

*Mike Berman's*

# WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

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\* Any statements in this issue of the Watch which are not sourced are mine and identified by “WW”.

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## State of the Nation

31% of registered voters say the country is headed in the right direction.  
60% of registered voters say the country is on the wrong track.

	<u>Right direction</u>	<u>Wrong track</u>
Male	35%	58%
Female	27%	61%
Democrats	50%	38%
Republicans	16 %	79%
Independents	26%	63%
Northeast	32%	56%
Midwest	24%	67%
South	27%	63%
West	42%	49%

[Econ/YouGov 2/14/23]

In the previous issue of the Washington Watch, on January 14, 2023, 30% said the country was headed in the right direction and 54% said it was on the wrong track.

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At 98+ years, President Jimmy Carter is the longest-lived President in history and the President with the longest post-presidency. And his 76+ year marriage makes him the longest married president. [Wikipedia 2/12/23]

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40 million U.S. homes have gas stoves. A CPSC announcement this week about safety was interpreted by many as a planned ban. Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer noted that the Energy Department and the commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission have denied that there are any plans brewing to declare gas stoves unsafe and ban them. [Forbes Tate 1/12/23 and The Hill 2/3/12]

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The following demonstrates the federal government's total spending as if it were a dollar.

- 62 cents is spent on benefit programs that Americans are entitled to receive at certain ages or income thresh holds.
  - 22 cents to Social Security
  - 17 cents to Medicare
  - 10 cents to Medicaid
- Almost 14 cents to national defense
- Almost 8 cents interest to holders of Treasury bonds
- The 16 cents left are spent on the rest of the federal government and its programs – things like border protection, air traffic control, and farm subsidies.

[WP 1/26/23]

\* \* \* \* \*

During 2022, people moved into:

Houston, Miami, Atlanta, the District of Columbia, Dallas, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Riverside California, Boston.

In the same time frame folks moved out of:

Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Detroit, New York, Seattle

[Axios visuals]

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41% of Americans say they are not as well off financially as they were when Biden became president. 42% they are about the same as they were when he became president. Only 16% say they are better off now. [ABC/WP 2/1/23]

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### Global Life Expectancy: Closing the Gap

Estimated life expectancy at birth for both sexes in 1950, 2000 and 2050 by region in years.

North America			Europe			Asia		
<u>1950</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2050</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2050</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2050</u>
68	77	84	62.8	73.5	83.8	42.0	67.6	79.5

[Statista Inc – Thanks to Jay Berman]

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3 of 4 U.S. voters see police violence as a problem and there has been little

change in views over the last couple of years.

	<u>All voters</u>	<u>Dems</u>	<u>Ind</u>	<u>GOP</u>
June 2020	73%	90%	77%	52%
January 2023	75%	89%	74%	56%

[Politico 2/1/23]

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Metropolitan areas with the highest inflation, 2022

Miami	+9.9%
Phoenix	+9.5%
Seattle	+8.4%
Atlanta	+8.1%
Philadelphia	+6.4%
New York-Newark	+6.3%
Baltimore	+6.3%
Detroit	+6.2%
St. Louis	+6.2%
Chicago	+5.5%

[Mike Allen 2/2/23]

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An overwhelming majority of Democrats (94%), 77% of Independents, and 67% of Republicans support a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who meet certain requirements including background checks. [NBC poll January 2023]

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The number of Black people living in the United States reached a new high of 47.2 million people in 2021.

- The Black population of the U.S. has grown by 30% since 2000, rising from 36.2 million then to 42.1 million in 2010 and 47.2 million people in 2021.
- The arrival of new immigrants from Africa, the Caribbean and elsewhere has been an important contributor to Black population.
- More than half of the nation's Black population (56%) lived in Southern states in 2021, up from a historic low of 52% in 1970.
- With 4 million Black residents, Texas is the state with the largest Black population.

- New York has more Black residents than any other metropolitan area.

Here are the 10 largest metropolitan areas by Black population in 2021. Each city is part of a larger metropolitan area.

	Share of Metro area <u>Population</u>
New York	19%
Atlanta	37%
Washington, DC	28%
Chicago	18%
Philadelphia	23%\
Dallas	18%
Miami	23%
Houston	19%
Detroit	24%
Los Angeles	8%

- The Black population of the U.S. is relatively young. In 2021, the median age of Black Americans was 33 years.
- Educational attainment among Black Americans is on the rise. In 2021, 26% of Black adults ages 25 and older – 7.5 million people – had earned a bachelor’s agree or more up from 15% in 2000. In 2021, 29% of Black women ages 25 and older had earned at least a bachelor’s degree up from 16% in 2000. Among Black men of the same age, 22% had earned at least a bachelor’s degree in 2021, up from 13% in 2000. [PEW 2/10/23]

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40% of Americans are very/somewhat satisfied with the level of immigration in the U.S. today.

