

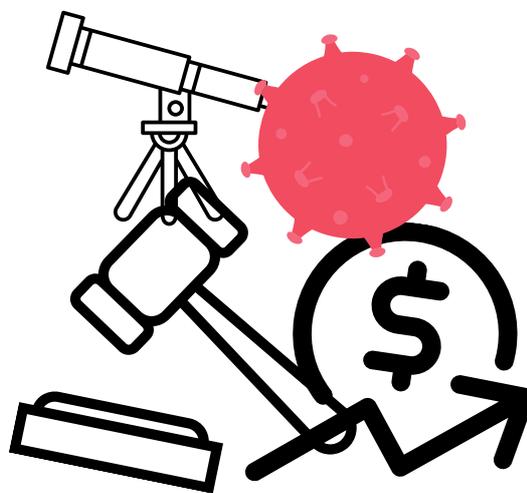
The Latest

Lenses' Monthly Magazine - June/July 2022



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A Message From Lenses

Lenses is a 100% teen-organized news platform that provides teenagers with the chance to share their thoughts and beliefs about the headlines that we see on a daily basis. Our community aims to get teenagers' ideas on 'adult issues' and provide accessible and simplified news to our readers, who may not always have the chance to stay up to date with the daily news.

Lenses intends to highlight the fact that though we all have different perspectives and 'lenses' when it comes to various issues, each of our beliefs matter and are worth sharing with the community. Through a combination of long and short-form articles, as well as short descriptions of important daily news on our social media, we intend to help all teenagers stay informed about the world around them and learn about what other Gen-Z members think when it comes to each of these issues.



James Webb Telescope identifies its first Supernova

Nirja Divekar

Shortly after being officially set up, the James Webb Space Telescope detected its first supernova. The supernova, being defined as an explosion of a dying star, was spotted in a galaxy named SDSS.J141930.11+5251593, 3 to 4 billion light years away from Earth.

Scientists have found this discovery particularly astonishing due to the fact that the Webb telescope was not built to identify supernovas. It was designed for closer inspection of objects in outer space. Since the telescope was very easily able to identify the supernova, scientists believe that the telescope will be able to spot more in the near future.

Supernovas in general are tricky to detect, due to the fact that they appear as a bright flash that lingers for a fraction of a second. However, the telescope was able to scan the lingering brightness of the gas and dust that followed the appearance of the supernova. While this may be beginner's luck for the scientists working with the James Webb telescope, it may be a blessing to have another powerful instrument that is able to identify supernovas.



Image of SMACS
0723 taken by
the James Webb
Telescope - AP

A Productive July in Federal Legislation

Lucas Ribiero

With midterm elections just three months away, Democrats have been racing to advance their legislative agenda, leading to a productive July in Congress and in the White House. Milestones include the passage of the CHIPS plus act, aimed at subsidizing the growth of the U.S semiconductor industry, as well as the possible passage of a climate bill, and various executive orders. The CHIPS act will provide \$52 billion in subsidies for semiconductor manufacturers who set up or expand operations in the U.S, as well as over \$200 billion for more general research in quantum computing, AI, and other technologies that could advance the U.S's position in computing.

A climate and inflation bill, also sponsored by Democrats, is making it's way through congress. The bill will increase corporate tax rates, close loopholes in the tax code, and cap drug prices to lessen Medicaid and Medicare costs. It will then direct the increased tax income and decreased Medicaid spending to fund new clean energy and clean air subsidies, as well as expand prescription drug and vaccine coverage. The bill has been extremely divisive, largely along partisan lines, and it is uncertain whether it will pass

Less significant also passed congress this month. For example, one bill mandated the expansion of benefits programs to compensate families of public safety (police, fire, ambulance, etc) officers who die on the job. While these benefits would previously only serve families of officers who die in the line of duty, the bill extends these benefits to families of public safety officers who commit suicide as a result of a traumatic event. The bill's passage was unanimous. Executive orders this month include one to fund Abortion travel with Medicaid, and another to help bring hostages and wrongfully detained U.S nationals back to the U.S.

While it's uncertain what effect these bill's and orders will have on the U.S, this July has represented a nice reprieve from the gridlock that usually plagues congress.

