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No. 148

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 14, 2022.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 10, 2022, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

PLIGHT OF THE PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Crying, vomiting, and 8 months pregnant, the young woman walked for an hour in labor pains in search of an ambulance. She was 23 years old.

Her journey did not end with that. She finally got to a place where she found a taxi. She had to convince this taxi driver in the midst of confusion, desperation, lack of food, to take her—

12 hours in labor—to a place where she could deliver her baby.

That is the plight of almost 650,000 women in Pakistan, where the flood waters are monstrosities that you would not imagine.

In visiting Pakistan over the last 10 days with the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, I could see water as far as the eye could see. The devastation is overwhelming: 33 million people displaced, more than 600,000 homeless, but more than that, hungry.

I continue to thank the Biden administration for its initial support of the U.N. fund of \$30 million and the additional funding of \$20 million. After our briefing in Islamabad and working with the administration, the United States military joined in in delivering 300,000 tents.

To my colleagues, more is needed. I will be introducing legislation that reflects the delegation's work and, as well, their efforts; and that is, we need additional funding for these devastating conditions.

We have to realize, as I visited the people in Dadu, children are without schools, pregnant women are without medical care, and as I indicated, more and more women will be giving birth over the next 6 weeks. This can turn into a medical crisis.

The water is not moving, primarily because this water is without a place to drain. There are no drainage facilities, if you will, in that area. So we will also have water-borne diseases, like hepatitis, dengue fever, malaria.

The people of Pakistan need our help. The Pakistani Americans have risen to their call. So many in my Congressional district are providing and offering to help send medical care, if you will. Doctors are leaving various places in America to head in that direction. But it is very important for the United States Congress to go on record in recognizing the devastation that the people are facing every single day.

Would you imagine, even in the trials and tribulations that we have in the United States, that you have populations of people who are isolated by dirty water and that there are people who are living in the outlying areas with no shelter whatsoever. The people are hungry, the lack of food is rising. The pregnant women are fearful for the unbelievable challenges they have in giving birth.

Madam Speaker, I am calling upon Congress, as I introduce this legislation dealing with the devastation of the floods in Pakistan, to join me in supporting the legislation and, as well, recognizing the dire conditions that our friends in Pakistan are having.

Our final point is to be reminded that Pakistan has been a friend and has helped us in the evacuation of Afghan refugees; helped us in the war on terror, where they lost Pakistani military in the war on terror. And, of course, the huge and very engaging Pakistani diaspora, Pakistani Americans who are both respected and, of course, energized to be collaborative with their government here in the United States to try to save the lives of babies and children, women and men, people who are sick, who need kidney transplants, who can't get their medicine, it is imperative that we rise up to this occasion.

Let me thank the members of the Pakistan Caucus who joined us, Mr. SUOZZI and Mr. GREEN. We are grateful for all of our members who have been so energetic in advocating for strong Pakistan-U.S. relations.

I also recognize the USAID, the embassy staff, and of course, the President and Prime Minister, and other leaders of government who opened their doors in the midst of this crisis for us to be briefed and to see the ongoing devastation that is going on there.

Madam Speaker, I will come back to the floor again because I am in fear of the devastation of pregnant women being stranded in places around that region who cannot be reached.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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This 23-year-old traveled 12 hours, out of her mind, if you will, to get to a place.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me.

TRANSPARENCY IS NONNEGOTIABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, the American people are rightfully concerned about the ambiguity of the Biden Administration's ongoing negotiations with Iran.

Are these negotiations being conducted in good faith? What concessions are being made? How would this deal impact America's standing within the international community and our ally, Israel?

These are precisely the questions that are being asked, and yet, the only response coming from the administration is the sound of crickets chirping. The same can be said for Congress.

The Biden administration has already expressed its intent to keep Congress in the dark about this potential nuclear deal. And according to new reporting, the Biden administration is trying to hide the facts on their ongoing negotiations with Iran until after the midterm elections to avoid scrutiny.

Here is the thing, Madam Speaker, the administration is already required to submit information to Congress pursuant to the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act or INARA.

INARA requires that the administration keep Congress fully and currently informed of any new or amended agreement with Iran. Those words couldn't be any clearer.

In 2015, many Members on the opposite side of the aisle voted for INARA, and yet, we have heard nothing but crickets from them about holding this administration accountable.

If INARA had not passed 7 years ago, Congress could have found itself completely blind to former President Obama's deal with Iran at the time.

Madam Speaker, 400 Members of the House, along with 98 senators voted to force President Obama to submit his deal to Congress for Congressional review. Given the profound silence as of late on these ongoing negotiations, are we to believe that good governance and effective oversight are no longer tenets of this body?