The desire to curb immigration has increased among all parties since 2021 but remains more common among Republicans than Independents or Democrats.

The percentage of Republicans dissatisfied with immigration levels for being too high jumped from 40% in 2021 to 69% in 2022 and remains about the same today at 71%.

The percentage of Democrats dissatisfied and desiring less immigration was nearly nonexistent in 2021, at 2%. Last year, it rose to 11% and is now 19%.

Independents' dissatisfaction and preference for less immigration has about doubled since 2021, rising from 19% at that time to 36% today. [Gallup 2/13/23]

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The United States is on track to add nearly \$19 trillion to its national debt over the next decade, \$3 trillion more than previously forecast. This is a result of rising costs for interest payments, veteran's health care, retiree benefits, and the military, the CBO said on Wednesday.

The new forecasts project a \$1.4 billion gap this year between what the government spends and what it takes in from tax revenues. [NYT 2/15/23]

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29% of credit card customers pay only the minimum payment or close to it, even when they can afford to pay more, according to data from the National Bureau of Economic Research. [NYT 2/26/23]

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Americans are increasingly foregoing or delaying marriage. Over the last 50 years the marriage rate in the U.S. has dropped by nearly 60%.

High school seniors' attitudes toward marriage have remained relatively stable over the past several decades. In 1976, 74% of seniors said they expect to get married; in 2020, 71% said so.

Marriage is now becoming the last step into adulthood. The number of women entering their first marriage between the ages of 40 and 59 has jumped 75% since 1990.

Roughly 4% of U.S. marriages in 2021 took place in Nevada. The share of U.S. marriages in Nevada has exceeded the share of the U.S. population residing in that state every year since 1920.

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Here are a few facts about the war in Ukraine after one year.

- Russia has launched 5,000 missile strikes, 3,500 air strikes and 1,000 drone strikes.
- 18% of Ukrainian land is controlled by Russian forces: 18% down from 27% in March, but up from the 7% held by Russia and Russia-aligned separatists when the war started.
- Potential Russian war crimes – 71, 905 killings, kidnappings, indiscriminate bombing and sexual assaults – under investigation by Ukraine’s prosecutor general.
- 8,006 civilians killed and 13,287 civilians injured.
- Russian troops killed and wounded – 200,000; Britain estimates that 40,000 – 60,000 Russian troops have died.
- 9,000 Ukraine troops confirmed as killed.
- 100,000 Ukraine troops killed or wounded.
- 8.1 million Refugees fled Ukraine.
- 5.4 people were driven from their homes but stayed in Ukraine.
- 5.6 million have returned to their homes either within Ukraine or abroad.
- 17.6 million people in Ukraine need humanitarian aid.

[NBC News 2/24/23]

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Democracy stands on the principle of equality for all people, and those who are turning away from Democracy, including the right wing in the United States, object to that equality. They worry that equal rights for women and minorities – especially LGBTQ people- will undermine traditional religion and traditional power structures. They believe democracy saps the morals of a country and are eager for a strong leader who will used the power of the government to reinforce their worldview. [Heather Cox Richardson 2/10/23]

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The following is the support for abortion legality, 2010-2022 by party affiliation.

Percent who say abortion should be legal in most or all cases:  
 Democrats 87%    All Americans 65%    Republicans 37%

Percent who say abortion should be illegal in all cases:  
 Democrats 3%    All Americans 7%    Republicans 14%

[PRRI 2/23/23]

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## **Employment**

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2023 is 3.4%.

If one considers the total number of unemployed + those marginally attached to the labor force + those working part-time who want full-time work, the unemployment rate is 6.6 % in January 2023, less than the 7.1% it was a year earlier.

The Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in January 2023 is 62.4%, down from 62.2% in January 2022.

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### The Demographics of Unemployment for January 2023

#### Unemployment by Gender (20 years and older)

Women –2.8% (same as last month)

Men –2.9% (up from last month)

#### Unemployment by Race

White – 3.1% (up from last month)

Black – 5.4% (down from last month)

Hispanic – 4.5% (up from last month)

Asian –2.8% (up from last month)

#### Unemployment by Education (25 years & over)

Less than high school –4.5% (down from last month)

High School –3.7% (up from last month)

Some college –2.9% (same as last month)

Bachelor's Degree or higher –2.0% (up from last month)

In December 2022, 24 states had unemployment rates below the national average of 3.5%. 24 states, including the District of Columbia, had unemployment rates that were above the national average. 3 states had unemployment rates the same as the national average.

The state/territory with the highest unemployment rate was Nevada at 5.2%.

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The following is the government spending on pensions as a percent of GDP.

Italy	15.7%	
France	14.1%	
Japan	11.3%	
Germany	10.2%	
OECD average	8.2%	
United States	7.1%	
United Kingdom	6.0%	
Australia	5.0%	[NYT 1/21/23]

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Job cuts by major companies since mid-to-late 2022.

