

know where their representatives stand on such an important issue.

Americans didn't elect us to sweep these issues under the rug, even if some Senators think they are difficult. By voting on these bills on women's healthcare, we are moving the issue forward because it is important for Members to be forced to take a position. That is the only way we will make progress.

Of course, some would want to sweep it under the rug. They say it is political. That is because they don't want to vote on it. They don't want to show their constituents that they are blocking something that the majority of their constituents demand.

We all know these issues are very, very personal to so many people. We all know that the other side is trying to hide. We are not letting them hide, and we are not letting them hide because that is the only way we will move this issue forward—by being public, by showing where people stand, and then by having, as our system has been designed to work since it was founded, their constituents putting pressure on them to do the right thing.

As I have made abundantly clear over the past couple of years, Democrats are always ready to work with the other side on legislation. But when we can't agree, Democrats aren't going to shy away from issues Americans fiercely care about, and protecting reproductive freedoms is among the most important issues in the minds of the American people.

So, once again, let me repeat: Voting on reproductive freedom is a "show us who you are" vote, and, all month long, Senate Republicans have shown everyone just how out of touch they have become with the mainstream. Hopefully, votes like this force them to change over a period of time.

In the last 2 weeks, Senate Republicans have shown that, for all their attempts to sound moderate on reproductive care, when it comes time to vote, they choose MAGA extremism over the wishes and desires of the American people. When Senate Republicans blocked Federal protections for contraceptives, they chose MAGA extremists over the American people. When Senate Republicans blocked Federal protections for IVF, they chose MAGA extremism over the American people. When Donald Trump continues, to this day, to brag about working with Senate Republicans to confirm three hard-right Supreme Court Justices to eliminate Roe, he is choosing MAGA extremism over the American people.

Make no mistake, the MAGA hard-right attacks on women are not done. First, it was abortion, then contraception, then IVF. What is next? If they get their chance, they will push for their ultimate goal of a national abortion ban.

That is why voting on legislation protecting access to contraception and IVF is so important. That is why affirming a woman's fundamental right

to choose is so important. And that is why Senate Democrats will continue to fight back against Republican attacks on reproductive care and never stop until the protections of Roe are the law of the land.

REMEMBERING WILLIE MAYS

Madam President, on a sad note but, in some ways, happy because he was such a great man, on Tuesday, the world of baseball said goodbye to one of its greatest athletes and its greatest human beings—he was one of the greatest Americans to ever play the game—Willie Mays. He died in Palo Alto at the age of 93.

Many call Willie Mays the great five-tool player in the history of baseball, but even that sells it laughably short. What Willie Mays meant to the game, what he meant to New York, what he meant to America can never be recorded with statistics. He was a living embodiment of America itself.

Born in the segregated South, he served in the Army, captured the hearts of millions from New York to San Francisco by dominating America's pastime at a time when Black players were just beginning to ascend into the major leagues.

He would play stickball with the kids on the streets of Harlem, get swarmed by admirers at the Red Rooster, and he was simply one of the nicest and coolest and most magnetic Americans who ever lived. That combination—nice, cool, and magnetic—it is a rarity. It is a rarity in anyone. There it was in Willie Mays.

When I was growing up, Mickey Mantle was my guy. I was a Yankees fan. So we were on the receiving end of Willie Mays' awesome powers. I was too young to remember the 1951 World Series, but I knew it was passed down from the older kids on the street as to how Willie Mays was an incredible competitor, as well as someone who was kind at the same time.

Of the many things that Willie Mays taught us, one is that you can be great and kind at once. So this week, New York and America says thank you, thank you, thank you to one of the greatest ever. I doubt we will ever see anyone like Willie Mays ever again.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

UKRAINE AND ENERGY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, last week, a U.S. company announced it had reached an agreement to begin exporting American liquefied natural gas to Ukraine for the first time. That

is certainly good news for our friends on the frontlines of Russian aggression, for allies across Eastern Europe, and for the workers and producers behind some of America's most affordable and reliable energy.

Exporting American abundance is a win-win proposition, and it is one that our closest trading partners in Europe have increasingly recognized as an opportunity to offset their reliance on Russian gas.

But setting aside last week's good news, the Biden administration is still chronically confused about the role that affordable and abundant American energy can play as a geopolitical tool, a source of American leadership, and an engine of our own economy.