Flickering Through April Lenses Articles You Need to Read

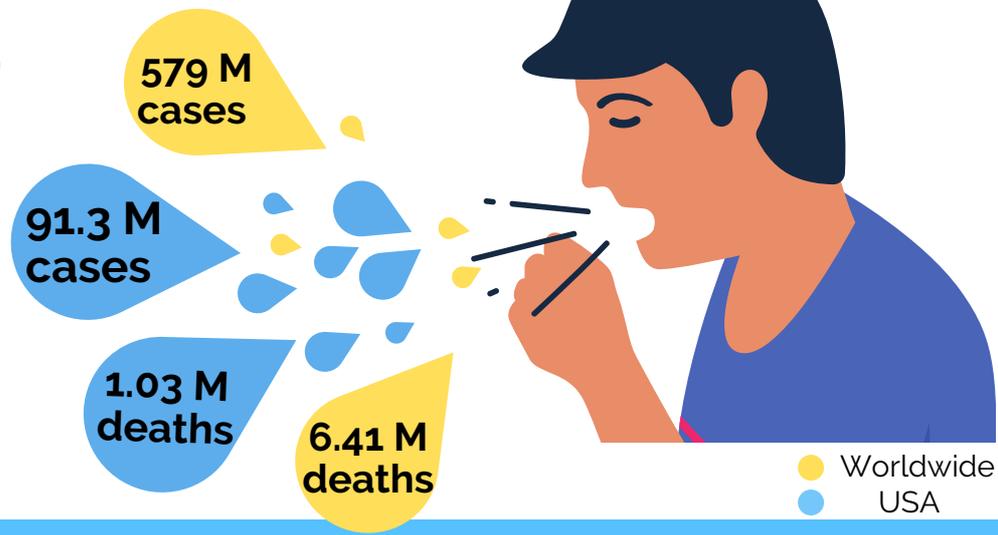
- [Monkeypox](#) - Sahana Subbanna
- [Gun Violence](#) - Soha Mahapatra
- [Language Translation Climate](#) - Kylee Weimeister
- [Prison Death Rates](#) - Aarya Niraula
- [Europe Refugee Bias](#) - Ahan Patani
- [Depp V Heard](#) - Ila Chynoweth
- [Roe V Wade Decision](#) - Emily Dissanayake



COVID-19 Updates

As of August 3rd, 2022

Sources: CDC, AP



Monkeypox Outbreak

25,391

Global Cases

6,326

U.S. Cases

83

of Countries with Cases

Monkeypox, a viral disease that causes red lesions around the body, has recently spread throughout the world. The disease is spread through skin to skin contact for prolonged periods of time.

Sources: CDC

Updates

Both the city of New York and San Diego as well as California and Illinois have declared a state of emergency due to Monkeypox

There is a new variant of COVID-19 known as the BA.5 variant. It emerged in early July and is another Omicron variant.

Deep Cuts

Key topics of the month

Supreme Court Protestors Reflect on Roe v. Wade's Overturning

Maia Nehme

A young protestor named Amarah* turned to face the Supreme Court. She raised her arm slowly, clutching a tarnished metal coat hanger. “[I]f the direction we’re going [in] means DIY botched abortions, women will die,” she said. “That message deserves to be put out. You look at a metal coat hanger and you immediately know what it means, and that shouldn’t be the case.”

On Friday, June 24, a 5-4 Supreme Court decision overturned Roe v. Wade, a landmark ruling which had asserted a constitutional right to abortion.

After hearing about the decision, Amarah, who is pro-choice, immediately drove from her home state of Maryland to protest at the Supreme Court.

As a victim of repeated sexual assault, Amarah believes that women's bodily autonomy should be prioritized over a fetus' wellbeing. “[Sometimes], women can’t get themselves out of a dangerous situation without abortion,” she said. “At the end of the day, as a human being, man, woman or anything in between, you should just have a right to your body.”

Another pro-choice protestor, Bryan Williams, worries that in the wake of this decision, women who receive abortions and doctors who perform them will face jail time. Williams said he advocates for jury nullification to prevent this from happening.