Amazon	18,000 people
Alphabet	12, 000
Meta	11,000
Microsoft	10,000
Salesforce	8,000
Disney	7,000
HP	6,000
Cisco	4,000
Pay Pal	2,000

There are many companies laying off less than 1,000 [Miscellaneous sources]

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The share of the workforce in labor unions has dropped to 10.1%, the lowest on record even though the total number of union members grew by 273,000 last year. In 2022, union membership in the public sector was at 33.1%. Outpacing the private sector which was at 6%. [WP 1/19/23]

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The average executive in the U.S. spends 23 hours a week in meetings, that is up from 10 hours in the 1960s. Since 2020 the time spent in team meetings increased by 252% and the time spent in Zoom meetings increased by 3,300% [Mike Allen 2/8/23]

The average American household is now considered “rent-burdened” with a record high share of renters spending more than 30% of income on rent each month. [Axios Markets 1/23/23]

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The size of the average U.S. family – defined as people related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together – is now around three people down from almost four in 1960. [NBC News – 1/12/23]

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### **This and That**

90% of Americans have flown at least once. More than half of Americans have flown before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. 2 million people choose to fly each day in the United States. In 2021, one-third of Americans who flew had family incomes under \$75,000 per year. [Political Playbook 2/6/23]

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The world produces about 400 million metric tons of plastic waste each year, according to a United Nations report. About half is tossed out after a single use. [NYT 1/15/23]

Montana has the smallest percentage of Black residents in the country and the largest minority group in the state, Native Americans, have faced disenfranchisement since securing the right to vote in 1924. [NYT 1/15/223]

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“Pope Francis criticized laws that criminalize homosexuality as ‘unjust’ saying God loves all of his children just as they are and called on Catholic bishops who support the laws to welcome LGBTQ people from the church. Being homosexual isn’t a crime.” [WP Daily 202 1/25/23]

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### **Odds and Ends**

Americans retire, on average, by their early to mid-60s yet many now remain vibrant into their mid-80s.

34% of adults in their 80s and 27% of those in their 70s, say they are very happy compared with 18% in their 50s.

51% of adults in their 70s say they are optimistic about their futures, compared with 44% in their 60s. [Mike Allen 1/30/23]

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If you watch a fair amount of TV, it is inevitable that you will hear many interviewees starting their answers saying, “that’s a great question.” And do you sometimes wonder what is so great about that question?

WW (Mike) often has that question and so WW decided to find out what it actually means. Here is what WW found when it googled that phrase.

“It’s a small compliment to the interviewer, and it indicates that you care about providing an insightful answer, so you need a second to think through your response.”

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Working from home saved workers around the world an average of 72 minutes of commute time every day in 2021 and 2022. [Axios Market 1/24/23]

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The 40-hour work week became the norm in the United States following the Great Depression; the government saw it as a way to address an unemployment crisis by spreading work among more people. During the Industrial Revolution, it wasn’t uncommon for employees to work six days, for 70 hours or more.

Representative Mark Takano (D-CA) proposed a bill that would reduce all standard workweeks to 32 hours, requiring overtime pay for anyone working beyond that.

A number of U.S. companies have tested the four-day workweek model. A major trial of the four-day model has been tested in Britain, Scotland, Spain, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. There are a number of different structures on the table. [WP 6/7/22 and CNBC 12/9/22]

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During February, the busiest month, the Manhattan restaurant One if Land Two I by Sea plays host to up to 10 marriage proposals per week, often with multiple proposals per night. [NYT 2/5/23]

Last year, about 20% of the nation’s unsheltered population – about 50,000 people – lived in Los Angeles County. This is according to Point-in-Time Count, the annual U.S. tally of those who live on the street or in homeless shelters. [NYT 2/5/23]

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Democrats have launched the “Congressional Dads Caucus”. The group will advocate for issues such as affordable childcare, paid family leave and expansion of the Child Tax Credit.

There is already a group called the “Mom Congress” which was organized many years ago. It has regularly supported things like the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and the Shine for Autumn Act.

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The following were created by Gerry Kauvar.

### **How To Retire**

Everybody’s got to make a name.  
By writing a book when they leave the game.  
There’s a standard way to make your claim.  
Recount the obstacles you overcome.

Reveal that you’re just a simple sort.  
Who was always ready with a clever retort.  
Of course, you were not seeking fame,  
It’s only that every predecessor was lame.

Don’t forget to settle old scores.  
All your detractors were jealous bores.  
Thanking God profusely is de rigueur.  
All is the quiet life you prefer.

Promise to donate some royalties  
To a charity worthy of your pieties.  
You won’t lead a life of poverty.  
You’ll be talking head on TV.

### **What’s The Matter?**

The Law of the Conservation of matter is that matter cannot be either created or destroyed.

