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COLUMN

Unlike Biden, most Democratic voters want strict abortion limits

Columnist

washington » The Biden administration is under fire from abortion rights activists after White House communications director Kate Bedingfield told The Washington Post they were "out of step" with the mainstream of the Democratic Party.

She's more correct than she realizes. Unlike the Biden administration and Demograts of

tration and Democrats on Capitol Hill, most Democratic voters want to impose strict limits on abortion.

A new Harvard CAPS-Harris poll, conducted by Democratic pollster Mark Penn, finds that a 60% supermajority of Democrats supports restricting abortion to 15 weeks or less. What this means is that, in practice, most Democratic voters agree with Mississippi's ban on abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, which the Supreme Court upheld when it overturned Roe v. Wade. Many would restrict abortion even further: A third of Democratic respondents would either ban abortion after six weeks of pregnancy or allow it only in cases of rape or incest. None of the restrictions they support would be allowed if Roe were still the law of the land.

But that is not the position of the Democratic Party. In the 1990s, Democrats' position was, as Bill Clinton famously put it, that abortion should be "safe, legal and rare." But in 2012, they expunged "rare" from the platform, and in 2016 they promised to oppose all "federal and state laws and policies that impede a woman's access to abortion, including by repealing the Hyde Amendment," which restricts federal funding for abortions.

Joe Biden had to renounce his 40-plus-year support for the Hyde Amendment to win the Democratic nomination in 2020. Today, the White House refuses to say whether Biden supports any limits on abortion at all. New York Democrats lit up the Freedom Tower in 2019 to celebrate the passage of a state law that removed almost all restrictions on abortion, even in the third trimester, while Illinois Democratic Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed a law repealing his state's Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act.

How many Democrats support that? According to the Harvard-Harris poll, just 15% of Democrats would allow abortion at will through all nine months of pregnancy.

The rest of the country agrees with the Democratic majority. The poll finds that 72% would restrict abortion to 15 weeks or less. Those figures include 69% of men and 75% of women.

Just 10% of Americans believe abortions should be allowed at

will up to nine months. In other words, the official position of

the Democratic Party is not just outside the Democratic mainstream — it is outside the American mainstream.

That is not stopping left-wing abortion activists from pressing Biden to show more outrage over the Supreme Court's decision to return abor-

tion policy to the states — where a plurality of Americans believe it belongs. In an economic moment when many are forced to choose between buying gas or food, this makes the president appear deeply out of touch. A New York Times/Siena College poll shows that only 5% say abortion is the most important issue facing the country today — and many of those voters are pro-life. By contrast, the poll found that the biggest issues are, in order of importance, the economy, inflation and our divided politics.

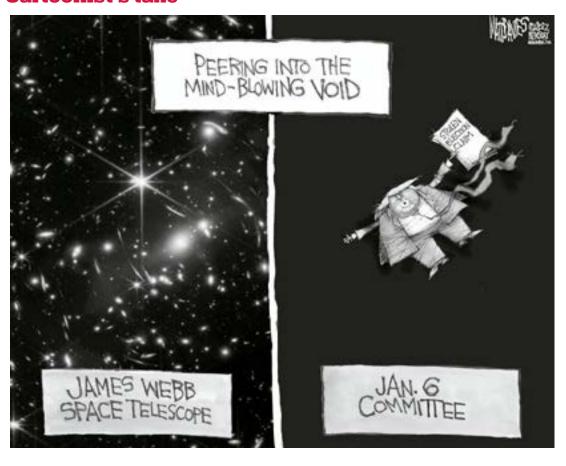
Not only do most Americans disagree with the activists' position on abortion, they disagree with their smash-mouth tactics. Sixty-two percent of respondents in the Harvard-Harris poll oppose allowing protesters to harass Supreme Court justices and their families in their homes. And now abortion activists are harassing conservative justices while they dine at restaurants. The group Shut-DownDC tweeted that it would pay restaurant workers \$50 for confirmed sightings of the conservative justices, and the bounty rises to \$200 if the justices are still there 30 minutes after the message.

This incivility is hurting Biden as much as the abortion extremism is. Americans voted for Biden because he promised to heal the nation and unite the country. In his victory speech, he promised "to marshal the forces of decency," and in his inaugural address, he promised to "end this uncivil war." Every time his supporters make headlines by harassing a Supreme Court justice, it underscores the biggest failure of Biden's presidency, which is his refusal to deliver on these promises.

Americans are sick and tired of incivility. And they care more about inflation than abortion. The more his radical base forces Biden to focus on abortion advocacy that's outside the mainstream, at the expense of issues Americans care about, the more likely it is that Americans will elect a pro-life Republican majority this November.

Marc Thiessen is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and the former chief speechwriter for President George W. Bush.

Cartoonist's take



COLUMN

Strong EPA rule would protect Michiganders from air pollution

Poor air quality is impacting families across Michigan, including my own. My son has asthma, and his symptoms are triggered by poor air quality. As summer continues, I know I may have to tell him he can't play outside with his friends. Every day, my family checks our weather app to ensure the air quality is safe enough for my son to leave the house. As any parent of an asthmatic child will tell you, when I see the fear in my son's face as his chest tightens and he struggles to breathe, I feel frustrated that I can't do more to protect him from this horrible disease. Fortunately, there are steps that the Biden Administration can take right now to protect children and communities here in Michigan from the pollution that degrades our air quality. Finalizing the strongest possible version of the Cross State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR), also known as the Good Neighbor Plan, is one of them.