“No matter how guilty a person appears to be, no matter how much video evidence, firsthand testimony, witness testimony there is... you’re allowed to vote not guilty,” he said. “Many people are going to get the opportunity to be [jurors] in these trials when they start happening. Do whatever you have to do to get selected, and no matter what, just vote not guilty.”

***Amarah requested not to be identified beyond her first name.**

Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe Killed by Shooter

Purnima Vasistha

Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was shot and killed on Friday at a campaign rally in Nara, Japan while giving a speech.

The nationalist had stepped down from his position in 2020, leaving the post he had served longer than anyone else. Tetsuya Yamagami, the 41-year-old alleged shooter and former member of Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force, shot at Abe twice, initially missing the first shot.

The second shot hit the former Prime Minister's chest and neck, leaving him to die within the next several hours.

The shooting came as a surprise to all, due to Japan's strict gun control policies. The country has one of the lowest rates of gun ownership and gun violence in the world, and according to Japan's National Police Agency, there was only one person killed by gun violence in 2021 — quite a sharp contrast to the 45,000 firearms deaths recorded by the U.S. in the same year.

Yamagami told officers that his main motive was because he was "dissatisfied" with Abe's service and due to his connection with a "specific organization" that Yamagami hated.

The group has yet to be revealed but the shooter's statement has sparked discussion about Abe's policies while in power. During his time in office, Abe worked to reform immigration policy, increased female labor-force participation, and returned the Japanese economy to healthy growth.

Michael Green, a former national security council staff member under George W. Bush, worked closely with Abe and told Morning Edition, "I think his legacy is profound... There is no major political figure in Japan arguing for a different direction, other than tactical changes, from what Abe put in place when he was prime minister."

He goes on to talk about Japan's steady footing even in times of uncertainty. "When President Trump withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, this major trade pact in Asia, Abe stepped in and kept it going and urged the U.S. to return," he said.

"When the Trump administration was fighting with Europe at the G7 summits, Abe was the peacemaker. He really stepped up to reinforce the international order, the liberal order that America helped to build, as China and Russia asserted themselves."

Unfortunately, despite all of his efforts, Abe failed to achieve his most well-known goal, which was to revise Japan's constitution, which left a lot of his constituents unsatisfied.

President Joe Biden said, "I am stunned, outraged, and deeply saddened by the news that my friend Abe Shinzo, former Prime Minister of Japan, was shot and killed while campaigning."

He goes on to offer his sympathies. "This is a tragedy for Japan and for all who knew him... He was a champion of the alliance between our nations and the friendship between our people."

**A picture of
Shinzo Abe
from 2017**



How the Inflation Reduction Act Promises to Reduce the Deficit and Ease Inflationary Pressures