Natter is a different matter,  
Created hourly by TV chatters.  
From their views I head such a clatter –  
That it’s only what matters that’s spattered.

Congress is where what matters is tattered.  
Where members are best at anti-matter,  
And making members wallets fatter.  
Run ye citizens, quickly scatter.

### **Advice to candidates for political office**

Accuse your opponent of being woe,  
Use as invective, not as a joke.  
Defame your opponent – that lefty bloke,  
No one will know you're really a moak.  
Don't be afraid – you won't choke  
If you just keep on blowing smoke.  
Don't back down, go for broke,  
No one will know you're an empty cloak.  
p.s. Deny knowing what "toke" means.

### **Record Hot Air in DC**

DC Recorded 81 yesterday - 2/24/23  
Not Josh Hawley's latest stray  
From sanity in his legislative guise.  
Nor the number of Santos' lies.  
It's the number of Fahrenheit degrees  
And the IQ of DC wannabes

### **Whine Not**

It's hard to find an advertisement for a wine that garnered under 90 points. They  
must be essentially from 90 to 100.

Perhaps we should revise academic scores similarly, or maybe upside down.

A=awful; B=borderline; C=competent; D=decent; F = Forceful

A= amazing; B=beautiful; C = charming; D = definitive; F = fabulous.

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### **President Biden**

President Biden is the oldest president in U.S. history. He still has not  
addressed the question of whether he will run for re-election in 2024. If he were to  
run, win, and survive the term, he would be 86 years old.

President Biden's job approval ratings

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN</u>	<u>FOX</u>	<u>QUINNIPIAC</u>
FEB'23	xxx	43/53	xxx	xxx	40/55
JAN'23	46/50	40/53	46/54	45/54	38/53
DEC'22	xxx	xxx	48/52	44/56	43/49
NOV'22	44/53	43/53	xxx	xxx	36/55
OCT'22	45/52	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
OCT'22	45/52	43/53	42/58	46/53	37/54
SEPT'22	xxx	xxx	46/54	xxx	xxx
SEPT'22	45/52	39/55	40/53	43/56	41/53
AUG' 22	42/55	xxx	xxx	41/55	43/53
JULY'22	xxx	xxx	xxx	36/58	33/59
JUNE'22	xxx	xxx	xxx	43/57	35/56
MAY'22	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	38/55
MAY'22	42/54	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
APR'22	xxx	42/52	41/59	45/53	40/51
APR'22	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	35/55
MAR'22	41/54	xxx	xxx	45/54	38/55
FEB'22	xxx	38/57	42/57	xxx	37/56
JAN'22	44/54	xxx	xxx	47/52	35/54
DEC'21	xxx	xxx	48/52	47/51	xxx
NOV'21	xxx	38/57	48/52	44/54	38/53
OCT'21	45/52	xxx	xxx	xxx	40/51

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As of the end of 2022, the following was Biden's approval rating based on Real Clear Politics.

	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>
Overall	43.8%	51.4%
On the economy	37.7%	58.1 %
On foreign policy	41.7%	52.0%

Gallup now does monthly or semi-monthly surveys of all adults. WW will include a periodic polling summary of Registered and Likely Voters by FiveThirtyEight.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Gallup (All Adults)</u>		<u>FiveThirtyEight (Reg/Likely voters)</u>	
	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>
1/22/23	41%	54%	43.9%	51.9%
12/2/22	40%	55%	42.9%	53.0%
9/16/22	42%	56%	42.5 %	52.0%
5/22/22	41%	54%	41.1%	54.3%
4/19/22	41%	56%	42.4%	53.1%
3/18/22	42%	54%	42.1%	52.8%
2/17/22	41%	55%	41.4%	53.0%
1/16/22	40%	56%	42.5%	52.1%

Using Gallup (all adults) as the marker, Biden’s approval rating has grown by 1 point in the last year. His disapproval has dropped by one point.

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Which do you think is a greater threat to national security? (Among registered voters.)

President Biden’s handling of classified documents when he was Vice President	26%
Former President Trump’s handling of classified documents	39%
Both	34%

[Marist poll 2/13-16/23]

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### **Judges Nominated and Confirmed to Date**

As of February 16, 2023, the United States Senate has confirmed 105 federal judges nominated by President Biden. One Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, 30 judges for the United States Courts of Appeals, and 74 judges for the United States District Courts.

There are 44 nominations awaiting Senate action: 7 for the Courts of Appeals and 37 for the District Courts. There are 9 vacancies in the U.S. Courts of Appeals, 70 vacancies on the U.S. District Courts, and 2 vacancies in the United States Court of International Trade.

