

White House press briefing  
07/09/21  
1:08:53 p.m.  
1 minute and 19 seconds

WEIJIA JIANG: Okay, and then I have a question —

JEN PSAKI: Mmhmm.

JIANG: — on Hunter Biden’s artwork.

PSAKI: Mmhmm.

JIANG: Did the White House play any role in crafting the sales agreement with the New York Gallery to protect the purchasers — or the ultimate purchasers’ identity?

PSAKI: Well, I can tell you that after careful consideration, a system has been established that allows for Hunter Biden to work in his profession within reasonable safeguards. Of course, he has the right to pursue an artistic career, just like any child of a president has the right to pursue a career but all interactions regarding the selling of art in the setting of prices will be handled by a professional gallerist adhering to the highest industry standards and any offer out of the normal course would be rejected out of hand and the gallerists will not share information about buyers or perfected buyers, including their identities with Hunter Biden or the administration, which provides quite a level of protection and transparency.

JIANG: But the gallery owner is a private citizen who you might not be privy to who might have some interest in purchasing this artwork. Is the White House doing anything to work with the owner to make sure there is not impropriety there when it is ultimately sold?

PSAKI: Well, I think it would be challenging for an anonymous person who we don't know and Hunter Biden doesn't know to have influence, so that's a protection.

(...)

1:16:01 p.m.  
1 minute and 32 seconds

EBONY MCMORRIS: On the campaign trail, the president said, “especially for those moments when this campaign was at its lowest, the African American community stood up again for me,” then “they always have my back and I'll have theirs.” With that said. I know you said on Tuesday, he's going to Philly, but there’s many activists on the ground who feel like the President has not done all that he can. Are we going to see him going, state to state like he did with infrastructure and having a very in-your-face approach with many Republicans like an Arizona, confronting some of these rules or even pressing Democrats when it comes into nuking the filibuster?

PSAKI: Well, first, I would say that the speech the President is delivering us about our fundamental right to vote in the country and the moral obligation we all have to defend that, stand up for that. It's not about legislative process and this issue is bigger than that. Um, and I would say that to those who are critics, um, we stand with you in wanting to make voting more accessible around the country, and that's why the President signed a historic executive order into law in his first month in office. That's why he — his Department of Justice has already taken action to double the funding and support around the country to fighting voter laws and fighting voter suppression. That's why he fought — nominated and fought for the confirmation of Kristen Clark and Vanita Gupta to civil rights activists who are now playing prominent roles in the Department of Justice. He has said this will be the cause of his presidency. He's delivering a speech in Philadelphia, the foundation of democracy next Tuesday, and that's a continuation of his efforts.

(....)

1:24:12 p.m.

1 minute and 16 seconds

PHILIP WEGMANN: We're almost halfway through the 90 day period that the White House has said for the U.S. intelligence community to redouble its efforts and analyze information about the origin of COVID-19. Is the president receiving or as the president received any update on that probe?

PSAKI: I don't have any updates to provide to all of you.

WEGMANN: And then —

PSAKI: But go ahead.

WEGMANN: Thank you. And then the second question, delegates at the National Education Association. They approved the measure last week calling for support of “the implementation of culturally responsive education, critical race theory, and ethnic studies curriculum in pre-K through 12 and higher education. The President’s obviously a big fan of education. First lady is a teacher. She's a union teacher. I'm wondering what are the President's thoughts on anti racism curriculum in the classroom?

PSAKI: Well, the President believes that in our history, there's many dark moments and there is not just slavery and racism in our history. There is systemic racism that is still impacting society today and he believes as I believe as a parent of children that kids should learn about our history. So, as the spouse of an educator, and as somebody who is — continues to believe that children should learn not just the good but also the challenging in our history, and that's part of what we're talking about here, even as it's become politically charged.

WEGMANN: Thank you, Jen.

PSAKI: Thank you.

(....)

1:31:29 p.m.

2 minutes and 59 seconds

JON DECKER: As you probably have noticed, gas prices are up considerably. Right now, all across the U.S., the average price of gasoline is \$3.14. In fact, gas prices are up 40 percent since the very beginning of the year. What is your message to motorists out there in the country that are concerned about how much it costs to get to work every day, how it's really impacting their family budgets?

PSAKI: First I would say that, um, gas prices do historically rise in the summer and that's particularly true even in moments like this, where there's a spike in people traveling, and even more people are hitting the road now because of our success in defeating the pandemic. So in the last 10 years pre-pandemic, for example, the average price of gas in July is nearly 30 cents higher than it is in January, and any prices are higher now than they were last year because Americans are finally able to travel. I just thought that context was important as it relates — but the President is quite focused on ensuring that we are doing everything we can to keep prices low for there — to keep the cost of living low for the American people, including the cost of gas. That's why he was against — vehemently against a gas tax, why he was against a vehicle mileage tax. We are not a member of — a party of OPEC, as you know. We are engaged with a number of countries, in part because we want to ensure that we are, um, remaining abreast of what is happening in those discussions as well because that will have an impact. But his direct message to the American people is that he is going to work, just as he worked to get the virus under control, is going to and — to create jobs. He's going to work to ensure we are doing everything we can to keep the gas of price [sic] low.

DECKER: Would — would releasing oil from the SPR have any impacts that — consideration of the administration?

PSAKI: I don't have anything to predict on that further.

DECKER: Thank you.

PSAKI: Sure, go ahead.

STEVEN NELSON: Thanks — thanks, Jen. As a candidate, President Biden said — and I'm quoting: “I have never spoken to my son about his overseas business dealings. But recently, photographs and documents have called that into question. In 2015, President Biden — as vice president — met Cafe Milano with his son's Ukrainian, Russian, and Kazakhstani business associates one day before at Brisbane executive thanked the first son for the opportunity to meet his father and also in 2015 as vice president, the President hosted at the Naval Observatory, Mexican business associates of Biden before Hunter Biden e-mailed these associates from Air

Force Two the next year going to Mexico. So I've had a two part question: Was President Biden indeed unaware that his son was pursuing business opportunities with these people he met? And also, according to recent reporting, the First Son still has taken Chinese investment company. When is he going to download that?

PSAKI: On the last part, he's working to unload that. I'd point you to his representatives. The President does not discuss business dealings with family members and otherwise, I'm not going to respond to Rudy Giuliani's lawyer.

[INAUDIBLE NELSON]

PSAKI: Go ahead in the back.