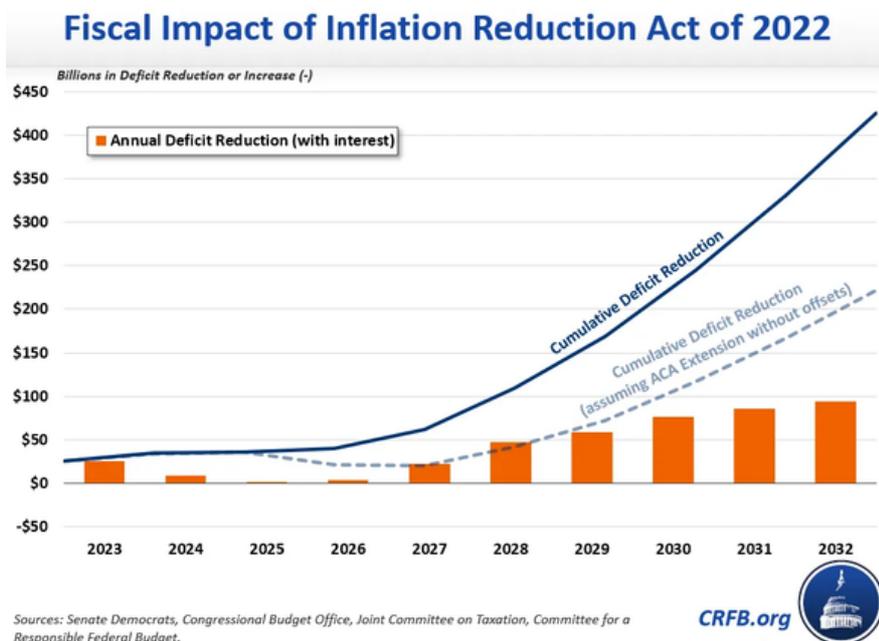
Achraf Azzaoui

Throughout the majority of Biden's tenure in office, his administration has faced criticism from the right-wing on his perceived lack of attention towards curbing inflation. More specifically, his pandemic-oriented relief plans such as the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan have been criticized as promoting excessive inflation through measures such as the \$1,400 stimulus checks and generous child tax credits. Whether excessive inflation was caused by these measures or if inflation should be attributed to unstable geopolitical affairs (Russia-Ukraine conflict), the effects its had on American livelihoods have been undeniable. Americans' wages haven't been rising fast enough to keep up with rising inflation — real or inflation-adjusted wages have decreased approximately 2.7% in the past year. Between July 2021 and July 2022, the Consumer Price Index, which is the most well-known measure of inflation, rose 9.1%, with 1.3% of that figure coming in the last month. The Federal Reserve has attempted to crack down on inflation recently, raising interest rates in July by 0.75% for the second consecutive time, but this brings the risk of creating an economic recession.

In the midst of spiraling price levels and a stagnant economy, Democratic Senators Chuck Shumer and Joe Manchin introduced the Inflation Reduction Act on July 27th, 2022, with the main goals of deficit reduction and funding the green economy. The bill raises funds primarily through tax code revisions, with \$313 billion in revenue being raised from a 15% corporate minimum, \$124 billion from better IRS tax enforcement, and \$14 billion raised from closing a carried interest tax loophole. An additional \$320 billion is raised by bill through healthcare measures such as setting an inflation cap on drug prices, as well as allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices.

A large portion of the revenue raised from this bill is projected to be spent on budget deficit reduction (approximately \$305 billion). Former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers, a stark supporter of the bill, claims that it will reduce the excess demand behind inflation. His support is especially notable considering his party affiliation as a Republican, and the fact that he had predicted the inflation that would result due to the passing of the American Rescue Plan. However, opinions are mixed on the efficacy of the deficit reduction measures in terms of reducing inflation. On July 29th, the Penn Wharton Budget Model released its first estimate of the bill, finding that the bill would “very slightly increase inflation until 2024 and decrease inflation thereafter”. The point estimates were found to be statistically indistinguishable from zero, indicating low confidence that there would be any significant impact on inflation.

The revenue generated would also be allocated towards incentivizing the green economy, as well as reforming the healthcare market. Examples of environmentally friendly measures incorporated in the Inflation Reduction Act include an expansion of the \$7,500 electric vehicle tax credit, clean electricity grants and loans, and a clean energy technology accelerator. These measures are reportedly enough to put the U.S. on track for reducing carbon emissions by 40% by 2030, much to the favor of climate activists such as Evergreen Action Executive Director Jamal Raad, who stated the bill could “mitigate the worst impacts of climate change, reduce energy costs for working families, and save countless lives.”



An Infographic describing the impacts of the Inflation Reduction Bill from the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget

Upcoming and Past Events

Eid-Al-Adha



Eid Al-Adha was celebrated this past July from the 8th to the 9th. It is the second major Eid celebration with the first being Eid Al-Fitr. Eid Al-Adha occurs after completing Hajj, the trip Muslims take to Mecca, the holiest city in Islam. The holiday celebrates the prophet Ibrahim sacrificing his son for his dedication to Allah. The holiday translates to "Festival of Sacrifice".

Independence Day

Independence Day celebrates the U.S. independence from the British at the end of the revolutionary war in 1776. It is celebrated on July 4th every year because the Declaration of Independence was ratified on July 4th, 1776. The holiday is celebrated with festivities like fireworks, parties, parades, and the coming together of families to cook special meals.



Back to School

With summer coming to an end for most students in the U.S. in the months of July and August many students are returning back to school. With masks mandatory in many schools in the 2021-2022 school year, many schools are changing their guidelines to accommodate with newer medical information as well as an ongoing teacher shortage in many counties around the country.



The Latest Staff

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