

# [***Editorial Roundup: United States***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BRS-X5Y1-DYMD-61WC-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Excerpts from recent editorials in the United States and abroad:

April 6

The Washington Post on the growing popularity of women's college basketball

Women’s college basketball has become a cultural phenomenon. Arenas are selling out. Records have been set for Division I all-time college points, [*three-pointers*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/colleges/2024/04/02/caitlin-clark-scoring-average/8bd30458-f12b-11ee-a4c9-88e569a98b58_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_2) and [*TV viewership*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2024/04/02/iowa-lsu-tv-ratings/?itid=lk_inline_manual_2). Women’s Final Four tickets have been reselling [*for double*](https://apnews.com/article/march-madness-final-four-tickets-d6cae68a63070866f54594d4bf2e5837) the men’s tickets.

The top players are now household names — [*Iowa’s Caitlin Clark*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2024/04/06/caitlin-clark-iowa-uconn/?itid=lk_inline_manual_4), Louisiana State University’s Angel Reese, the University of Connecticut’s Paige Bueckers, the University of Southern California’s JuJu Watkins, the University of South Carolina’s Kamilla Cardoso, to name a few.

But the images of young girls and boys — begging for autographs, crying when they meet players — have been the most evocative. (Yes, even more so than the tiara Ms. Reese brought to her final game.) For decades, women’s professional sports have been a cultural afterthought, with vast differences in pay and player treatment, relative to men’s teams, justified by middling interest (though passionate) among the public. That could change.

This moment feels akin to that of the 1990s Chicago Bulls with Michael Jordan and Scottie Pippen, or when soccer star Brandi Chastain won the World Cup for Team USA and ripped off her shirt.

And it has been a long time coming. Many of the coaches of Elite 8 teams had to beg friends to attend their games, which they played in rotting facilities that men’s teams had long abandoned. Title IX, a 1972 federal law, mandated more equality between men’s and women’s college sports. The early 2000s saw players — such as Diana Taurasi and Sue Bird — who generated many TV viewers in college with their faster game and then went on to elevate the WNBA’s stature. Now, women’s basketball is reaching new heights.

There’s already buzz about next year’s college season, with the return of players such as Ms. Watkins and LSU’s Flau’jae Johnson. Meanwhile, the WNBA is about to welcome the once-in-a-generation talents of Ms. Clark and Ms. Reese, who could start selling out professional stadiums next year, too.

ONLINE: [*https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/04/06/ncaa-caitlin-clark-angel-reese-final-four-women-basketball/*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/04/06/ncaa-caitlin-clark-angel-reese-final-four-women-basketball/)

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April 6

The New York Times on Speaker Mike Johnson's responsibility to bring Ukraine aid to a vote

After more than two years of brutal, unrelenting war, Ukraine is still ready and has the capacity to defend its democracy and territory against Russia. But it cannot do so without American military assistance, which the United States had assured the Ukrainians would be there as long as it was needed.

A majority of Americans understand this, and believe that curbing the revanchist dreams of Russia’s leader, Vladimir Putin, is America’s duty to Ukraine and to American security. A survey by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and Ipsos found that [*58 percent of Americans*](https://globalaffairs.org/research/public-opinion-survey/americans-continue-support-military-and-economic-aid-ukraine) favor providing economic help to Ukraine and sending more arms and military equipment to the Ukrainian government. And 60 percent of respondents said that the U.S. security relationship with Ukraine does more to strengthen American national security than to weaken it.

While that support has declined somewhat since the beginning of Russia’s invasion, and it is weaker among Republicans, many Republican members of Congress also support continuing military aid. So it is distressing that the fate of Ukraine has fallen prey to internecine Republican politicking. House Speaker Mike Johnson has the power to do the right thing, but time is running critically short.

Without American artillery, as well as antitank and antiaircraft shells and missiles, Ukraine cannot hold off an army that has a far deeper supply of men and munitions. “Russia is now firing at least five times as many artillery rounds as Ukraine,” as Andrew Kramer of The Times [*reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/05/world/europe/ukraine-ammunition-shells-russia.html). As summer approaches, Russia is expected to prepare a new offensive thrust. Mr. Johnson knows this. He also knows that, if he brings it to a vote, a [*$60.1 billion aid package for Ukraine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/12/us/politics/senate-ukraine-aid.html) would most likely sail through the House with bipartisan support. Many Republican members and most Democrats want to pass it. The Senate passed it in February.