Smog and other air pollution often travels across state lines. As a result, families in Michigan have long experienced the health consequences of pollution from power plants and industrial facilities hundreds of miles away, including lasting and life-threatening impacts like heart disease, asthma, and early death. The strengthened CSAPR currently under consideration by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would require power plants and industrial facilities to utilize existing technologies and improve



Elizabeth Hauptman

pollution, comply with federal air quality standards, and limit the harm they are causing in neighboring communities.
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their efficien-

cies to control air

Michigan counties - including Macomb and Oakland that have failing air quality grades for unhealthy levels of ozone according to the American Lung Association, the need for solutions for pollution like the CSAPR is urgent. Living with ozone pollution aggravates lung diseases like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Multiple studies have found that high levels of ozone pollution are also linked to the hospitalization of more asthmatic people with aggravated symptoms. The dangers posed to children are even more concerning, as their lungs are still developing.

Ozone pollution isn't just a problem that Michiganders face. Three out of 8 Americans live in counties with unsafe ozone levels, according to the American Lung Association's 2022 State of the Air report.

It doesn't have to be this way. Some highly polluting coal plants already have pollution control mechanisms installed, yet they do not operate those devices at full capacity. This is truly shocking. They have the technology installed but decline to turn them on.

This is an affront to my son and the 25 million other Americans who also have asthma. Major polluters should be required to use the control devices they already have installed to reduce ozone pollution and protect our health.

Even worse, some coal plants across the country do not even have modern pollution control technology installed at all. These power plants must install pollution controls to reduce the ozone pollution that threatens our communities.

That's why I spoke at the EPA's public hearing on the Cross State Air Pollution Rule earlier this year about this proposal, in support of the agency's plan to clean up these highly polluting power plants and industrial sources. I also urged the EPA to strengthen the proposal by speeding up the compliance timeline to protect more lives as quickly as possible.

As a mother, I am constantly trying to protect my son, and I believe the EPA should do the same for communities across the country. The EPA is currently considering the Cross State Air Pollution Rule and I urge them to finalize the strongest version of this rule. Doing so is a vital step in ensuring that every child can breathe clean air.

Elizabeth Hauptman is the Moms Clean Air Force state coordinator in Michigan. She also coordinates volunteer engagement for Moms Clean Air Force across the U.S.

GUEST COLUMN

Electric vehicle future is revitalizing the Motor City

Motor City is seeing a come-

As America accelerates toward a zero-carbon economy, electric vehicles ("EV(s)") have emerged as a key component to a greener future. In fact, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has promised to allocate over \$3 billion to boost production of advanced batteries that power electric vehicles and energy storage. This package also promises funding to promote the expansion of key battery material refining and production plants, as well as other manufacturing and recycling facilities that could generate thousands of jobs. Substantial EV investments have also been announced by American automakers such as Ford and General Motors, who are eager to expand U.S. EV manufacturing and battery production.

These investments herald a



John DeMaio

welcome new era for Detroit. Until the 1960s, Detroit was the locus of the automotive industry and home of the "Big Three." However, as automakers began outsourcing manufacturing away

from Detroit and into other regions of the U.S. and internationally, manufacturing jobs in the area dropped off, leading to a decline in the economic state of Detroit.

Now, supply chain disruptions induced by the pandemic and volatile international relations have demonstrated to those seeking to advance the production of EVs, that plans to do so may be untenable without a domestic supply chain. One particular example is through the

domestication of mineral supply chains that are key to EV manufacturing. EV batteries require critical minerals that, in the near to mid term, will continue to be mined internationally. However, the localization of the processing and manufacturing of these minerals closer to the point of use offers the promise of greater stability and control. Additionally, locating the mid-stream processing of key elements allows for a more diverse upstream supply base that can serve to bring costs down through competition and provide a buffer against supply chain interruptions.

Fortunately, Detroit stands to

New domestic manufacturing plants will bring new technology into the US and provide jobs for those with a variety of skills, ranging from unskilled produc-

work, analytics, and managerial positions. One report has predicted that if EVs grow to comprise 50% of domestic auto sales by 2030, 150,000 jobs in the auto industry could be created. The transition has made considerable progress, especially in the Detroit area. Earlier this month, Ford announced a \$2 billion investment in electric vehicles including 2,000 jobs in Michigan as part of a larger expansion of EV production across the midwest. Similarly, General Motors earlier this year announced plans to invest \$6.5 billion in two Michigan sites, creating 4,000 jobs in the state; they also announced a new electric vehicle battery lab in Warren which will employ hundreds.

These jobs often boost a local economy through ripple effects caused by increasing overall economic activity and providing an uptick in optimism that can energize previously slow growth. The positive impacts of the EV industry are likely to pervade further into the greater local economy.

Looking ahead, the increasing momentum to create domestic supply chains, supported by policy, legislative, and Federal and state incentive programs, is poised to revitalize areas around Detroit. The industry and legislators have recognized the downside tradeoff of outsourcing critical elements of the manufacturing supply chain, and Detroit is welcoming back the automotive industry with open arms.

John DeMaio is President, Graphene Division of Graphex Group & CEO, Graphex Technologies