The chart below reflects the number of Article III court judges appointed by every U.S. president since Jimmy Carter.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Supreme Ct</u>	<u>Appeals Ct</u>	<u>District Ct</u>	<u>Int'l Trade</u>
Biden – 2 years	105	1	30	74	
Trump – 4 years	234	3	54	174	3
Obama – 8 years	325	2	55	268	
GW Bush – 8 years	325	2	62	261	
Clinton – 8 years	373	2	66	305	
GHW Bush – 4 years	192	2	42	148	
Reagan – 8 years	376	4	83	290	
Carter – 4 years	261	0	59	203	

[USCourts/Wikipedia/List of federal judges appointed by Joe Biden]

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Of the Biden judges confirmed to date:

- 76/100 judicial nominees confirmed to date by this Senate are women.
- 68/100 judicial nominees confirmed to date by this Senate are people of color.
- 33/100 judicial nominees confirmed by this Senate are Black.
- 25/100 judicial nominees confirmed by this Senate are Black women.
- 21/100 judicial nominees confirmed by this Senate are Hispanic.

This Senate has confirmed more women to judgeships than any Republican president.

This Senate has confirmed more people of color to Circuit Court judgeships than any other president.

This Senate has confirmed more Asian and Native women to the federal bench than any other president. [Brennan Center 2/14/23]

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There are roughly 4,000 politically appointed positions in the executive branch and independent agencies, including more than 1,200 that require Senate confirmation.

The Washington Post and the Partnership for Public Service are tracking 810 of those 1200 positions.

- 509 people have been confirmed by the Senate.
- 76 nominees are being considered by the Senate.
- 0 are awaiting formal nomination.

- 91 positions have no Biden nominee.
- 128 appointees are serving in termed positions or were held over from previous administrations. [WP 2/15/23]

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The following are the favorability ratings for a variety of political leaders based on the Real Clear Politics averages for 2/14/23.

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
Biden	41.5	52.9
Harris	38.2	51.8
Trump	37.9	56.1
DeSantis	40.6	38.0
Jeffries	24.7	24.7
Schumer	26.6	39.4
McCarthy	22.4	39.6
McConnell	19.2	53.0

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The 118<sup>th</sup> Congress

### **Congress**

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Approval of the Congress is up roughly 3 points from where it was a year ago and disapproval is down 2.9 points.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Real Clear Pol. 2/14/22	24.4%	65.4%
Real Clear Pol. 12/19/22	27.6%	62.4%
Real Clear Pol. 11/23/22	23.8%	62.8%
Real Clear Pol. 10/13/22	25.3%	65.8%
Real Clear Pol. 8/30/22	20.6%	67.4%
Real Clear Pol. 6/15/22	21.2%	69.0%
Real Clear Pol. 5/17/22	22.4%	68.0%
Real Clear Pol. 4/16/22	22.2%	67.5%
Real Clear Pol. 3/15/22	21.8%	67.8%
Real Clear Pol. 2/18/22	20.8%	68.3%
Real Clear Pol. 1/17/22	22.4%	66.4%
Real Clear Pol. 12/21/21	23%	65.8%

Real Clear Pol. 11/30/21      22.2%      68.6%

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The 118<sup>th</sup> Congress breaks records for lesbian, gay and bisexual representation, and various other describers.

20 years ago, in the 108th congress, there were three people who openly identify as LGBT, all members of the House. By 10 years ago, in the 114th Congress there were 7 people who identified as LGBT, 6 in the House and 1 in the Senate.

Today, there are 13 people who identify as LGBT, 11 in the House and 2 in the Senate, one of whom identifies as bisexual.

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**THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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Washington Watch uses the report by David Wasserman of the Cook Political Report for its report on elections in the U.S. House of Representatives. (One seat is open.)

Solid Republican	192	Solid Democrat	174
Likely GOP	11	Likely Dem	16
Lean GOP	9	Lean Dem	12
GOP Tossup	9	Dem Tossup	11
Total	221	Total	213

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**THE SENATE**

49 Republicans  
48 Democrats  
3 Independents

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The 2024 Senate Election

(\*\* Diane Feinstein will not run for re-election. She will be 91 years of age at the next election.)

		<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Independents</u>
Seats not up in 2024		28	39	0
Seats up in 2024		20	10	2
Safe in 2024		Feinstein**	IN-Open	
		Murphy	Hawley	
		Carper	Wicker	
		Hirono	Cramer	
		Warren	Fischer	
		Cardin	Ricketts	
		King (I)	Blackburn	
		Klobuchar	Cruz	
		Menendez	Romney	
		Heinrich	Barrasso	
		Gillibrand		
		Whitehouse		
		Kaine		
		Sanders (I)		
		Cantwell		
Likely	0		1	
			Scott	
Lean	5			
		MI-Open		
		Tester		
		Rosen		
		Casey		
		Baldwin		
Toss Up	3			
		Sinema (I)		
		OH – B		
		Manchin		

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### **2024 Presidential Election**

The 2024 Republican National Convention will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The site of the 2024 Democratic National Convention has not yet been selected. Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, and New York City have submitted bids. The decision had not been made as of 2/28/23.