Yet so far, Mr. Johnson has avoided a vote, fearing that a clutch of far-right House members, who parrot the views of Donald Trump and oppose any more aid for Ukraine, could topple him from the speaker’s post. To placate them, the speaker has said he will produce a proposal with “important innovations” when legislators return to work on Tuesday. These may include lifting the Biden administration’s hold on liquefied natural gas exports, including a proposed terminal in his home state, Louisiana; calling the aid a loan; or seizing billions of frozen Russian assets.

None of those conditions are wise. Tying aid for Ukraine to unrelated political goals, such as undoing President Biden’s climate change agenda, may be typical of congressional horse trading, but it turns Ukraine into a pawn in partisan conflict. “This is not some political skirmish that only matters here in America,” Donald Tusk, the Polish prime minister, said on his visit to Washington last month. The speaker’s decision, he said, “will really cost thousands of lives there — children, women. He must be aware of his personal responsibility.”

Nor does it make sense to force Ukraine to take on massive debt when it’s fighting for its life, and its economy is already dependent on aid. Seizing large sums of money from another sovereign nation could also have unpredictable legal and economic consequences.

Given Ukraine’s perilous position, however, most Democrats and Republicans would likely accept what Mr. Johnson cobbles together, even measures they have reservations about, particularly since the package also includes aid for Israel and Taiwan. Those lawmakers are right to pursue a reasonable compromise. The House minority leader, Hakeem Jeffries, has also [*suggested that Democrats will support*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/28/us/politics/hakeem-jeffries-mike-johnson.html) Mr. Johnson as speaker to avoid yet another damaging and pointless fight over the speakership. Those moves are welcome steps to try to loosen the grip of Republican extremists on America’s ability to support its allies.

Of course, recalcitrance in Congress is not Ukraine’s only problem. Europe has been slow to step in to meet Ukraine’s military needs, and the country’s president, Volodymyr Zelensky, may have taken too long to lower the recruitment age to 25 in the face of a shortage of soldiers.

But American weapons and artillery are essential to Ukraine’s ability to hold the line and, eventually, to negotiate for an end to hostilities from a position of strength. No country has the stockpiles or the production capabilities to match the United States in producing and providing the 155-millimeter artillery shells, HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems) or air defense systems that Ukraine requires to hold the Russians at bay. Russia, by contrast, has successfully ramped up military production and is receiving supplies from North Korea and Iran, and Mr. Putin has used the recent terror attack on a [*concert hall in Moscow*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/23/world/europe/moscow-concert-hall-attack-what-we-know.html) to ramp up recruitment.

Ukraine is already suffering the consequences of America’s faltering support. Russian forces [*took the eastern city of Avdiivka in February*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/17/world/europe/ukraine-avdiivka-withdraw-despair.html), and U.S. intelligence officials [*warned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/14/briefing/ukraine-us-aid.html) Congress that this happened because Ukraine ran out of artillery shells. The Russian command is doubtlessly aware of this as it plans its next moves.

Mr. Putin gambled from the outset that the United States would not go the distance in its support for Ukraine, and he must be reveling in the goings-on in Congress.

Allowing Russia to impose its will on Ukraine would be a devastating blow to America’s credibility and leadership — fulfilling one of Mr. Putin’s long-term goals. That, in turn, would risk encouraging him to test waters further afield, whether in the Baltic States, in western Europe or to the south, and would signal to Xi Jinping that China, too, can throw its weight around.

Mr. Trump and his followers may argue that the security of Ukraine, or even of Europe, is not America’s business. But the consequence of allowing a Russian victory in Ukraine is a world in which authoritarian strongmen feel free to crush dissent or seize territory with impunity. That is a threat to the security of America, and the world.

Congress is prepared to stand up to this aggression; it is Mr. Johnson’s duty to bring this effort to a vote.

ONLINE: [*https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/06/opinion/ukraine-aid-congress.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/06/opinion/ukraine-aid-congress.html)

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April 5

The Wall Street Journal on Trump, Biden and the two-party system

Many Americans are unenthused, to say the least, about a 2024 grudge match between two grumpy old men, President Biden and [*Donald Trump*](https://www.wsj.com/topics/person/donald-trump). But after months of No Labels teasing an alternative “unity ticket,” this week it pulled the plug after failing to find a candidate. The exercise says something about the country’s political system and this particular moment.