In a joint pledge issued 2 years ago, President Biden committed to help reduce Europe's reliance on Russian energy and increase global energy security. Then, a few lines later, he reiterated his commitment to the unenforceable virtue signals of the Paris climate deal.

Sometimes it seems that cognitive dissonance is the most powerful force in the universe.

Remember, the President who continues to insist he is serious about helping America's closest allies resist the predations of Putin's Russia is the same President who made stunning American energy development a day-one priority. He is the same one who decided not to intervene when he had a chance—before Russia's escalation in Ukraine—to block the expansion of European reliance on Russian gas with the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. And, of course, this is the same President who earlier this year issued a de facto ban on new permitting for LNG export infrastructure that would make it harder for American producers to respond to demand for reliable alternatives to Russian or Iranian energy.

As I have discussed at length, Russia's escalation in Ukraine prompted some of our closest European allies to finally start investing seriously in their own defenses. It has also been an opportunity to rethink their dangerous overreliance on Russian energy.

Back in February, one German state-owned energy provider was in the process of switching from buying Russian gas to buying American gas instead, but the plan was stifled by the administration's decision to appease its activist base instead of reinforcing America's allies.

So last week brought good news. But here is the rub: This new commitment to Ukraine relies, in part, on the completion of a new LNG export facility that is stuck in the Biden administration's regulatory purgatory. And even as already permitted infrastructure comes online, producers who want to create new American jobs and expand their capacity to meet foreign demand are simply out of luck.

Since 2016, American LNG has been a remarkable success story. It had driven our economy to become a net energy

exporter. And just last year, even in the shadow of the Biden administration's War on Energy, the United States was the world's largest LNG exporter.

But this year, Russia has overtaken the United States in gas exports to the European market, and it might have something to do with a ban one of our former Democratic colleagues, Mary Landrieu, described as "throwing a match in a bale of hay." We might describe the President's ban as a tremendous missed opportunity, but that would undersell the predictably disastrous consequences.

In the face of a dangerous world, the administration's obsession with performative climate policy is taking meaningful levers of American power simply off the table. For 3½ years, the Biden administration has worked relentlessly to suffocate American energy production, both onshore and offshore. And when Senate Republicans offered amendments to restore some modicum of sanity to the system for permitting and leasing new energy development, every single Senate Democrat stood behind the administration and voted no.

The first and longest suffering victims of Washington Democrats' War on American Energy are the American people. Historic inflation has already made insuring a car or filling up the tank more than 50 percent more expensive on President Biden's watch. But his administration wants to compound the pain with regulations that would put entire sectors of our economy in an even more serious bind.

Back in March, the Biden administration finalized a rule on vehicle emissions that would give manufacturers of work trucks and commercial vehicles until 2032 to turn 40 percent of their new stock into zero-zero-emission vehicles. In the case of the biggest long-haul tractor-trailers, this would effectively mean replacing a quarter of these vehicles with zero-emission vehicles that are not yet on the road. It doesn't take an expert to imagine the sort of shock waves this would send across America. Our economy simply cannot function without reliable large vehicles to get products to market—or the hard-working men and women who make a living driving them. We are talking about a rule that would supercharge inflation on delivery costs and shelf prices alike and a penalty that would hit hardest for those least able to afford it.

Unsurprisingly, this zeal for redtape extends beyond heavy-duty vehicles to every passenger car, SUV, and pickup truck. In 8 years, if the administration has its way, two of every three vehicles manufactured for American consumers will have to be electric vehicles.

Now, consumers have already made it abundantly clear that they don't want Washington bureaucrats telling them what car to drive, and major engines of our economy have joined together to take the Biden administration to court over all of this nonsense.

Folks in my home State of Kentucky are following this progress closely. I spoke recently with a car dealer from Richmond. When it comes to his livelihood, he doesn't mince any words. Here is what he had to say:

I don't want to be in court fighting a governmental agency. I just want to sell and service the cars and trucks that my customers want. . . . [R]ight now and for as long as I can see, my customers don't want vehicles that our government requires them to buy. They don't want vehicles that are not affordable, can't be reliably re-charged, and can't be depended upon to make the drive from Richmond to Lexington on a below zero midnight in January.

