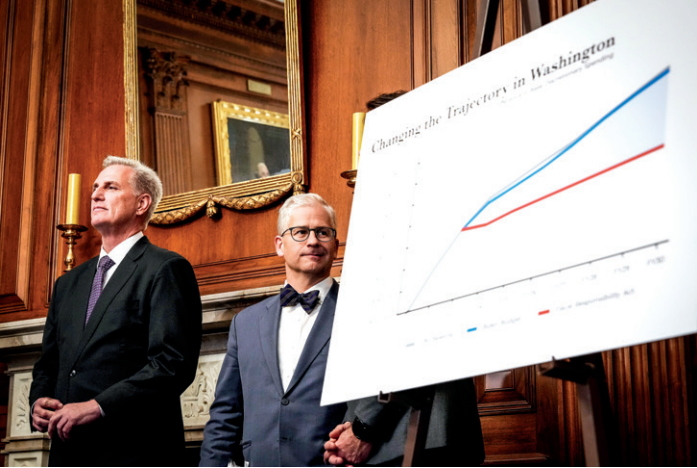
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New guidelines on breast cancer screening may be risky, a study says.

Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) and Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-N.C.) attend a news conference after the House passed the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington on May 31.

PHOTO BY DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES

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SPOTLIGHT

Honoring the Fallen

A MAN AND HIS SON VISIT THE FINAL RESTING place of a fallen loved one in Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day, in Arlington, Va., on May 29. The day honors those who have died while serving in the U.S. armed forces.

PHOTO BY SAMUEL CORUM/GETTY IMAGES





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NATION • WORLD • WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

Week 22

The Week



A participant races during
the 2023 Miami Formula
One Grand Prix at the Miami
International Autodrome in Miami
Gardens, Fla., on May 7.

PHOTO BY ANGELA WEISS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Formula One a Boon for Florida 44

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“*[The committee] will now be taking steps to hold the FBI Director in contempt of Congress for refusing to comply with a lawful subpoena.*”

Rep. James Comer, chairman, House Oversight Committee, in a statement about the FBI’s refusal to hand over an informant file that allegedly accuses then-Vice President Joe Biden of being part of a criminal bribery scheme

**\$12.7
BILLION**

Target’s stock has lost about \$12.7 billion amid a continuing backlash against the retailer over its line of LGBT clothing for children, according to the New York Post.

**\$300
MILLION**

The White House has announced the latest in a series of aid packages for Ukraine that includes **up to \$300 million worth of air defense systems, ammunition, and other defense equipment.**



“**For the last several decades, many states have allowed liberal ideologies to poison their universities and colleges.**”

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, in a letter to the state’s Board of Regents on improving higher education standards

2 CHARGED

The Justice Department has charged two men with attempting to bribe an IRS official with tens of thousands of dollars in a scheme to help the Chinese Communist Party to “topple” the persecuted faith group Falun Gong.



\$1.3 BILLION—Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and her staff investigators have found that a total value of \$1.3 billion in untracked U.S. tax dollars went to China and Russia in recent years.

**350
PROFESSIONALS**

A group of more than 350 artificial intelligence researchers, journalists, and policymakers have signed a brief statement warning that **greater focus should be placed on ensuring that AI doesn’t bring about the end of human civilization.**

THIS PAGE FROM TOP: ANNA MONEVMAKER/GETTY IMAGES; SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK; RIGHT PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: SAMIRA BOUADOU/THE EPOCH TIMES; JOE SKIPPER/FILE PHOTO/REUTERS; MICHAEL GONZALEZ/GETTY IMAGES



Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton in Washington on May 20, 2019.

TEXAS

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton Impeached

TEXAS’S REPUBLICAN-CONTROLLED HOUSE has voted to impeach Attorney General Ken Paxton, sending 20 articles of impeachment to the state Senate. The House needed a simple majority of its 149 members to move forward, and 60 of 85 House Republicans voted with Democrats in a final vote of 121–23.

The House impeachment process was “absolutely political targeting,” and the House General Investigating Committee process was “flawed” and “despicable,” Republican state Rep. Tony Tinderholt told Newsmax in an interview.

The accusations against Paxton include misuse of official powers, bribery, and abuse of public trust. The 60-year-old, who has been under federal investigation, was elected to a third term in November 2022.

US-MEXICO

Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz to Retire Next Month

BORDER PATROL CHIEF Raul Ortiz will be retiring this month, after more than three decades with the agency, he has announced.

“After a 32-year Border Patrol career spanning multiple Sectors, HQ tours, and overseas assignments in Afghanistan, I have decided to retire from federal service on June 30th,” Ortiz wrote in an email to employees, which was obtained by the Daily Caller News Foundation.



U.S. Border Patrol Chief Raul Ortiz attends a press conference in Brownsville, Texas, on May 5.

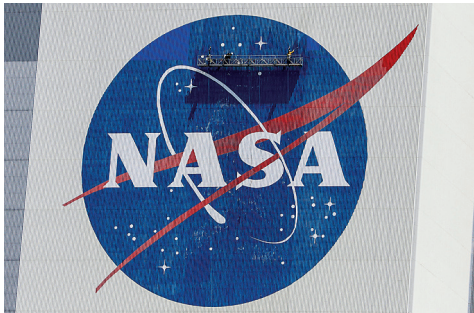
NASA

NASA UFO Panel, in 1st Public Meeting, Says Better Data Needed

THE FIRST PUBLIC MEETING of a NASA panel studying what the government calls “unidentified aerial phenomena,” commonly known as UFOs, began on May 31 to discuss findings since its formation last year.

The 16-member body, which includes experts from fields ranging from physics to astrobiology, was formed in June 2022 to examine unclassified UFO sightings and other data collected from civilian government and commercial sectors.

“If I were to summarize in one line what I feel we’ve learned, it’s we need high quality data,” panel chair David Spergel said during opening remarks.



NASA panel chair David Sperge says the agency plans to release a report by late July.

LAWSUIT

Project Veritas Sues Founder James O’Keefe

PROJECT VERITAS has sued founder James O’Keefe following his ouster from the nonprofit journalism enterprise.

O’Keefe breached his contract by starting a rival group while still employed by Project Veritas, the organization said in the lawsuit, which was filed in federal court in New York.

O’Keefe formed the O’Keefe Media Group (OMG) on Feb. 17 despite not having been terminated yet, the suit says. O’Keefe also falsely said on multiple occasions that he was fired despite still being employed, albeit suspended, by Project Veritas, according to the filing.

O’Keefe is also accused of violating his contract by contacting Project Veritas donors and soliciting Project Veritas workers to come work for him at his new organization.



An illustration of an unfolded solar panel at the International Space Station.

JAPAN

Japan to Test Beaming Solar Power From Space in 2025

JAPAN IS EXPLORING WAYS to beam solar power from space, a project that's expected to be tested in 2025, even as concerns remain about the costs involved in such a project.

"If we can demonstrate our technology ahead of the rest of the world, it will also be a bargaining tool for space development with other countries," Naoki Shinohara, a professor at Kyoto University, told Nikkei Asia.

In about fiscal year 2025, a Shinohara-led group intends to see if power can be transmitted from space to the ground using small satellites.

Space-based solar power would involve placing solar panels at an altitude of 36,000 kilometers (22,369 miles). The solar energy that's soaked up would be converted to microwaves and transmitted to receiving stations on Earth for conversion to electrical energy.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa Gives Putin Immunity to Attend 'World-Changing' BRICS Summit

THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT has granted diplomatic immunity to all officials set to be involved in the upcoming BRICS summit, including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

International Relations Minister Naledi Pandor published a notice for the Diplomatic Immunity and Privileges Act to be extended to all international officials attending BRICS-related events in South Africa.

Meetings of heads of state and foreign affairs ministers from the BRICS bloc of countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) are scheduled for several South African cities from Aug. 22 to Aug. 24.

“Special envoys” from nations across the globe, most notably Middle Eastern powers, including Iran and United Arab Emirates, have also confirmed attendance. Putin has accepted an invitation to be at the summit.

Presidential adviser Obed Bapela recently told The Epoch Times the African National Congress government would “never” arrest Putin, because to do so would be a “declaration of war” on Moscow.

UGANDA

Uganda Enacts 'Anti-Homosexuality Act,' With Death Penalty in Some Cases

UGANDA HAS PASSED A NEW LAW
that adds the death penalty as
punishment for certain cases of
practicing homosexuality, including
acts that involve rape, incest, and
spreading HIV/AIDS.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni enacted the 2023 Anti-Homosexuality Act, which Western critics are calling one of the world's toughest anti-gay laws. Homosexuality was already banned in the East African nation under its 1950 Penal Code Act.

Including Uganda, where a colonial-era law made sexual activity “against the order of nature” a criminal act, more than 30 of Africa’s 54 countries already had laws criminalizing homosexuality.

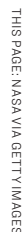
The new Ugandan legislation imposes imprisonment for promoting homosexuality and the death penalty in some cases, among multiple other provisions.

UK

UK Government Refuses to Hand Over WhatsApp Messages to COVID-19 Inquiry

BRITISH PRIME MINISTER Rishi Sunak's government says it won't hand over internal WhatsApp messages requested by a public inquiry into its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and will instead seek a legal challenge against the demand.

The inquiry seeks to provide insight into core political and administrative decision-making by the UK government during the pandemic. But the Cabinet Office said the inquiry is going beyond its remit.



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(Right)
Jockeys
compete
during a
traditional
horse race in
Narathiwat,
Thailand, on
May 28.



The Week in Photos

(Left)
The Vivid
Sydney
festival is
celebrated
with
fireworks and
lights at the
Opera House
in Sydney on
May 26.



(Right)
A sailboat off
the coast of the
French island
territory of
Mayotte, north
of Mozambique,
on May 27.



(Right) The sun sets in alignment
with Manhattan streets running east-
west, in a twice-yearly event known
as Manhattanhenge, on May 30.



(Above)
U.S. Naval Academy
graduates throw
their hats in the air
at the conclusion of
the 2023 U.S. Naval
Academy Graduation
and Commissioning
Ceremony in
Annapolis, Md.,
on May 26.



(Above) The mascot of Club Xelaju
MC, a goat with painted horns, is
present prior to the final match of
the Guatemalan Clausura national
football league between Xelaju
and Antigua in Quetzaltenango,
Guatemala, on May 27.

LEGISLATION

19 STATES GIVE DRIVER'S LICENSES TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

*Republicans back bills allowing illegal immigrants
to obtain driver's licenses*

By John Haughey

*Sixteen of the 19 states that have
adopted "Driver's Licenses for All"
laws have done so since 2013.*

PHOTO BY SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

ILLLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN MASSACHUSETTS, Rhode Island, and Minnesota will be eligible to apply for restricted driver's licenses beginning in 2023. That expands the number of states that permit illegal immigrants to get legal driving privileges to 19, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Rhode Island and Massachusetts legislators passed their bills last year, with voters in Massachusetts confirming support for a measure lawmakers adopted in November 2022. Both go into effect on July 1. Minnesota's law takes effect on Oct. 1.

Similar bills were introduced in at least six states in 2023. However, with the legislatures in at least five of those states adjourning for the year, none of the proposals are likely to be enacted.

Democrats backed 2023 proposals in New Hampshire and Texas, while Republicans either introduced them in Indiana, Nebraska, Idaho, and Oklahoma or were among primary bipartisan cosponsors.

With immigration a contentious issue, Republicans—driven by conservative voters—overwhelmingly espouse tighter restrictions, generally with little accommodation for illegal immigrants. Therefore, many are surprised to learn that these bills have Republican sponsors.

What may come as even more of a surprise to some is that allowing illegal immigrants to apply for driver's licenses has been supported by Republicans, chambers of commerce, business associations, the agriculture industry, law enforcement groups, the auto insurance industry, and an array of other backers normally associated with conservative causes more often than not over the past decade.

Sixteen of the 19 states that have adopted “driver's licenses for all” laws have done so since 2013.

The surprise is “totally understandable,” said Trent England, a fellow at the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs and former policy analyst for the Freedom Foundation and The Heritage Foundation.

Americans are “rightly upset” about “the brokenness of our immigration system” and the inability of

The bill would allow noncitizens who file state taxes to utilize their individual tax identification number instead of a Social Security number to apply for a driver's license.

Congress to address immigration reform, he told The Epoch Times.

“The federal government has chosen to look the other way and allow [illegal immigrants] to be in Oklahoma,” England said. “So then the question is, what do you do about it?”

Hard Case to Make

England said the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs assisted Sen. Michael Brooks-Jimenez (D-Oklahoma City) and Rep. Ryan Martinez (R-Edmond) in putting together a bill providing a pathway for illegal immigrants to apply for restricted driver's licenses.

The bill, which received bipartisan backing, would allow noncitizens who file state taxes to utilize their individual tax identification number instead of a Social Security number to apply for a driver's license.

Under the law, the driver's license, which costs \$50 more than a standard driver's license, would be marked with an “NR” notation to indicate that the license holder is a nonresident.

To qualify, a person “would have to have a tax document,” England said. “These are people who are actually filing taxes, paying taxes at some level.”

The Senate version of the bill advanced out of committee in March but hasn't moved closer to being enacted.

With the Legislature adjourned on May 26, the bill is dead for the year, hastened to the dustbin likely by a flap raised by the Oklahoma Second Amendment Foundation, among other conservative groups, over the proposal.

Oklahoma Second Amendment Foundation President Don Spencer told The Epoch Times that several members received letters from the governor's office expressing support for the bill and listing potential benefits and safeguards in the proposed law.

Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt's office denied that the Republican, a staunch critic of President Joe Biden's immigration policies, authored the letter and told The Epoch Times that the governor withholds comment on bills until they reach his desk, which this bill never did.

“If done the right way,” restricted driver's licenses or “driver privilege cards” are “the best solution to a bad situation,” England said.

“As evidence shows, there are a lot of wrong ways to provide driver's licenses to noncitizens but at the end of the day, states have to deal with the results of failed federal policies.

“The right answer is usually not to put our fingers in our ears and pretend it is not going on.”

According to proponents, those “results of failed federal policies” include unlicensed, uninsured drivers causing injuries, deaths, and millions in damages in car accidents each year; making roads more dangerous; driving up insurance costs for all legal drivers; clogging courts; and limiting employment opportunities for illegal immigrants, who are often already living in a



Illegal immigrants wait to board a bus to a U.S. Border Patrol processing center, after crossing into Arizona from Mexico, in Yuma, Ariz., on May 11.

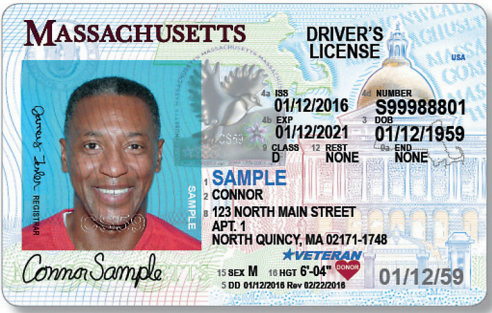
shadow of poverty.

The insurance industry backs the measures but hasn't been as vocally supportive as groups such as the Insurance Institute, which, several years ago, as it did in 2017 in Florida, lobbied unsuccessfully for a “driver's license for all” law.

Only one insurer or insurance association responded to The Epoch Times' phone and email queries regarding the laws.

American Property Casualty Insurance Association's Vice President for Public Affairs Jeffrey Brewer said it has “not been closely tracking this,” so it “can't provide good insight” into the proposals.

Ditto for Washington-based highway safety group Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, whose di- ➡



A sample of a Massachusetts driver's license for a U.S. citizen. Under the law, the driver's license for illegal immigrants would be marked with an “NR” notation to indicate the license holder is a nonresident.

rector of communications, Helen Jonsen, said, “This is not an issue we track,” and offered no more comment on the topic.

England said it’s probably wise right now for insurers to keep such endorsements under wraps.

“Just from the political policy perspective, [the Oklahoma bill] doesn’t make sense, politically,” he said. “But it would have made the roads safer.”

Saves Lives, Lowers Insurance

Since Washington became the first state to extend driving privileges to illegal immigrants in 1993, proponents have cited road safety and lower insurance costs as among the benefits of a “driving privilege card” program.

Supporters cite a 2017 study published by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that showed states such as California, which adopted its “driver’s licenses for all” bill in 2015, reduced the likelihood of hit-and-run accidents, lowered auto insurance costs for drivers, and increased the number of insured motorists on the roads, leading to a measurable reduction in poverty rates.

“We find that this policy did not increase the total number of accidents or the occurrence of fatal accidents, but it did reduce the likelihood of hit-and-run accidents, thereby improving traffic safety and reducing costs for California drivers,” the study noted.

“Our findings have important implications for policymakers: providing unauthorized immigrants with access to driver’s licenses can create positive externalities for the communities in which they live.”

Also in 2017, an analysis by New York City Comptroller Brad Lander’s office argued that allowing the city’s estimated 570,000 illegal immigrants to apply for driver’s licenses would “improve public safety, strengthen families, enhance financial stability, increase employment opportunities, and lower auto insurance premiums” for the city’s 3.6 million licensed drivers.

Noting that “undocumented New Yorkers” contribute \$1.1 billion in taxes annually to the city and state, Lander’s office said, “Extending driving privileges will give undocumented immigrants the chance to learn the rules of the road, purchase insurance policies, and interact more openly with law enforcement officials, making roads safer and building trust between police officers and immigrant communities.”

New York lawmakers adopted their restricted driver’s license program in 2019.

Safety and insurance costs were the reasons for the Minnesota House approving such a measure in a late-February vote, sending it to Democratic Gov. Tim Walz, who signed it into law on March 7.

Under the new law, “all Minnesotans” are eligible to apply for driver’s licenses “regardless of immigration status so long as they pass the written and practical tests” beginning on Oct. 1, 2023.

The bill was backed by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association, the Minnesota Police Chiefs Association, labor unions, grassroots immigrant organizations, an array of nonprofits, and elected officials in a coalition spearheaded by the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota.

“This legislation increases safe legal access to our shared roads for everyone,” the center stated, noting that the bill actually restores state statute to that of 2003, before amendments excluded illegal immigrants from applying for driver’s licenses.

Republican Sponsors in Indiana, Idaho

Proponents in Indiana cited the same benefits but were less successful in getting a companion bill sponsored by Sen. Blake Doriot (R-Goshen) and Rep. Joanna King (R-Middlebury) adopted before the session adjourned on April 26.

The bills were backed by the Indiana Motor Truck Association, 49 mayors—including 25 Republican mayors—the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council, the Indiana Association of Chiefs of Police, the Indiana Farm Bureau, the Indiana Catholic Conference, the Indiana State Poultry Association, the Indiana Muslim Advocacy Network and, among others, the Insurance Institute of Indiana.

Under the bill, a person would be required to have paid taxes in Indiana in the past year, submit fingerprints for a criminal background check, and have insurance. They must renew their driving privilege card every year and pay an additional \$50 fee.

Despite being sponsored by Republicans, the Senate version advanced through one committee hearing but got a “do not pass” verdict from another, where it died. The House measure was never heard.

Sen. Jim Buck (R-Kokomo) said during the second hearing that many lawmakers were “sympathetic” to proponents’ arguments, calling the measure “one of the best bills” he’d seen regarding the issue.

But he couldn’t vote for it.

“The fundamental question still remains from those that have obeyed the rules and done the right thing—to try to placate their frustration when I’m down here voting to complicate their frustration. I’m just struggling,” Buck told the panel.

“You’ve got two sides here, very emotionally involved, and I keep hearing this same phrase, to ‘follow the rules and do the right thing.’ It’s hard to square.”

In Idaho, Sen. Jim Guthrie (R-McCammon) was the

sponsor of SB 1081, which would make anyone aged 16 or older without proof of citizenship eligible for a restricted driver’s license.

Under his proposal, applicants would need to apply for the license in person, pass the state’s driving test, and provide “some form of identification,” such as a birth certificate.

The bill was heard by the Senate Transportation Committee on March 1 without a recommendation. On March 15, it was referred to the Senate State Affairs Committee where it was never heard before the Legislature adjourned its 2023 session on April 6.

“Without question, data shows road safety improves with drivers trained and licensed,” Guthrie said during the Senate Transportation Committee hearing.

“Accidents are less deadly when drivers are trained, injuries are less severe, property claims are smaller. The result is from two key factors: a trained driver and an insured driver.”

The bill was widely supported by chambers of commerce, industry groups, and the agriculture industry but, unlike in most instances, was opposed by the Idaho Sheriffs Association, which said the bill has vagaries that would “allow criminals to exploit for illicit gain.”

Also during that hearing, Sen. Chris Trakel (R-Caldwell) expressed a common frustration with the whole situation.

“I don’t think illegal immigration would be a big

“[Many immigrants have told me] how hard they had to work to get here to be here legally. And we’re just gonna start giving privileges away?”

Sen. Chris Trakel

deal if it wasn’t for the fact that we have employers illegally hiring these people,” Trakel said. “So I find it difficult to reward bad behavior, especially when I’ve had so many immigrants come to me and tell me all the hurdles they had to pass through, how hard they had to work to get here to be here legally. And we’re just going to start giving privileges away?”

Immigration Reform Advocates: No Way

Most groups opposing “driver’s licenses for all” laws are generally immigration reform advocates such as the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), NumbersUSA, ProjectUSA, and the America First Foundation, or elections integrity groups such as the Honest Elections Project.

FAIR State and Local Engagement Director Shari Rendall in an email to The Epoch Times dismissed



People wait at the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office in the Brooklyn borough of New York on Dec. 18, 2019. New York lawmakers adopted their restricted driver’s license program in 2019.

ANGELA WEISS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



It's difficult for poll watchers to know if a driver's license holder is eligible to vote because there's little that distinguish between REAL IDs and noncompliant IDs, an expert says.

many proponents' claims.

"People argue that giving driver's licenses to illegal aliens will make our roads safer. However, this is a misnomer because a 2018 study conducted by AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that 5 percent of the drivers involved in fatal car accidents were unlicensed drivers," Rendall said.

That means 95 percent of drivers involved in fatal car crashes are or were licensed drivers, she said.

"Suggesting that giving an illegal alien a driver's license will make them safer on the roads is, therefore, tenuous at best," she said.

Rendall had little sympathy for illegal immigrants struggling to find work because they don't have driver's licenses.

"Proponents claim that driver's licenses are needed for individuals to get to work. This is a totally invalid reason to issue a driver's license to an illegal alien. It is unlawful for illegal aliens to work in the United States," she said, noting that "driver's licenses for all" laws treat illegal immigrants "as if they are lawfully in the United States" and "encourage illegal conduct."

