

Legislators Reaction To President Biden's State Of The Union Address

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DURBIN STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT BIDEN'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) released the following statement on President Biden's State of the Union Address:

“With President Biden at the helm, we have seen tremendous progress in our country. The *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* is building new infrastructure and pushing our transportation industry forward. Belvidere, Illinois, has its Stellantis operation up and running again and is awaiting a new battery plant because of the deal struck by UAW President Shawn Fain with the support of the White House. The *PACT Act*, championed by Congressional Democrats, will help our nation’s veterans lead healthier lives.

“But there’s still work to be done. Reproductive freedom and voting rights are under siege by conservative lawmakers nationwide, and Congressional Republicans are standing in the way of codifying equitable access to the ballot box and essential protections for reproductive health care into law. I’m committed to working with my colleagues and the Biden Administration to push through these holds to protect the fundamental freedoms of all Americans.

“We have responsibilities abroad too. I agree with President Biden that we cannot shy away from supporting Ukrainians, who are still bravely staving off Putin’s advances more than two years after his unjust and unprovoked invasion. In the Middle East, we must put a serious effort behind negotiating a ceasefire by all sides that allows for the release of hostages and the delivery of critical aid to Gaza.

“President Biden reminded us tonight that we are a country of progress, possibilities, and resilience. I took this message to heart, and I hope my colleagues will do the same as we work to deliver for the American people.”

Durbin’s guest for tonight’s State of the Union Address was Dr. Zaher Sahloul, President of MedGlobal, a nonprofit that provides critical medical services in areas of crisis. Through MedGlobal, Dr. Sahloul been coordinating humanitarian and medical relief services for innocent people in Gaza caught in the crossfire spurred by the horrific October 7 Hamas attacks. Gaza hospitals have been in desperate need of medical supplies, forcing medical professionals to sometimes rely on vinegar as antiseptics or use Tylenol as the only relief for those undergoing amputations.

Dr. Sahloul has also provided urgent care to desperate populations amidst natural and man-made disasters in Syria, Ukraine, Yemen, Turkey, and Bangladesh. In 2017, when the Burmese military was attacking its Rohingya population, Durbin traveled to a refugee camp in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh, to see Dr. Sahloul’s work firsthand.

In addition to his role in MedGlobal, Dr. Sahloul is a critical care specialist at Advocate Christ Medical Center and Saint Anthony’s Hospital, and an Associate Professor in Clinical Medicine at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

Budzinski Statement on the State of the Union Address

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Tonight, Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski (IL-13) released the following statement on President Biden's State of the Union address:

"In his first term in office, President Biden has made real progress for working families. He signed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that has invested millions of dollars into Central and Southern Illinois communities. He signed the Inflation Reduction Act to support workforce development and cap insulin prices at \$35 a month for seniors. And he signed the bipartisan PACT Act -- the largest expansion of veterans' health care. While we still have critical work ahead of us to help families keep more of what they earn, secure our border and address crises around the world, I was glad to hear the President lay out his vision for our future. A future where we defend democracy, protect women's reproductive rights, sustain a thriving middle class and support our allies."

Congresswoman Budzinski, a member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, brought April Williams as her guest to tonight's State of the Union address. Williams is an East St. Louis native and current Belleville resident who serves veterans as a Certified Wound Care Nurse in the VA St. Louis Health Care System. Williams is also a legislative coordinator for American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 96 and a member of Congresswoman Budzinski's Veterans Advisory Council.

BOST ISSUES RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT BIDEN'S STATE OF THE UNION

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Mike Bost (R-IL) issued the following statement in response to President Biden's State of the Union Address to Congress this evening:

"Joe Biden's speech tonight was less a State of the Union than it was a State of Delusion," said Bost. "Biden took a victory lap for an economy the American people have no faith in and celebrated a legislative agenda that's already failed. He led off his speech asking for more money to secure Ukraine's border; but he made securing America's border his 17th priority, soon after Snickers bars and fixing online concert ticket sales.