He also said:

The history and civics classes that I dearly loved did not prepare me for a country where executive action and career bureaucrats can create "law" and regulations that will put me out of business.

Boy, I can't top that. American workers and job creators are struggling to keep up with persistent—persistent—high prices, and all the Biden administration seems to be offering as consolation is more redtape.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Chair execute the order of June 4, 2024, with respect to the Sullivan nomination and that the confirmation vote occur at 11:40 a.m.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GLIOBLASTOMA

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article that appeared in the Chicago Tribune a year ago on May 3, 2023, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

POWERFUL CHEMOTHERAPY DRUG REACHES BRAIN TUMORS USING NOVEL ULTRASOUND TECHNOLOGY

A major impediment to treating the deadly brain cancer glioblastoma has been that the most potent chemotherapy can't permeate the blood-brain barrier to reach the aggressive brain tumor.

But now Northwestern Medicine scientists report results of the first in-human clinical trial in which they used a novel, skull-implantable ultrasound device to open the blood-brain barrier and repeatedly permeate large, critical regions of the human brain to deliver chemotherapy that was injected intravenously.

The four-minute procedure to open the blood-brain barrier is performed with the patient awake, and patients go home after a few hours. The results show the treatment is safe and well tolerated, with some patients getting up to six cycles of treatment.

This is the first study to successfully quantify the effect of ultrasound-based blood-brain barrier opening on the concentrations of chemotherapy in the human brain. Opening the blood-brain barrier led to an approximately four- to six-fold increase in drug concentrations in the human brain, the results showed.

Scientists observed this increase with two different powerful chemotherapy drugs, paclitaxel and carboplatin. The drugs are not used to treat these patients because they do not cross blood-brain barrier in normal circumstances.

In addition, this is the first study to describe how quickly the blood-brain barrier closes after sonication. Most of the blood-brain barrier restoration happens in the first 30 to 60 minutes after sonication, the scientists discovered. The findings will allow optimization of the sequence of drug delivery and ultrasound activation to maximize the drug penetration into the human brain, the authors said.

"This is potentially a huge advance for glioblastoma patients," said lead investigator Dr. Adam Sonabend, an associate professor of neurological surgery at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and a Northwestern Medicine neurosurgeon.

Temozolomide, the current chemotherapy used for glioblastoma, does cross the blood-brain barrier, but is a weak drug, Sonabend said.

The paper was published May 2 in *The Lancet Oncology*.

The blood-brain barrier is a microscopic structure that shields the brain from the vast majority of circulating drugs. As a result, the repertoire of drugs that can be used to treat brain diseases is very limited. Patients with brain cancer cannot be treated with most drugs that are otherwise effective for cancer elsewhere in the body, as these do not cross the blood-brain barrier. Effective repurposing of drugs to treat brain pathology and cancer require their delivery to the brain.

In the past, studies that injected paclitaxel directly into the brain of patients with these tumors observed promising signs of efficacy, but the direct injection was associated with toxicity such as brain irritation and meningitis, Sonabend said.

BLOOD-BRAIN BARRIER RECLOSES AFTER AN HOUR

The scientists discovered that the use of ultrasound and microbubble-based opening of the blood-brain barrier is transient, and most of the blood-brain barrier integrity is restored within one hour after this procedure in humans.

"There is a critical time window after sonication when the brain is permeable to drugs circulating in the bloodstream," said Sonabend, also a member of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University.

Previous human studies showed that the blood-brain barrier is completely restored 24 hours after brain sonication, and based on some animal studies, the field assumed that the blood-brain barrier is open for the first six hours or so. The Northwestern study shows that this time window might be shorter.

In another first, the study reports that using a novel skullimplantable grid of nine ultrasound emitters designed by French biotech company Carthera opens the blood-brain barrier in a volume of brain that is nine times larger than the initial device (a small single-ultrasound emitter implant). This is important because to be effective, this approach requires coverage of a large region of the brain adjacent to the cavity that remains in the brain after removal of glioblastoma tumors.

CLINICAL TRIAL FOR PATIENTS WITH RECURRENT GLIOBLASTOMA

The findings of the study are the basis for an ongoing phase 2 clinical trial the scientists are conducting for patients with recurrent glioblastoma. The objective of the