She cited concerns expressed by many opponents that such measures could allow someone to build a

"Suggesting that giving an illegal alien a driver's license will make them safer on the roads is ... tenuous at best."

Shari Rendall, state/local engagement director, FAIR

false identity based on seminal documents that can't be "fully vetted" for accuracy.

"When they present identifying documents, we cannot be assured of their veracity. While not every individual who enters the country illegally intends us harm, we cannot be confident in every person's intentions who crossed our borders illegally," she said.

NumbersUSA CEO James Massa agreed, with a qualifier.

"First," he wrote in an email to The Epoch Times, "let's not confuse the right to drive with the right to work in the United States."

Massa said such measures "give a veneer of legitimacy to practices that undermine the post-9/11 purposes of REAL ID or the longstanding Title 8—lawful, unlimited temporary nonimmigrant worker program (H2A

visa) that allows workers to provide agricultural labor or services on a temporary or seasonal basis."

NumbersUSA maintains that there's already a pathway for illegal immigrants to apply for driver's licenses outlined under the 2005 REAL ID Act.

Massa said the federal law "ensures that, indeed, someone has the legitimate documents that show they are who they allege themselves to be."

He said visitors and immigrants can drive in the United States for up to three months before they need to apply for an international driving permit.

NumbersUSA is opposed to states allowing "lesser standards" for driver's licenses that accept "green cards" or "temporary work permits" to receive "standard" driving licenses.

Massa, too, had little sympathy for illegal immigrants who say they need licenses to work, but was especially critical of employers who back such measures.

"There is simply no reason for employers or workers to break the law, including the need to drive," he said.

Election Integrity Concerns

While proponents argue that safeguards can be installed to ensure that restricted licenses aren't used to register to vote, opponents aren't convinced.

"One of the root issues that FAIR has with giving illegal aliens driver's licenses is that it creates an incredibly slippery slope to allow voting rights for those who are not U.S. citizens," Rendall said, citing "motor voter laws" in many states where the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) asks applicants if they would like to register to vote.

"They do not let these applicants know that registering to vote is reserved for American citizens only—the result is that many noncitizens are, in turn, registered to vote," she said.

"If they do exercise the right to vote, it would be difficult for poll watchers to know that they are ineligible, since there is very little to distinguish between REAL IDs and noncompliant ones."

England said that in Oklahoma, they "worked on the bill to make sure it would not compromise election integrity."

"That was our No. 1 concern," he said.

"Not only would it not have compromised election integrity, but it would have made it better" by requiring information sharing between the state's DMV and state/county elections offices, he said.

Proponents say support for immigration reform and tighter immigration laws doesn't mean opposing driver's license eligibility—and documentation of who is driving what on the nation's roads.

When lobbying for his bill in Indiana, Doriot told fellow senators in a February hearing, "We know [immigrants] are already a contributing member to our

economy and society," people who are employed and active in their communities.

Proponents also argue that the "driver's licenses for all" laws help those whom Americans want to help—refugees escaping totalitarianism.

In testifying on behalf of his bill in Nebraska on Feb. 14, Sen. Tom Brewer (R-Gordon) told the Legislature's Transportation and Telecommunications Committee—Nebraska has only one state legislative chamber, the Senate—that Ukrainian refugees need licenses to work in the state, with many of them being drivers, including some with commercial driver's licenses

"We're trying to make a category to put them in so that they can have a license and have a life here doing the things that they need to do in order to be productive," Brewer said, inviting a Ukrainian refugee living in Nebraska to testify on its behalf.

England said, "As conservatives, we ought to be the people who understand refugees the best, especially those coming from communist countries, people who reject communism and embrace American freedom," adding that it's "perfectly reasonable for states to make things" tolerable so they can survive.

There are already accommodations for refugees in the 2005 REAL ID Act, opponents argue, reciting the oft-repeated, often-disregarded axiom that two wrongs don't make a right.

"The real issue is that undocumented, illegal aliens should not be in the United States being forced to work at low wages and [in] substandard work conditions," Massa said.

"This is unfair to them and undermines legal temporary workers, or legal permanent residents, or U.S. citizens." ■

Supporters of the law say it reduced the likelihood of hit-and-run accidents. Critics oppose the idea, citing research finding that 95 percent of drivers involved in fatal car crashes were licensed drivers.

\$50
UNDER THE LAW, a driver's license for an illegal immigrant would cost \$50 more than a standard driver's license.



2024 ELECTION

Abortion a Defining Issue for VOTERS

*Presidential candidates try to balance
politics and morality in abortion debate*

By Janice Hisle



THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL election marks the first since the U.S. Supreme Court decided to return abortion authority to the states last year. Since then, it has been a free-for-all, with a patchwork of laws that restrict or protect abortion dotting the nation and, in many cases, spawning legal challenges.

Thus, America’s next president will be thrust into the role of referee in an emotional tug of war over the legality and morality of abortion.

But to win the presidency, each candidate faces a formidable challenge. While thinking about a life-or-death issue, each must also consider the political reality. Each must appease his or her conservative or progressive bloc of supporters. Yet none can afford to alienate independents, whose votes could mean the difference between victory and defeat on Election Day.

In the current climate, voters who used to care little about the abortion issue might be motivated to make it “a much higher priority,” said Michael New, assistant professor of practice at The Catholic University of America.

“I think it creates both opportunities and challenges for both political parties,” he told The Epoch Times.

In recent days, pro-abortion President Joe Biden, a Democrat, and pro-life Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican presidential hopeful, both directed abortion-related barbs at the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, former President Donald Trump.

And Republican candidate Nikki Haley told a TV interviewer that neither party has enough votes to pass a federal abortion law, so it would be “unrealistic” and divisive to discuss it further.

DeSantis, Trump Spar

Trump drew fire from the left and the right on the abortion issue after his CNN town hall appearance on May 10.

The former president, who often responds in a straightforward manner to questions, tiptoed around the topic. Repeatedly asked whether he would sign a federal abortion ban, Trump gave no

direct answer. Instead, he made comments such as, “We want to do what’s right for everybody.”

He did denounce “radical” people who want unrestricted access to abortion, even in late-stage pregnancies. Repeating a position he has maintained for years, Trump said he believes that abortions should be allowed under certain circumstances, such as pregnancies involving rape, incest, or life-endangering health conditions.

On May 15, Florida-based publication The Messenger quoted Trump as saying that he thought that many pro-life voters would consider Florida’s new six-week abortion cutoff “too harsh.”

“He has to do what he has to do,” Trump said, referring to DeSantis. “If you look at what DeSantis did, a lot of people don’t even know if he knew what he was doing. But he signed six weeks, and many people within the pro-life movement feel that that was too harsh.”

In a retort to Trump during a news conference, DeSantis said he stood by his decision to approve The Heartbeat Protection Act. The law forbids abortions after six weeks of pregnancy. Around that time, or sooner, many fetuses’ heartbeats can be detected.

DeSantis declared: “Protecting an unborn child when there’s a detectable heartbeat is something that almost, probably, 99 percent of pro-lifers support.” He said he was proud to sign the law, and he knocked Trump for refusing to answer whether he would sign a similar measure.

New said he viewed Trump’s abortion position as “evolving,” while DeSantis has locked himself into a stance favoring an abortion ban at six weeks of pregnancy.

“Trump has not really expressed clear support for any kind of federal legislation just yet. Now, that may change,” New said. “But that does create an opening for DeSantis, and it may create an opening for other Republican candidates” to snare pro-life votes.

Mission Impossible?

During his CNN appearance, Trump said he would “negotiate” abortion restrictions, “so that people are happy.”

In a later interview with Newsmax, Trump said, “We’re in the position now



Pro-life supporters attend the 50th annual March for Life rally on the National Mall in Washington on Jan. 20.

where we can get something that the whole country can agree with.”

Abortion is a non-negotiable issue for about one-quarter of U.S. voters, according to the nonpartisan Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI). Those voters said that “they will only vote for a candidate who shares their views on abortion,” according to the 50-state survey that PRRI released earlier this year. The survey also found that 20 percent of vot-

CHIP SOMDEVILLA/BETTY IMAGES

ers give abortion little weight.

“I don’t think President Trump can find legislation that will make everybody happy with this issue. That’s impossible. People disagree,” New said.

Earlier this month, NARAL Pro-Choice America stated that a research firm found that “an overwhelming majority of voters reject the argument that banning abortion at 15 weeks is a ‘compromise’ on abortion rights.” Formerly known as the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws, NARAL has a political action committee that ranks among the wealthiest

single-issue PACs and has played a crucial role in close races.

Further, NARAL said, 73 percent of voters—“including a majority of 2020 Trump voters” and 3 out of 4 independents—“believe things have gone too far.” As of early May, 19 states had eliminated or restricted abortion, NARAL said.

New cautioned against putting too much weight on abortion polls, as the results are “very sensitive to how they’re worded,” he said.

‘Killing’ Roe v. Wade

PRRI and other surveys have found

that about half of Americans disagree with the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn the landmark abortion case Roe v. Wade.

That 1973 ruling classified a woman’s decision to abort a pregnancy as a constitutionally protected right up until the point when a fetus was viable enough to live outside the womb. However, the Supreme Court nullified that ruling by a 6–3 vote in the 2022 Dobbs v. Jackson ruling, stating, “The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision.”

Amy O'Donnell, spokeswoman for Texas Alliance for Life, told The Epoch Times that Trump, who appointed three conservative justices during his presidency, deserves credit for his work in the pro-life arena.

"It is important to recognize that President Trump made great gains in the pro-life movement and kept his promises as far as advocating for the protection of life," she said. "So we have to just pause and show our gratitude for that. He definitely prioritized life in his first presidency."

In a May 15 post on social media platform Truth Social, Trump wrote: "After 50 years of failure, with nobody coming even close, I was able to kill Roe v. Wade, much to the 'shock' of everyone, and for the first time put the pro-life movement in a strong

negotiating position over the radicals that are willing to kill babies even into their ninth month, and beyond.



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis says he stands by his decision to approve The Heartbeat Protection Act.

"Without me, there would be no six weeks, 10 weeks, 15 weeks, or whatever is finally agreed to. Without me, the pro-life movement would have just kept losing. Thank you, President Trump!!!"

Warning From Biden

Biden, who is running for a second term, used that post as ammunition against Trump.

On his personal Twitter account, Biden posted a screenshot of Trump's statement and wrote: "That's about

as clear as it gets. Donald Trump and MAGA [Make America Great Again] Republicans are responsible for killing Roe v. Wade. And if you vote for them, they'll go even further."

Biden's Twitter post was viewed 9 million times within a day after it was posted; more than 81,000 people indicated they liked it.

But Biden's opinion didn't sit well with Mindy Robinson, an independent journalist and host of the show "Conspiracy Truths" on the crowdfunded website America Happens Network.

She responded, in part: "Go 'further' than allowing the people in different states to [choose] for themselves on what to do about the topic? Yea ... how 'awful.'"

Throughout his administration, Biden's office has issued statements describing abortion as a necessary type of "health care."

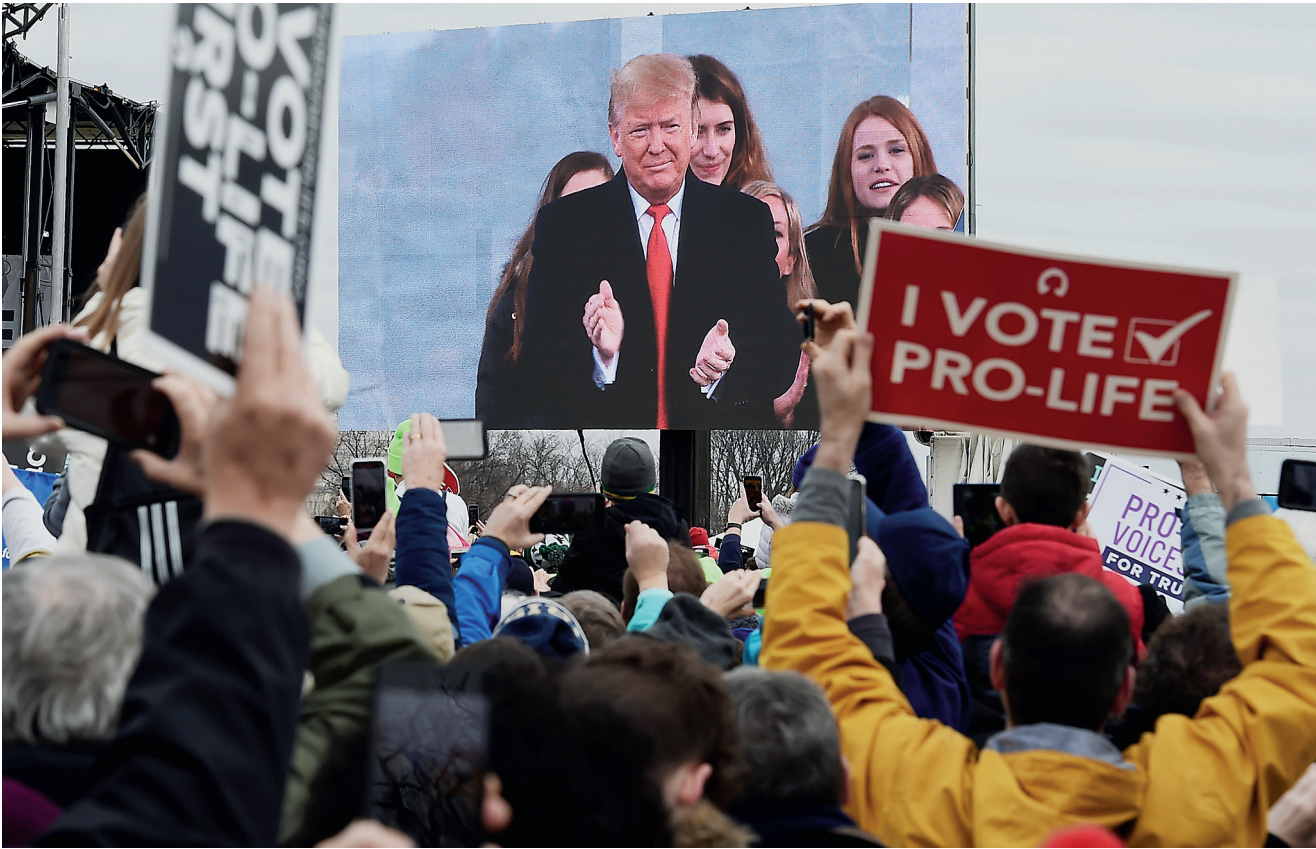
In July, following the Dobbs decision, the White House released a statement denouncing it.

"Fundamental rights—to privacy, autonomy, freedom, and equality—have been denied to millions of women across the country, with grave impli-



President Joe Biden speaks at a Democratic National Committee event in Washington on Oct. 18, 2022. Throughout his administration, Biden's office has issued statements describing abortion as a necessary type of "health care."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: STEPHEN MATURE/GETTY IMAGES; OLIVER DOULERY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; ANNA MONEMAKER/GETTY IMAGES



Pro-life demonstrators listen to then-President Donald Trump as he speaks at the 47th annual March for Life in Washington on Jan. 24, 2020. Trump in early May said he would "negotiate" abortion restrictions, "so that people are happy."

cations for their health, lives, and well-being," the White House statement read. "This ruling will disproportionately affect women of color, low-income women, and rural women."

"President Biden has made clear that the only way to secure a woman's right to choose is for Congress to restore the protections of Roe as federal law."

In the meantime, according to the statement, Biden had signed an executive order "protecting access to reproductive care services" and instructed the Department of Health and Human Services "to protect and expand access to abortion care," including access to abortion pills.

Democrats Versus Republicans

Biden's position appears likely to play well with Democrats, based on PRRI's findings.

When party affiliation is factored into the abortion debate, the differences between Republicans and Democrats appear stark. Only about one-third of

Trump's abortion position is 'evolving,' while DeSantis has locked himself into a stance favoring an abortion ban at six weeks of pregnancy, an expert says.

Republicans favor keeping most abortions legal; that number has remained relatively steady for more than a decade.

In contrast, support for abortion among Democrats has increased 16 percentage points since 2010; in 2022, 87 percent of Democrats favored abortion access in most cases, the PRRI survey said.

Both Trump and Biden have shifted their attitudes about abortion over the years, too.

In 1982, near the beginning of his longtime political career as a Democrat, Biden voted in favor of an amendment that sought to overturn Roe. At the

time, Biden said it was a difficult decision because of his religious affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, which staunchly opposes abortion. However, Biden voted the opposite way against the same amendment a year later, according to congressional records.

In 1999, Trump told NBC's "Meet The Press" that he was "very pro-choice." But he also said he was disquieted over abortion procedures. He viewed abortion as a personal decision between women and their doctors and wished it would stay out of politics. But in the 2000 book "The America We Deserve," Trump reflected on that interview ♦♦

and said that after speaking with doctors he respected, he decided he would support a ban on so-called partial-birth abortions, performed late in pregnancy. By late 2015, Trump was calling for the defunding of Planned Parenthood, the top provider of abortions in the United States. He also was saying he wanted to consider looking at overturning Roe.

The Epoch Times sought comment from Planned Parenthood and several other pro-abortion groups, but received no response by press time.

Concerns Among Pro-Life Leaders

Trump’s recent remarks have caused pro-life leaders to worry about a possible change in his stance again. Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, said Trump’s CNN town hall highlighted the importance of the abortion issue in the 2024 election cycle.

He called the Trump administration “the most pro-life in our history.” In a

May 11 commentary, Perkins lauded Trump for “graphically [describing] the brutality of the abortion procedure” during a 2016 presidential debate against Hillary Clinton. He also cited Trump’s appointment of the three conservative Supreme Court justices—Neil Gorsuch, Amy Coney Barrett, and Brett Kavanaugh—as “a signal achievement.”

But Perkins was “deeply concerned” after a Trump spokesman recently said that the former president believes abortion should be decided at the state level. Perkins also disliked that while many Republicans were “glad to see the end of the fictional constitutional right to abortion,” some “seemed more glad to kick the life issue back to the states than take any further action.”

A former Louisiana state lawmaker who crafted pro-life legislation, Perkins said that “personhood in the womb is not just a state issue—it is the most profound of all human rights issues” and “it merits federal consideration—and protection.”

In May, when Perkins and other pro-life leaders met with Trump in Miami, “Mr. Trump reaffirmed his commitment to protecting children who can feel pain and are actually sucking their thumb in their mother’s womb,” Perkins said. “His horror at late-term abortion and the incredible idea that some so-called ‘unwanted’ children could be left to die after birth remains unchanged.

Perkins said he would not be endorsing any candidates in the primary but would work with Trump and all other candidates on “issues impacting faith, family, and freedom.”

O’Donnell, the Texas Alliance for Life spokeswoman, said that her group “would like to see a candidate who would like to see every state in the United States look like Texas, where life is protected from conception, on.”

“At a bare minimum, anybody that we endorse must at least be for a 15-week protection of life law that is a federal law across the United States. And that’s just something that we’re going



Pro-abortion activists protest outside the Supreme Court in Washington on June 30, 2022. The vast majority of voters who care deeply about abortion may have already changed their party affiliation to align with the major parties’ “increasingly firm” stances on abortion, an expert says.

to look for before we put forward any endorsement from our organization,” she said.

O’Donnell acknowledged that while many pro-life advocates favor an all-out abortion ban, “when it comes to protecting life, one of the things that we’ve learned in Texas is that we have to make incremental gains.”

“The first time we try to advance a law may not be the first time that that law passes. But we believe that we’re making some progress, that we’re planting seeds. And then we’re going to keep making the effort until it does pass,” she said.

“Our track record has shown that that approach has brought us tremendous pro-life gains in our state. And I believe that that will happen at the federal level as well.”



Sarah Isgur, former Justice Department spokeswoman during the Trump administration.

Not Sole Factor

Some pundits describe abortion as a “wedge issue” that Democrats can use to differentiate themselves from Republicans, as well as to attract votes from Republican-leaning voters who are not strongly against abortion.

But others dispute whether abor-

tion wields as much political sway as it once did.

In a pre-Dobbs Politico article in May 2022, Sarah Isgur, a Harvard University law school graduate and former Justice Department spokeswoman during the Trump administration, acknowledged that a prediction she made in 2021 was wrong. She thought Republicans would see political backlash over abortion. “Instead, Republicans saw near-universal gains across the country,” she wrote.

“After 50 years of abortion politics sorting voters, maybe there is nobody left to lash back.”

Perhaps the vast majority of voters who care deeply about abortion or other issues may have already changed their party affiliations to align with the parties’ “increasingly firm” stances on abortion, she suggests.

If Democrats do push hard on the abortion issue, they risk putting off Latino and black Democratic voters, “who are already more conservative than white Democrats on many social issues, including abortion,” Isgur said. ■

25%

ONE IN FOUR AMERICANS SAY they will only vote for a candidate who shares their views on abortion, a survey shows.