"This was Biden's last big chance to convince the American people he deserved four more years in the White House. Instead, all he offered was divisive political rhetoric, class warfare, and clear proof that he's completely out of touch with the priorities of Southern Illinois' working families."

Duckworth Reaction to President Biden's 2024 State of the Union Address

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) issued the following statement after President Biden’s 2024 State of the Union address:

“Tonight, President Biden underscored the historic progress Democrats have made for working families with one of the fastest and strongest post-pandemic economic recoveries in the world in addition to our efforts to bring down inflation, create millions of good-paying jobs and help middle-class families keep more of their hard-earned dollars—despite Republican obstruction.

“As he reminded the nation of Republican’s hypocrisy on everything from border security to reproductive rights, President Biden also reminded us that the American people can achieve anything when we are united toward common goals rather than divided by fear and anger. I agree that we must continue to stand with the Ukrainian people as they fight for their lives against Putin, while we work to secure an immediate ceasefire in Gaza that both alleviates the suffering of innocent civilians and reunite hostages home with their families.

“While we’ve made great progress, I look forward to continuing our work to help make the President’s vision for the future of our nation a reality: a future that improves the lives of all working families, guarantees the right to IVF nationwide and fully restores *Roe v. Wade*, keeps our communities safe and ensures every American can achieve the American dream.”

Last week, Duckworth [led a group of Senate Democrats](#) in trying to pass her [Access to Family Building Act](#)—which would establish a statutory right to access IVF for all Americans who need it to start or grow a family—through unanimous consent, but U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS) blocked it. Building on Senator Duckworth’s continuing efforts to protect access to IVF and other assisted reproductive technology (ART) nationwide, the Senator [brought](#) Illinois reproductive endocrinologist and infertility specialist Dr. Amanda Adeleye as her State of the Union guest:

“For years, even before the Supreme Court’s disastrous *Dobbs* decision that overturned *Roe v. Wade*, I’ve sounded the alarm that Republicans’ decades-long campaign to rob women of their right to make decisions about their healthcare and bodies would eventually put IVF and other ART at risk. It’s thanks to doctors and health professionals like Dr. Amanda Adeleye that millions of Americans—myself included—have been able to have the families of their dreams, but Republicans’ intent on exerting even more control over women’s bodies are putting access to these treatments at risk across the country. I’m proud to have brought Dr. Adeleye as my State of the Union guest this year to remind Americans just how critical this work is and the importance of protecting IVF access nationwide.”

Duckworth was the first Senator to give birth while serving in office and had both of her children with the help of IVF. In 2018 she [advocated](#) for the Senate to change its rules so she could bring her infant onto the Senate floor. She has made protecting and expanding access to essential reproductive healthcare a top priority.

Since President Biden was sworn into office, Duckworth has been an integral part of helping implement his agenda in Congress. She worked closely on the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)—which is helping repair our roads and bridges and create good paying jobs across the country—that includes several provisions led by Duckworth to help improve the lives of working Americans by making drinking water safer, reducing traffic congestion, allowing infrastructure projects to implement local hiring initiatives, protecting roadside responders and improving transit accessibility, among many other benefits for workers. Part of the law includes the Senator's [Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act](#) (DWWIA), which is helping fix and upgrade our nation's crumbling, dangerous water infrastructure.

Senator Duckworth championed and secured key provisions in the [Inflation Reduction Act](#), a law that is lowering costs for life-saving prescription drugs, capping out-of-pocket costs of insulin for Medicare beneficiaries at \$35 per month and \$2,000 per year for other medications, tackling the climate crisis to protect our planet for future generations, cutting the deficit by hundreds of billions and ensuring megacorporations pay their fair share.

She strongly supported the [CHIPS and Science Act](#), which is helping ensure our nation remains a competitive leader in research and development, science and manufacturing for generations to come. Duckworth celebrated the passage of the [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act](#) that is helping enhance background checks, helping states implement red flag laws, helping close the boyfriend loophole and, ultimately, save lives.

Duckworth proudly supported the [PACT Act](#) that is helping overhaul our VA's processes for toxic-exposed Veterans so they can get the care they need for service-connected illnesses.