

TRUMP POLICY BILL CLEARS CONGRESS



Speaker Mike Johnson bringing the House vote to a close on Thursday. The tally was 218 to 214, with all but two Republicans in favor.

Tariffs Could Render Next Year's Fourth a Dud

By ALAN RAPPEPORT

WASHINGTON — President Trump may soon have to decide between his love of tariffs and his affection for fireworks.

The Trump administration's trade policies have set off a frenzy of lobbying for exemptions, with industries across the economy raising alarm about how tariffs would crush their companies, raise prices for consumers and lead to shortages of products.

But as the July 4 holiday approaches, the pyrotechnics sector, which is heavily reliant on imports from China, has been in-

Chinese Fireworks Get More Costly as U.S. 250th Nears

creasingly loud about its concerns. The higher prices are already straining the mom-and-pop fireworks shops that dot road-sides across rural America, and the budgets of cities and towns that put on splashy displays could soon be further stretched.

But the bigger fear is 2026, as industry representatives warn that many of the festivities that

are in the works to celebrate the nation's 250th birthday could be diminished or even go dark.

"It's really the next year that's worrying us with the manufacturing and what tariffs will do," said Stacy Schneitter-Blake, the president of the National Fireworks Association and co-owner of Schneitter Fireworks & Importing in Missouri.

Fireworks are a \$2 billion industry in the United States, and about 99 percent of the fireworks that light up the skies across America come from China. The Trump administration raised tariffs on Chinese imports as high as 145 per-

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Caidryn Spilman, 8, and his great-grandfather Joe Golubski at Schneitter Fireworks & Importing.

Loving Homes Wanted for Rats and Zebra Fish

By HIROKO TABUCHI

Employees at the Environmental Protection Agency's research campus in North Carolina are preparing to take on a new responsibility. Bring home lab rats as pets.

Or maybe some zebra fish.

Both animals have long been used at the E.P.A. facility to test the toxicity of chemicals. But as the E.P.A. shuts down its research arm as part of the Trump adminis-

Adopt Ex-Lab Animals, E.P.A. Asks Staff

tration's deep cuts to government scientific work, the animals need new homes.

So employees at the agency's sprawling Research Triangle Park in North Carolina have set up an adoption plan, according to four

people with knowledge of the program. Staff members can take home the rats or fish and keep them as pets.

"Adopt love. Save a life," read a poster displayed on campus last week, according to a picture obtained by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, a nonprofit that provides legal assistance to government workers who speak out on environmental

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ABUSE ISN'T SAME AS RACKETEERING

How Combs Fended Off the Gravest Charges

By JULIA JACOBS and BEN SISARIO

Over 28 days of testimony, federal prosecutors called witnesses who gave compelling accounts of harrowing violence, acts of intimidation and voyeuristic sex in hotel rooms with oceans of baby oil. Sean Combs, they said, was the ringleader.

Investigators detailed for the jury raids at Mr. Combs's mansions in Miami Beach and Los Angeles, where they carted away several AR-15-style guns and illicit narcotics. People who worked for Mr. Combs, the music mogul known as Puff Daddy or Diddy, testified that they had procured drugs for him or had witnessed his physical abuse of a former girlfriend.

In the face of this evidence, the defense presented a case that lasted less than half an hour. Mr. Combs declined to testify, and no other witnesses were called. The rapid turnaround was startling after six weeks of trial.

In retrospect, the defense's compact case was a sign that Mr. Combs's lawyers felt confident the government had not done enough to convince a federal jury that Mr. Combs was, as charged, the boss of a criminal enterprise.

That confidence had appeared to waver on Tuesday afternoon, when eight of Mr. Combs's lawyers somberly huddled near their client after jurors said they had reached a verdict on all but the racketeering charge. But those lawyers turned jubilant on Wednesday after the jury declared Mr. Combs not guilty of sex trafficking and racketeering conspiracy — the two most severe charges against him.

While Mr. Combs's convictions on two lesser counts of transportation to engage in prostitution could result in his spending years in prison, sex-trafficking or racketeering convictions would have carried potential life sentences.

"He fought for his innocence," Marc Agnifilo, Mr. Combs's lead

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Democrats See a Chance to Win Voters Back

By ANNIE KARNI and REID J. EPSTEIN

WASHINGTON — Demoralized Democrats who have denounced President Trump's sweeping domestic policy bill have landed on a silver lining. It is so unpopular with voters, they say, that it could win them back one, if not both, chambers of Congress in next year's midterm elections.

Top officials in the party, who see the bill as cruel, fiscally ruinous and the single biggest wealth transfer in American history, expect that they can blame Republicans who voted for the loss of health care coverage, nursing home care and food security for millions of Americans in order to extend the 2017 tax cuts that favor the wealthy.

And they have plenty of quotes from Republicans like Senators Josh Hawley of Missouri, Thom Tillis of North Carolina and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska denouncing their own bill that, Democrats say, will make the argument that much more potent.

"There's going to be some powerful ads," said Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the chamber's Democratic leader, before rattling off potential scripts for advertisements that are set to begin airing as early as next week. "My daughter had cancer. She was doing fine. Well, all of a sudden, her health care was blown up.' I worked at this rural hospital for 30 years. I put my heart into it because I wanted to help people. I was fired.' Stuff like that is going to really matter."

It may take a while for people to feel the full effects of the bill because Republicans front-loaded some temporary tax cuts for working people, like no taxes on tips, that were engineered to appeal to working-class voters. The cuts to Medicaid are not set to be implemented until after the midterm elections.

