

The Record

Learning the Hard Way

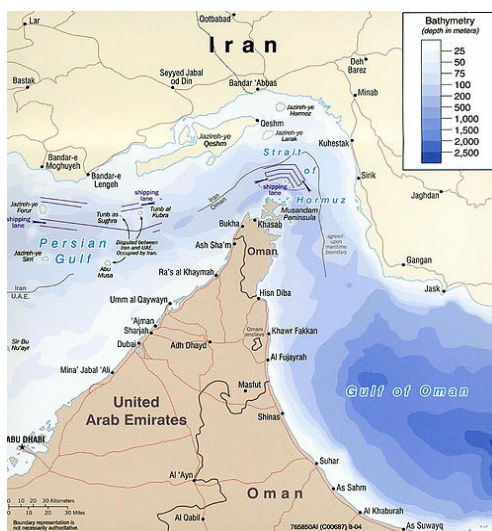
By Dr. Jim Haas

Four weeks into Mr. Trump's war-of-choice with Iran, it's time to ask what we have learned or should have learned. Here are a few of the most important lessons.

First, the 2015 nuclear non-proliferation agreement negotiated over two years by the Obama Administration among the U.S., Britain, China, France, Germany, Iran, Russia, and the EU was working as intended until Mr. Trump withdrew the U.S. in 2018. Titled the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPA), it prevented Iran from making highly enriched uranium necessary for a weapon, verified by on-the-ground inspectors. In exchange, some Western sanctions were lifted, and banks unfroze about \$50 billion of Iranian assets and returned the money to its owner.

The JCPA was to be in effect until 2030. Since Trump withdrew in 2018, saying the JCPA wasn't favorable enough to the U.S., Iran resumed enriching uranium toward weapons-grade quality. Both the U.S. and Israel have said eliminating Iran's uranium program is a goal of the current war. If the JCPA were still in effect, this would not be a problem for five more years. The lesson is to not let the fantasy of a perfect agreement cancel a good one.

Another lesson is the failure to foresee—and be prepared for—Iran's closing of the Strait of Hormuz, the 21-mile-wide route connecting the Persian Gulf to the world's oceans (see map). The strategically important Strait is used by ships carrying about 20 percent of the world's liquified natural gas and 25 percent of seaborne oil annually as well as fertilizers to feed the world. Shortages of these commodities have skyrocketed prices



worldwide. About 3,200 ships are stranded above the Strait.

Mr. Trump has been forced into the embarrassing position of begging allies to help by sending minesweepers and other assets to the Strait. Most were unwilling to get involved in someone else's war when they had not been advised in advance and had often been criticized and even insulted by Trump. Last week, though, some European countries, Canada, and Japan appeared ready to help enforce the principle of freedom of navigation under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Economic pressure is growing on Washington faster than on Tehran.

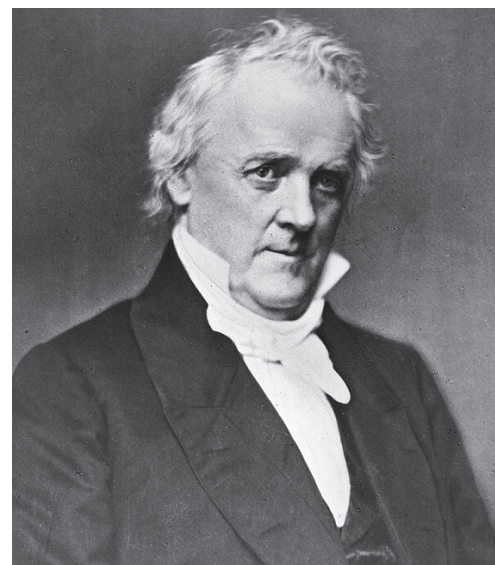
Shamefully, when Japan's foreign minister, in a press conference with Trump, asked him why allies were not told of the U.S. attacks in advance, he told her that "secrecy" was important as it was to Japan when it attacked Pearl Harbor. He could hardly have said anything less diplomatic.

There are at least two lessons here: Mr. Trump should leave diplomacy to experienced diplomats, and his notion of "America First" has become America Alone. Alienat-

ing long-term allies like Canada, the U.K., Germany, and Denmark is unwise and dangerous. Nations, like people, should cherish friends and not make enemies unnecessarily.