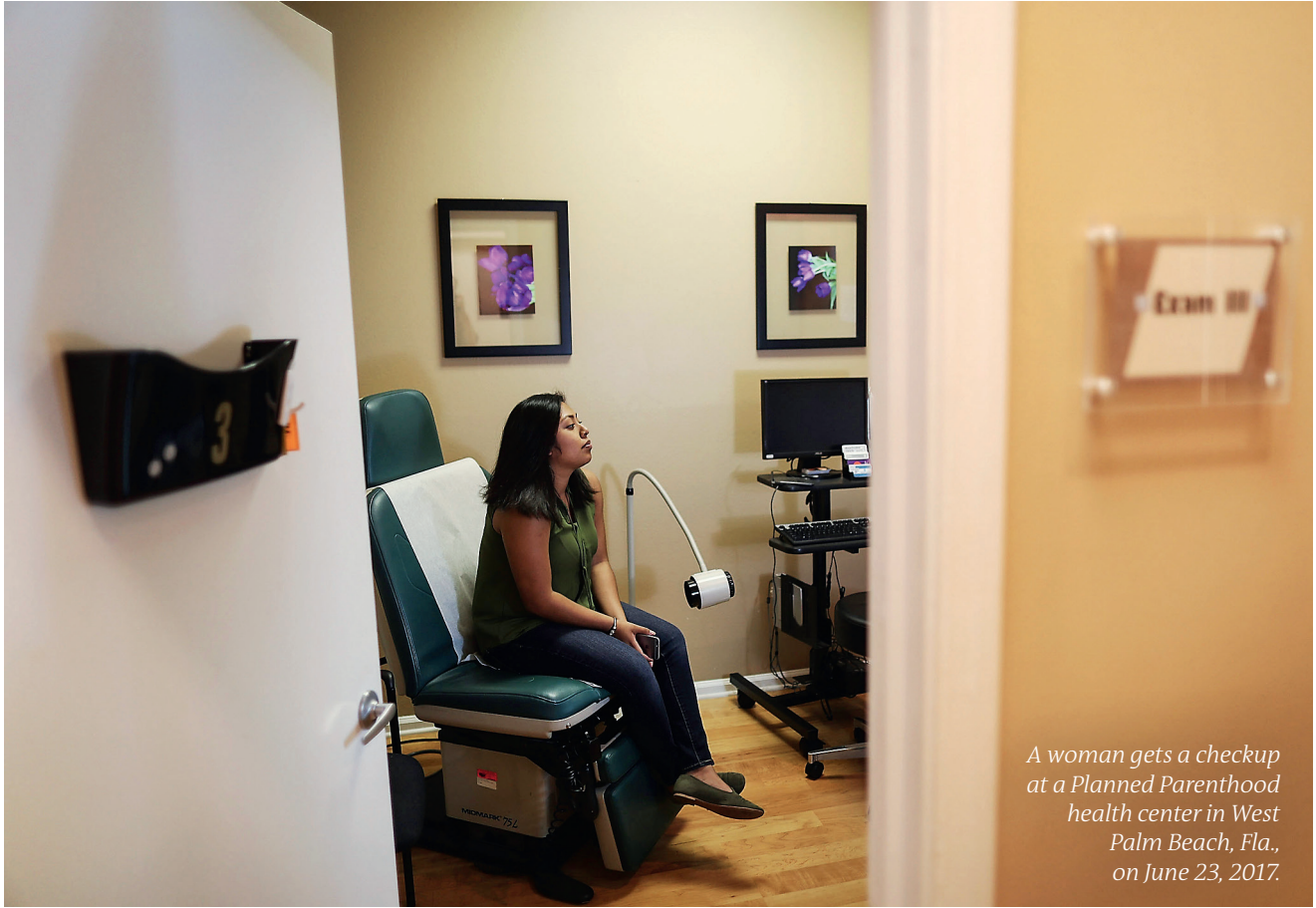
20%

ONLY 20 PERCENT OF VOTERS give abortion little weight, a survey shows.

87%

ONLY ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF Republicans favor keeping most abortions legal, compared to 87 percent of Democrats, a survey shows.

Biden voted in favor of an amendment that sought to overturn Roe in 1982, while Trump stated that he was ‘very pro-choice’ in 1999. The attitudes of both candidates toward abortion have shifted over the years.



A woman gets a checkup at a Planned Parenthood health center in West Palm Beach, Fla., on June 23, 2017.

CLOCKWISE FROM L: JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES; NICHOLAS KAMM/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; KRIS CONNOR/GETTY IMAGES FOR GLANDOUR

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

An electric generator at the CenterPoint Energy power plant in Houston on June 9, 2022.

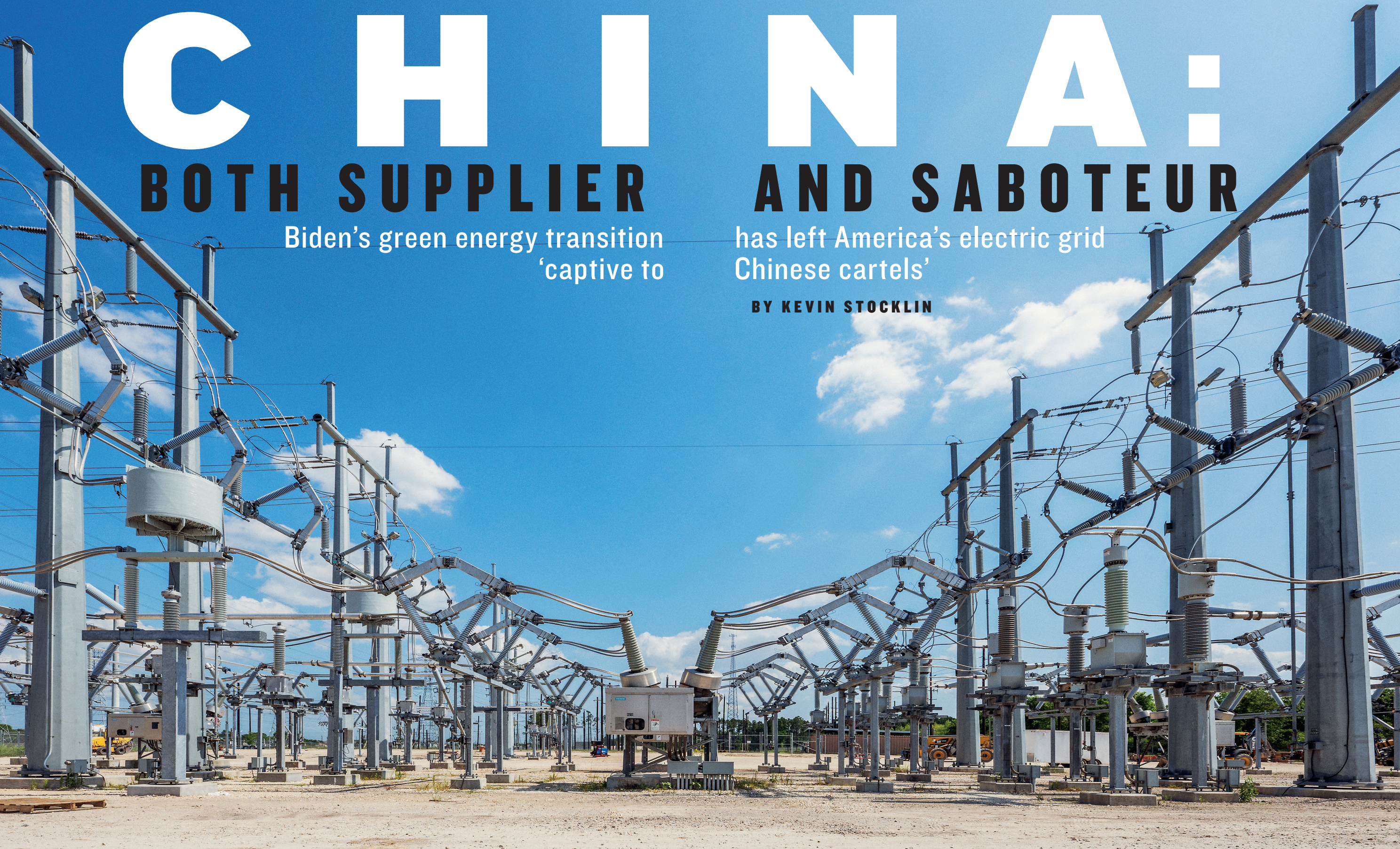
PHOTO BY BRANDON BELL/GETTY IMAGES

CHINA: BOTH SUPPLIER AND SABOTEUR

Biden's green energy transition
'captive to

has left America's electric grid
Chinese cartels'

BY KEVIN STOCKLIN



SIMULTANEOUS WITH efforts by the Biden administration to make the United States' energy infrastructure "green," Chinese companies have become key suppliers of hardware to the U.S. electric grid that analysts are concerned could give China the ability to crash the grid if hostilities were ever to escalate.

Americans have become so used to an uninterrupted supply of electricity that our degree of dependence on the grid for the most basic necessities, such as food, water, heat, medical care, communication, and increasingly, transportation, often goes unnoticed. But experts say that the U.S. electric grid is an Achilles heel.

"If they're able to knock the grid out, basically modern society is going to fall," Joe Trotter, director of the Energy, Environment, and Agriculture Task Force at the American Legislative Exchange Counsel, told The Epoch Times.

"The modern grid runs our whole infrastructure, and without power, we don't have refrigeration, our food supply goes down, our water supply goes down.

"If the power went out across the entire United States for a month, people would die. There'd be widespread looting. Two to three months and you might actually have a full societal collapse."

Attacking power grids has been a tactic of warfare since World War II, including the destruction of electric grids by the United States during wars in Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq. Most recently, Russia has employed similar tactics during its invasion of Ukraine.

But there have also been numerous examples of clandestine sabotage by countries such as Russia, China, and Iran on U.S. infrastructure over the past two decades. Despite these risks, however, U.S. electric utilities have increasingly been installing essential hardware components, such as transformers, that are made in China.

Testifying before the U.S. Department of Energy in December 2021, Michael Mabee, a retired U.S. Army sergeant major, stated: "It is of great concern that the People's Republic of China, and its controlling Chinese Communist Party, is marketing equipment or systems to

the same U.S. critical infrastructures that multiple U.S. government agencies have confirmed—for years—are the target of China's past and present cyber-espionage, probing, and cyberattacks."

A 2020 report by the Atlantic Council found that "in the past decade, China has exported more than 200 large power transformers for use in the U.S. power grid," and other estimates go as high as 300. Given that there are approximately 2,000 transformers throughout the U.S. grid, Chinese-manufactured systems represent about 10–15 percent of the total. And while cyber warfare can come from many foreign sources, the threat from hardware is unique to China.

"There are other countries that can be sources of potential energy grid compromise, like Iran or Russia, but they don't supply components at the same volume as China," the report states.

In a December 2022 report, Trotter stated that "although electrical operators are continually working on building redundancy and security into our electrical infrastructure, the fact remains that if a relatively small percentage of the nation's 2,000+ high-power transformers are taken offline all at once, most of the country could lose power for weeks, if not months."

"What a transformer does is it simply raises or lowers the voltage," Joseph Weiss, a control systems engineer and partner in Applied Control Solutions, told The Epoch Times.

Transformers are installed at power plants to "step up" the voltage to hundreds of thousands of volts so it can be rapidly distributed along the transmission grid. They are installed along the grid to compensate for friction and energy loss along the way, and they are installed near end users so that electricity can be stepped down to 440, 220, or 110 volts to power machines and appliances.

Trump Orders Ban on Chinese Technology; Biden Rescinds Order

In a 2021 report to the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Weiss stated that "one of the first nation state cyberattacks against the U.S. grid was the Chinese cyberattack of the California Independent System Operator in 2001." Weiss cited numerous other Chinese efforts to sabotage the U.S. grid since then.



Workers repair a power station that was damaged by a Russian air attack in Kyiv Oblast, Ukraine, on Nov. 4, 2022.

Outside of the electric grid, "most Chinese cyberattacks have been to steal data," Weiss stated, but the transformer hacks were different. "There was no data to steal, only access to the operation of the transformers."

In May 2020, then-President Donald Trump signed Executive Order 13920, which declared a state of emergency over the state of the power grid and banned the imports of Chinese equipment in its construction. Immediately upon taking office in January 2021, President Joe Biden rescinded that order.

Speaking at a Senate Energy Committee hearing on March 23, Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) said: "The director of the U.S. cybersecurity and infrastructure security agency warned us just a few weeks ago about China. She said that in the case of an invasion of Taiwan, China would likely launch cyberattacks against America's critical energy infrastructure. "The Biden administration has, wrong-

ly, prioritized greening of the grid over the reliability of energy production and delivery. This is a dangerous mistake."

Hardware 'Backdoors'

In addition to software hacks, "China has been shown to be increasingly adept at using hardware to essentially leave networks vulnerable," Trotter said. Computer hacking is done using code, he said, "but on the hardware side, they literally put something on the chip that leaves it vulnerable to manipulation ... and then these chips have wound up in energy infrastructure."

While software hacks can often be blocked and vulnerabilities plugged through the use of code, removing physical hardware embedded in chips is much more difficult. Among the concerns with Chinese hardware is that "back doors" can be built into computer chips that allow the Chinese Communist Party to control their performance remotely.

According to Trotter, there are a number of ways the grid could be impaired through these back doors, one of which is to misdirect the computer chips that control the flow of electricity.

"They can essentially create a second pathway to allow the chip to believe that they're acting normally, while actually ramping things up," he said. "The chips on the monitors for the amount of electricity going across the transformers can [register] that it's within normal parameters, when what's actually happening is the electricity output is so high that the cables are on the verge of melting."

Chinese companies have become competitive in the construction of equipment such as transformers from the experience they gained building out China's electric grid, which is operated by the monopoly State Grid Corp. of China, the world's largest utility. They are competitive on cost and on access to the materials necessary to build the components.

Transformers are generally custom-made, at a cost of millions of dollars, with delivery times from several months to more than a year. Two European engineering companies that manufacture transformers, Siemens in Germany and ABB in Switzerland, often use Chinese components.

In May 2020, U.S. federal officials seized a 500,000-pound transformer that had just been imported from China on its way to the Western Area Power Administration, a utility in Colorado. The confiscated transformer was then transported under guard to Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to a laboratory operated by Honeywell International Inc., which was under contract with the U.S. Energy Department to investigate national security threats.

According to Latham Saddler, former director of intelligence at the National Security Council under the Trump administration, "They found hardware that was put into that [transformer] that had the ability for somebody in China to switch it off."

US Is 'Captive to Chinese Cartels'

A May 20 report by energy analyst Robert Bryce stated that "two years ago, about 40 environmental groups, including Friends of the Earth, 350 Action, Earthworks, Sunrise Movement, and Union of Concerned Scientists, signed a letter urging Congress and the Biden Administration to work with China on a 'new internationalism.'"

They called on Biden and Congress to "eschew the dominant antagonistic approach to U.S.-China relations and instead prioritize multilateralism, diplomacy, and cooperation with China to address the existential threat that is the climate crisis."

"China is the world leader in industrial capacity across a number of clean energy industries," the environmentalists wrote, according to Bryce, and "working together could speed the transition away from dirty energy economies."

Thomas Waller, CEO of the Center for Security Policy, told The Epoch Times that between 2002 and 2021, in addition to transformers, U.S. utility companies imported more than 171 million inverters from China. During the same period, the United States imported more than 3 million electricity meters from China. ♦



A worker assembles transformers at a factory in Haian, Jiangsu Province, China, on Nov. 17, 2022. While cyber warfare can come from many foreign sources, the threat from hardware is unique to China.

In an April 14 report, Brien Sheahan, who served on the board of directors for the National Association of Regulatory Commissioners, stated that “the U.S. and allies have allowed themselves to become captive to Chinese cartels that control production of electronic components, high-powered magnets, printed circuit boards, computers, drones, rare earth metals, wind turbines, solar cells, cellular phones, and lithium batteries at a time when the integration of renewables and electric vehicles at scale will require ever more sophisticated technologies to manufacture and manage.” Sheahan continued, “In fact, nearly every element of the technology-based digital smart grid is dependent on Chinese-made components with murky provenance.” Puesh Kumar, director of cybersecurity at the U.S. Energy Department, stated at the Senate hearing that “domestic manufacturing is not going to address the short-term issues; it’s going to address the medium- and long-term issues.” Kumar said the administration has been discussing allocating money

from the 1950 Defense Production Act to “start to incentivize building transformers here in the United States.”

EVs, Solar Panels Create New Threats for the Grid

So-called green laws and regulations from both the Biden administration and liberal states such as California, New York, and Washington are pushing cars, home heating, stoves, and more onto the electric grid, and energy experts warn that the grid is being pushed beyond its capacity. >> But cyber experts are concerned that some of these products carry security risks for the grid, too.

“Americans are purchasing rooftop solar panels and electric vehicles at a rapid rate,” Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) said at the March 23 energy hearing. “While experts are still determining the degree of risk, there is concern that these new resources can serve as additional entry points for cyber adversaries to target the grid and could have the possibility to cause major disruptions and cyberattacks on our energy system.”

A February report in The Wall Street

Journal cited cybersecurity experts who claimed that, because EVs are controlled by web-based technology, they are vulnerable to hacking, not only in terms of controlling the car itself, but also by affecting charging stations and the power grid.

“Electric vehicles are packed with chips and software that control everything from their batteries and motors to cruise control and braking,” the report stated. “They also are plugged into chargers almost daily, sending information back and forth over charging networks or the internet, and they communicate wirelessly with the companies that made them, EV dealers, cellular and home Wi-Fi networks and apps on their owners’ phones.”

Barrasso criticized the Biden administration for “forcing the rapid adoption of technology that is inherently more vulnerable to cyberattacks and exploitation.”

“According to leading cybersecurity experts, electric vehicles offer orders of magnitude more targets for cyberattacks than standard internal combustion en-

gine engines, orders of magnitude greater risk,” he said.

And while utilities across the United States invest in upgrades and new technology, this modernization in some respects also adds to the grid’s vulnerabilities and puts ever larger segments of the grid at risk.

According to a 2020 report by Ridge Global, a systems security firm, the United States’ power grid is undergoing a “growing convergence of the Information Technology ... and Operational Technology ... environments within the industry, and the advent of the Smart Grid including the evolution of key technologies that support local power distribution.”

While the U.S. grid had formerly been characterized by a patchwork of regional and local systems, featuring a wide variety of equipment and technology, today, our grid is becoming more uniform and more dependent on management systems that are directly connected to the internet.

Speaking at the March Senate hearing, Robert Lee, CEO of Dragos, a cybersecurity firm, said that “the industrial threat landscape has shifted irreversibly this past year.”

“The heterogeneous nature of our industrial infrastructure made it difficult for adversaries to create repeatable attacks that cause disruption or physical damage,” Lee said. “For good reason, the



“Why would we allow China, a country that’s suspected of numerous cyberattacks against the U.S., to supply major components for our electric grid?”

Sen. Josh Hawley

industry has moved towards homogenous infrastructure with common software packages, network protocols, facilities, designs, training, and so forth. I warned that one day an adversary would take advantage of this, though, and in 2022 that adversary emerged.”

Lee described the recent threat of malware called “pipe dream,” which “was developed by a highly capable strategic state adversary” and designed to sabotage industrial infrastructure. “Pipe dream” has the capability of spreading far and wide throughout the United States’ electrical network.

Biden Administration Takes ‘Holistic View’ on Grid Risks

During the hearing, Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) stated that “the risk of malicious hardware implants was sufficiently high that the [Trump] administration seized some Chinese transformers back in 2020.” Hawley asked Kumar what percentage of the United States’ transformers are made in China today.



A worker installs rooftop solar panels at the Port of Los Angeles on April 21. Such “new resources can serve as additional entry points for cyber adversaries to target the grid,” Sen. Joe Manchin says.

Kumar replied, “We’re doing that analysis right now to see what pieces of equipment have some of these concerning areas.”

“It sounds like you don’t know,” Hawley said. “When do you think you might know?”

“I’m happy to get back with you on that answer,” Kumar replied.

“I find this really quite baffling,” Hawley responded. “This leads me to ask why it is that this administration suspended the last administration’s executive order that restricted the procurement of foreign electric equipment.

“Why would we allow China, a country that’s suspected of numerous cyberattacks against the U.S., to supply major components for our electric grid?”

Kumar replied, “We have to take a more holistic view of supply chain security. Just having an approved list is not the only way to secure our supply chains.”

Biden’s executive order is “under review,” Kumar said. “But know that this is an area that’s a priority for us at the department.”

“The electric grid is one of the greatest engineering marvels that’s ever been done,” Weiss said. “But you lose transformers and things like that, you cannot run the grid, period.

“We’ve got a lot of really critical equipment, and the people quote-unquote protecting it don’t understand how that equipment works. That’s a recipe for disaster.”

“We should not depend on China for anything that sustains life in the United States of America, but particularly the backbone of our most critical infrastructure,” Waller said. “In our nation, that backbone is high voltage transformers; the grid doesn’t operate without them.

“It plays right into what Sun Tzu, the Chinese philosopher thousands of years ago, said: ‘The supreme art of war is to subdue your enemy without fighting.’” ■

HEALTH

AMERICA'S SILENT CRISIS

Nearly half of all Americans now have at least 1 chronic disease

BY AUTUMN SPREDEMAN



A patient with diabetes shows her insulin kit. In recent decades, there has been a spike in the number of patients suffering from chronic conditions, coinciding with changes in our food and lifestyle.

PHOTO BY KEREM YUCEL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

IT CAN STRIKE AT ANY TIME and at any age. When someone develops a chronic disease, it can cause debilitating, life-altering changes that penetrate every aspect of daily life.

The prevalence of these conditions has surged over the past decade, creating a twofold health care and economic crisis affecting nearly half of Americans. By 2030, the number of U.S. residents struggling with at least one chronic illness is expected to surpass 170 million.

That's more than half of the current population, for perspective, and close to half of the projected 2030 population.

The expanding elderly population and adults aren't the only age groups seeing an uptick. More than 40 percent of children and adolescents currently have at least one chronic illness, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

There's also a tremendous cost burden. Chronic diseases generate a disproportionately large segment of U.S. health care costs; of the nation's \$4.1 trillion in annual health care expenditures, chronic illnesses and mental health conditions account for 90 percent.

At an individual level, the price tag doesn't look any better. Estimates for the treatment and management of chronic conditions—on average—tally more than \$6,000 annually per patient.

Some chronic disease specialists and health practitioners say that figure is spot on, depending on the condition.

Beyond the Numbers

"For example, if you have Type 2 diabetes, you are often checking in with your provider every three months. Four visits a year, times \$300 a visit, plus the amount spent for medications per month ... quickly adds up," nurse practitioner Lola MacLean told The Epoch Times.

MacLean has worked in family and internal medicine for the past five years. In that time, she's noticed a spike in the number of patients suffering from chronic conditions.

"Especially those related to metabolic disorders, [like] Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and men-

tal health conditions such as anxiety and depression," she said.

Many chronic diseases require specialist care for management. Providers in these fields have also witnessed a surge in patients.

"Indeed, I have noticed an uptick in the number of patients with chronic diseases, particularly those with respiratory diseases such as asthma and COPD [Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease]," according to John Landry, a licensed, registered respiratory therapist and founder of the education platform Respiratory Therapy Zone.

Those suffering from chronic diseases often experience lengthy, exhausting, and dangerous trial-and-error treatments.

He noted that chronic respiratory diseases often require expensive medications, frequent doctor visits, and hospitalizations.

"I find the estimate of \$6,000 USD for the annual cost of treating chronic diseases to be plausible," he told The Epoch Times. "This doesn't even take into account indirect costs such as time off work for the patient and their caregivers."

Conditions with some of the highest direct health care costs in the United

States are diabetes, at \$189.6 billion in annual expenses, Alzheimer's disease (\$185.9 billion), and osteoarthritis (\$115.5 billion).