Madam Speaker, we cannot let accountability and transparency become relics of a bygone era. That is why I have introduced H. Res. 1266 alongside my colleague from South Carolina, Representative JOE WILSON.

This resolution of inquiry requests that President Biden turn over to the House copies of documents, memos, and other communications related to any initiative or negotiations regarding Iran's nuclear program.

It could also expose any side agreements—such as the episode of the Obama administration leaving cash on a tarmac in 2016—that are offered as part of negotiations with Iran.

Today, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs will be marking up my legislation, and the American people will find out who still supports increased transparency and oversight and who does not.

Congress must do its job and exercise its explicit oversight authorities to hold this administration accountable. If this body upheld its commitment to good governance and effective oversight 7 years ago, we should certainly do the same now. There is no excuse not to.

Congress should not be sitting back and kicking its feet up while there is work to be done.

LOWERING COSTS TO AMERICAN FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the recent passage of the Inflation Reduction Act. My fellow colleagues, yesterday, I joined many of my House Democrats alongside Democratic President Biden as we celebrated the passage of this new law at the White House.

During the White House visit, I kept thinking of the millions of Americans this monumental law will help. I also kept thinking about the Texans and constituents across my district who will benefit significantly from the impact of this law. The Inflation Reduction Act will lower families' costs with savings ranging from healthcare to energy costs. But if we look closely, we see just how important and lifesaving this law is. This law lowers prescription drug prices, like insulin, which is critical, by finally giving Medicare the ability to negotiate prices of prescription drugs—not just simply accept what Big Pharma says but negotiate prices.

It also prevents greedy price hikes and caps out-of-pocket costs to \$2,000 to Medicare beneficiaries—capping out-of-pocket at \$2,000.

Madam Speaker, for residents like those in my district, Texas' 29th District, these savings can literally save lives.

My district is 77 percent Latino. Studies from the CDC show that Latinos are 70 percent more likely than white non-Hispanics to be diagnosed with diabetes, and they are 1.3 times more likely to die from diabetes complications. On top of this, about 11 percent of Texans have diabetes.

Shockingly, studies show that one in four diabetics in Texas have rationed their insulin to make ends meet. They are literally putting themselves at risk of death and more complications because of the price of insulin.

Let's just let that sink in, Madam Speaker. One in four diabetics ration a

lifesaving drug simply because the prices are high and because our country has higher prescription drug prices than any other developed country in the world.

This simply breaks my heart. It is tough to think about this because this issue also does hit very close to home. I know all too well people who have family members that are suffering from diabetes. I know their pain, and I know how it impacts their livelihoods and their pocketbooks.

My mother faced uphill battles with diabetes before passing away from complications due to diabetes.

□ 1015

Now, I am 1 of 10 children. Five of us are also affected by diabetes and are on insulin, and a brother is on dialysis. So, I know firsthand how important insulin is to one's health, and I can't fathom a country where people can't afford this lifesaving drug.

While more must be done for those diabetic patients not on Medicare, this law is a monumental, great step forward in making insulin accessible to all. But I promise to keep fighting for those who are not on Medicare, those who are not insured, and those who are too poor to get access to insulin.

The Inflation Reduction Act also reduces the cost of health insurance for millions by extending the Affordable Care Act subsidies for 3 more years. This will lock in lower healthcare prices that will save 13 million people across our country an average of \$800.

Now, \$800 may not sound like a lot to some people, but in my district and across America, hardworking families know the value of \$800. In my district, Madam Speaker, there are about 55,000 people who are enrolled in health insurance plans through the Affordable Care Act. That is about \$800 for these Texas families to use for school supplies, for food, for gas, and for other basic necessities.

So, the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act is a massive victory for the people in my district and districts across America.

This is what happens when we have strong leadership in the White House and when House Democrats work together, because they put people first.

Madam Speaker, it is all about putting people first.

CONNECTIVITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam Speaker, earlier this year, my friend Mark Shlanta died at age 57. He had been a South Dakota telecommunications leader since 1998.

Earlier this year, my friend Greg Dean died at age 58. He had been a South Dakota telecommunications leader since 1999.

Earlier this year, my friend Rod Bowar died at age 60. He had been a

South Dakota telecommunications leader since 1976.

Earlier this year, my friend Bryan Roth died at age 59. He had been a South Dakota telecommunications leader since 1998.

Now, losing one friend, losing one industry leader, is not easy. When you lose four over the past few months, it can be almost more than their friends and family can bear.