A different lesson is that airpower, no matter how overwhelming, will not result in regime change, which was another of several muddled goals of joining Israel's long-planned attack on Iran. Allied airpower during World War II reduced much of Germany and Japan to rubble and killed millions of citizens in both countries. It took an invasion and nearly a year to end the Nazi regime, and the invasion of Japan was only three months away when two atomic bombs convinced Emperor Hirohito to order a surrender (which some Japanese Army officials tried to prevent). Invading Iran is not a practical or acceptable option. Know the history.

We are in a mess, but there is good news for one American: James Buchanan (pictured), 15th president (1857-1861) and judged by most historians our worst. He is likely to move up to second-worst.





By Sharon Hoover

Comin' & Goin' Turner Style

wycokck.org to be sure.

The KCKCC Library, the KCKCC Art Gallery, and the WYCO Historical Society and Museum will host a "Lewis & Clark Quilt presentation in the KCKCC Library on April 1, 2026, from 10am-11am. Guest speakers Susan Taylor and Diane Pickman, members of the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance, will give the history of Lewis and Clark and the archival handmade quilt. Light refreshments will be served. The KCKCC library is located on the 2nd floor of the Learning Commons Building.

The 2nd Annual "I Voted" and "Future Voter" sticker contest for Wyandotte County students K-12 is in full swing. The deadline for entry is April 10, 2026, by 5pm.

For more information wycovoteskck.gov/stickercontest. To enter: email election@wycokck.org or send to Sticker Contest, 850 State Ave., KCK.

If you are or know a high school senior or recent graduate, the BPU Scholarship Fund provides the following for those: enrolling in a 4 year STEM degree, \$2500 per semester; 2 year technical/vocational program up to \$1500 per semester; Apprentice Lineman program up to \$1500 per semester. The Application deadline is April 1, 2026. Visit <https://gkccf.academics.com>.

The Turner Community Garden has 6 open 4'X12' plots this year. The cost is \$15 per plot. First year garden renters can only rent a maximum of two plots. The plot appli-

cations and payments due will be available April 1, 2026, at Turner Recreation Commission, 831 S. 55th St. KCK with the deadline of May 1, 2026. If you wish to visit the garden, it is located next to the Turner Neighborhood Center at 667 S. 55th St.

The 8th District Senior Resource Fair will be at Eisenhower Community Center, 2901 N. 72nd. KCK on April 9, 2026, from 9am-2pm. This is an opportunity to learn what resources are available to the KCK senior community.

The Kansas City Fire Department is holding its annual Blood Drive on April 9, 2026, from 9am-2pm in the City Hall Lobby, 701 from 9am-2:30 pm.

Until next time, stay safe and be kind to those around you.

What a gorgeous weekend is planned for us and by the time you read this we will be enjoying above average temperatures. It's about time. Activities around the city are picking up.

The Mayor's Community Prayer Breakfast will be April 1, 2026, from 7:30 am to 9:00am at the Thomas Burke Technical Education Center, 6565 State Avenue, KCK. I didn't see a registration request, but you might check out

Stock Market Insights

5 Reasons U.S. Stocks Remain Resilient Amid the Iran War and Oil Shock

Dr. Richard Baker, AIF®, is the CEO and executive wealth advisor at Fervent Wealth Management.

When I was a boy, my Poppy and I were cutting wood and saw red squirrels in a hollowed-out oak tree that we planned to cut down. We yelled and threw rocks at it, but they wouldn't come out. So we cut the tree down with them in it, and to my surprise, they stayed in even after the tree hit the ground. They were going to tough it out no matter what. U.S. stocks seem to have that same tenacity during the current Iran war.

Surprisingly, U.S. stocks are only down a few percentage points since before the Iran war began, even as the war drags on and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz continues to send oil and gas prices higher. This is not the typical market reaction to a worldwide oil supply shock.

Typically, during an oil crisis, for every 30% increase in oil prices, there is a 10-15% drop in the U.S. stock market. So far, while oil prices

have fluctuated by 40-50% since before the war began on February 28th, the S&P 500 is only down 2.5%, according to LPL Financial. Investors' attention remains squarely focused on Iran, as it should be, but they are not overreacting, yet.

Here are five reasons why the U.S. economy has been insulated from this current crisis and why U.S. stock markets aren't overreacting.

First, investors believe that President Trump won't risk the political damage to the midterm elections from a long-lasting war that would significantly hurt the U.S. economy.