But the price of living with a chronic disease goes beyond the financial costs. For many, it's a daily battle that demands vigilance, patience, and emotional support.

Uphill Battle

For Deb Borchert, a trip to the hospital is almost as routine as folding laundry. The 47-year-old Wisconsin mother of two knows most of the emergency

room staff at her local hospital by their first names.

She suffers from a condition known as hypokalemic periodic paralysis, which causes consistently low and dangerous potassium levels. It's an illness that has landed her in the hospital more times than she can count over the past 20 years.

On March 10, she arrived at the emergency room with her miniature medical assistance dog, Molly. Her specialist's phone number was already



A 3-year-old who was diagnosed as a newborn with chronic granulomatous disease, a rare immune system disorder, in McLean, Va., on Dec. 26, 2019.

THIS PAGE: EVA HAMBACH/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



There has been an increase in the number of patients particularly with respiratory diseases such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, a medical professional says.

on file, and she was promptly admitted for treatment.

There was no red tape or extra paperwork; Borchert was put in a bed and hooked up to IVs and machines that would help save her life. Despite her outwardly calm demeanor, she was on the threshold of cardiac arrest. Again.

“Your pulse oxygen drops, and your entire body just collapses. It can’t even function,” Borchert told The Epoch Times about the effects of her condition.

For most people, healthy potassium levels are between 3.5 and 5.2 millimoles per liter (mmol/L). Anything below 2.5 is considered life-threatening.

Borchert was admitted on March 10 with a potassium level of 2.2 mmol/L.

“I’ve had it since my 20s, but they’ve never known how to really treat it. Every time, they try different drugs, but I’m allergic to a lot of those,” she said.

It’s a tune heard often among those suffering from chronic diseases—a lengthy, exhausting, and sometimes

dangerous trial-and-error process with treatment. Some conditions can also be difficult to manage with traditional Western medicine.

That’s the case for Julie Walters, whose 14-year-old daughter suffers from a rare form of epilepsy called PCDH19, which is caused by a gene mutation. It’s also challenging to manage with medication.

Moreover, it causes intense clusters of seizures that can cause the person to stop breathing. That’s a side effect her daughter has endured many times and, as a result, she sleeps with a pulse oximeter and supplemental oxygen nearby.

“It’s changed our entire lives,” Walters told The Epoch Times.

Walters is co-founder of the PCDH19 Alliance, an online support network promoting early diagnosis and supporting families struggling with the condition. She also runs The Connected Parent, which is a free platform for families and caregivers that also reviews resources.

She is acutely aware of how import-

ant resources are for parents who have children struggling with PCDH19 and other chronic diseases. Her daughter’s illness requires constant monitoring and vigilance. Family vacations, attending school, or just going out to dinner must be planned carefully since her daughter might have a seizure at any moment.

Things such as sharp corners on furniture, balcony seating, and other details that most people don’t give much thought to are the focus of strategy and planning in Walters’s household. But it’s absolutely worth it to watch her daughter grow and enjoy as good a quality of life as possible.

Many PCDH19 patients can go years without a seizure. Yet when seizures return, they can be harrowing. Walters recalled a nightmare episode when her daughter suffered a seizure that lasted for more than an hour, requiring hospitalization.

“It’s something you’re always thinking about,” Walters said.

SBARTS MEDIA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Cause and Effect

While Borchert and Walters battle conditions beyond their control, health care professionals say many chronic diseases are the byproduct of unhealthy lifestyle choices, diet, and excessive stress.

One study asserts that noncommunicable diseases that are chronic account for 70 percent of all global deaths annually. They include various ailments that vary in severity, from food allergies to heart disease.

Some of these conditions are called “lifestyle diseases,” because of their established cause-effect relationship with daily choices.

Heart disease and obesity fall under this heading. And while certain illnesses may not stem directly from unhealthy life choices, they’re made significantly worse by them. Diseases such as diabetes, certain cancers, inflammatory conditions, and asthma are all under this umbrella to a greater or lesser extent.

“The vast majority of chronic diseases in the United States are related to lifestyle choices, and contributing factors include dietary choices, lack of regular physical activity, [and] mental-emotional stress,” MacLean said.

The CDC said the main factors contributing to this subset of “lifestyle diseases” include tobacco use, poor nutrition, a sedentary lifestyle, and excessive alcohol usage.

Further, the tidal wave of chronic diseases has occurred in lockstep with a sharp rise in ultra-processed food consumption over the past two decades.

An 18-year study published by New York University showed that consumption of ultra-processed food climbed steadily during that period and accounted for 57 percent of America’s daily calories by 2018.

During that study period, an additional 15 million people developed chronic diseases. Medical professionals say this is no coincidence.

Yet a more subtle shift from acute to chronic illnesses as the dominant U.S. health concern began in the 1950s. Some researchers place the blame for the current health crisis squarely on the shoulders of a lethargic medical industry.

“The medical profession and its

leadership did not recognize or respond appropriately to the rising prevalence of chronic disease,” a 2020 study published in the National Library of Medicine summarized. “As a consequence, a health care crisis emerged, with inadequate access to care and quality of care, together with excessive costs.”

Finding Strength

Borchert knows exactly what her illness has claimed from her.

“It’s taken away my ability to do whatever I want and enjoy the best of what life has to offer,” she said.

But her condition has also given her a different perspective on life. She says you’d never know how sick she was at a glance or even during a normal conversation on her good days.

That’s the case for many, including Walters’s daughter. Chronic illness is a constant battle with an invisible enemy that, for some, has no end in sight.

But this is where Borchert found a surprising and important new mission: spreading kindness.

“What’s most important is kindness and giving back. If I see someone struggling or having a rough day, I’ll do something nice. I’ll pay for their groceries if I’m ahead of them in line or buy their coffee,” she said.

Over the past two decades, Borchert watched her son and daughter grow into responsible adults, which inspired her to be a better person. The loss of so many little freedoms through the veil of her disease has given her an appreciation for the little things.

“When I was younger, I used to take those things for granted. I don’t want to be like that anymore. It’s made me more kind, more empathetic. There are so many chronic illnesses you can’t see.”

For Walters, her fellow “medical moms” have been a critical lifeline in her family’s journey, since it takes a proverbial “village” to tackle chronic disease, especially when there’s no cure.

“Community, friendships, and the alliance. My daughter has friends with the same mutation, and they chat every weekend,” she said.

“A lot of the families have created these friendships ... because they get it.” ■

HIGHEST ANNUAL US DIRECT HEALTH CARE COSTS

Diabetes: \$189.6 billion
Alzheimer’s: \$185.9 billion
Osteoarthritis: \$115.5 billion

40%

More than 40 percent of children and adolescents currently have at least one chronic illness, according to the CDC.

90%

Of the United States’ \$4.1 trillion in annual health care expenditures, chronic diseases and mental health conditions account for 90 percent.

\$6,000 PER PATIENT

Estimates for the treatment and management of chronic conditions average to more than \$6,000 annually per patient.

170 MILLION

By 2030, the number of U.S. residents struggling with at least one chronic illness is expected to surpass 170 million.

Chronic noncommunicable diseases account for 70 percent of all global deaths annually, according to a study.

A dry, cracked lake bed in drought-stricken Lake Mead in Boulder City, Nev., on Sept. 15, 2022. Geoengineering techniques, such as cloud seeding, might be able to alleviate drought, but some have raised concerns about the implications of weather manipulation.

PHOTO BY FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



GEOENGINEERING

GOVERNMENT EMBRACES

WEATHER
MANIPULATION

The US government has invested millions into climate experiments with a dark history

BY AUTUMN SPREDEMAN

BLOCKING SUNLIGHT FROM REACHING the earth, creating rain, and altering a hurricane sound like the behaviors of a science fiction movie villain.

But this is exactly what the U.S. government has invested millions of dollars in for decades.

And the United States isn't alone. Because of ongoing climate concerns, renewed interest in geoengineering has taken countries by storm. Global governments—including China—have officially jumped on the geoengineering, or "climate intervention," bandwagon.

The idea of weather and climate manipulation has been around for more than half a century. There are two main types of geoengineering: solar radiation management and carbon removal. Weather manipulation, such as cloud seeding, is also a kind of geoengineering. Cloud seeding is used to manufacture or alter rainfall, snow, or even entire storms.

In March, the Southern Nevada Water Authority was given a \$2.4 million government grant to enhance cloud seeding in Western states with rivers that feed the desert region.

"This money from reclamation is wonderful. We just have to decide how exactly it's going to benefit us," Andrew Rickert, cloud seeding coordinator for the Colorado Water Conservation Board, told reporters.

This followed 2022's White House announcement of the funding of a five-year study on climate modification and geoengineering.

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy stated that a "scientific assessment of solar and other rapid climate interventions in the context of near-term climate risks and hazards" would be part of the final report, which will focus on "research associated with climate intervention."

White House officials didn't respond by press time to a request by The Epoch Times for comment.

The timing may prove auspicious. China already claims to have a weather modification program covering more than 2 million square miles. For perspective, that's bigger than all of India.

According to a State Council statement, China will have a "developed weather modification system" by 2025,

thanks to breakthroughs in fundamental research and key technologies.

The European Commission followed suit in March 2022 and announced a more than \$1 billion investment in five geoengineering projects.

But not everyone is happy about the renewed interest in climate manipulation. Security analysts and scientists are sounding alarm bells over the geopolitical and environmental implications.

Their unease is understandable. The U.S. government has a checkered past with weather modification experiments.

Some researchers say current science isn't up to speed with political ambition for geoengineering.

Unknown Consequences

"Just because people do it, doesn't mean it works," Alan Robock told The Epoch Times.

Robock is a professor in the Department of Environmental Sciences at Rutgers University. He said he doesn't think geoengineering or "climate intervention" is advanced enough to have a significant effect, for better or worse. He also stressed that more research—a ♣



lot more—is needed before any real progress can be made.

“Geoengineering, climate intervention, is a term for schemes to address global climate change and reduce the impact of humans on climate. Since it can’t be done, there’s nothing else they want you to do. It’s only in the realm of people doing con model simulations and theoretical calculations,” Robock said.

He isn’t alone in this assessment. A collection of 16 scholars drafted an open letter for an International Non-Use Agreement on Solar Geoengineering, which has collected signatures from dozens of university professors and researchers worldwide.

“These proliferating calls for solar geoengineering research and development are cause for alarm,” the letter reads.

It further cites concerns over the lack of understanding of consequences and the oversight needed to maintain “fair, inclusive, and effective political control.” Solar geoengineering has taken a lot

of heat in recent months. The technique aims to deflect sunlight back into space using stratospheric aerosols. Some climate change advocates say it could be a promising way to reduce the global temperature.

But there’s a major hurdle. Scientists say there could be a disastrous environmental impact.

“Potentially, it has a lot of benefits as well as risks. So we are in the middle of doing a lot of research to figure out whether it’s risky to do it,” Robock said.

In a May 2022 risk analysis study of geoengineering, researchers concluded that there was no risk-free scenario with any “climate intervention” methods.

Lead study author Benjamin Sovacool said human interventions don’t eliminate climate risks.

“They merely shift risk or redistribute it,” he said. “These risk tradeoffs must be evaluated if some of the more radical geoengineering technologies are to be deployed.”

Possible environmental consequences aside, there’s a security angle to consider. More advanced methods of weather manipulation will soon, if they aren’t already, be at the fingertips of global governments, which has raised ethical usage concerns.

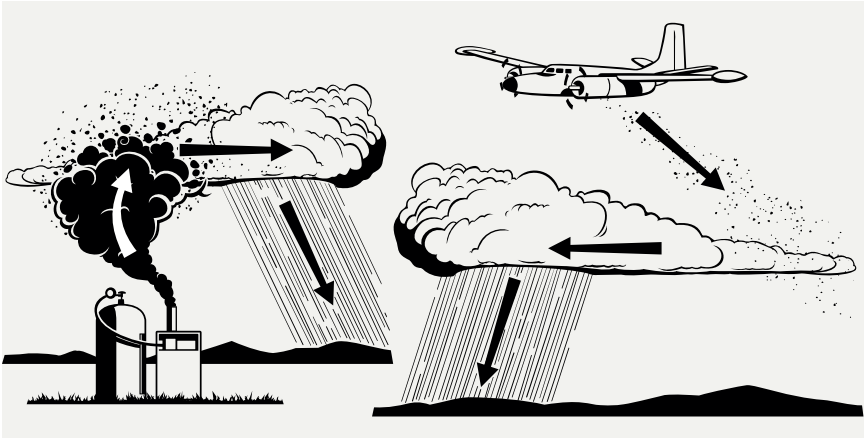
Among the unsettling implications, Robock noted societal disruption, conflicts between nations, and breaches of international treaties as possible outcomes.

He also posed an important question: Whose hand will be on the thermostat?

Cloud of Suspicion

The U.S. government has a dark history with weather manipulation. In 1947, Project Cirrus targeted a hurricane working its way out to sea in the Atlantic for a cloud-seeding experiment that was meant to weaken the cyclone. The storm was the ideal candidate because it was forecasted to continue moving away from land.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ALLAN STEIN/THE EPOCH TIMES; DOOF/PIRELLA GÖTTSCHE LOWE VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; NASA



(Left) The Colorado River, pictured on Jan. 16, supplies millions of gallons of water each day to drive the hydroelectric turbines at Hoover Dam. The Southern Nevada Water Authority has been given a \$2.4 million government grant to enhance cloud seeding in Western states whose rivers feed the desert region. (Above) Cloud seeding is used to manufacture or alter rainfall, snow, or even entire storms.

A plane was dispatched to fly over the storm and dump 80 kilograms of dry ice directly into it.

After the dry ice was “seeded” into the storm, it abruptly pivoted 130 degrees west and made its way toward Georgia. The hurricane crashed into the state and caused \$2 million in damages. Residents threatened lawsuits, and the government was immediately blamed.

But that was just the beginning of the questionable U.S. venture into weather manipulation, most of which has been done through cloud seeding.

In May 1958, a government-funded experiment used an “airborne silver iodide generator” to transform puffy white cumulus clouds near Rapid City, South Dakota, into a raging thunderstorm in less than an hour.

That same year, the U.S. Navy claimed that it successfully created and eliminated clouds “at will” in a series of tests over the coasts of Georgia and Florida during the summer. The experiments were 100 percent effective at destroying clouds in a period that ranged from less than three minutes to 20 minutes.

The price tag of these government-backed projects between 1950 and 1970 topped out at \$74 million. Another \$35 million was spent in the following two years.

In 1960, during the Cold War with Russia, U.S. Naval Commander William J. Kotsch touted the weapons applications of cloud seeding.

“If certain states within the United States, or certain countries of Western Europe, decided systematically and covertly to dissipate part or all of the clouds over their regions for several months of the year—to invoke a ‘cloud blockade’ in their own interests and deprive the areas to the east of rain—those areas to the east would be reduced to semi-desert over a period of time,” Kotsch said.

Considering the alleged climate cri-



“POTENTIALLY, IT HAS A LOT OF BENEFITS AS WELL AS RISKS.”

Alan Robock, professor, Rutgers University

sis and widespread drought currently unfolding, it’s not surprising that many have questioned the security implications of geoengineering.

Breaking the Rules

“Geoengineering, like any scientific innovation, should be conducted with the highest possible standard of honesty and transparency, in the scientific methods and within the strict observation of the framework of both general and specific ethical norms,” Irina Tsukerman, national security lawyer and founder of Scarab Rising, told The Epoch Times.

Tsukerman said science is often fraught with people “breaking the rules,” which can come with disastrous results. However, she said calamitous short-term forays into weather modification—such as Project Cirrus—and general climate science share a common denominator.

“The lack of ability to apply scientific processes to the studies consistently,” she said.

But Tsukerman said she doesn’t believe that any government has honed geoengineering into a weapon just yet.

“Despite all the hype, scientists still have a fairly rudimentary understanding of both climate and even local weather patterns,” she said.

Regardless, it certainly hasn’t stopped the U.S. government from trying.

In 1970, a military whistleblower told Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh that the U.S. government used cloud seeding as a weapon in South Vietnam to alter natural rainfall patterns in 1963.

It marked the first confirmed use of meteorological warfare in history. At the time, some members of the U.S. State Department reportedly opposed the use of weather modification as a weapon.

Fast forward 60 years. Now the United States, China, and Europe are all aggressively pursuing geoengineering, largely through cloud seeding.

With so many scientists calling for a halt to climate intervention, the benefits of these projects also become dubious.

When asked what geoengineering method looked the most promising, Robock replied, “None.”

The U.S. State Department, U.S. Geological Survey, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration didn’t respond by press time to requests by The Epoch Times for comment. ■

Formula 1 a Boon for Florida

The international race pumped hundreds of millions of dollars into the state's economy

BY T.J. MUSCARO

Racers compete on the track at the F1 Grand Prix of Miami at Miami International Autodrome on May 7.

PHOTO BY JARED C. TILTON/GETTY IMAGES



FORMULA ONE MOTOR racing returned to the Sunshine State in May for the second Miami Grand Prix, pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into the South Florida economy.

The international race adds to a growing wave of professional sporting events in the Magic City.

From May 5 to May 7, the governing body of Formula One—the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile—occupied Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens.

The event transformed the facility, home of the Miami Dolphins of the NFL, into the Miami International Autodrome.

Racing festivities attracted more than 270,000 people and generated enough revenue in the region to rival a national championship sports event, according to a local tourism organization.

In 2022, Formula One reported that the first Miami Grand Prix gave a \$350 million economic boost to the Greater Miami area and South Florida. It recorded a total attendance throughout the three-day weekend of 240,000 people.

For comparison, the Miami Super Bowl Host Committee stated that Super Bowl LIV generated \$572 million for Southeast Florida in February 2020.

It's unknown whether Miami will host another Super Bowl.

But the Formula One Miami Grand Prix is guaranteed to return for the next eight years.

Business Boom

The total revenue from the Miami Grand Prix 2023 hasn't yet been released, but attendance increased in 2023 by 30,000, recording 270,000 in attendance, a sellout.

Estimates on the economic effect going into race weekend were exciting, local entrepreneurs told The Epoch Times.

In the lead-up to the race, clients of Heyday Marketing and PR were expecting a jump of "25–35 percent from a business model" as travelers packed Miami restaurants, clubs, and events, according to Eduardo Moya, the firm's chief marketing officer.

While official numbers are still being

tallied, the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau confirmed that the number of hotel rooms sold in Miami-Dade County increased by 7.9 percent during race week, as compared with race week in 2022.

Neighboring Broward County, home to Fort Lauderdale, also saw a 2.5 percent increase in occupancy.

Hotel occupancy in Miami-Dade County was recorded at 72.5 percent overall and was more than 80 percent in some areas, the tourism organization reported.

A Formula One Grand Prix attracts fans, celebrities, and socialites from all over the world, pitting some of the biggest names in the automotive industry and extreme sports against each other.

In the mix of competitors were teams for Mercedes-Benz, McLaren, Ferrari, Aston Martin, and Red Bull.

Miami's own professional sports teams continued experiencing success.

Both the NBA's Miami Heat and the NHL's Florida Panthers were advancing in their respective playoffs, upsetting top teams in their leagues.

"A weird dynamic now in the city that helps a lot of the local businesses is the sports," said Miguel Zulueta, founder and CEO of the marketing firm Lifestyle Miami. "The Panthers. The Heat. The city's excited. Everybody's pumped. 'So what happens? They're going out!'"

And that's good for Miami-area businesses, Zulueta and Moya said.

"It's F1 weekend. It's Cinco de Mayo weekend. It's the Heat-Knicks playoffs," Moya said.

The men's social media pages were registering tens of millions of impressions on May 5, as locals, visitors, and celebrities looked for places to go.

'A Necessary Evil' for Locals

But not everyone in Miami is thrilled with what a grand prix race brings to town.

Hard Rock Stadium is in the middle of a vast residential area. Many complain that Formula One is just the latest event turning Miami into a party town exclusively for the rich, Moya and Zulueta said.



“It’s a mixed review,” Moya said. “Locals feel that the event in the city is overpriced. They feel like they are catering to the elite. At the end of the day, it is what it is. But that’s their perspective. “But there are locals that appreciate the sport, and they go and enjoy it.” And the boost it brings to local businesses can help soothe angry feelings. As for Formula One attracting many locals around the stadium, “that’s not their audience,” according to Zulueta. “But, of course, if you own a local restaurant around there, it does bring business,” he said. “So they kind of deal with it.” Inside the autodrome, local businesses partner with Formula One by operating pop-up vendor stands. And most people who work at the Grand Prix live in the area, according to Zulueta. So while they may not be Formula One fans and feel that their

72.5%

DURING RACE WEEK, hotel occupancy in Miami-Dade County was recorded at 72.5 percent overall and was more than 80 percent in some areas, the tourism organization reported.