The first Republican primary debate will be held in Milwaukee in August 2023.

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The network of donors and activist groups led by conservative billionaire Charles Koch will oppose Donald Trump for the 2024 Republican nomination, mounting a direct challenge to the former president's campaign to win back the White House. [WP 2/5/23]

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The following people have indicated or been commonly named as someone thinking about or planning to run for president in 2024. This list is a result of the mining of a variety of lists published in the last few months.

The most recent addition to the list of people who have announced they are seeking the Republican nomination for president in 2024 is Vivek Ramaswamy, age 37, a multimillionaire entrepreneur and author who made a name for himself in right-wing circles by opposing corporate efforts to advance political, social, and environmental causes.

For the Republican nomination (Several on this list have said they will not run if Trump runs again.):

The following have announced their candidacies:

Donald Trump  
Nikki Haley – Former governor of South Carolina  
Vivek Ramaswamy – Entrepreneur and author

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Kristi Noem – Governor of South Dakota  
Larry Hogan – Governor of Maryland  
Asa Hutchinson – Governor of Arkansas  
Chris Sununu – Governor of New Hampshire  
Ron DeSantis – Governor of Florida  
Chris Christie – Former Governor of New Jersey  
Brian Kemp – Governor of Georgia  
Mike Pence – Former Vice President  
Mike Pompeo – Former Secretary of State  
Glenn Youngkin – Governor of Virginia

Republicans who have said they are not running in 2024:

Rick Scott – U.S. Senator

Josh Hawley – U.S. Senator

Tom Cotton – U.S. Senator

In the 2024 Republican primary, Trump has a strong lead among potential rivals. [1/18/23]

Trump 48%

Ron DeSantis 31%

Mike Pence 8%

Liz Cheney 3%

Nikki Haley 2%

Ted Cruz 2%

Greg Abbott 1%

Kristi Noem 1%

Mike Pompeo 1%

Tim Scott 1%

For the Democratic nomination, whether President Biden runs for re-election or not.

One person, Marianne Williamson, the author and 2020 presidential candidate, has confirmed that she will launch a bid for the Democratic Party's 2024 nomination at an event in Washington D.C. on March 4, becoming President Joe Biden's first primary opponent.

For the Democratic nomination if Biden does not run. (The top 10 from this list, according to the Washington Post on 12/3/22, are the most likely nominees if Biden does not run.) (WW has modified this list)

1. (Biden)
2. Buttigieg
3. Harris
4. (Polis)
5. Klobuchar
6. Newsom
7. (Sanders)
8. Whitmer
9. Shapiro

## 10.Pritzker

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### **Women Will Get It Done**

As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, six of the eight Ivy League School presidents will be women – Brown, Cornell, Penn, Columbia, Dartmouth, and Harvard. The outliers are Princeton and Yale, each of which has had a woman president in the past. (Thanks to Bob Werbel.)

This year, for the first time in history, the four leaders of the two congressional spending committees are women.

Kay Granger – R – TX – Chair of the House Appropriations Committee  
Patty Murray – D – WA – President Pro Tempore of the U.S. Senate  
Susan Collins – R – ME – Vice Chair Senate Appropriations Committee  
Rosa DeLauro – D – CT – Ranking Member House Appropriations

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Only 8 percent of companies have a female chief executive. A survey of nearly 500 companies found, that only 24% had female executives who were considered above the senior management level at all. Meanwhile, women comprised 50 percent of entry-level positions. [Politico's The Long Game 2/9/23]

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History was made right before kickoff on Super Bowl Sunday. For the first time in NFL history, the U.S. Navy flyover was piloted by all women, led by Lt. Peggy Dente. The event honors 50 years since women were allowed to be U.S. Navy pilots.

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### **WW Recommends Books & Other Things**

In this feature of the Washington Watch, WW will primarily recommend books you may find interesting but may also now and then mention a TV program or other things. I welcome your suggestions and your input. What have you been reading or watching that you think WW readers might like?

I Eat Men Like Air  
Alice Berman

A lavish, snowy weekend in New Hampshire ends in tragedy - and, a few months later, one of the partygoers is found dead. As famed podcaster Tyler Carroll tries to discover the truth around Alex Sable's dramatic death, he turns to the native Upper East Siders who knew the billionaire's son best. Each of the six people Tyler is investigating has something to hide, and each has chosen a wildly different path: Lulu is an LA influencer, Maxie a Park Avenue Princess turned Chicago housewife, Will a status-obsessed lawyer, Rob a money-hungry trader, Yael a not-so-innocent ER doctor, and Alex himself a party boy with a penchant for darker trouble than even his friends knew. With the shadow of a fifteen-year-old crime hanging over Alex's life, Tyler delves deeply into the complex past that seems almost to have disappeared from memory, hoping to find any answers around who Alex was, alive and dead.