Second, many investors remember their mistake of rushing to sell stocks too quickly during Trump's tariff Liberation Day, which proved to be a major mistake. Most investors believe the war will end soon because Trump will ultimately do what is good for the U.S. economy and the upcoming election.

Third, U.S. stocks and the U.S. dollar have again become the world's safe havens. For the last six months, we've seen investors

around the world who oppose Trump start the "sell America" trade, selling U.S. stocks and leaning into international markets. This works when the world is somewhat calm, but when things get volatile, the world still runs back to the U.S. for safety and financial security. The U.S. dollar has rallied and remains dominant in global finance, and it is likely to remain so.

Fourth, the U.S. is energy independent. America uses less than half as much oil as it did in the 1980s, and for six years it has been a net petroleum exporter. Because the U.S. produces more oil than it uses, a worldwide oil disruption has less impact on U.S. consumers.

Finally, earnings expectations have held up remarkably well and continue to support stock prices. There continues to be massive corporate spending on AI, which not only powers strong technology sector earnings but is now bleeding over to add solid earnings to other sectors.

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SENATE NEWS



By Sen. Pat Pettey

This week, the Senate took up several controversial bills that aim to:

- expand the private school voucher program;
- mandate that children – beginning in kindergarten – are taught the dangers of socialism and communism; and
- protect crisis pregnancy centers from having to provide medically-accurate information about abortion and reproductive care to their patients.

Senate Republicans campaigned on lowering property taxes, yet they have failed to produce any meaningful reforms to lower costs for Kansans. The House’s property tax bill would have harmed our local communities by allowing a small minority of a community

to protest the local government’s budget and force the city to keep a flat budget for another year. This would have especially harmed our growing communities, which need to have the flexibility to increase local spending to cover the costs for first responders, maintain our roads, and support our schools.

On Thursday, Majority Leader Blasi added an amendment to SB 515, which permits home school students to participate in KSHSAA activities at nonpublic schools in Kansas. Senator Blasi’s amendment would mandate that no KSHSAA competitions, games, practices, etc., be held on days that align with Christian and Catholic religious holidays and services. This includes a ban on KSHSAA activities on Wednesdays after 6 p.m. While we must respect the religious practices of our students, this amendment elevates the Christian and Catholic religions over other religions. Sen. Francisco brought this up during the floor debate, as there are several faiths whose re-

ligious holidays and services don’t align with the schedule outlined in Sen. Blasi’s amendment.

Committees were hard at work this week, as we have only ten working days left before First Adjournment. Committees will be wrapped up with regular work on the 17th, so this week will be full of hearings and passing bills out of committee.

As a reminder, I am serving on the following committees:

- Education
- Local Government, Transparency and Ethics
- Public Health and Welfare
- Ways and Means

Standing committees have just two days left of regular work. On the 18th and 19th, the Senate will spend the entire day on the floor working to pass out legislation ahead of conference committee week. Several committees are holding hearings on controversial legislation sent over from the House or recently introduced in the Senate.

Legislation to keep an eye on:

- Restricting Kansans’ access to voting: HB 2453 would reduce the window for Kansans to request a mail-in ballot by a week, reduce the number of days of early in-person voting, and increase the amount of time before Election Day you must register. The Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee is holding a hearing on HB 2453 on Tuesday, March 17. Testimony is due by Monday, March 16, at 10:30 a.m.

On the Senate Floor

We debated and passed 26 bills on the Senate floor this week. My votes on these pieces of legislation were as follows:

Tuesday’s bills:

- Requiring applications, expenditure information, and reports concerning the Rural Health Transformation Program be presented to the State Finance Council and Legislature: HB 2555 would require that all grant applications for the Rural Health Transformation

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Petty...

...from page 3

Program be first presented to the Kansas Health Innovation Alliance. It must then be presented and reviewed by the State Finance Council. HB 2555 passed 40-0, I voted YES.

- Modifying and updating procedures for the dissolution of cities: HB 2711 would modify the election and petition procedures for the dissolution of cities. This bill specifies that the election must take place within 60 days of the petition being filed. HB 2771 passed 40-0, I voted YES.

