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Democracy Dies in Darkness

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026 • \$4

Chevron scores a big win at high court

Ruling puts into question a \$745 million judgment to help restore wetlands

BY JULIAN MARK

The Supreme Court on Friday sided with oil giant Chevron, ruling that it can fight an environmental damage lawsuit in federal court — a decision that could affect the outcomes of nearly a dozen other lawsuits that make similar allegations about the oil and gas industry.

The unanimous decision puts into question a \$745 million state court judgment against Chevron to help restore coastal wetlands in Louisiana that were damaged as long ago as World War II. Chevron had asked the Supreme Court to order the case moved to federal court, where legal experts say judges and juries are less likely to have a bias toward local interests. A move to federal court also means the massive judgment could be vacated.

Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. did not participate in the case. Shortly before arguments in January, he recused himself, citing financial interests in ConocoPhillips, the parent of Burlington Resources Oil & Gas, a party in a related case.

The heart of Chevron's case dated to World War II, when the firm's predecessors played a key role in the refinement of aviation gas, or avgas, to meet the demands of the war. Because the work was on behalf of U.S. government interests, the company and its backers have argued, claims regarding the actions at the time should be heard in a federal court rather than at the state level. The high court agreed.

"In this all-hands-on-deck, wartime context, Chevron needed to produce more crude oil as quickly as possible to facilitate more avgas refining, including its

SEE CHEVRON ON A4

Nuclear deal with Iran is at hand, Trump says



HASSAN AMMAR/AP

Displaced residents wave a flag with the image of Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem as they return to their villages Friday in Lebanon.

Lebanese families rush home amid shaky ceasefire

Celebrations and relief despite uncertainty over Hezbollah's response

BY MOHAMAD EL CHAMAA AND SUSANNAH GEORGE

Haidab, Lebanon — Families packed into cars with mattresses lashed to rooftops, many waving Hezbollah flags, and streamed into southern Lebanon in the first hours of a tentative ceasefire early Friday, rushing home after six weeks of Israeli bombardment

that has killed more than 2,100 people across the country.

While the 10-day truce was greeted with celebrations and relief by many in Lebanon, the exact parameters of the deal remain unclear. Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed militant group that is Israel's main target in Lebanon, has not confirmed it will honor the ceasefire, and Israel has said its ground forces will not withdraw from Lebanese territory.

Nonetheless, the pause in fighting in Lebanon appeared to signal diplomatic progress to end the war in Iran. President Donald Trump has said the United States

and Iran are "very close" to a peace deal and has suggested a second in-person negotiating session could be held in the coming days.

Trump warned Hezbollah not to derail the fragile ceasefire, in a social media post early Friday: "I hope Hezbollah acts nicely and well during this important period of time," Trump posted. "It will be [a] GREAT moment for them if they do. No more killing. Must finally have PEACE!"

He later cautioned Israel against violating the truce: "They are PROHIBITED from doing so by the U.S.A. Enough is enough!!!"

Hezbollah and Israel have fought each other on and off since the 1980s, but the most recent round of conflict was triggered by Hezbollah when it attacked Israel in retaliation for the late-February killing of the Iranian supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. For weeks, beginning in March, Israel carried out a devastating air campaign against Lebanon. At its apex earlier this month, Israeli airstrikes killed more than 350 people in a single day, Lebanese authorities and aid groups said.

After the ceasefire went into effect late Thursday, relief agencies and religious groups mobilized

SEE LEBANON ON A11

HORMUZ NOW OPEN, TEHRAN ANNOUNCES

President says nearly all his demands being met

BY KAREN DEYOUNG, SUSANNAH GEORGE, EVAN HALPER AND JOHN HUDSON

President Donald Trump declared Friday that Iran has agreed to virtually all his demands to end its nuclear program forever and said that talks to finalize the deal, "probably" held this weekend, "should go very quickly."

In a flurry of social media posts and media interviews, Trump said the United States "will work with Iran" at what he called "a leisurely pace" — with no need for American ground troops — to retrieve all of its buried highly enriched uranium and turn it over to the U.S. He said Iran would receive no money for agreeing to an "unlimited" halt to all nuclear activities.