No Labels isn’t wrong that many voters think the two big parties are serving up the equivalent of week-old leftovers. In the latest Harvard/Harris poll, 62% (and 71% of independents) say the nation “needs another choice.” Or look at Tuesday’s primaries: In Wisconsin, nearly 21% of Republicans spurned Mr. Trump, with 12.8% for [*Nikki Haley*](https://www.wsj.com/topics/person/nikki-haley) and 3.3% for [*Ron DeSantis*](https://www.wsj.com/topics/person/ron-desantis), long after both left the race. In Rhode Island, more than 17% of Democrats refused Mr. Biden, with 14.8% for “uncommitted” and 2.6% for Dean Phillips.

Yet a longstanding feature of America’s political system is a balance between two major parties. The Electoral College forces a majority winner among the states. Even if an upstart third party earned a plurality (say, 40%) for its presidential nominee, this would throw the election to Congress, back to the control of Republicans and Democrats.

Compounding the difficulty is that third parties are required to hustle merely to get their candidates on the ballot, though No Labels said it had qualified in 21 states. Two-party systems have drawbacks, but the upside is that they avoid the political fragmentation that ails many parliamentary countries, where it’s a struggle to put together any kind of governing coalition. See Israel or much of Europe.

Also, successful political movements tend to rally voters to some specific issue or cause, and it was never clear what a No Labels agenda would look like. Immigration is one place that Republicans and Democrats are doing damage by refusing to compromise. But splitting the difference on everything isn’t a galvanizing message. The left wants higher taxes. The right wants lower taxes. Would a No Labels nominee pledge to keep taxes the same?

Without a larger cause, No Labels needed a strong political personality. One by one, its best prospects said no. Some didn’t want to be a spoiler. “If my candidacy in any way, shape or form would help Donald Trump become President again,” former New Jersey GOP Gov. Chris Christie said, “then it is not the way forward.”

Others courted by No Labels (Ms. Haley) might still hope for a future inside their parties, especially since whoever wins the White House in November will be a lame-duck President ineligible for 2028.

Given those dynamics, it was always a longshot that a unity ticket straight out of a buddy cop movie—Larry Hogan for President, with VP Joe Manchin riding sidecar, or vice versa—could take mellow centrism to the Oval Office. Crazier things have happened, but it probably would have depended on a collapse in support for either Mr. Biden or Mr. Trump, which isn’t in evidence, despite their manifest political and personal liabilities.

The public is left with an unappealing choice. Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump are in a codependent political relationship. Each imagines that he’s the only candidate who can defeat the other, when the truth is that each is being propped up by the other’s flaws.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is no good alternative. He’s a vessel for the discontented, a man of the left who feints to the populist right. Unlike No Labels, Mr. Kennedy apparently doesn’t mind being a spoiler, but which side he’ll hurt more is hard to guess and the polls offer conflicting evidence.

It’s going to be a mean and ugly campaign, and a perilous four years of high polarization, no matter who wins. On the bright side, at least the winner can only serve one more term.

ONLINE: [*https://www.wsj.com/articles/no-labels-third-party-unity-ticket-donald-trump-joe-biden-2024-1ca18569?mod=editorials\_article\_pos4*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/no-labels-third-party-unity-ticket-donald-trump-joe-biden-2024-1ca18569?mod=editorials_article_pos4)

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April 3

The Los Angeles Times on the GOP and criminal justice reform

Congress eliminated parole from the federal criminal justice system in 1984, but it didn’t completely do away with post-release supervision. About 3 of every 4 people leaving federal prison remain under supervision, often for years, and [*often for no good reason*](https://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-parole-violations-recidivism-20190622-story.html).

A transition period to ensure successful reentry into society after prison makes sense. But federal supervised release — a parole-like period of restrictions post-prison — lasts too long and is too expensive. It makes little distinction between those who are at high risk to break the law again and those at negligible risk. And there is mounting evidence that the longer supervision goes on, the greater the chance that the former prisoner will get into trouble again. The extended lack of real freedom interrupts transition to responsible post-prison behavior.

The [*Safer Supervision Act*](https://safersupervision.com/) is a [*bipartisan bill*](https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/2681) that would shorten post-prison supervision upon a showing that public safety would not be negatively affected.

It is similar in spirit to the [*First Step Act*](https://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-step-act-20181119-story.html), another bipartisan federal criminal justice reform that was signed into law in 2018 by President Trump. The act reduced excessive federal prison sentences while encouraging rehabilitation. It was one of the few truly bipartisan successes in years, a result of efforts by [*CNN commentator Van Jones*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/movies/story/2023-04-05/van-jones-prison-reform-first-step-movie) and U.S. Sen. Cory Booker, a Democrat from New Jersey.