- Requiring any candidate or elected official, of certain offices, to be a resident of Kansas or the district they represent: HB 2733 specifies requirements for candidates and elected officials of certain offices to remain residents of the district in which they represent. This legislation was brought after a school district candidate was a resident of the district when they filed but then moved, and it was unclear whether they were still eligible. HB 2733 passed 40-0, I voted YES.

- Expanding the private school voucher program and increasing the amount of funding that may be diverted from the State General Fund each year to fund such vouchers: HB 2468 enrolls Kansas in the federal private school voucher program created after the passage of H.R. 1. This bill also prohibits Kansas from having stricter eligibility requirements for vouchers than the federal government. Therefore, families making up to 300% of the area median income—\$312,000 in Overland Park, \$195,000 in Lawrence, \$192,000 in Wichita, \$186,000 in Kansas City—would be eligible to participate in this program. These income levels are far above low income, despite the program still be touted as a “low income students scholarship program.” HB 2468 will divert millions away from our public schools to fund private education. Kansas families should, and do, have the choice to send their children to private schools, but our tax dollars should not foot the bill.

HB 2468 passed 27-13, I voted NO.

- Shell bill for the budget: HB 2513 was originally a bill authorizing for the payment of certain claims against the state, and providing the funds to pay such claims. However, it is now going to be used as the shell for the budget agreed upon during House/Senate budget conference committee. In the Kansas Legislature, legislators can ‘gut’ (remove the original contents) and ‘go’ (insert new language, often from a different bill). This is what the Legislature will do to HB 2513—the original claims language will be removed and the new budget language will be added. HB 2513 passed 39-1, I voted YES.

- Providing an income tax credit for the retail sale of higher ethanol fuel blends: SB 498 would enact a three-year tax credit for the retail sale of higher ethanol fuel blends, encouraging consumers to purchase this type of fuel. On the floor, this bill was amended to sunset four other tax credits that are not commonly used, including the swine facility improvement tax credit. SB 498 passed 38-1-1, I voted YES.

- Establishing standards and requirements for active shooter drills in Kansas schools: SB 263 establishes guidelines for active shooter drills in Kansas public and accredited nonpublic schools. On the floor, this bill was amended to remove the requirement for elementary students to participate in these drills. It was also amended to explicitly prohibit simulation drills, which have been shown to increase rates of trauma among participants. SB 263 passed 38-1-1, I voted YES.

- Modifying the registration period for personalized license plates and authorizing county treasurers to charge fees for vehicle registration transactions: SB 404 would authorize a vehicle registration transaction of no more than \$15. Proponents of this legislation said it would decrease reliance on property taxes to fund these services. SB 404 passed 33-7, I voted YES.

- The KIRK Act: SB 419 establishes the Kansas Intellectual Rights and Knowledge Act (KIRK Act). This Act would protect the freedom of speech and assembly

on college campuses, a protection already guaranteed under the First Amendment. It is vital to the strength of our democracy that students have the freedoms guaranteed to them under the First Amendment, and we should be encouraging students to exercise such freedoms. The KIRK Act creates a private cause of action for students and faculty who feel they have been aggrieved or their freedoms restricted, regardless of whether there is evidence to support such claim. This provision of the bill encourages frivolous lawsuits that will jam our court systems, delay justice, and waste taxpayer dollars. Senate Democrats attempted to amend the bill on the floor to remove this provision, as students and faculty would still be able to file complaints and investigations through other mechanisms, but the amendment was defeated. SB 419 passed 29-11, I voted NO.

Wednesday’s bills:

- Amending certain deadlines within the Public Innovative District Act: SB 384 seeks to change the deadlines for school districts to submit applications to the State Board of Education for approval to act as a Public Innovative District. This bill would also shorten the timeline for State Board of Education’s window to review and act upon such a request. If the State Board of Education did not act on the request within the timeline, under this bill, it would be automatically approved. SB 384 passed 32-7, I voted NO.

- Authorizing Gov. Kelly to make a declaration to receive extra funds to support our first responders during the World Cup: Senate Sub for HB 2212 allows for the governor to make a declaration of need for enhanced public safety and security during the World Cup this summer. With hundreds of thousands of people traveling to our state, it is crucial that our first responders have the support they need to protect the safety and security of our communities and visitors. Several weeks ago, the House passed a bill that would extend the Governor’s original declaration of emergency for the World Cup, but Senate

Republicans held up that bill. I am grateful that my Republican colleagues came together to pass this compromise bill to ensure our first responders receive the funding they need. Senate Sub for HB 2212 passed 38-2, I voted YES.