Still, there were some immediate effects. A clinic in southwest Nebraska announced this week that it was closing, blaming anticipated cuts to Medicaid. And Democrats said they expected millions of people to feel the impact from the bill's allowing credits from the Affordable Care Act to expire. It will be up to Democrats over the next year to drive home the argument that these policies are the fault of Republican lawmakers.

The party is starting in good shape: A slew of recent polls show

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Quashing Revolt, G.O.P. Delivers His Agenda

This article is by Michael Gold, Robert Jimison and Megan Mineiro.

WASHINGTON — The House on Thursday narrowly passed a sweeping bill to extend tax cuts and slash social safety net programs, capping Republicans' chaotic monthslong slog to overcome deep rifts within their party and deliver President Trump's domestic agenda.

The final vote, 218 to 214, was mostly along party lines and came after Speaker Mike Johnson spent a frenzied day and night toiling to quell resistance in his ranks that threatened until the very end to derail the president's marquee legislation. With all but two Republicans in favor and Democrats uniformly opposed, the action cleared the bill for Mr. Trump's signature, meeting the July 4 deadline he had demanded.

The legislation extends tax cuts enacted in 2017 that had been scheduled to expire at the end of the year, while adding new ones Mr. Trump promised during this campaign, on some tips and overtime pay, at a total cost of \$4.5 trillion. It also increases funding for defense and border security and cuts nearly \$1 trillion from Medicaid, with more reductions to food assistance for the poor and other government aid. And it phases out clean-energy tax credits passed under former President Joseph R. Biden Jr. that Mr. Trump and conservative Republicans have long decried.

Also included is a \$5 trillion increase in the debt limit, a measure that Republicans are typically unwilling to support but that was necessary to avert a federal default later this year.

The bill's final passage was a major victory for congressional Republicans and Mr. Trump, who is expected to swiftly sign what he has frequently referred to as his "big, beautiful bill." G.O.P. lawmakers who had feuded bitterly over the legislation united almost unanimously behind it, fearing the political consequences of allowing a tax increase and of crossing a president who demands unflinching loyalty and was pressuring them to fall into line.

"If you're for a secure border, safer communities and a strong military, this bill is for you," Mr. Johnson said, extolling the bill

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HIRING STEADY The labor market showed strength despite uncertainty over tariffs. PAGE B1

Offhand Remark on Gold Bars, Secretly Taped, Upends a Life

By LISA FRIEDMAN

They matched on Tinder shortly after the November presidential election, shared their mutual disappointment about Donald J. Trump's victory and agreed to meet for a drink.

Sitting at a table at Licht Cafe, a bar on Washington's U Street corridor, Brent Efron and his date, Brady, talked a bit about home and hobbies. But Brady — or at least that's the name he used — repeatedly steered the conversation back to Mr. Efron's job at the Environmental Protection Agency.

"It was a boring date," Mr. Efron, 29, recalled. "He just wanted to talk about work."

Brady took a particular interest in the fate of billions of dollars that Congress had ordered the E.P.A. to spend on tackling climate change. Mr. Trump had promised on the campaign trail to repeal climate programs, so the Biden ad-



Brent Efron was recorded by a Project Veritas operative.

ministration was "trying to get the money out as fast as possible," Mr. Efron told his date.

Mr. Efron, a passionate believer in the E.P.A.'s mission "to protect human health and the environment," came up with an analogy to describe what was happen-

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British Royals Retire Train

It's the end of the line for private rail cars that have transported the monarchy for over 150 years. PAGE A4

Low-Level War in the Making

Absent a U.S. deal with Iran, a long game of hide-and-seek, punctuated by military action, is likely. News Analysis. PAGE A10

Next Test for Democrats

Adelita Grijalva is favored to win her late father's Arizona House seat, but youthful rivals and tired voters are asking why change is so hard. PAGE A14

ICE Fears Dampen Celebrations

Some Los Angeles-area communities canceled events over fears of raids, as Latinos grapple with how, and whether, to mark Independence Day. PAGE A19

Mamdani Fires Back at Trump

The Democratic nominee for mayor of New York City said the president's criticism was an effort to divert attention from the G.O.P. agenda. PAGE A15

A 21st-Century Kodak Moment

The company's name has become synonymous with a failure to adapt to the digital revolution. But overseas, its logo is a retro fashion statement. PAGE B1

Vietnam Deal a Swipe at China

An initial trade accord with the country offers a glimpse of how President Trump is pushing the world to cut back on trade with Beijing. PAGE B1

South Korea's Market Fortunes

Analysts attribute the rise of the country's stocks mostly to the restoration of a unified government that has vowed to pass investor-friendly reforms. PAGE B1



Soccer Star Dies in Car Crash

Diogo Jota, 28, who played for Liverpool and the Portuguese national team, was killed along with his brother. PAGE B11

Baseball's Sweat Science

Electrolyte packets? Body-cooling devices? Plain old water? Players seek ways to cope with stifling heat. PAGE B8

Dolly Before She Was 'Dolly'

Thornton Wilder's "Matchmaker" was transformed into a blockbuster musical, but it has virtues of its own. PAGE C1

A More Romantic Vermeer

A Frick exhibition unites three of the artist's works that explore letter-writing and (maybe) love affairs. PAGE C1

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Carlos Lozada PAGE A24