These were real leaders. Everybody around here talks about broadband. It has been a hot topic in Congress for the last 2 years, every day—broadband, high-speed internet, broadband, connectivity.

But I tell you, Madam Speaker, those four gentlemen were involved in broadband long before it was cool and long before it was the hot topic in Washington, D.C.

Mark spent 20 years as the CEO of SDN. Originally, it was the South Dakota Network. He turned this into one of the most sophisticated State networks in the country, and he expanded it by 50,000 miles of fiber-optic cable.

For 20 years, Greg, in his work with the South Dakota Telecommunications Act, was probably the most influential person to help set rural broadband policy in the halls of the State capital.

For 30 or 40 years, Rod, in his work as the CEO of Kennebec Telephone Company, made sure that two small towns, Kennebec with 281 residents and Presheo with 472, had high-speed internet that would be the envy of the largest and most cosmopolitan urban areas in the world.

For more than 20 years as CEO of TrioTel, Bryan worked to make sure that that cooperative was the first telephone company in South Dakota, all the way back in 2013, to have 100 percent of its customers connected with fiber.

So, yes, Madam Speaker, these were titans of the rural broadband arena.

But when I think about connectivity and these gentlemen's contribution to it, I don't just think about rural broadband. I think about the connections they made with their families and their communities. It would have been hard to do more for Sioux Falls or for Scouting or for his family than Mark did. It would have been hard to do more for the Pierre community or Pierre athletics or his family than Greg did. It would have been hard to do more for his church or the outdoors or the Salem community than Bryan did. It would have been hard to do more for Kennebec or for Presheo or for the fire department or for his family than Rod did.

The contributions of these gentlemen in their communities were absolutely staggering. So, Madam Speaker, it is altogether appropriate that we focus on the contributions to rural broadband of these four titans of the industry. But I also think it is important to recognize that when they thought of connectivity and when they made a contribution to connectivity, it was about the human connection.

No one could have done more for the people and the places they loved than Mark, Greg, Rod, and Bryan did.

COMMEMORATING THE LEGACIES OF ADDIE MAE COLLINS, DENISE MCNAIR, CAROLE ROBERTSON, AND CYNTHIA MORRIS WESLEY ON THE 59TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 16TH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH BOMBING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the lives and legacies of four precious little girls—Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Morris Wesley—who died within the sacred walls of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, 59 years ago.

On September 15, 1963, as the four little girls were getting dressed in the bathroom of the church basement, preparing to sing in the choir, 19 sticks of dynamite placed under the church detonated and totally exploded, causing the interior walls to actually cave in.

The crowd of about 200 people who gathered for the 11 a.m. service evacuated the church. But the church was filled with smoke, and underneath the debris lie four little girls.

Along with the little girls who lost their lives, dozens of others were injured that day, including Sarah Collins Rudolph, the younger sister of Addie Mae Collins, who was in the basement with her sister and the other girls preparing for church that day.

Due to the violently racist nature of the attack, thousands of African Americans protested across the State of Alabama. In response, George Wallace called the police to break up the demonstrations.

The violent clashes between protesters and police resulted in massive arrests and the tragic loss of two more lives, two little boys who died that day, Johnny Robinson and Virgil Ware. The two boys, one 16 and the other 13, were killed within hours of the church bombing.

Following the attack, several people, many of whom were members of the KKK, were arrested, but none of them—none of them—were actually prosecuted until 34 years later.

Described by Dr. Martin Luther King as one of the most vicious and tragic crimes ever perpetrated against humanity, this racially motivated act of terrorism focused America's eyes on Birmingham, Alabama, bringing into sharp clarity the injustices that sparked the civil rights movement.

Although we will never replace the lives lost or injuries suffered, the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 proved that their sacrifices were not in vain.

Today, as we reflect on our painful history, we are reminded that every gain in the battle for civil rights has come at a high cost paid by those who

sacrificed everything for a vision and a dream bigger than themselves.

As a direct beneficiary of the legacy of the four little girls, I was honored that the very first bill that I passed in this body posthumously bestowed upon them the Congressional Gold Medal to ensure that this Nation will never forget their sacrifice.

I not only question where I would be today without the influence of the four little girls, but more importantly, I question where America would be today. The premature and senseless deaths of these four little girls awakened the slumbering conscience of America and galvanized the civil rights movement.

It was their memory that carried John Lewis and those brave foot soldiers, unarmed and unafraid, across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in my hometown of Selma, Alabama.