- Enacting a statewide curriculum requiring students, beginning in kindergarten, to be taught the dangers of socialism and communism: SB 381 enacts a statewide curriculum mandate on all accredited public, non-public, and parochial schools to teach their K-12 students about the dangers of socialism and communism. It is not the role of the Legislature to mandate curriculum standards in this state; that is the job of the Kansas Board of Regents, the Kansas Board of Education, and local school districts. SB 381 would also require that students pass a 100-question exam, modeled after the U.S. citizenship test, to graduate high school. If a student were unable to pass this test, they would be forbidden from graduating, regardless of their other academic performance. Senate Democrats attempted to amend the bill on the floor to only require students in grades 7-12 to have this curriculum requirement, as it is unlikely that kindergartners will have the necessary critical thinking skills to contemplate and consider complex economic and political systems. We also tried to amend the bill to require that schools teach about totalitarianism, constitutional republicanism, fascism, and more, to ensure our students are receiving a fuller education of different economic and political systems in our world. Both of these amendments failed on party lines. The Legislature needs to stay in its lane and stop trying to pass extremist curriculum mandates that don’t even hold up to content-neutral educational standards. SB 381 passed 26-14, I voted NO.

- Prohibiting promise scholarship awards from being used to fund remedial courses: SB 340 seeks to prohibit the Kansas Promise Scholarship from being used to fund remedial courses as part of a corequisite course. SB 340 passed 40-0, I voted YES.

Tom's Tasty Treats

By Tom Valverde

This week's tasty treat is a scrumptious quick bread that is quick to put together and is moist and keeps for days. This recipe is a favorite of mine because it uses rhubarb and this is the season for it.

Bake a loaf and try it for yourself:

RHUBARB BREAD WITH CINNAMON SUGAR

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Ingredients: | 1/3 c Canola oil |
| 2 c Flour | 1 1/2 c Rhubarb, washed and diced |
| 1 c Sugar | Cinnamon sugar |
| 1 t Baking Powder* | 1/3 c Sugar |
| 1/2 Salt | 2 t Cinnamon |
| 1 lg. Egg | •Best if you use a fresh can. |
| 1 c Milk | |

Set oven to 350°. Grease a loaf pan and line with parchment paper leaving the paper extending on the ends to use to lift out of the pan. In a large bowl, combine and whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Form a well in the center. In another bowl, whisk together the egg, milk and the oil. Pour the egg mixture into the flour well; stir to blend and just until the dry ingredients are moistened try not to over mix. Fold in the rhubarb. Prepare the cinnamon sugar by placing the ingredients in a small bowl and stir until blended.

Place half of the batter into the pan and sprinkle half of the cinnamon sugar over the batter. Top with the remaining batter and finish with the cinnamon sugar. If desired you can take a butter knife or offset spatula and swirl the cinnamon sugar into the batter. Bake at 350° for 55-60 minutes. Test for doneness with a toothpick. Cool in pan for 10 minutes then, lift out of the pan and place onto a wire rack to cool. Wrap the bread in plastic wrap and chill for 2 hours. This makes the bread easier to slice.

Share a piece of this wonderful rhubarb bread over a cup of coffee with a neighbor or good friend. Enjoy!

Market Insights...

...from page 2

The bottom line is that the U.S. economy and its stocks are still insulated from the Iran war because the drivers of U.S. economic growth are still in place, the U.S. uses its own oil, and is still the place the world runs to for safety. For these reasons and more, it is likely that U.S. stocks will still see double-digit earnings growth at the end of 2026.

I cut the tree with a chainsaw above and below the hole where the squirrels were hiding and propped it up on a stump not far away. Later in the day, we watched those tough squirrels go in and out of it as if nothing had ever happened. I hope the U.S. stocks are just as tenacious.

Have a blessed week.
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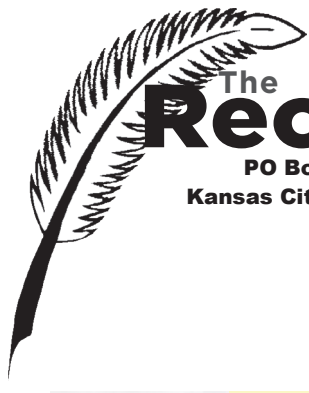
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