\$350 MILLION

IN 2022, FORMULA ONE REPORTED that the first Miami Grand Prix gave a \$350 million economic boost to the Greater Miami area and South Florida.

neighborhood is being used, they still get an influx of work. In the eyes of the locals, “it’s a necessary evil,” he said. Formula One is said to be one of the fastest-growing spectator sports in the United States. It’s been popularized recently by a Netflix documentary series, “Formula 1: Drive to Survive.” Miami is trying to prove that it can host an event that stands alongside the racing quality at Silverstone Circuit in England and the Imola track in Italy. The city also aims to rival the elegance of tracks in Monaco and Abu Dhabi. “Formula One, like anything else, is putting us on the map to another audience,” Moya said. “With F1, we’re bringing a European audience.” Zulueta said, “Super Bowl is king, in my opinion. Formula One is the new kid in school. Everybody wants to look at it. Everybody wants to go and be a

FROM L. GIORGIO VIERA/AFV VIA GETTY IMAGES COURTESY OF HEYDAY MARKETING



(Far Left) Visitors walk along the floating docks during the Discover Boating Miami International Boat Show in Miami on Feb.18. In the lead-up to the race, travelers packed Miami restaurants, clubs, and events.
(Left) Eduardo Moya of Heyday Marketing and PR (L) and Miguel Zulueta of Lifestyle Miami. Sporting events are good for the Miami-area businesses, they say.

part of it—but fans are not super connected yet.” And like that notoriously bumpy first day of school, Miami had a lot of adjustments to make in the lead-up to its second Formula One event. The inaugural event in 2022 was criticized by fans and drivers on a variety of issues—from the state of the street circuit to the logistics of getting spectators in and out of the autodrome. But Miami leaders took action, according to Moya and Zulueta. “The City of Miami has a lot of pride for itself. We bleed 305,” Moya said. “When we heard those comments last year that people were unhappy, we took that to heart.” Moya and Zulueta were involved in meetings with state representatives, mayors, and committees in order to figure out how to make the 2023 event better, they said. “We’re known for a high production, high-quality party city,” Moya said. “It’s important for us to continue making this the go-to city.” This year, the event went more smoothly, and drivers reportedly immersed themselves in the city more than last year, they said. And there was a strong sense of community involvement. Promoters of the sport hope to “get to the kids, build a fan base, and gain support,” according to Zulueta. “Not just in Miami Gardens, but everywhere,” he said. Moya said, “Let’s think 10, 15 years from now. You may have a kid who comes out of Miami Gardens that ends up being a racer. That’s the idea of it.” Formula One just adds to the nearly nonstop sports action for the past two months. LoanDepot Park—home of the Miami

Marlins of MLB—was one of the four stadiums to host the 2023 World Baseball Classic from March 11 to March 21. The world’s best tennis pros gathered at Hard Rock Stadium for the 2023 Miami Open from March 19 to April 2. And UFC 287: Pereira versus Adesanya 2, a mixed martial arts event produced by the Ultimate Fighting Championship, was held at the Miami Heat’s home arena, Kaseya Center, on April 8. “Believe it or not, local businesses are already getting ready for [a FIFA] World Cup” soccer championship in 2026, Zulueta said. “It’s three years away. It seems like a long time. But with these Formula One events coming up, it’s also taught the city and local businesses [to handle] another mega event. So people are more prepared.” When people around the world think of Miami, they often think of glamorous South Beach, Moya said, but now many are learning that there’s a lot more to do than hang out at the beach.

Homegrown Formula 1 Star
On May 7, 20 of the best drivers in the world charged through 57 laps around Hard Rock Stadium. In that lineup was Fort Lauderdale native Logan Sargeant. As he started from the back of the grid, Sergeant’s race was analogous to South Florida’s Formula One future. The city has earned its place in the club and now gets to show the world what it can do over the next few years.

Some say the Miami Grand Prix is already among the best spectacles in racing. “Formula One is all over South America, all over Asia, all over Europe—everywhere but America,” Juan Ganem, a Miami-based consultant and Formula One fan, told The Epoch Times. “I’ve gone to Monaco. I’ve gone to Singapore. I’ve gone to all of these ... races, and Miami is up there, man. Miami is really up there. It’s making a noise. “Now, our first year, Miami cut some corners as far as the quality of the track. But as a consumer, as a sponsor, it’s all there. It’s a great opportunity, and it’s growing.” ■



PHOTO BY JAN WALDE/GETTY IMAGES

A GROUNDBREAKING FEDERAL lawsuit could ban fluoride from drinking water, overturning a decades-long program aimed at preventing cavities that has been challenged by mounting evidence of harm.

The Fluoride Action Network (FAN) sued the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Toxic Substances Control Act in 2017, and it appears to be nearing its conclusion. Under the act, citizens can challenge the EPA in court when the agency rejects a petition to ban or regulate a toxic substance. The FAN’s suit is the first in the 44-year history of the act to actually get to trial.

The lawsuit has included pointed testimony from leading experts on environmental toxins and admissions from both EPA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) officials that fluoride could be linked to specific harms. The lawsuit has also revealed government interference in crucial scientific findings.

In From the Fringes

The lawsuit has brought attention to new research that links fluoride exposure to damaging neurodevelopment effects, concerns that have sometimes been deemed conspiracy theories.

“Opposition to fluoridation is now at least 70 years old, but for most of that time has been wrongly dismissed as a fringe and unscientific position,” FAN Executive Director Paul Connett said in a statement.

“The rapidly emerging science on developmental neurotoxicity, especially loss of IQ from early life exposure to fluoride, is a game-changer.”

Much of the most important science on fluoride has come via research funded with millions of dollars by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Some of that research has concluded that “the risk to children is too great to consider water fluoridation safe,” Connett said.

The Background

The lawsuit began after the EPA rejected a petition filed in November 2016 that called on the agency to “protect the public and susceptible subpopulations

from the neurotoxic risks of fluoride by banning the addition of fluoridation chemicals to water.”

The petition referenced more than 2,500 pages of scientific documentation detailing the risks of water fluoridation to human health, including more than 180 published studies showing that fluoride is linked to reduced IQ and neurotoxic harm.

“Fluoride exposure during early brain development diminishes the intellectual abilities in young children.”

Dr. Bruce Lanphear, former consultant, Environmental Protection Agency

In its Feb. 27, 2017 response, the EPA rejected the petition, claiming that it failed to “set forth a scientifically defensible basis to conclude that any persons have suffered neurotoxic harm as a result of exposure to fluoride.”

In response to the denial, the FAN and Food & Water Watch filed the federal lawsuit against the EPA.

The Toxic Substances Control Act is aimed at preventing harm from environmental chemical hazards before they occur and gives the EPA authority to regulate or ban the “particular use” of chemicals that pose an “unreasonable risk” to human health, including susceptible subpopulations.

The EPA made several attempts to have the case dismissed, each of which was denied by the court. After each side made its closing remarks in the two-week trial in 2020, the court made a surprise decision to delay judgment.

A 2nd Phase

Rather than issue a judgment, in August 2020, the court paused all proceedings

and instructed the plaintiffs to file a new petition with the EPA including the new scientific studies.

They did so in November 2020, but the EPA denied it, citing insufficient scientific evidence.

“Without the final [National Toxicology Program] monograph, reconsidering the petition denial at this time would not be prudent use of EPA’s resources,” the EPA stated.

That monograph is the National Toxicology Program’s report on fluoride toxicity, a document that the government has been reluctant to release.

The EPA’s rejection of the petition means that a second phase of the trial will take place. In explaining his decision to extend the trial, the judge noted the issue of ongoing science on the topic.

“So much has changed since the petition was filed ... two significant series of studies—respective cohort studies—which everybody agrees is the best methodology. Everybody agrees that these were rigorous studies and everybody agrees that these studies would be part of the best available scientific evidence,” said Judge Edward M. Chen of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Chen wants two documents in the next phase of the trial.

1. The systematic review of fluoride’s neurotoxicity from the National Toxicology Program. The program’s report, which isn’t yet finalized, has been a source of controversy in the ongoing lawsuit. The report draft was made public on March 15, 2022, as part of an agreement in the lawsuit, but internal CDC emails obtained through the Freedom of Information Act revealed government interference with its release.
2. A Benchmark Dose analysis of fluoride’s neurotoxicity. The analysis titled “A Benchmark Dose Analysis for Maternal Pregnancy Urine-Fluoride and IQ in Children” by Dr. Philippe Grandjean et al. was published on June 8, 2021, in the journal Risk Analysis.

The court also expressed a concern that the EPA didn’t apply the proper stan-

dard of causation under the requirements of the Toxic Substances Control Act in its assessment of the health hazards of fluoride.

According to the FAN, the court has set aside two weeks to hear testimony and cross-examination of expert witnesses based on new published research and evidence that has come to light since the last trial dates in 2020.

Revelations at Trial

In the initial trial, Grandjean, Dr. Howard Hu, and Dr. Bruce Lanphear were among the noteworthy expert plaintiff witnesses.

Grandjean has published about 500 scientific papers, and his study on the neurodevelopmental effects of prenatal mercury exposure was used by the EPA to derive a reference dose for methylmercury.

Hu and Lanphear are known for their seminal research on the impact and neurotoxicity of lead exposure, and both have worked with the EPA in expert advisory roles. Lanphear’s past studies were used by the EPA to set the standards on and regulations of lead.

Both testified on the results of their recent multiyear NIH-funded studies on fluoride and neurodevelopment.

In his testimony, Hu said his findings were comparable in magnitude to the impact of lead exposure, and in his closing statement said, “It is my opinion to a reasonable degree of scientific certainty, that the results of the element studies support the conclusion that fluoride is a developmental neurotoxicant at levels of internalized exposure seen

in water fluoridated communities.”

Similarly, Lanphear closed his testimony by stating, “The collective evidence from prospective cohort studies supports the conclusion that fluoride exposure during early brain development diminishes the intellectual abilities in young children, including at the purportedly ‘optimal’ levels of exposure for caries prevention.”

Grandjean, a physician, environmental epidemiologist, and adjunct professor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, testified on a weight of evidence analysis he did of all best-available research on fluoride and neurotoxicity.

“With a reasonable degree of scientific certainty, I, therefore, consider the elevated levels of fluoride exposure in the U.S. population as a serious public health concern,” he said.

Science for Hire?

According to court documents, instead of the EPA calling in their own agency’s experts on fluoride, they hired the outside consultancy firm Exponent, bringing in their employees, principal scientists Ellen Chang and Joyce Tsuji, as expert witnesses.

Exponent’s website states that one of the many areas it specializes in is toxic tort and supporting its clients on regulatory frameworks such as the Toxic Substances Control Act. It also notes that they’ve testified in quite a few state and federal courts.

In the past, Chang has produced systematic reviews for both Dow’s chemical Agent Orange, a herbicide used by the military during the Vietnam War to kill enemy crops, and Monsanto’s pesticide glyphosate.

Both reviews concluded that there was no consistent or convincing evidence of a “causal relationship” between exposure to the products and health risks, although not all scientists and studies agree with these conclusions.

Chang was also a key expert witness for 3M in the 2017 lawsuit filed by the state of Minnesota against the company for dumping PFC-containing waste into the Minnesota environment.

In her expert report, she argued that



The Environmental Protection Agency in Washington on Dec. 12, 2018.

“no major health or regulatory agency has concluded that a causal effect has been established between exposure to PFOA, PFOS, or other and any adverse human health outcome.”

Currently, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is part of the World Health Organization, classifies PFOA as “possibly carcinogenic to humans.”

Per trial documents, Chang criticized the quality of the peer-reviewed NIH-funded studies linking fluoride to lowered IQ. She concluded that “the strength of the observed associations does not provide persuasive evidence.”

According to court documents, Chang and Tsuji testified that they

weren’t experts on fluoride prior to their retention for the lawsuit, and Chang had billed the EPA roughly \$150,000 for her work.

In a September 2022 court document, defense attorney Brandon N. Adkins notified the court that on July 2022, Chang, the defense’s expert epidemiologist, was no longer available as an expert witness in the case.

Federal Depositions

The FAN presented several sworn statements from leaders within the CDC, the EPA, the Food and Drug Administration, and others from prior depositions.

The Epoch Times acquired video clips of several depositions and the petitioners’ summary of the trial record but hasn’t obtained the complete transcript of the trial.

Based on these documents, Joyce Donahue, chief scientist on fluoride at the EPA’s Office of Water, admitted under oath that the most recent studies on fluoride neurotoxicity, including the NIH-funded studies, are “well conducted” and warrant a reassessment of all existing safety standards on fluoride.

During his testimony, Casey Hannon, director of the Oral Health Division at the CDC, said the agency, in connection with the intergovernmental work group, agreed with the National Research Council (NRC) that it’s apparent that fluorides have the ability to interfere with the functions of the brain and the body by direct and indirect means.

When asked if the CDC accepts that fluoride is an endocrine disruptor, Hannon replied, “We accept the [2006] NRC report as a summary of the hazard, yes.”

“The rapidly emerging science on developmental neurotoxicity, especially loss of IQ from early life exposure to fluoride, is a game-changer.”

Paul Connett, executive director, Fluoride Action Network

When asked, he said the CDC considers the American Dental Association an outside partner that the CDC partners with to promote community water fluoridation.

Alleged Fraud and Corruption

The FAN has used the lawsuit to also draw attention to what may be systemic issues within the EPA.

Court documents included a Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey conducted by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

In the survey, 60.4 percent of employees in the EPA’s Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT), responsible for enforcing the Toxic Substances Control Act, gave a “negative” assessment regarding the honesty and integrity of senior leaders.

The documents also noted that four EPA scientists in the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (which includes the OPPT) have filed complaints alleging “fraud and corruption” related to chemical risk assessments conducted under the act, including the removal of potential health effects without the knowledge or consent of human health assessors.

The survey and documents weren’t specific to the fluoride issue. ■

60%
A FEDERAL SURVEY has found that 60.4 percent of employees in the EPA’s Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics gave a “negative” assessment regarding the honesty and integrity of senior leaders.



A technologist assists a woman as she gets her annual mammogram.

BREAST CANCER

Why Early Mammography Won't Save More Women

New US guidelines on breast cancer screening will increase risk and mortality, study says

By Emma Suttie

ON MAY 9, A DRAFT RECOMMENDATION from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force announced that women should begin screening for breast cancer at age 40 and every other year after that, which differs from their 2009 recommendation that women start screening for breast cancer a decade later, at age 50. Dr. Carol Mangione, previous task force chair, said, “This new recommendation will help save lives and prevent more women from dying due to breast cancer.”

The new guidelines raise the question of whether another decade’s worth of mammograms—which involve placing the breast in a machine and pressing it with up to 45 pounds of pressure while subjecting it to ionizing radiation—is the best way to prevent more deaths from a disease that can be caused by exposure to radiation.

Does Mammography Lead to Better Outcomes?

A previous Epoch Times article titled “The Business of Breast Cancer: Mammogram Risks”

FROM: KALU/GETTY IMAGES; THE EPOCH TIMES

reported on the risks of mammography, the studies that examine those risks, and the perspectives of some experts on the subject.

One of those experts was Dr. Michael Baum, a British surgical oncologist specializing in breast cancer treatment and one of the architects of the UK’s national breast screening program, which opened its first center in England in 1987. Baum went from being one of the program’s most adamant supporters to one of its most vocal critics.

He summarizes it this way in an interview from April:

“For every thousand women screened by mammography over 10 years, we will avoid one breast cancer death—note, I am not saying it will help them live longer—they will avoid one breast cancer death.”

He calls the breast screening program [using mammography] a “courageous experiment” but says that “when the data changes, you must change your mind,” adding that “the data no longer supports mammographic screening.”

Accuracy

Mammography is touted by cancer groups, organizations, and associations as “the gold standard” because it can find breast cancer, which is thought to save lives ultimately. But plenty of evidence suggests that mammograms are inaccurate; they can miss the fast-growing, aggressive cancers they should discover and find some cancers they shouldn’t, such as DCIS, or ductal carcinoma in situ.

DCIS is the presence of precancerous cells localized in a single duct or ducts in the breast. It’s slow-growing and develops into cancer in only about 20 percent of women. Many women are unaware of this type of cancer and aren’t told all the details if diagnosed. A DCIS diagnosis often results in treatments that may be unnecessary. DCIS was rarely diagnosed before the advent of breast screening, and 60,000 women are now diagnosed annually in the United States.

In an interview from December 2016, Dr. Otis W. Brawley, chief medical and scientific officer of the American Cancer Society, stated: “In the best of circumstances, the studies show that mammography decreases the risk of death by 20 to 30 percent. That means it does not benefit 70 to 80 percent of the women that need a test that saves their lives.”

A page on the American Cancer Society’s website called “Limitations of Mammograms” states, “Overall, screening mammograms miss about 1

in 8 breast cancers.” The page also says, “About half of the women getting annual mammograms over a 10-year period will have a false-positive finding at some point.”

Radiation

Breasts are the most sensitive tissues in a woman’s body and are highly vulnerable to radiation. In fact, Cornell University’s Program on Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors states that “the female breast is known to be highly susceptible to the cancer-causing effects of radiation when exposure occurs before menopause.”

Mammograms direct radiation directly at the breast and sometimes the vital organs beneath it, such as the heart and lungs.



“In the best of circumstances, the studies show that mammography decreases the risk of death by 20 to 30 percent.”

Dr. Otis W. Brawley,
chief medical and scientific officer, American Cancer Society

A cohort study published in the British Journal of Cancer in 2012 followed more than 500,000 women from 1973 to 2009. The study found that women who had received radiation treatment for breast cancer (high-energy X-rays) had a significant increase in heart disease and lung cancer decades after their treatment.

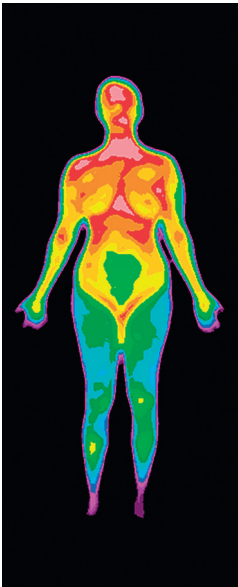
The study demonstrates a progressive increase in risk and mortality from radiation-related heart disease and lung cancer with time—into the third decade—after radiation exposure.

Mammograms can be in 2D or 3D (called digital breast tomosynthesis, or DBT) and use ionizing radiation to capture images of the breast. The newer 3D version is what many women receive today. However, despite all our technological advances, it delivers more radiation to a woman’s breast than the older 2D variety.

The Susan G. Komen website states, “DBT may give a slightly higher radiation dose than standard 2D mammography. This higher dose is within FDA guidelines, though.”

Breast Density

Another factor affecting a mammogram’s accuracy is the density of a woman’s breast. Some women have more fatty tissue in their



An illustration of a woman's body using thermography. The image shows a range of colors, with blue showing cooler temperature and red showing warmer temperature, which can indicate inflammation.

breasts, and some women's breasts are more dense. Mammograms can't clearly see changes in breast tissue in women with dense breasts, and some say breast density makes mammography 50 percent less accurate. Also, dense breast tissue absorbs significantly more radiation than fatty breast tissue, putting women with dense breasts at higher risk of breast cancer.

A study published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute found that 43.3 percent of U.S. women aged 40 to 74 have dense breasts. There are four levels of breast density, according to AreYouDense.org: A (fatty), B (scattered), C (heterogeneous), and D (extreme).

According to Dr. Thomas Kolb, who specializes in detecting and diagnosing breast cancer and was the lead author of a study published in Radiology, "Mammographic sensitivity for breast cancer declines significantly with increasing breast density (48 percent for the densest breasts)." In the same study, Kolb said that the "addition of screening [ultrasound] significantly increases detection of small cancers."

"Two-thirds (66 percent) of premenopausal women and 25 percent of postmenopausal women have breasts dense enough that a mammogram will miss their breast cancer," Kolb said.

According to AreYouDense.org, "Breast density is one of the strongest predictors of the failure of mammography screening to detect breast cancer."

Overdiagnosis, Overtreatment, and Incorrect Diagnosis

One of the biggest concerns with the prevalence of mammography is overdiagnosis. Mammograms can detect abnormalities that may not be cancer or cancers that may have regressed on their own. These abnormalities are often treated with chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery without knowing whether they would have ever become clinically significant.

As the evidence has accumulated, overdiagnosis is now considered the most severe consequence of population-wide screening with mammography.

An abnormality detected by mammography

is usually treated with a biopsy, which removes cells from the area in question and looks at them under a microscope. A study published in the American Journal of Roentgenology states, "More than 1 million breast biopsies are performed every year in the United States, and approximately 75 to 80 percent yield a benign outcome."

Incorrect diagnosis is also an extremely unpleasant side effect of mammography, as are the resulting biopsies if abnormalities are found. In fact, according to a Susan J. Komen white paper from June 2006, "More than 90,000 people currently living with breast cancer may, in fact, be living ... with an incorrect diagnosis."

A Better Alternative

Many other noninvasive screening options for preventing and detecting breast cancer are discussed in our previous article "Finding Breast Cancer—Low-Risk Early Detection Tools You May Not Know About." They include thermography and multiple blood tests to detect cancer cells before they coalesce into a tumor.

Thermography uses an infrared camera to detect heat on the skin's surface. It can see variations in temperature and increased heat that can point to various stages of breast disease. Unlike mammography, there is no compression, no radiation, and the machine doesn't touch the body. It's as simple as having your picture taken.

Dr. Galina Migalko, who runs a noninvasive complementary and alternative medical imaging practice, is one of the few doctors in the nation who does thermography and ultrasound side-by-side. Based on her clinical experience, she said that ultrasound can give up to 90 percent accuracy, but the combination of thermography and ultrasound is between 95 and 99 percent accurate.

Part of the reason this combination of screening is so effective is that it uses two types of tests. An ultrasound is an anatomical test, a test of structure, while thermography is a test of physiology, of function. Together, they make a powerful team and can detect breast changes many years before a tumor develops.

"Thermography can see problems eight to 10 years before we see a mass," Migalko said. ■

50%

SOME EXPERTS say breast density makes mammography 50 percent less accurate.

99%

THE COMBINATION of thermography and ultrasound is between 95 and 99 percent accurate, a doctor says.

Perspectives



The G-7 2023 summit logo is displayed at the entrance of the International Media Center ahead of the G-7 leaders summit in Hiroshima, Japan, on May 18.

PHOTO BY LUDOVIC MARIN/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES



SELECTIVE TARGET

Have the progressives won the cultural war? **56**



G-7 TARGETS CHINA'S AGGRESSION

Human rights and territorial integrity of neighbors at issue. **57**



ANOTHER HOUSING CRISIS?

New administration policies may be setting up a rerun of 2008. **58**

Selective Target

Have the progressives won the cultural war?



ONE OF THE FUNNIEST and most original Monty Python skits finds a man paying a receptionist to have an argument with one of her fellow office workers, who does this for a living. But he enters the wrong door. “This is abuse,” he’s told by another employee whose job it is to insult paying clients.

One couldn’t be blamed for wondering if abusing your own customers is no longer in the realm of chic absurdist BBC comedy but forms part of the business plan of the Minneapolis-based Target retail corporation.

It was in 1996—not exactly the Middle Ages—when a Democratic president of the United States named Bill Clinton signed the quite popular Defense of Marriage Act. The law declared that “the word ‘marriage’ means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word ‘spouse’ refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife.”

This is how matrimony has been viewed for thousands of years of civilization, not only in the West but spanning the continents of the globe. If it’s your view, however, you won’t feel very comfortable at Target. In fact, browsing at Target, you won’t have to look very far to find every color of the spectrum shouting “pride” at you with the none-too-subtle message that you’re a bigot and a fossil from another age that ought to be discarded to the ash heap.

Target’s website contains 50 pages of material promoting the opposite viewpoint, including an apparently pornographic novel described as “a hot boss/CEO/assistant gay romance set in England (UK) with a side of humour, steamy sex, and a cute kid thrown in.”

Whatever happened to compa-

nies refraining from involving themselves in divisive political or cultural issues, in fear of their offended clientele taking their business elsewhere?