Alice Berman is not related to WW (Mike Berman). Alice is the daughter of Lea and Wayne Berman who are friends of WW (Mike Berman).

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The Bill of Obligations:  
The Ten Habits of Good Citizens  
Richard Haass

A provocative guide to how we must re envision citizenship if American democracy is to survive.

The United States faces dangerous threats from Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, terrorists, climate change, and future pandemics. The greatest peril to the country, however, comes not from abroad but from within, from none other than ourselves. The question facing us is whether we are prepared to do what is necessary to save our democracy.

*The Bill of Obligations* is a bold call for change. In these pages, *New York Times* bestselling author Richard Haass argues that the very idea of citizenship must be revised and expanded. The Bill of Rights is at the center of our Constitution, yet our most intractable conflicts often emerge from contrasting views as to what our rights ought to be. As former Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer pointed out, “Many of our cases, the most difficult ones, are not about right versus wrong. They are about right versus right.” The lesson is clear: rights alone

cannot provide the basis for a functioning, much less flourishing, democracy.

But there is a cure: to place obligations on the same footing as rights. The ten obligations that Haass introduces here are essential for healing our divisions and safeguarding the country's future. These obligations reenvision what it means to be an American citizen. They are not a burden but rather commitments that we make to fellow citizens and to the government to uphold democracy and counter the growing apathy, anger, selfishness, division, disinformation, and violence that threaten us all. Through an expert blend of civics, history, and political analysis, this book illuminates how Americans can rediscover and recover the attitudes and behaviors that have contributed so much to this country's success over the centuries.

As Richard Haass argues, "We get the government and the country we deserve. Getting the one we need, however, is up to us." *The Bill of Obligations* gives citizens across the political spectrum a plan of action to achieve it.

\* \* \* \* \*

Untouchable: How Powerful People  
Get Away with It  
Elie Honig

CNN senior legal analyst and nationally bestselling author Elie Honig explores America's two-tier justice system, explaining how the rich, the famous, and the powerful—including, most notoriously, Donald Trump—manipulate the legal system to escape justice and get away with vast misdeeds.

How does he get away with it? That question, more than any other, vexes observers of and participants in the American criminal justice process. How do powerful people weaponize their wealth, political power, and fame to beat the system? And how can prosecutors fight back?

In *Untouchable*, Elie Honig exposes how the rich and powerful use the system to their own benefit, revealing how notorious figures like Donald Trump, Jeffrey Epstein, Harvey Weinstein, and Bill Cosby successfully eluded justice for decades. He demonstrates how the Trump children dodged a fraud indictment. He makes clear how countless CEOs and titans of Wall Street have been let off the hook, receiving financial penalties without suffering criminal consequences. This doesn't happen by accident.

Over the four years of his administration, Donald Trump’s corruption seemed plain for all to see. The former president obstructed justice, flouted his responsibility to the Constitution, lied to the American people, and set the United States on a dark path to disunity and violence. Yet he has never been held accountable for any of his misdeeds. Why not?

*Untouchable* holds the answer. Honig shows how Trump and others use seemingly fair institutions and practices to build empires of corruption and get away with misdeeds for which ordinary people would be sentenced to years behind bars. It’s not just that money talks, Honig makes clear, but how it can corrupt otherwise reliable institutions and blind people to the real power dynamics behind the scenes.

In this vital, incisive book, Honig explains how the system allows the powerful to become untouchable, takes us inside their heads, and offers solutions for making the system more honest and fairer, ensuring true justice for all—holding everyone, no matter their status, accountable for their criminal misdeeds.

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The following is from a book that will not be published until April 18, 2023, but it can be pre-ordered on Amazon and perhaps other places.

Life in Five Senses: How Exploring the Senses Got Me out of My Head and Into  
the World  
Gretchen Rubin

Hello,

Are you searching for ways to boost your focus and productivity at work? I find that while tips for time management and task prioritization are helpful, often they ignore the external factors that make it harder to get work done. While researching my book *Life in Five Senses*, I discovered that to a great degree, it’s often our surroundings, our screen, and other people that hijack our attention. Here’s one simple, manageable solution: Tap into the power of our five senses.

**Seeing:** Ask yourself if you are a simplicity-lover or an abundance-lover. For some people, creativity and productivity are sparked by orderly arrangements, bare counters, empty shelves. Others get a boost from profusion, buzz, piles, and collections.

**Hearing:** Identify and eliminate bothersome noises that distract you while you work, or wear noise-cancelling headphones.

Smelling: Because bad smells can drain your energy, tackle a search at the source. The garbage pail, the fridge, and the microwave are common culprits.

Tasting: I find that keeping a sugar-free mint in my mouth helps me concentrate. I don't why, but it works. Some people prefer to chew gum.