With U.S. help, Trump said, Iran was removing all sea mines in the Strait of Hormuz — which Tehran, earlier in the day, said it would reopen to commercial shipping. He said Iran has agreed "never to close" the waterway again.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the strait's opening would be limited, lasting until a two-week ceasefire expires early next week unless a broader agreement is reached, and that travel was permitted only along the Iran-approved "coordinated route." He emphasized that the decision had come after Israel and Lebanon agreed, under U.S. pressure, to a separate, temporary ceasefire in that separate war, a key demand of Iran's.

Deploying its own social media flourishes, Tehran was publicly dismissive of Trump's claims of major breakthroughs. A Foreign Ministry statement, posted by state broadcaster IRIB, said: "The Americans talk excessively and create noise around the situation. Do not be misled! There is no new agreement."

A spokesman for President Masoud Pezeshkian also advised

SEE HORMUZ ON A12

Trump presses on in effort to reframe Jan. 6 riots

Administration moves to vacate some of the last remaining convictions

BY MARK BERMAN

Since President Donald Trump returned to the White House last year, his administration has enthusiastically — and steadily — embraced his campaign to try to rewrite the story of the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Trump immediately granted a blanket pardon to nearly everyone charged or convicted in connection with the attack, calling them "patriots." Earlier this year, his White House posted a falsehood-strewn retelling of that day.

Then, this week, his administration moved to vacate some of the last remaining and most serious criminal convictions stemming from the riot.

This last cluster of convictions was handed down to 12 members of the right-wing Proud Boys and Oath Keepers. The Justice Department said undoing their convictions was in the "interests of justice," but did not specify why.

The Capitol riot followed a rally where Trump repeated his false claims that he defeated Joe Biden in the 2020 presidential election. A mob stormed and breached the Capitol, forcing law-



AMANDA ANDRADE-RHOADES/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

A person climbs scaffolding outside the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, during a mob attack on the building.

makers to evacuate and delaying the certification of Biden's election for hours. More than 140 police officers were injured, and the Justice Department has said the attack cost millions of dollars in damage.

In the aftermath, the Justice Department launched the largest investigation in its history. More than 1,500 people were charged

in connection with the attack. A House committee launched its own probe.

For Trump and his supporters, the Jan. 6 criminal cases became symbols of what they called Justice Department overreach under Biden. They have assailed the conditions in which people were jailed, said defendants were excessively charged and called in

some cases for "retribution" for the prosecutions.

Since Trump's second term began, his administration has turned some of these complaints into action.

A Justice Department task force has been examining "weaponization" in the response to Jan. 6, including probing the work of

SEE JAN. 6 ON A6

Congress extends FISA surveillance law 10 days

Trump officials link warrantless data culling to national security

BY NOAH ROBERTSON, MARIANA ALFARO AND THEODORIC MEYER

Congress agreed Friday to briefly extend an expiring warrantless surveillance program, after a restive group of House Republicans refused to go along with efforts to reauthorize the controversial law.

The 10-day extension, which the Senate approved hours after an overnight session in the House, will allow Speaker Mike Johnson (R-Louisiana) more time to seek a compromise in the lower chamber with skeptical members of his party.

Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) permits the U.S. government to collect from American communications firms the texts, emails and phone calls of foreigners living overseas, without a warrant. It is due to expire Monday.

Trump administration officials have said the tool is vital to protecting U.S. citizens, from res-

cuing Americans held hostage abroad to preventing terrorist attacks. But it has also been a longtime target of civil libertarians in Congress, including many members of the conservative House Freedom Caucus, who are troubled by aspects of the program that they say could infringe on Americans' privacy rights.

Some Democrats have also expressed fears that, without better safeguards, the law could be exploited by the administration to spy on people and groups who oppose President Donald Trump. The administration has downplayed assertions that the program is vulnerable to abuse, and Trump is expected to sign the short extension into law.

The episode is the latest instance during Trump's second term in which ideological differences have split House Republicans and undercut the president's desire for swift legislative action. He has faced pushback from within the GOP on a range of issues — from his controversial trade agenda to matters of domestic spending and foreign policy — and the path ahead now appears uncertain at best.

Speaking to reporters after the Senate approved the 10-day extension, Majority Leader John Thune (R-South Dakota) ap-

SEE FISA ON A7

IN THE NEWS

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Todd M. Lyons, acting ICE director, resigned one year into Trump's deportation offensive. A4
A former leader of FEMA who was ousted last year may be picked to lead agency again. A4

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