And, importantly, reform-oriented Republicans.

Liberals could too easily mislead themselves into believing that tough-on-crime conservative lawmakers [*signed on to the First Step Act*](https://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-step-act-20181119-story.html) six years ago and are signing on to the Safer Supervision Act now as reform newbies. That’s a far cry from the truth.

Criminal justice reform has deep roots in political conservatism. Some of the [*most meaningful recent sentencing reforms*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/conservatives-for-criminal-justice-reform-1506463970) have come from states like Texas, Georgia and South Carolina. The organization [*Right on Crime*](https://rightoncrime.com/about/case-for-reform/) and other conservative reform groups draw on religious traditions that stress repentance and forgiveness, plus a deep concern over government expansion and waste — including in public safety and punishment.

Writing in favor of the Safer Supervision Act, former House Speaker [*Newt Gingrich, a Georgia Republican, emphasized*](https://www.gingrich360.com/2024/03/27/congress-must-pass-the-safer-supervision-act/) the conservative critique of an expansive carceral system.

“Our nation’s public safety systems are not immune from the bloat, waste, and ineffectiveness that naturally grows in massive government operations,” Gingrich wrote.

You don’t have to be a fan of Gingrich or his ***politics*** to appreciate his support for badly needed changes in a criminal justice system with far too large a footprint and too little benefit to show for it.

A decade ago, Gingrich joined with the late Malibu billionaire [*B. Wayne Hughes Jr.*](https://www.forbes.com/sites/katiasavchuk/2014/10/30/why-a-conservative-billionaire-wants-to-reduce-sentences-for-drug-and-theft-crimes-in-california/), in writing a [*Times op-ed in favor of Proposition 47*](https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-0917-gingrich-prop--47-criminal-justice-20140917-story.html), the California reform that right-sizes drug offenses and small property crimes. Hughes, a staunch conservative, founded and ran an organization that assisted crime victims and former offenders. He was one of the biggest donors to the Proposition 47 campaign.

The two noted that Texas reversed prison expansion in 2007, saved billions of dollars and used the savings on drug treatment and mental health services. Texas reset the dividing line between misdemeanor and felony theft at $2,500 (California’s is $950 — well short of Texas levels).

Ohio, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Missouri and Mississippi — all red states, Gingrich and Hughes noted — adopted their own reforms along the lines of Texas’.

“Now voters in California will have a chance to do the same, using costly prison beds for dangerous and hardened criminals,” Gingrich and Hughes wrote. “It is time to stop wasting taxpayer dollars on locking up low-level offenders.”

Today’s election-year posturing has clouded the facts and original ***politics*** of criminal justice reform. Some [*elected Democrats*](https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2024/01/assembly-public-safety-chair-floats-prop-47-reform-bill-00133925), fearing for their political lives, embrace false connections between smart reforms and periodic spikes in crime. Some [*elected Republicans*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-03-23/congressman-involved-in-attempted-prop-47-overhaul-violated-campaign-finance-law) — [*especially in California*](https://abc7news.com/prop-47-repeal-fails-california-non-violent-crimes-measure-vote-republicans-proposition-reform-retail-theft-bill/11632890/) — betray the conservative reform principles articulated by Gingrich, U.S. Sen. [*Rand Paul*](https://www.ocregister.com/2014/10/29/rand-paul-and-b-wayne-hughes-jr-republicans-should-back-prop-47/) (R-Kentucky) and others to [*seek backing from law enforcement*](https://www.ocregister.com/2022/02/18/what-compels-republicans-and-police-to-lie-about-proposition-47/) and other groups that see political gain in embracing fear.

But even law enforcement organizations such as the [*Major Cities Chiefs Assn.*](https://majorcitieschiefs.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2022.09.29S.-5040-Safer-Supervision-Act-of-2022-Support-Letter.pdf) have joined with prosecutors, defense lawyers, religious groups and progressive reformers to embrace the Safer Supervision Act.

Truth be told, the reform doesn’t go far enough. But that’s no reason to reject it. The [*First Step Act*](https://thehill.com/opinion/criminal-justice/4356127-the-first-step-act-wasnt-a-mistake-but-criminal-justice-reformers-dropped-the-ball/) made it clear by its name that more reform steps were needed. But they are to be taken one at a time, as conservatives and liberals, Democrats and Republicans, seek common ground. Passing the Safer Supervision Act is a step that Congress ought to take now.

