

HSAS COMMON SENSE: CURRENT EVENTS RELEASE

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American Politics: Biden's State of the Union

Adam Ripp and Maya Brenner, Grade 11, News Editors

- This State of the Union was among the most critical speeches Biden has had to give in his career. More than just an update, the State of the Union was an opportunity for Biden to campaign to the American public. He flaunted his successes and attacked his “predecessor.”
- The president tackled various topics including Ukraine, January 6, abortion, the economy, big pharma, the federal deficit, education, social security, immigration, civil rights, women's rights, the climate crisis, crime and gun violence, Israel, China, AI, and the military.
- Biden urged lawmakers to pass aid to Ukraine to help it defend itself from Russia and criticized Trump's position on the issue.
- Biden highlighted the importance of Roe v. Wade and blamed Trump for it. He attacked Republicans for banning IVF treatments.
- Biden flaunted his economic achievements, including 16 million new small businesses, 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 50 years, the smallest wealth gap in 20 years, and falling inflation from nine to three percent.
- Biden put the ball in Republicans' court through legislation that would support the border and increase security measures to prevent as many undocumented immigrants from entering the US.
- Biden proposed many new policies, including price negotiations for medicine, the building of at least two million new homes, and the increasing the tax rate on households making over 400,000 annually.
- Republicans rarely booed or heckled the speech, though representative Marjorie Taylor Greene was very active in heckling the immigration issue. On the other hand, Democrats were very easily excited and stood to cheer throughout the speech.

Global Conflict: Haitian Gang Violence Worsens Following Prime Minister's Resignation

Jessi Zheng and Joyce Lee, Grade 11, Staff Writers

- Haiti's prime minister, Ariel Henry, announced his resignation on March 11th amidst an armed gang rebellion against the government in its capital city, Port-au-Prince, this month.
- Following his resignation, Henry stated that he would cede power to a presidential council, but as of March 21, it has not yet been created.
- His resignation was called upon by the criminal gangs that are currently in control of the capital city.
- Armed gangs have taken over Port-au-Prince, seeking new territory and targeting police and state institutions. In response, civilians have begun killing and burning outsiders suspected of gang membership in an attempt to protect themselves.
- A multinational security support mission will be deployed to help Haiti, the State Department has said. The United Nations Security Council authorized a multinational security support mission for Haiti for an initial period of one year in October 2023.

Miscellaneous News:

Evangelina Benakis and Zara Rasul, Grade 11, Staff Writers

- Biden canceled \$5.8 billion in federal loans for 78,000 people, mostly public workers such as teachers, firefighters, and nurses. This is another step in the Biden administration's work to forgive student loans.
- Mississippi officers will be sentenced in court for the Torture of Two Black Men. 6 former Mississippi officers pleaded guilty after the two victims filed a \$400 million federal lawsuit. The former officers face 20 years in a federal prison.

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