In fact, that wasn’t as much the case as we might believe. There are many insignificant instances, such as Coca-Cola making the most expensive TV commercial to date in 1971, spending \$250,000 assembling hundreds of hippies from around the world to an Italian hilltop to sing “I’d like to buy the world a Coke” in hopes that it would end the Vietnam War and war in general.

What ever happened to companies refraining from involving themselves in divisive political or cultural issues, in fear of their offended clientele taking their business elsewhere?

And then there is Henry Ford II, in 1947, using the massive Ford fortune to establish the Ford Foundation, the largest foundation in the world, which among many other things “began supporting the Ms. Foundation in 1979 in order to advance women’s rights in reproductive health” and as far back as 1952 was “paving the way for the establishment of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS),” one of the most potent progressive influences on children and adults alike.

In Target’s case, it’s prominently displaying same-sex celebratory wares ranging from clothing to pet products to rainbow baking utensils to even a kiddie swimsuit

designed to be “thoughtfully fit on multiple body types and gender expressions.” But it has withdrawn or downplayed some offerings in the wake of “threats impacting our team members’ sense of safety and well-being while at work,” whatever exactly that means.

If physical “threats” mean things such as online videos of rainbow cardboard displays being trampled, they can hardly be taken seriously as any danger of physical violence against Target employees. Does political expression under the First Amendment now exclude visual expressions of outrage?

Symbols and slogans that extol same-sex relationships, as well as the mutilation of children in defiance of their parents, plus opposition to the integrity of the institution of marriage, are an affront and intimidation to those who embrace traditional family values.

Consider the double standard: The firms that do all they can to promote this agenda don’t take an “if you don’t like it, shop elsewhere” attitude when it comes to the Confederate battle flag, despite the fact that most Americans who wear or fly that symbol clearly don’t do so out of racist sentiment.

No one should be promoting or selling the swastika, and yet most of its use before the Nazis appropriated it was as a symbol wishing prosperity by a multitude of cultures around the world. And even today among Hindus and Buddhists in much of Asia and for Navajos in America, the symbol is revered.

If businesses aren’t convinced that they’ll lose a lot of money for their woke-based selectivity and double standards, they’ll never stop abusing the eyes of their customers. Customers who don’t subscribe to turning morality upside down, that is.

G-7 Targets China’s Aggression

Human rights and territorial integrity of neighbors are at issue



THE G-7 SUMMIT OF developed democracies ended on an unprecedentedly tough note against the regime in China. The seven economically strongest democracies—the United States, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Canada—distributed a May 20 statement with a list of complaints against the regime in Beijing, including its failure to pressure Russia into ending the Ukraine invasion.

The communiqué also addressed a list of China “concerns” related to Taiwan, Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, the South China Sea, political interference in democracies, climate change, environmental conservation, vulnerable countries’ debts, global public health, and macroeconomic stability.

The statement hastened to reassure Beijing that the G-7 countries sought cooperation with China. But it implied that such cooperation was not forthcoming from the regime. The G-7 rejected economic “decoupling” from China but supported other closely associated strategies, such as “de-risking” and “diversifying” supply chains.

Beijing was not pleased. Whether one calls it “decoupling” or “de-risking,” the end result is the same: a gradual diversification of supply chains away from China to more friendly countries.

“We will seek to address the challenges posed by China’s non-market policies and practices, which distort the global economy,” the communiqué read. “We will counter malign practices, such as illegitimate technology transfer or data disclosure.”

The G-7 countries made clear that they sought “resilience to economic coercion” by China and would protect “certain advanced technologies that could be used to threaten ... national security without unduly

limiting trade and investment.”

On May 22, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak called China an “epoch-defining challenge” and said the West needed a robust approach to protecting sensitive technologies, including semiconductors, quantum computing, and dual-use equipment.

The G-7 countries made clear that they sought ‘resilience to economic coercion’ by China.

The Gv-7 communiqué categorically rejected Beijing’s attempts to infringe on other countries’ claims in the East and South China seas. “We strongly oppose any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion,” it stated. “There is no legal basis for China’s expansive maritime claims in the South China Sea, and we oppose China’s militarization activities in the region.”

Human rights and democracy played an important part in the statement, which noted concerns over forced labor in Tibet and Xinjiang and Beijing’s violation of its Hong Kong treaty.

“We call on China to honor its commitments under the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law, which enshrine rights, freedoms and a high degree of autonomy for Hong Kong,” the communiqué read.

In an apparent reference to a Chinese ambassador who rejected the sovereignty of former Soviet republics and potentially Beijing’s recently revealed interference in Canada’s democratic processes, the statement implied that China violated the most basic of international agreements on diplomacy and respect for democracy.

“We call on China to act in accordance with its obligations under the

Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, and not to conduct interference activities aimed at undermining the security and safety of our communities, the integrity of our democratic institutions and our economic prosperity,” it stated.

The G-7 countries were unequivocal in supporting Ukraine, whose president was present for some of the meetings.

“We call on China to press Russia to stop its military aggression, and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its troops from Ukraine,” the statement reads. “We encourage China to support a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on territorial integrity and the principles and purposes of the UN Charter, including through its direct dialogue with Ukraine.”

Beijing reacted to the statement with outrage, depicting the G-7 as an “anti-China workshop” and focusing its ire on Japan and the United Kingdom. China’s foreign ministry summoned the Japanese ambassador in Beijing for censure.

The G-7 statement increased pressure on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to abide by basic human rights and respect the territorial integrity of sovereign states in the international system. The world’s most powerful democracies, which together have a far larger GDP than China, have now shown that they take a unified stand against the CCP’s aggression and back it up with their considerable economic heft.

This G-7 achievement is a rarity in international politics and a testament to the importance of working closely with our nearest allies and partners, with whom we share not just trade and investment but democratic values and rights that all people deserve to enjoy.

Another Housing Crisis?

New administration policies may be setting up a rerun of 2008



WASHINGTON seems to have missed the primary lesson of 2008’s financial crisis, so much so that the government seems ready to set up the nation for a second run at that horror.

It’s true that the last crisis had a lot of moving parts and reflected many bad decisions by both government and private actors. However, the one of greatest significance was Washington’s long insistence before the crisis broke that banks and other lenders extend more and more mortgage credit to lower-income people, the so-called subprime borrower. These are people who would likely have difficulty meeting their financial obligations.

As the government for years pressured banks to make such loans, the risk of default in the financial system grew. When events that otherwise might have been a minor economic setback put these poor borrowers in a position where they could no longer pay, all these lenders found themselves in a precarious position. And because the mortgage lenders were in trouble, any other financial institution vulnerable to them found itself in trouble.

Now, 15 years on, the Biden administration seems eager to orchestrate a rerun of the disaster.

Although the specifics of this new policy look nothing like the game Washington played in the run-up to 2008, the essentials are the same and the effect will be as well.

Instead of the old way of using regulatory powers to reward and punish lenders according to how well they followed Washington’s directions on subprime lending, this new approach relies on the loan-level price adjustment (LLPA) rule. It would subsidize mortgage fees for lower-income bor-

rowers, those with low credit scores, and those who are unable to offer a substantial down payment.

These subsidies would extend to the cost of mortgage insurance, which is typically required when a buyer puts relatively little cash down. The rule would enable this support by charging higher fees to those with better credit scores and who are willing to make a higher down payment.

The last crisis had lots of moving parts and reflected many bad decisions.

The aim is a worthy one. All else equal, it seems like a good idea to bring more lower-income people into home ownership. That way they would have more of a stake in their community. They would also gain an important leg up on the path to wealth creation. Worthy as the goal is, however, the new LLPA rule would fail to serve its intentions and would bring other ills with it as well.

One such problem considers fairness. It would seem fundamentally inequitable, to use a word much more common these days, to press higher fees on borrowers who are more likely to repay the loan than those who are less likely to repay it.

It would further seem ill-advised to effectively penalize (at least relatively) those who may have postponed their purchase for years in order to amass a larger down payment and who also imposed on themselves the financial discipline necessary to earn a high credit score.

The more important economic problem is that the rule exposes the country’s financial system to an ever-greater probability of facing widespread default on loan portfolios:

in other words, the very same risks that led to the 2008–09 crisis.

Reduced fees will, of course, offer low-income borrowers some relief on their costs and, to that extent, make it easier for them to meet their financial obligations. But this would be paltry protection. These fees are only a small part of the cost of home ownership. The size of the mortgage and the interest rate on it constitute a greater portion of the burden.

And then, of course, there are also unexpected repairs, a leaky roof, for example, the failure of home appliances, accidents, and a long list of other expenses with which all homeowners are familiar.

These costs fall on all, but to a low-income person already only just able to meet even a subsidized payment structure, they can easily force a failure to meet the terms of the mortgage. If enough of these borrowers fail, the lenders will find themselves in a precarious financial position, which is precisely what happened in 2008.

These financial problems will take time to develop enough to threaten the financial system’s stability. Right now, there are relatively few such subprime loans on the books for mortgage lenders or elsewhere in the financial system. The bankers seem to have longer memories than people in Washington do. The problem may never develop. It also seems that, recently, the Federal Housing Finance Agency has put the effort on pause.

Even if the rule change does go ahead, it’ll take time to develop a critical mass of risky loans. However, the risk will grow with each passing week. Then, the slightest economic setback, much less the recession that’s highly likely to develop soon, could bring on the loan failures and a return to the mess that all—save Washington, it seems—remembers all too well.

Consumers Show Signs of Resilience

Robust consumer spending could be bad news for inflation



AMERICAN CONSUMERS are proving to be more resilient than many market experts had expected in the tough economic climate, and this strength in spending is fueling the reacceleration in inflation.

However, this might not be good news for consumers or the Federal Reserve.

The Fed’s preferred inflation gauge—the Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) price index—unexpectedly rose in April, climbing to 4.4 percent, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). The core PCE, which excludes the volatile energy and food components, also edged up to 4.7 percent.

The PCE report revealed that consumers are surviving amid an environment of high prices, rising borrowing costs, and a slowing economy. While real household income (inflation-adjusted) was flat, consumer spending advanced at a significant 0.8 percent in April, fueling the jump in prices.

PCE figures were supported by the 0.4 percent rebound in retail sales in April, according to the Census Bureau (CB). Although they came in below economists’ expectations of 0.8 percent, retail sales were up from negative 0.7 percent in March.

BEA and CB statistics highlight that spending has been broad-based, with shoppers allocating their consumption behaviors to both goods (durable and nondurable) and services, increasing by 0.8 percent and 0.5 percent, respectively.

Despite real wage growth (inflation-adjusted) being stuck in negative territory, consumers have utilized two tools to fund their spending and cover higher prices: debt and pandemic-era savings.

Recent Fed data revealed that consumer credit climbed by 6.6 percent in



Consumer spending advanced at a significant 0.8 percent in April.

March, up from the 3.7 percent increase in the previous month. This was driven by the more than 17 percent surge in revolving credit, such as credit cards.

The San Francisco Fed Bank published a report that found that consumers still possess about \$500 billion in excess savings. This cash was accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic when the economy was shut down and the U.S. government flooded the economy with liquidity.

So are these consumer spending levels sustainable?

Not quite, says Scott Anderson, chief economist at Bank of the West, who wrote in a note that “gray clouds are forming on the consumer spending front.”

“The household income outlook, the high-octane fuel for overall consumer spending growth, is visibly bifurcating across income brackets,” he said.

Government social benefits started tumbling to kick off the second quarter, while low-income households report that their pandemic-era savings have been depleted. The overall per-

sonal savings rate clocked in at 4.1 percent in April. Credit growth has been solid, but various Fed reports confirm that the banking turmoil has resulted in tighter lending conditions. More households believe access to credit will be harder a year from now.

All this could start to weigh on consumers and their wallets.

The Conference Board’s Consumer Confidence Index slipped in May to 102.3, down from 103.7 in April. Likewise, the Expectations Index—consumers’ short-term outlook for the economy, such as income and the labor market—dipped to 71.5, down from 71.7.

Experts say strong consumption levels could be a headache for the U.S. central bank as it decides to hit the pause button on tightening or continue raising rates.

After the key inflation gauge came in hotter than expected, policymakers could be forced to raise interest rates at the policy meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee in June.

Since March 2022, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell and his colleagues have attempted to curb inflationary pressures by killing demand to slow the economy. Fed officials argue that because the economy is performing better than projected when it started tightening, policymakers have enough room to keep pulling the trigger on rate hikes to cool prices.

The upcoming challenge for consumers, especially those with debt, will be their monthly interest payments. WalletHub reported that the Fed’s 500-basis-point boost to the benchmark federal funds rate would cost indebted credit card holders at least \$33.4 billion over the next 12 months.

With a potential recession entrenched in economic forecasts, could a downturn force consumers to stop spending?

DANIEL LACALLE is chief economist at hedge fund Tressis and author of “Freedom or Equality,” “Escape from the Central Bank Trap,” and “Life in the Financial Markets.”

Daniel Lacalle

Debt Ceiling Isn’t a Social Policy

That more taxes can address the debt crisis is another deception



SINCE 1960, CONGRESS has raised the debt ceiling 78 times. The process of increasing the debt limit has become so regular that markets barely worry about it.

Politicians believe that raising the debt ceiling is a social policy and that debt doesn’t matter. Until it does. The United States’ ratio of debt to gross domestic product is now 123.4 percent and the risk of losing confidence in U.S. Treasurys as the lowest-risk asset is exceedingly high.

The problem in the U.S. budget is evident in mandatory and discretionary spending. Focusing all the attention on discretionary spending doesn’t solve the deficit and debt problem. Trying to convince American citizens that the entire debt problem can be solved with higher taxes is also lying to them.

Mandatory spending is about 63 percent of the budget, discretionary spending is almost 30 percent, and despite low borrowing costs, net interests already consume 8 percent of the budget.

The U.S. budget is unsustainable however you want to look at it.

Projections for fiscal year 2023 show outlays of \$5.9 trillion. Outlays rose after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, instead of them being brought back to the pre-pandemic level, expenses have been consolidated and annualized. The U.S. budget already had an expense problem, as outlays rose above economic growth.

The same projections, courtesy of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, estimate a \$1 trillion deficit even after considering a record \$4 trillion in revenues.

There’s no way in which the United States can cut the budget deficit to zero with higher taxes and revenue measures. It’s impossible for the U.S. economy to generate a consolidated



The U.S. budget is unsustainable however you want to look at it.

annual increase in tax receipts of \$1 trillion over a cyclical high of \$4.9 trillion. And this is only to bring the deficit to zero, it doesn’t even start to address the much-needed net debt reduction.

Deficits are always a spending problem, because receipts are, by nature, cyclical and volatile, while spending becomes untouchable and increased every year.

The neo-Keynesians will say that deficits don’t matter and debt is an asset for the rest of the world. If that were the case, why the obsession with massive tax hikes? Obviously, the idea that deficits and debt don’t matter because they’re constantly refinanced makes no sense.

Deficits and debt matter because the confidence in the solvency of the state and its currency is predicated on its ability to manage debt to a level that doesn’t scare off domestic and international investors. Debt is only an asset to others if the solvency of the issuing state isn’t under question.

The biggest problem is that the United States’ solvency and confi-

dence are under question globally. Central banks are reducing exposure to U.S. Treasurys as a reserve asset precisely because of diminishing confidence in the public accounts as well as rising concerns about the safety and strength of government bonds as a safe haven. In 2022, many central banks saw their reserves collapse due to the decline in the value of Treasurys.

The entire neo-Keynesian fallacy is based on the idea that the state can always absorb more wealth from the private sector at no cost. However, that cost is already evident. Inflation is here, and it’s a direct consequence of years of monetization of government debt. Furthermore, the dangerous cocktail includes high inflation, rising taxes, and increasing debt. There’s no improvement in the public accounts even with record receipts.

If Congress doesn’t work to curb spending, global confidence in the U.S. debt is likely to slump, and higher monetization will only make things worse because it will destroy confidence in the entire monetary system starting with the currency.

Maintaining these enormous fiscal imbalances won’t be solved by raising taxes. It’s impossible to add \$1 trillion in revenues every year all the time.

The gigantic fiscal imbalances of the United States are putting the U.S. dollar and the safety of the national debt at risk. There’s nothing social about destroying a currency’s reserve status and a bond’s attractiveness for investors.

The year 2022 was a warning sign that debunked the myth of eternal monetization of debt with low inflation. It’s time to be serious.

Higher debt means more taxes, weaker growth, and weaker real wages in the future. High deficit spending isn’t a tool for growth, but a tool for cronyism and a burden on the future.

AMANDA ANDRADE-RHOADES/REUTERS

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Fan Yu

Stop Backing the Enemy

Dozens of private equity and VC firms have holdings in China

CHINA’S TECH STARTUP and venture capital (VC) boom over the past decade has produced some household names, while stoking concerns that it would one day surpass innovation out of Silicon Valley.

But that momentum has waned recently.

Various reasons have dampened international funding into Chinese tech startups, including pandemic restrictions, the communist authority’s crackdown on tech, macroeconomic reasons such as higher interest rates, and growing geopolitical and national security concerns.

Venture funding into China’s tech startups during 2022 totaled almost \$70 billion across 6,186 transactions, according to data from PitchBook. That’s the lowest in terms of deal value since 2017, while 49 percent lower in value and 17 percent lower in volume compared to 2021.

Fundraising by Chinese VC funds also dropped in 2022.

Dozens of U.S. private equity and venture capital firms have holdings in China. Fund managers such as Blackstone Group, Carlyle, KKR, Bain Capital, Sequoia, Silver Lake Partners, and General Atlantic all have significant investments in Chinese technology companies.

Among the most active has been the New York-based growth equity investment firm General Atlantic. The firm has invested nearly \$7 billion in China since 2000 in more than 34 companies, including ByteDance, the owner of social networking app TikTok.

The March collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) brought the financial connectivity between the U.S. VCs and their Chinese startup portfolios to the forefront. The California-based lender served as the vehicle for U.S. VCs to fund their Chinese startups.

STEVE SPAS/THE EPOCH TIMES



The U.S. government doesn’t have comprehensive information on funding of Chinese tech firms.

The White House is reportedly close to an executive order that would put restrictions on U.S. investors funding Chinese projects on certain technologies, such as semiconductors and other innovations that could later make their way to the Chinese military.

The U.S. Treasury Department has also been coordinating with other governments to ensure that allies don’t step in and provide financing to China should the United States put limits on VC funding.

Enforcement of this measure will be key. The U.S. government doesn’t have comprehensive information on funding of Chinese tech firms, as these investments are often private and done through offshore entities created for tax and legal purposes even as they are managed by U.S. funds.

While details haven’t been revealed, the executive order is likely being diluted in impact by certain industry participants and other bureaucrats in Washington that support making money in China.

For example, The Intercept reported that one individual identified as “Tom” at an industry event in New York earlier this year said that some of his firm’s investments would skyrocket in value should China attack Taiwan in the near future.

The event’s location was ironically at the SVB offices. “Tom” was allegedly attending the event instead of Jordan Blashek, the president and COO of America’s Frontier Fund (AFF), the U.S. government-affiliated nonprofit investment platform that pursues emerging tech investments.

“If the China–Taiwan situation happens, some of our investments will [grow] 10x, like overnight,” the individual said. “So I don’t want to share the name ... and so if it’s only produced in China, for example, and there’s a kinetic event in the Pacific, that would 10x overnight, like no question about it. There’s a couple of different things like that.”

We’re speculating what the “kinetic event in the Pacific” means, but it’s likely a euphemism for war. Could the U.S. government be hedging itself—or even advocating—for a war in the Pacific?

On some levels, the fact that we’re even having this debate is concerning.

Keith Rabois, a general partner at VC firm Founders Fund and an industry veteran who opposes most VC funding into China, recently tweeted, “This needs to be illegal,” in response to an article by The Information reporting that U.S. VC Sequoia Capital and others are financially backing China’s answer to OpenAI.

Rabois, who was part of the famous “PayPal Mafia,” said in a follow-up tweet that “investing in arming the enemy” should be outlawed.

The White House executive order and more comprehensive and stronger laws prohibiting U.S. tech investments in China need to arrive as soon as possible.



Michael Pillsbury, a senior fellow for China strategy at The Heritage Foundation and co-author of a new report: “Winning the New Cold War: A Plan for Countering China.”

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THOUGHT LEADERS

What War With Communist China Could Look Like

China expert outlines strategies for different scenarios

“I F YOU JUST WATCH TELEVISION, you see all these members of the House and Senate bragging about their new legislation,” says Michael Pillsbury. “So of course, I would think—and others would think—we’re doing a lot to stop the Chinese. But what if it’s not true?”

In a recent episode of “American Thought Leaders,” host Jan Jekielek meets with Pillsbury, a senior fellow for China strategy at The Heritage Foundation and co-author of a new report: “Winning the New Cold War: A Plan for Countering China.” Here, they discuss the possibility of war with China, the factors influencing the outcome of that conflict, and the need for legislation protecting U.S. interests. Pillsbury is also the author of “The Hundred-Year Marathon: China’s Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower.”

JAN JEKIELEK: You’ve said you expect war with China sometime this century. What kind of a war would this be? Is it a war the United States can actually win?

MICHAEL PILLSBURY: It depends on the quality of strategy the United States brings to the war. We have certain advantages in terms of economy, and experience in war with Afghanistan and Iraq. But we have certain major disadvantages, one of which is distance. It’s up to 10,000 miles away from our best ports, our munition storage areas, and our bomber bases to get near China.

Whether it’s to defend Korea, India, or Taiwan, we have a huge disadvantage in that it takes our forces two or three weeks to sail there. It takes 24 hours to fly there. The Chinese are right there with quick action to seize something, like a piece of Indian territory, or something involving Taiwan. China has the advantage for a short

“To defend Korea, India, or Taiwan, we have a huge disadvantage in that it takes our forces two or three weeks to sail there. It takes 24 hours to fly there.”

war that involves distances close to China, something that would be over within three or four days. Then, the Chinese simply announce, “We’ve done this, please don’t overreact. We’ll be happy to debate this with you at the UN Security Council, where we Chinese have veto power.” That’s one kind of war we would probably lose.

It’s the topic of an interesting book called “The Strategy of Denial” by Elbridge Colby. He was a Pentagon official for a few years. He says: “Taiwan would probably collapse within a week of combat. There would be 50,000 to 100,000 Chinese PLA [People’s Liberation Army] troops on Taiwan. Should we Americans surrender?”