ONLINE: [*https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2024-04-03/editorial-conservative-criminal-justice-reform*](https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2024-04-03/editorial-conservative-criminal-justice-reform)

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April 5

The Guardian on Biden's Gaza warning

A pivotal point has arrived in the cataclysmic six\u2011month war in Gaza. The Israel Defense Forces’ killing of seven foreign aid workers and their Palestinian driver has spurred the US, the UK and other European allies to draw the line that they should have established long ago. On Thursday, Joe Biden [*called*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/04/israel-us-gaza-joe-biden-benjamin-netanyahu-phone-call) for an immediate ceasefire and told Benjamin Netanyahu that future support would depend on Israel taking steps to protect civilians and relief workers.

These warnings come too late for tens of thousands of Palestinians, mostly women and children. But they could now protect others from the continued offensive, the threatened [*ground assault in Rafah*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/top-israeli-official-ron-dermer-yelling-meeting-us-officials-gaza-rcna146293), and the famine setting in: Oxfam [*says*](https://www.oxfam.org.uk/media/press-releases/people-in-northern-gaza-forced-to-survive-on-245-calories-a-day-less-than-a-can-of-beans-oxfam/) that people in the north are consuming on average just 245 calories a day. Faced with the prospect of sanctions or a halt to arms deals, Mr Netanyahu’s war cabinet [*agreed*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/05/israel-reopen-erez-crossing-gaza-biden-warning-war-netanyahu-palestine) to the opening of the Erez crossing and temporary use of the port of Ashdod in southern Israel. But as the US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, [*has said*](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/apr/05/first-thing-israel-to-reopen-erez-crossing-into-gaza), “the real test is results”. The US government wants to see them within days.

A massive scaling-up of aid must be matched by a dramatic reduction in casualties. The killing of the World Central Kitchen staff highlighted not only the desperate need in Gaza but also the IDF’s conduct of the war. It has now sacked two senior officers over the “grave mistake”, but these deaths were not an anomaly; they underscored the hollowness of its claims to minimise civilian casualties. That is made even more starkly clear in testimony [*from intelligence officials*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/03/israel-gaza-ai-database-hamas-airstrikes) over the use of artificial intelligence to identify targets and the “very lenient” rules on how many civilian deaths were permissible.

Mr Biden’s call came amid growing pressure. The US president had looked not only complicit but weak, as the Israeli prime minister ignored pleas and criticism alike. On Friday, the United Nations Human Rights Council [*adopted*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/05/un-human-rights-council-israel-gaza-biden-netanyahu) a resolution calling for [*Israel*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/israel) to be held accountable for possible war crimes and crimes against humanity. The public sympathy and support for Israel engendered by the Hamas atrocities of 7 October were immense. Yet more voters in the US now disapprove than approve of its conduct of the war. Most UK voters [*want to stop arms sales*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/03/majority-of-voters-in-uk-back-banning-arm-sales-to-israel-poll-finds). This is not just a moral issue but a legal one. Hundreds of legal experts, including [*four former supreme court judges*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/04/another-former-supreme-court-judge-signs-letter-genocide-law-breach-sunak-gaza-catastrophe), have [*warned*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/03/former-supreme-court-judges-say-uk-arming-israel-breaches-international-law) that Britain is breaching international law by continuing to arm Israel.

Even if the war in Gaza stopped tomorrow, the toll of the dead, wounded, orphaned and traumatised ensures that Palestinians will pay the price [*throughout their lifetimes*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2024/gaza-food-famine-malnutrition-children-aid/?itid=hp-mv-top-stories_top-table-main_p001_f002) and over generations. Mr Biden’s embrace of Mr Netanyahu was supposed to prevent regional escalation, yet there is growing concern about an all-out conflict with Hezbollah in Lebanon. Israel is on high alert amid [*fears of Iranian retaliation*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/04/israel-on-high-alert-after-iran-missile-retaliation-threat) for the killing of Revolutionary Guards commanders in diplomatic premises in Syria.

The opening of aid corridors following Mr Biden’s call only reinforces the fact that Israel’s allies should have acted decisively earlier. Instead, the US allowed a critical UN security council resolution to pass, then called it non-binding; the president spoke of red lines, then erased them moments later. What is needed now is what was needed months ago: a ceasefire in Gaza, the release of hostages, and a massive, sustained humanitarian relief effort. Nothing short of that will do.

ONLINE: [*https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/apr/05/the-guardian-view-on-biden-gaza-warning-it-is-much-too-late-it-must-not-be-too-little*](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/apr/05/the-guardian-view-on-biden-gaza-warning-it-is-much-too-late-it-must-not-be-too-little)

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