Touching: Eliminate scratchy shirts or tight pants and replace an uncomfortable chair or a desk that's too high or too low. Discomfort can distract and drain us.

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### **Restaurants**

Ellington Park Bistro  
St. Gregory Hotel  
2033 M St. N.W.  
Washington D.C.  
Telephone for Bistro  
202-888-2899

Rita, Bob, Debbie, and I had dinner at Ellington Park Bistro on a Saturday night.

The restaurant has been open since September/October 2022.

Rita and Bob shared a Caesar Salad and Mike had a Caesar Salad to himself. Debbie did not order a first course.

Debbie and Bob ordered Branzino Almondine - French beans, sweet onion puree, brown butter-heirloom tomato, kumquat.

Rita ordered Amish Chicken Cordon Bleu – Hen Roulade, jambon, aged gruyere, beluga lentils, marjoram jus.

Mike ordered Arctic Char Filet – lime pickled Swiss chard, braised sweet onion, carrot-ginger reduction, Thai bail oil. Mike also ordered Potato Gratin – Nancy's Hudson valley camembert mornay. Debbie and Bob had never had potato gratin and once they had taken their first bite, they were very helpful in helping Mike finish this dish.

For dessert Mike ordered Crème Brulée – Almond genoa bread, maple feuille de brick, burnt honey ice cream.

Rita and Debbie shared Citrus Mille-Feuille – Vanilla tuile, Kalamansi cremoux, meringue, lemon creme fraiche ice cream.

Bob ordered Blue Berry Sorbet.

The gender-neutral restroom is near the entrance to the new restaurant and was about 15 feet from our table. There is a very heavy wood door, that requires real strength to open. A staff person as well as a guest just walking by, seeing me with my cane and having some difficulty opening the door, offered to help. I waved them off. A similar thing happened while I was opening the door from the inside.

The walls are painted a deep green and there is a wall-hanging piece of black and white art.

There is a white floor-based commode and a device holding a single roll of toilet paper within reach.

There is an oblong black ceramic washbasin with a shelf just above the washbasin and a large mirror above that. That shelf holds a container of paper towels and another roll of toilet paper.

There is also a narrow floor to ceiling, set of black shelves.

The floor is covered with white, oblong tiles with various black designs on them. There are a series of supportive silver bars, horizontal and vertical, placed on the wall as one would expect. There is also a black trash can on the floor.

The restroom is designed to be used by one person at a time, but depending on who the people are, it could be used by two people, one using the commode and one using the washbasin.

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Reveler's Hour  
1775 Columbus Avenue NW  
Washington DC 20009

Amy, Peter, Debbie, and I had dinner at Reveler's Hour on a Wednesday night. The restaurant has been open since New Year's Eve 2019.

Debbie and Peter started with Tuna Tartare with (espelette + orange aioli) followed by bucatini with (lamb sausage, carrot, pistachio, and chives.

Amy started with roasted carrots (with radicchio, blood orange and puffed farro), followed by mafalde (with roasted pork ragu, kale, fennel pollen breadcrumbs and grana Padano.)

I started with grilled brussels sprouts alla romana (with anchovy + aronia vinegar dressing and chili). I followed with what is described as a Large Plate (the only item with that title) crispy duck leg confit with garlic sausage, (tarbais beans and frisée.)

For dessert we ordered two orders of vanilla custard, sheep's milk ricotta + honey gelato and chocolate sorbet. Each order was so large that the four of us were not able to finish the two orders.

Reservations go live each morning at 10 a.m. for up to two weeks out on RESY Washington DC.

The items on the menu change regularly and non-alcoholic selections are available, but not iced tea.

Open Tuesday through Sunday at 5:30 p.m.

There appears to be an unlimited supply of wine in wooden shelves.

As you enter the restaurant, to your left is a small bar and several tables and chairs. You then enter the main dining which is a combination of round tables with 4 chairs and a series of tables backing on room-long wall attached benches.

The kitchen is at the end of this room headed by an area from which the serving people work.

When completely full, the restaurant seats 110 people and is rather loud. Attentiveness from servers varies.

A 22% service fee will be added to your bill. The entirety of these charges is retained by Reveler's Hour, which is 100% distributed to all non-management employees. There is included on the bill an optional tip line.

There are two gender neutral restrooms down a short hallway. I assume they are identical. Everything is basically black and white. There is a white ceramic washbasin with a wall hanging mirror above it.

To the far right is a white ceramic wall-hanging commode. Next to it is a black metal rod with 3 toilet paper rolls on it and one roll hanging on the wall. There are a series of silver wall hanging rods around the commode area. The walls are white with various figures on them.

The floor and parts of the wall are covered with small 6-sided tiles.

*Mike*

325 7<sup>th</sup> St, NW, STE 825  
Washington, DC 20004  
202- 728-1100  
[mberman@dubersteingroup.com](mailto:mberman@dubersteingroup.com)