He says: “No, this is a great opportunity for us. We can land our own forces, and link up with whatever’s left of the Taiwan forces. Then, in a kind of guerrilla warfare movement, we can force the PLA off Taiwan to return to the mainland.” I’m summarizing a 30-page description from Chapter 10.

He says this will be a good thing, because right now, most countries in Asia want to hedge their bets. They want to be friends with America and friends with China. But according to Mr. Colby’s argument, when Asian leaders see that China has attacked Taiwan and that America is fighting back, they’ll be

galvanized. They’ll see just how evil communist China is. They’ll stop hedging and join our coalition.

It’s quite a stretch to say: “Here’s this island with 23 million people. Here’s how close they are to China, 100 miles away. Here’s all the forces that could land on the island. How are we going to take it back?” But at least the Colby book is raising the issue publicly.

The idea of deterring the Chinese leadership gets you into how they think about war. As long as they believe Taiwan is going in the direction of unification, there’s no incentive for them to start a war. It would be idiotic. If Taiwan is going in a different direction, then war becomes the only hope they have of reunifying with the island.

Some war games looked at a three-year war with China over Taiwan. The first thing we learned is that we run out of ammunition. The U.S. Navy, in each of its submarines, only has so many torpedoes. Each Navy warship has what they call loading. How many of each kind of missile goes into that ship? You can mix different kinds of missiles. When you make this decision, you’re deciding what happens in the first couple of weeks of the war. How many ships can you shoot down on the Chinese side? What will happen to our side?

There is a very scary Rand Corporation report from 2015, highly rec-

commended by me, called “Military Scorecard.” It shows how the balance of power between Washington, D.C., and Beijing has shifted. In almost every category, we do worse over the last 30 years. One of the worst cases is a long war where we cannot produce anti-ship missiles, air-to-air missiles, torpedoes for submarines, or even fuel.

So we will run out of these things. But here’s China, highly productive, with arms factories already building hundreds of missiles of various types over the past 15 years.

Another related issue is whether our allies will be with us. Defending Taiwan involves our forces going through Okinawa and other bases in Japan. We would need the Philippine naval and air bases. In a long war of six months or a year or more, if the United States is denied access to Japanese bases and to Filipino bases, and if our main forces on the island of Guam are harmed by Chinese missiles and bombers, then we don’t have any support infrastructure.

That’s why other historians and I have gone back to World War II to ask, “How did it happen then, when the Japanese took such a large area in just a few months?” The answer lies in the Pacific Islands. We had to start out in Australia and New Zealand, go north, and take these Japanese-occupied islands one by one. We hadn’t built bases in advance. The Japanese carefully used these islands instead.

It took two years to reclaim these islands that could then be used as air bases, depots, or naval storage areas. Only then could the war be brought to an end by a complete blockade of Japan. Could we do that again today? If we have to fall back from the Japan ring, the first island chain and the Philippines, the next set of bases are in the Pacific Islands.

Meanwhile, the Chinese are opening embassies in those islands, signing



In defending Taiwan, “we would need the Philippine naval and air bases,” says Pillsbury.

security agreements, and building air bases. They have obviously thought this through, saying, “We can take care of the Americans near China in the first island chain, but we have to make sure they can’t use the Pacific Islands like they did in World War II to come back into the war zone.” Right now, that doesn’t look promising for us.

Nuclear power also comes up in a lot of war games. China’s nuclear power, at a minimum, is 300 warheads. What would they do with all this? Some smart people interested in nuclear strategy write a lot about deterrence through demonstration. They might fire off a nuclear weapon someplace in the ocean as a demonstration that they are serious.

And the whole nuclear balance is changing. Everybody used to write articles about how China would never exceed 200 or 300 weapons, but the Defense Department has announced in the past year that within five to

seven years, China probably will go to 1,000 more warheads, and then to 1,500 warheads by 2035.

[This] is an important number. Our ceiling for strategic nuclear warheads is 1,500. The Russians have the same cap. It was negotiated. The Chinese refused to come to the talks. President [Donald] Trump invited them, but they refused to come. So the nuclear balance is also changing against us. When you line up these various trends, you can get yourself into a very pessimistic mood.

MR. JEKIELEK: There are some lessons from the pre-World War II period to be learned with the mentality that you just described, even though nuclear weapons obviously weren’t in play.

MR. PILLSBURY: The main thing is deterrence. How do you deter the leadership in Beijing that may not

think the same way we do about the nature of the world? The Chinese view of what we’re doing right now is very different from what we’re actually doing. You can see this almost daily in Chinese propaganda. They say: “America is trying to overthrow the Chinese Communist Party. The Americans did this to the Soviet Union, and they’re trying to do it to China today.”

A recent Chinese foreign ministry article was a long attack on America. It says, “America dominates the world in culture, economics, politics, propaganda, and the use of armed forces to invade little countries.” If they believe this, they see us as a malevolent force that not only wants to overthrow the Communist Party of China, but wants to seize Chinese territory.

MR. JEKIELEK: There were joint naval exercises, the largest ever, with the Philippines. You’re saying that doesn’t mean the Philippines and the Americans are on the same side?

MR. PILLSBURY: Not at all. Everything I said about war with China is hypothetical speculation based on war games and thinking about what might happen for extremely unlikely events.

We’ve got a school of thought, for example, that says China is going to collapse. That it won’t be around as a great power for more than a few more years into the future. When our military planners hear things like this, they say to the civilian leaders, “Why should we plan against China? The place is going to collapse.” You can see how the assumptions you make for war games or forecasts depend on your initial thinking.

By the way, will we create an effort to overthrow the Chinese Communist Party? There are ways to do that. It was done against the Soviet Union. If it’s not being done, why not? The issue

“If Taiwan is going in a different direction, then war becomes the only hope [China has] of reunifying with the island.”

ought to be discussed and people should think about it.

MR. JEKIELEK: We’ve had decades of appeasement policy, and not any form of deterrence.

MR. PILLSBURY: It’s true, and we have no organization to fight a war with China. You have commands in charge of the Middle East. You have the NATO planning staff that allocates weapons systems and makes war plans for NATO. But do we have a command in charge of fighting a war with China? Is there any kind of China command somewhere in the world? Is there an admiral or general with four stars who can say, “My duty is to prepare to win a war with China?”

The answer is no. We don’t have a command for war against China or to deter China within our whole U.S. government.

Some people might say it’s provocative to do such a thing. “Oh, how stupid. If we have a command for fighting China, that will just provoke China and cause a war. How irresponsible can you get?”

MR. JEKIELEK: It’s a fantastic question and deeply concerning. We’re here at The Heritage Foundation, and you have a proposal on how to counter the China threat.

MR. PILLSBURY: Not exactly. This exercise ordered by the new president

of Heritage was not to create a new set of measures, it was to survey the best ideas that have been proposed so far, mainly in legislation by Senate and House members. A couple of congressional commissions have also been producing recommendations for almost 20 years.

One is called the United States–China Economic Security Review Commission. Every year, it produces about a 500-page report. Usually, it averages 70 to 80 recommendations. None of them ever get implemented. For example, the current one is to monitor American high-tech investment going into China. Most people are surprised that we don’t already do that. We have no idea what American high-tech firms are investing in China’s state-of-the-art technology.

We went back through the last five years looking for ideas and found 300 pieces of legislation, each one quite useful and quite thoughtful. Marco Rubio, for example, had a proposal in 2018 for the White House to set up a technology czar to review technology about to be sent to China and stop it if necessary. It should coordinate across all departments of government. Technology czar was the title. It never passed. We put it in our set of proposals.

This is not a new Heritage plan for China. It’s pointing out that many good ideas were proposed which were never implemented. As a former Senate staffer, I saw it happen in at least 200 pieces of legislation

where the sponsor would introduce it, then go on television and say, “Today, I introduced a bill to block the purchase of farmland by the Chinese Communist Party.” It was a big news story. At last, the CCP will be denied American farmland near sensitive military installations.

But it’s not happening that way. You get senators and congressmen who have a sexy bill. They introduce it and get on Fox News or in The Epoch Times, because they’re a hero. They’re standing up to the Chinese Communist Party. But is there a follow-up a month later, six months later, two years later? “Whatever happened to that bill of yours?” They reply: “I don’t know. Somebody blocked it.” However, the people who introduced the ideas get a lot of credit in the media.

If you watch television, you see all these members of the House and Senate bragging about their new legislation. Of course, I would think—and others would think—that we’re doing a lot to stop the Chinese. But what if it’s not true?

I run into people all over the world who think China’s going to collapse soon, but we know the Chinese themselves sometimes push this argument. They say: “We have so many problems with our one-child policy, cancer, pollution, the water table, and the lack of agricultural production, you Americans don’t need to worry about China. We’ll be lucky to be around 20 years from now.”

And over here, we have a weak effort to stop China, combined with a powerful lobby and cheerleading force, and frankly, lots of goodhearted Americans who think everybody is like us. They think: “They all want to have a constitution and democracy. This will break out in China someday. There’s no need for us to do anything.”

MR. JEKIELEK: Talking about these theories of how the Chinese economy

is fragile, we know there’s fragility in our own economy. We know there’s a huge housing bubble. At the same time, we know there’s still massive investment from the United States through these index funds.

MR. PILLSBURY: It’s not even tracked. We don’t have the number. One guy in the private sector, Roger Robinson, has come up with different estimates of up to \$3 trillion or more. But the important thing is there’s no government law that says: “Track this. We care.” It’s the same thing with farmlands. It was just revealed a couple weeks ago that the Farm Service Agency on a voluntary basis can be told the Chinese or someone fronting for them is buying land. It’s voluntary.

So if you don’t want to tell the Farm Service Agency, you don’t have to. Plus, these are often county-level transactions, and counties don’t necessarily say: “National security is being threatened. I better call somebody in Washington.” It keeps the perception of threat very low. This is part of the Chinese secret formula that over time really pays off.

To counter it, and that’s the purpose of our exercise here at Heritage, is to pull together all this legislation that hasn’t passed. In a way, it’s meant to shock effect the reader. What if 100 bills haven’t passed, but members and senators have taken credit for them when they introduced them? That means we can’t respond to China other than by talk, rhetoric, papers, and articles, which the Chinese simply laugh at.

It confirms their hope that the Americans are not going to wake up, other than by talking, of which we have plenty. I was watching a recent TV show. This guy called in and said: “It sounds like, from what your guest is saying, we’re a nation of talkers. That’s all we can do.” I saw the host kind of smile, like this was a pretty shrewd observation.

MR. JEKIELEK: Is your policy recommendation to start passing these pieces of legislation that you reference in this report?

MR. PILLSBURY: These recommendations are feeding back to current members of Congress and especially their staff from people at Heritage who, like me, are former Senate or House staffers. The long-term president and founder of Heritage, Ed Feulner, helped create something called the Republican Study Committee. There’s something on the Senate side called the Senate Steering Committee. Both of these are active on China policy. But our idea is bringing this together like a guidebook, with specific recommendations and how to implement them.

MR. JEKIELEK: As we finish up, your overall thesis in this interview is that we as a society are not awake to the China threat.

MR. PILLSBURY: No. The polls show that a high percentage of Americans are very concerned about the China threat. I’m talking about members of Congress who don’t pass legislation. I’m talking about the county governments that don’t report Chinese farmland purchases.

Our guide will be a handbook for insiders. You are going to be judged. People are going to know a year or two from now if your legislation passed or not. Is the Army still buying drones from China? Or did the legislation pass banning that? It’s going to be yes or no, and it’s going to be graphic. This is a very sophisticated guide on how our government is doing on China at local, state, and congressional levels. We’ve got to have accountability. ■

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.



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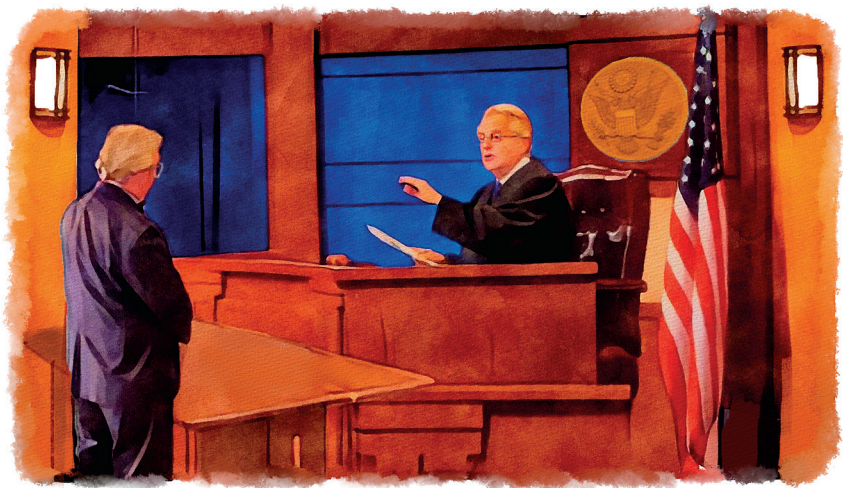
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Focus on Success, Not Failure

Instead of regretting the past, celebrate the present

By Jeff Minick



ON A RECENT LIVESTREAM, “America’s Labor Crisis,” co-host Mike Rowe commented, “The evidence demands a verdict.” He was discussing the workforce, but his words, sharp and hard as flint, hit me on a different level. What verdict does the evidence of our own lives yield?

The day winds down, and some of us land in a courtroom of the mind. Did I put in a full day’s work? How did I miss that deadline? Did I come across as rude to that customer on the phone? How could I possibly forget to call Mom on her birthday?

Sometimes, when our conscience charges us with graver crimes, the court never takes a recess. Was it my fault our marriage ended? Why didn’t I repair the rift and visit Dad before he died? Why do I spend night after night all alone watching good-for-nothing TV shows and nursing a drink?

A lot of us, I suspect, habitually recollect our wrongs and mistakes, both the misdemeanors and the felonies. We review the evidence, pronounce ourselves guilty as charged, and add another stone to the prison wall of regret that we’ve built for ourselves.

Meanwhile, our society has for years stressed the importance of self-esteem. In a 2018 study, titled “Does a narcissism epidemic exist in modern Western societies?” the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland, reported that “The endorsement rate for the statement ‘I am an

important person’ has increased from 12 percent in 1963 to 77–80 percent in 1992 in adolescents.”

Acknowledge mistakes and wrongs, but never forget to be grateful for the good.

Though well-intended, this therapeutic movement has produced its own problems. Despite this push to boost the ego, here’s the strange thing. Most of the adults I’ve known, young and old, and many of the teens I taught over the decades, always seemed much more inclined to self-criticism and doubt than to marching under the “I am special” banner. In other words, they’re the ones likely to enter that courtroom of the mind and come away laden with guilt.

Believe me, I know the feeling. Like many readers, I’ve spent my share of time on that witness stand.

Yet, let’s reconsider that declaration, “The evidence demands a verdict.” It sounds ominous, but only if we restrict the evidence to our failures. If all the evidence demands a verdict, then we should necessarily look at our triumphs as well as at our defeats, the good we’ve done as well as the bad.

Maybe you’ve lost your business because of some terrible decisions. You can convict yourself of all sorts of foolhardy mistakes and hang

your head in shame, but what about the big-picture you? Do you have a roof over your head and food on the shelves? Do you have friends who take pleasure in your company? A spouse who loves you? Are your children loving and reasonably happy? If so, then no matter what else, you’ve done something right.

It’s all too easy to let the negatives drag us into the gutter while the positives go up in smoke. It’s then that our lives resemble the nightly news. The negatives snatch our attention, just as they do for a television audience; the positive news rarely appears.

The wise among us keep their equilibrium intact. They acknowledge mistakes and wrongs but never forget to be grateful for the good in their lives. They weigh all the evidence before rendering a final judgment about themselves. They understand and practice the old adage “balance is everything.”

We deserve a fair and balanced trial. The next time we stand in that courtroom of the self, let’s make sure that when Lady Justice takes up her scales, she weighs the good in us as well as the bad, our virtues as well as our vices and mistakes. ■

Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust on Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning as I Go” and “Movies Make the Man.”



ET

TRAVEL • FOOD • LUXURY LIVING

Week 22

Unwind

From fireworks extravaganzas over Washington to small town parades or offbeat Independence Day events, there are a wealth of opportunities to make this year’s Fourth of July the best ever.

PHOTO BY FRANCOIS ROUX/SHUTTERSTOCK



Celebrating Our Nation’s Birthday 76

IRELAND’S CAPITAL CITY of Dublin is sure to “raise the spirits” of all who visit, with historic treasures as well as epic whiskey and friendly pubs. 72

ANTHONY CALDWELL’S LIFE journey took him from serving time in prison to becoming a celebrated chef and the owner of Chapel Hill’s celebrated 50Kitchen. 75

WHETHER YOU’RE ZIPPING across a lake or jumping ocean waves, a personal watercraft is a sure way to have fun out on the water. 79

INSIDE

This breathtaking view of New York City from 50 stories up is one that few people have experienced.

A Great View

A 3-level penthouse featured on HBO's 'Succession' series

By Bill Lindsey

TELEVISION SHOWS OFTEN SHOW an idealized way of life that's rarely attainable, but in this particular case, those with the means can live the dream.

Perched at the top of the 50-story 180 East 88th St. building is this three-level residence that combines dazzling views of the city with all the room and amenities needed by a large, active family. Built in 2019, 180 East 88th is located in the Carnegie Hill neighborhood.


The five-bedroom, four-bathroom, two-half-bathroom residence has approximately 5,508 square feet of interior space, as well as 3,501 square feet of exterior areas. The layout provides plenty of spacious rooms connected by galleries, with 13-foot ceilings setting a luxurious tone accented by floor-to-ceiling glass walls that afford an unobstructed view of the city. The integral elevator and a centrally located staircase provide easy access within.

The first level features a corner great room with a fireplace, a bedroom and bath-

room, laundry facilities, two wraparound terraces, and a kitchen featuring white-lacquered cabinetry; Statuario marble countertops; a full suite of Gaggenau appliances, including two ovens and two dishwashers; natural brass fixtures by Fantini; and an oversized marble-topped, wood-accented island/breakfast bar.

The very spacious master bedroom on the second level has three exposures, a lavish bathroom, a cavernous dressing room, and a private balcony. Three bedrooms with private bathrooms and terrace access are located on the far side of this level, buffered to ensure privacy. The rooftop terrace on the third level has alfresco dining for 14, as well as an adjacent gathering area with a massive fireplace and another gathering area around the corner, all providing a commanding view from 467 feet above street level.

The building has a concierge, a full-time doorman, a full-time super, eight levels of amenities including a gym and a children's playroom, and access to a wine storage facility. ■



**180 EAST 88TH
PENTHOUSE
NEW YORK CITY
\$29 MILLION**

- 5 BEDROOMS
- 4 FULL BATHROOMS;
2 HALF-BATHROOMS
- 5,508-SQUARE-FOOT
INTERIOR
- 3,501-SQUARE-FOOT
EXTERIOR

KEY FEATURES

- 3 LEVELS
- INTEGRAL ELEVATOR
- ROOFTOP TERRACE

AGENT
MICHAEL GORDON
CORCORAN GROUP
212-753-3111



(Above) In addition to an elevator, a circular staircase provides access to all three levels.
(Top Right) Thirteen-foot ceilings and floor-to-ceiling glass walls combine to create a very posh atmosphere.
(Right) The extensive exterior areas include this alfresco dining and gathering area accented by a massive outdoor fireplace.



A Day in Dublin

However long you tarry, Ireland’s capital raises spirits in more ways than one

An aerial view of St. Stephen’s Green, an epicenter of fierce fighting during the Easter Rising in Dublin.

PHOTO BY L_E/SHUTTERSTOCK



By Tim Johnson

THE BEST PART OF VISITING Dublin? Even if you only have a day to spend there, you’ll have plenty of chances to experience the famous luck and warmth of the Irish.

That’s the case for me. While I spent time in the city on two prior occasions, this time, I was arriving on a ship, anchoring in the morning and gone by sundown. So I had to plan carefully, because Dublin, which has a metro population of about 2 million people, packs in so many things to see, do, and drink.

I started with a walk through history, strolling through what’s now just a pleasant little park in the heart of the hustle and bustle. But in 1916, St. Stephen’s Green was the epicenter of fierce fighting during the Easter Rising, home to barricades and trenches. Famously, both the Irish rebels and British soldiers paused their daily strife to allow the groundskeeper at the park to feed the ducks.

While the rebellion failed within days, it gave birth to Irish independence. In 1922, following a three-year war between the Irish Republican Army and the British, the Irish Free State was born. In 1937, the country wrote a new constitution and formally became Ireland, officially becoming a republic in 1949.

Just across the road from St. Stephen’s Green, I learned more about all this at the Little Museum, an unexpected find. I’d simply walked by on my way to the shops and pubs of O’Connell Street and saw signs declaring this to be Dublin’s favorite tourist attraction. Taking a tour inside, I instantly saw why.

It’s indeed small, and it’s packed to the rafters with items donated by local residents—simple found pieces, mostly, which together tell the story of a city, with the help of my guide, Lisa. With fiery red hair, an emerald green dress, and a charming lilt, she seemed straight from central casting.

“This is a gift from the city, to the city itself,” she said. “We’re going to take these little things and tell a big story.”

And she did indeed, telling 200,000 years of history in just 29 minutes, all packed into a former private home that dates to 1876.

Dublin is one of the world’s great walking cities, so newly briefed on the city’s history, I decided to just stroll. Down the River Liffey, crossing the Ha’penny Bridge. Past Trinity College, founded in 1592, which has

Dublin’s original name means “Black Pool” in Gaelic.



Dublin is roughly 105 miles away from Belfast.

Guinness was created by Arthur Guinness at St. James Gate, Dublin, in 1759.

Guinness, an Irish dry stout created in Dublin in 1759, is now one of the most popular brands of alcohol worldwide.





People walk by the Temple Bar, a famous Dublin pub that claims to hold Ireland’s largest whiskey collection.

produced so many literary greats. The list is almost ridiculously long—yes, Oscar Wilde, but also Bram Stoker, Sally Rooney, Samuel Beckett, and so many more.

Pubs form the fabric of social life in this city, and on previous visits, I had spent quality time in some of the best—O’Donoghue’s, with its live music and legends still dropping by to participate in the regular jam sessions; O’Neill’s, with super-delicious pub grub, including prime rib and beef-and-Guinness stew; and The Swan Bar, a last redoubt during the Easter Rising and the War of Independence, where they’ve left the bullet holes in the walls as a reminder.

But no matter where you choose, you’ll find the craic (Irish slang for a good time). And without fail, visitors are always welcome, something you’ll feel from the second you step through the door. I popped into a random pub—not especially famous or historic—and even in the middle of the afternoon, I was soon wrapped up in conversation. Where are you from? How long are you here? Have you tried the Guinness yet?

And a favorite question when you’re in Dublin: What are you doing while you’re here? And if you pause for even a moment, just a second, they’ll be happy to let you know all the details on how, in their opinion, you should be spending your time.

That’s how I ended up at EPIC: The Irish Emigration Museum, my last stop in town. In so many ways, the history of this country, going back many generations, is a story of going away. Irish culture, and Irish people, can be found on all continents.

EPIC explores that process and the reasons for it. The numbers are staggering—in just the decade following the Great Famine in the middle of the 19th century, 1.84 million Irish left for North America alone. I was given a little paper passport and walked through the process of leaving the Old Country, crossing a huge and often inhospitable ocean, and arriving in a new and unfamiliar world.

High-definition recordings of actors recount real immigrant stories. Other sections highlight the global cultural impact of these waves of emigration, from fun stuff such as “Lord of the Dance” to Nobel laureates and U.S. presidents of Irish lineage.

A final neon sign declares “Ireland never leaves you.” And I really think that’s the case. As I head back to the ship, even after just one day in Dublin, it will remain with me. The songs, the laughs, of course the craic, and especially all the stories—those are a true Irish specialty. ■

Tim Johnson is based in Toronto. He has visited 140 countries across all seven continents.

If You Go

- Fly:** Dublin Airport (DUB) serves as an international hub for both Aer Lingus and Ryanair. A number of other airlines offer nonstop.
- Stay:** A grand dame hotel in the heart of the city, The Merrion brings together a collection of Georgian townhouses into a single, elegant property.
- Getting Around:** Dublin is served by a truly excellent network of buses, trams, and light rail.
- Take Note:** The republic remains a member of the European Union and uses the euro, and is also part of the Schengen Zone.

THIS PAGE: MRELARO/SHUTTERSTOCK

COMEBACK KING: CHEF ANTHONY CALDWELL’S PATH FROM PRISON TO HIS OWN RESTAURANT

50Kitchen in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, is a passion project that’s years—and a divine promise—in the making

By Ryan Cashman

CHEF AND RESTAURATEUR Anthony Caldwell says divine providence got him from where he was to where he is today. And where he was, was prison. “I didn’t have the perfect life,” Caldwell said. “But prison, in the long run, was a good decision, because it’s where I learned how to cook.”

Caldwell’s kitchen career began as a way of getting his sentence reduced, but it evolved into a passion. When he was released from prison in 2006, he started working at Legal Sea Foods in Boston. But a darkness lurked beneath the surface. Shortly after his release, he joined his brother for a night out at a bar.

“All hell broke loose. By 2009, I was an alcoholic,” he said. One night, during a drinking binge, he and his friends were passing rap lyrics back and forth. At his turn, Caldwell stood up and rapped: “I’m 50Kitchen! The boss with the sauce!” “God does miraculous things without us even knowing it,” he said of his drunken burst of inspiration. He didn’t know God then, but he was about to.

Divine Intervention

In the midst of another heavy bender, Caldwell said, an ethereal voice said to him, “If you don’t stop drinking, your career is going to go downhill, and you’re going to die!” On Sept. 25, 2011, he walked into a church and asked God to deliver him from alcohol. Then, he said, the voice made an addendum: “If you stop

Shrimp and grits, Caldwell’s take on a Southern classic.



Chicken and waffles, served with rosemary-infused maple syrup and housemade apple butter.



Deep-fried cornbread, drizzled with honey.



Anthony Caldwell, 54, executive chef and owner of 50Kitchen.

IF YOU GO

- Location:** 50Kitchen at the Blue Dogwood Public Market, 306 W. Franklin Street, Suite G, Chapel Hill, N.C.
- Hours:** Open Saturdays noon–8 p.m., every other Sunday noon–4 p.m.
- Website:** 50Kitchen.com

but had yet to acquire a place of his own. He knew he had to take a leap of faith. He applied to a small business pitch competition for a commercial space—and won.

Trusting the Plan

On Feb. 23, 2020, 50Kitchen opened, serving American Southern and Asian fusion food: collard greens simmered with kimchi, jambalaya egg rolls, and deep-fried cornbread drizzled with honey. For eight days, Caldwell had himself a working restaurant. Then COVID-19 hit. “My chairs went up, and I had no idea what to do,” he said. Instead of closing, Caldwell spent the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic feeding more than 4,000 of

Dorchester’s homeless. Still, he was left without a penny to continue. Fortunately, he said, God had a plan. “He said, ‘The soil is in North Carolina,’” Caldwell said. Sure enough, he found a small space in Chapel Hill, where his wife was born and raised, and reopened in May. 50Kitchen has a slogan: Beautiful food for beautiful people. “All people are beautiful,” Caldwell said. “I am going to put 150 percent into what I do ... because we all deserve something good to eat.” ■

Ryan Cashman is a writer, father, husband, and home-steader based in southwestern New Hampshire.



The National Park Service
hosts an outstanding
July Fourth fireworks
extravaganza every year in
Washington.

PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. NATIONAL PARK
SERVICE

OUR NATION'S *Birthday*

*Consider a vacation that happens to
take place on July 4th*

By Bill Lindsey

THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM L: ARIEL SKELLEY/GETTY IMAGES, EZZANGI/SHUTTERSTOCK,
ROBERTO GALAN/SHUTTERSTOCK, FLYSNOWFLY/SHUTTERSTOCK

WITH JULY FOURTH ONLY A few weeks away, it's time to start planning how to make this year's Independence Day the best ever.

No other special date inspires quite the same deep emotions as Independence Day, when we celebrate the adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. Fun fact: The Continental Congress actually voted in favor of the Declaration on July 2, but it was revised and then completed two days later by Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston.

With that in mind, because it's too easy to get caught up in planning a menu and festivities, take a moment to learn more about the circumstances that led to this day, and then share that knowledge with friends and family. The courage of our Founding Fathers to take a clear and unequivocal step away from England and King George, a crime they knew was punishable by death, must be remembered and honored.

The first Independence Day celebrations were, ironically enough, modeled after English celebrations of the king's birthday, with bells ringing, big bonfires, parades, and speeches made by local politicians. We added fireworks to simulate the raging battles as the 13 American colonies fought

The Continental Congress actually voted in favor of the Declaration on July 2, 1776.

what was at the time the world's largest armed force.

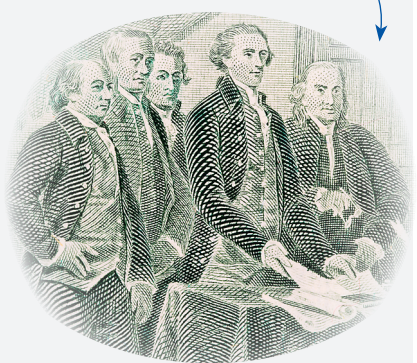
There are many ways to celebrate this holiday, from simple to complex. In many parts of the country, all that's needed is to step outside and watch as neighbors, towns, and cities put on a fireworks extravaganza. For a lot of folks, a backyard cookout attended by friends and family, followed by safely shooting off fireworks, is an excellent, time-honored way to mark the day.

Another option is to attend a local Fourth of July parade or fireworks display, being sure to check with the event organizer first for any event details or restrictions; then get ready to "ooh" and "aah." Arrive early to ensure a good parking spot, and bring a blanket or folding chairs, water, and a few snacks. But for those seeking to make more of the day, the following suggestions were chosen for their history or uniqueness.

Historic Backdrops

Washington, D.C., is another great place to visit, capping a day of sight-seeing with a 35-minute fireworks

The Continental Congress voted in favor of the Declaration of Independence on July 2, 1776, but it wasn't completed until two days later.



There are few things as purely "American" as a hometown Independence Day parade.



Historical reenactments are a great way to get an idea of what our forefathers experienced as they risked everything to win freedom.



It's vital that we teach our children the significance of July Fourth so they know it's more than just fireworks and parades.



To experience unique ways to celebrate July Fourth, consider offbeat events such as the Key Lime Festival in Key West, Fla.

display organized by the National Park Service and featuring some of our country’s most iconic monuments as a backdrop. It’s also televised nationally. Another option is to celebrate the day where it all began, in Colonial Williamsburg, where a full day of festivities starts off with a reading of the Declaration of Independence, followed by historic reenactments, musical performances, craft exhibitions and, of course, a dazzling fireworks show.

Another unique Fourth of July celebration, now in its 68th year, takes place as Hannibal, Missouri, sets aside five days to celebrate its favorite resident during National Tom Sawyer Days. From June 30 to July 4, the town steps back in time, presenting a slice of Americana that isn’t often experienced. The family-friendly events include parades, a fence whitewashing contest, frog jumping competitions, a crafts fair, concerts, and a fireworks display.

State Spinoffs

New York City does everything in a big way, with the Fourth being no exception. Now in its 47th year, Macy’s Fourth of July Fireworks Spectacular is the city’s largest fireworks exhibition and a good excuse to visit. There were an astounding 65,000 shells fired from five barges on the East River during the 2022 event. Good spots from which to see the show include

FDR Drive at East 42nd Street, Gantry Plaza State Park, and Bushwick Inlet Park. The fireworks show is also televised nationally for those who are unable to attend in person. Those eager to find a new and delicious way to celebrate the Fourth may want to consider heading to the southernmost state. Key West’s Annual Key Lime Festival is a five-day event that culminates on the Fourth with a dinner under the stars and a great view of the fireworks, hosted by the Key West Rotary Club. As the event name suggests, the other days are filled with events dedicated to the Key lime, found only in this part of the world. For fireworks against a majestic backdrop, it’s tough to beat Wyoming’s Jackson Hole Independence Day Celebration. The events get underway on July 3 with a pancake breakfast at the city’s Town Square, followed by a music festival, with a parade of horseback riders, marching bands, classic cars, and more that begins at the Teton County Fairgrounds and winds its way into town on July 4. Other events include a rodeo, Old West shootout reenactments, and a 10-kilometer run. There are two fireworks shows on the Fourth, with one in the Teton Village at Jackson Hole Mountain Resort and the other at the base of Snow King Mountain in Jackson Hole. Happy Birthday, America! ■



LIFESTYLE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, AMERICA!

A Nationwide Party



1

Revisiting History

It’s important that our children are aware of the events this holiday celebrates, so brush up on your history so you can share it with them.



2

Get Out of Town

New York City, Boston, Washington, and other big cities go all-out for the Fourth of July, so consider attending their celebrations to make it a more special day.



3

Safety First

Fireworks are associated with the Fourth of July, but they can be dangerous, so obey local laws as well as all safety rules. Never allow kids to use fireworks or to get too close to them.

THIS PAGE FROM L: COURTESY OF KEY LIME FESTIVAL. ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE EPOCH TIMES.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY BOWRIDERS

There’s simply nothing so worth doing as spending time with the family in a boat

By Bill Lindsey



Cool Euro Styling
GLASTRON GTD 205
\$50,540

Glastron was one of the first builders to use fiberglass more than 60 years ago, and this bowrider shows they have mastered the craft. Powered by a 200-horsepower MerCruiser 4.5-liter inboard engine, this versatile vessel comes ready to go with a trailer and can be outfitted for water sports with a tower; for fishing with a baitwell, trolling motor, and bow casting platform; or for family cruises with a premium audio system.



The Fun Element
BAYLINER ELEMENT E18
\$27,595

With a length of a little more than 18 feet, the E18 is an ideal size for first-time boaters or as a boat for the summer cottage on the lake. It can be powered by an outboard engine of up to 125 horsepower, making it suitable for the kids to operate under adult supervision. This little adventure machine comes with a trailer and is a good choice for cruising, fishing, or towing water skiers and inflatable toys.



Family Favorite
CHAPARRAL 21 SSI
\$69,729

Since 1965, family-owned-and-run Chaparral has been building boats designed to provide years of fun, such as the 21 SSI. From the comfortable bow seating to the swim platform extending aft out over the water, the boat is ready to deliver miles of smiles. Standard power is a 200-horsepower MerCruiser 4.5-liter engine, with 250-horsepower options also available. The optional watersports tower makes it ready to entertain even the most active family members. Standard equipment includes a custom trailer.



Waterway Classic
SEA RAY SPX 190
\$53,427

The sleek lines and features of this “Baby Sea Ray” give it the feel of a larger boat. It comes with a tandem axle trailer and features comfortable, secure seating at the bow, amidships, and in the rear adjacent to the swim platform. A 200-horsepower 4.5-liter MerCruiser Alpha One inboard engine is standard, with a 250-horsepower engine also available, both of which are perfect for water skiing or just enjoying the passing scenery.




Have It Your Way
FOUR WINNS H1 AND H1 OUTBOARD
H1: \$60,645; H1 OUTBOARD: \$57,360

The H1 can be ordered with either outboard engine power or a traditional inboard engine. The bowrider-style hull has ample seating all around, with big-boat features such as an optional dining table and premium audio systems. Standard power options include a 200-horsepower MerCruiser or a 115-horsepower Mercury outboard, with larger engines also available. The base price includes a trailer, so you can take your fun with you.

Are there books you'd recommend?
We'd love to hear from you. Let us know at features@epochtimes.com

RECOMMENDED READING

This week, we feature a Smoky Mountains cookbook with a side of savory stories and a unique slant on one of America's most beloved illustrators.



HISTORY

‘Smoke ‘Em If You Got ‘Em’

By Joel R. Bius

Anyone in the U.S. military before 1980 remembers the cry “Smoke ‘em if you got ‘em.” Most lit up a cigarette. In 1900, cigarettes were viewed as unmanly. World War I changed that as cigarettes helped doughboys tolerate trench life. In 1973, when the all-volunteer army was instituted, the military discouraged smoking to keep down health care costs, and cigarette use has now plunged to near 1900 levels. This book gives interesting insights into the link between cigarettes and the military.

NAVAL INSTITUTE PRESS, 2018, 328 PAGES



COOKING

‘Fishing for Chickens’

By Jim Casada

In a very interesting memoir twist, this book combines history, kitchen lore, information about the basic foods of Appalachia, old-time recipes, and ancestral tales set around cooking and meals. Casada is a native of these mountains and author of some 30 books, including “A Smoky Mountain Boyhood,” and here he puts together a well-seasoned stew that should appeal to many tastes. If you enjoy regional history, books about cooking, or just some fine storytelling, here’s a memoir to satisfy you.

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA PRESS, 2022, 336 PAGES



ART

‘Norman Rockwell’s Models’

By S.T. Haggerty

For fans of Norman Rockwell, Haggerty has made a beautiful and unique contribution to the artist’s legacy. The author thoroughly discusses many of Rockwell’s paintings from the perspective of those who modeled for them, including their experiences while the works were produced and what it was like anticipating the release of the artwork. It also tells of how Rockwell came across and selected models and why he chose regular people instead of professionals for his paintings. It’s an intimate look at one of America’s treasures.

ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD, 2023, 312 PAGES



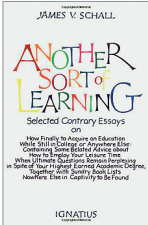
FOR KIDS

‘The Tanglewood Tales’

By Nathaniel Hawthorne

Published in 1853, “The Tanglewood Tales” features six Greek myths retold by Nathaniel Hawthorne, including “The Minotaur,” “The Pygmies,” “The Golden Fleece,” and more. Hawthorne aimed to provide child-appropriate versions of these timeless tales. The sequel to “A Wonder Book for Girls and Boys,” it’s a wonderful addition to a child’s library.

DOVER PUBLICATIONS, 2017, 224 PAGES



CLASSICS

‘Another Sort of Learning’

By James V. Schall

Here’s an eccentric collection of essays erudite, witty, and reflective. Schall covers a wide range of topics—literature, theology, philosophy, even a chapter “On the Seriousness of Sports.” Also included are essays on teaching along with advice for students, including “What a Student Owes His Teacher.” The book lists accompanying each chapter are a huge plus. Authors discussed range from Plato to Josef Pieper to George Gilder. This is a “big questions” book accessible to the general reader.

IGNATIUS PRESS, 1988, 300 PAGES



NONFICTION

‘Gila Lost and Found’

By Marc Levesque

Search and Rescue Field Coordinator Marc Levesque shares experiences from his decades-long career in the rescue business in New Mexico. Told through real-life stories, readers will get a glimpse into the intricacies and challenges of finding the lost, stranded, or injured in some of the most rugged and remote corners of the Southwest. Harrowed yet hopeful, numerous teams of unsung heroes coalesce to bring calm out of chaos. These are gripping accounts told from a voice steeped in wilderness wisdom.

RED PLANET PRESS, 2021, 222 PAGES




Ian Kane
is a U.S. Army veteran, filmmaker, and author. He enjoys the great outdoors and volunteering.

ENTERTAINMENT

This week, we feature an enduring classic about World War I and an endearing story about a boy who seeks to free his friend, an orca whale.

NEW RELEASE



‘Asteroid City’ (2023)

► This romantic dramedy transports us to a fictional, small desert town in the American Southwest in 1955. It follows the stories of characters as they flock from all over the country to attend a stargazing convention. Things get interesting when a purported alien encounter occurs.

Director Wes Anderson’s latest whimsical flick oozes with style and does a good job of transporting us to his nostalgic ‘50s universe. The characters have individual stories that form an entertaining tapestry, but the story can seem a bit convoluted.

COMEDY | DRAMA | ROMANCE

Release Date: June 23, 2023

Director: Wes Anderson

Starring: Jason Schwartzman, Scarlett Johansson, Tom Hanks

Running Time: 1 hour, 44 minutes

MPAA Rating: PG-13

Where to Watch: Theaters

★★★★★

AN EARLY REALISTIC PORTRAYAL OF WAR



‘All Quiet on the Western Front’ (1930)

► Paul (Lew Ayres) is a young German student who, wanting to do his patriotic duty, enlists for World War I. But when he begins to realize what hell war can be, his perspective changes.

This groundbreaking film pulled no punches in its realistic portrayal of war. Even today, it isn’t

DRAMA | WAR

Release Date: Aug. 24, 1930

Director: Lewis Milestone

Starring: Lew Ayres, Louis Wolheim, John Wray

Running Time: 2 hours, 32 minutes

Not Rated

Where to Watch: DirecTV, Vudu, Apple TV

★★★★★

Epoch Watchlist

FAMILY PICK

‘Free Willy’ (1993)

► Willy is a wild orca that has been placed in a marina fish tank, where he is expected to perform tricks for audiences. Jesse (Jason James Richter) is a troubled kid who has been assigned to clean Willy’s tank by his social worker. The boy and the whale form a special bond that may just lead to Willy’s freedom.

While somewhat formulaic, this well-meaning drama should appeal to animal lovers and those who like feel-good films with satisfying endings.



ADVENTURE | DRAMA | FAMILY

Release Date: July 16, 1993

Director: Simon Wincer

Starring: Jason James Richter, Lori Petty, Michael Madsen

Running Time: 1 hour, 52 minutes

MPAA Rating: PG

Where to Watch: Amazon, HBO Max, Redbox

★★★★★

AN ENGROSSING COLD WAR THRILLER

‘Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy’ (2012)

► The highly proficient spy George Smiley (Gary Oldman) comes out of retirement to ferret out a Soviet mole in the British intelligence agency MI6. But as he conducts his investigations, he begins to realize that he’s also a suspect.

Based on John le Carre’s novel, this well-paced geopolitical thriller eschews the glitz and glam of James Bond films for gritty drama and dialogue, realistic situations, gradual tension-building, and



DRAMA | MYSTERY | THRILLER

Release Date: Jan. 6, 2012

Director: Tomas Alfredson

Starring: Gary Oldman, Colin Firth, Tom Hardy

Running Time: 2 hours, 7 minutes

MPAA Rating: R

Where to Watch: Amazon, Vudu, Apple TV

★★★★★



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Proper Pup Etiquette

Ensuring Fido behaves in public

We like to think our pooches are very well-behaved, but how they behave in public, among strangers and other dogs, is the true test.

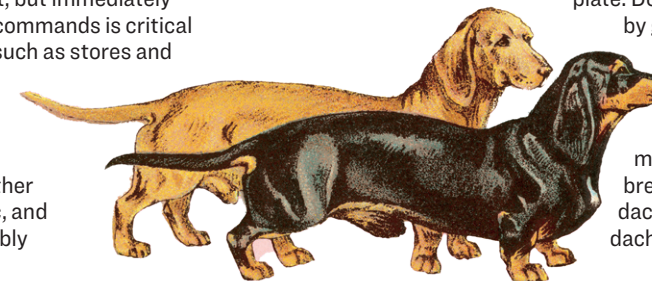
By Bill Lindsey

1 Sit, Stay

A properly trained pooch knows basic commands and, more importantly, obeys them while out and about. Knowing “sit, stay, come” at home is great, but immediately complying with these commands is critical when in public places such as stores and dog parks and while being walked in the neighborhood, where your dog is exposed to distractions such as other dogs, strangers, traffic, and many unfamiliar, possibly unsettling sounds.

5 Chew Your Own Food

One of the worst things a dog can do is steal food from your plate, or even worse, from someone else’s plate. Don’t encourage bad manners by giving your dog bits of your meal as you sit at the table. A similar infraction is stealing food from a countertop, a crime more often committed by breeds such as Labradors than dachshunds—but only because dachshunds can’t reach that high!



2 Contagious Congeniality

Dogs are magnets for children and a lot of adults, making it important that your pup is OK with what might be a constant stream of attention. If your dog is a sweetheart around you and the family but snarls or barks at strangers, consider adding a “Do Not Pet” patch to the dog’s harness or attach a red bandana or ribbon from the leash as a sign your pet needs some space.

3 Acrobatics Are for the Circus

Some dogs become excited or scared while out in public and jump on their owners or perhaps on people who come over to meet them. In addition to not being an example of good pup manners, this behavior can lead to cuts or scrapes on unprotected human legs, paw prints on trousers, and tears in stockings. Unexpected, unsolicited jumps onto furniture are another example of improper pooch behavior; “down” means no jumping.

4 No Surprises

Nature can come calling at the most inopportune time for a dog or its owner, so it’s best to be prepared. This starts with using the facilities before leaving home. Train the dog, using snacks as a reward, to let you know by means of scratching at the door or giving you a meaningful look when it needs to take a potty break. If an accident happens, clean it up promptly.

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