It was their sacrifice which burned in the mind of President Lyndon Johnson as he signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

It was their sacrifice that inspired a generation of freedom fighters to move this Nation closer to its highest ideals of equality and justice for all.

Madam Speaker, as we commemorate the 59th year since the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church, we, as Americans, are called upon to reflect on the legacy of the four little girls and to know them by name: Addie Mae Collins, Carole Robertson, Denise McNair, and Cynthia Morris Wesley. These four little girls and the loss of their lives have changed America forever.

The legacy of the four little girls paved the way for a more equitable and more just future. For that, we owe it to them to pick up the baton and carry it forward.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commemorating the 59th anniversary of the lives of Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Morris Wesley.

May we always remember their names: Addie Mae, Denise, Carole, and Cynthia.

REMEMBERING SANDRA DEAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Sandra Deal, a woman whose legacy as a lifelong champion of education will not soon be forgotten.

On August 23, Mrs. Deal passed away surrounded by family after a 4-year battle with cancer. Sandra was the daughter of two educators and was raised in Gainesville, Georgia. After earning both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in elementary education, she went on to teach language arts in public schools for over 15 years.

As Georgia's first lady, she made childhood literacy improvements her top priority. Through this initiative,

she visited schools in every single one of Georgia's 159 counties, spanning across 180 school districts. Across just 8 years, she read to students in nearly 1,000 classrooms, touching tens of thousands of lives. She donated copies of her memoir, "Memories of the Mansion: The Story of Georgia's Governor's Mansion," to every public library in the State.

On top of these accomplishments, she was a devoted wife of 56 years, a mother to four, and a grandmother to six. A shining example of the qualities every person strives toward, Sandra Deal's impact will be felt by many generations of Georgians.

HONORING LIEUTENANT GENERAL DONALD E. "ROSIE" ROSENBLUM

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is with a very heavy heart that I rise today to recognize and honor the life and service of a true American patriot in my district, Lieutenant General Donald E. Rosenblum.

Rosie was born on June 3, 1929, in Flushing, New York, and was raised during the Depression in Hell's Kitchen in New York.

In 1948, Rosie graduated high school and followed his older brother, Bob, to the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina. At the Citadel, Rosie was a member of the varsity baseball team and sports editor of the college paper. Upon graduation, Rosie was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army and deployed to lead an infantry platoon in the Korean war.

After Korea, Rosie was placed in command of an infantry company in the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg and served as a staff officer in Berlin, Germany, when the wall was built.

In between his tours in Vietnam, Rosie also managed to graduate from the U.S. Army War College and later served as the executive officer to the Army's director of operations at the Pentagon. It was there that he received his first of three general officer stars, and he was then transferred to Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield in Georgia.

Rosie became an institution in our community, serving on boards for the YMCA of Coastal Georgia, the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Savannah, and the Citadel Foundation.

His legacy is one of patriotism, dedication, selflessness, and love for his neighbors. My prayers reside with his family and friends during this time of sadness.

HONORING THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN PORT WENTWORTH

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the First Baptist Church of Port Wentworth and its 100-year anniversary.

Under the leadership of Reverend L.R. Watkins, the First Baptist Church in Port Wentworth has been a shining cornerstone of greater Savannah since its founding in 1922.

In the early 1950s, the church decided to purchase and install chimes within

the church steeple so that all within the community could hear the "call to worship" bells every Sunday morning. These bells became popular within the Port Wentworth community.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the church experienced tremendous growth. As the church grew larger, there was a need for an educational building for the church's youth. In 1960, a new educational wing of the church was dedicated. The 1970s also brought even more new changes to the church. The church expanded its music program and decided to build a new sanctuary. The sanctuary that was dedicated in 1973 is still being used today.

Today, the First Baptist Church in Port Wentworth is under the leadership of Reverend Paul Mongin. Reverend Mongin is continuing the legacy of the congregation's storied history.

Congratulations Port Wentworth First Baptist Church on this wonderful milestone.

□ 1030

IN LOVING MEMORY OF TERRELL COPPAGE

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in loving memory of a devoted husband, a caring father, and my wonderful father-in-law, Terrell Coppage.

On April 28, 1928, Terrell was born in Lowndes County, Georgia. His family migrated to Adel, Georgia, and Terrell attended Sparks-Adel High School.

Immediately after high school, Terrell joined the war effort, serving as a member of the United States Navy during World War II.

On August 21, 1949, Terrell met Betty Jones, his future wife of 73 years.

As a member of his community, Terrell was among the best. He was actively involved in his church, Trinity United Methodist Church, leading Sunday school and the local Boy Scout Troop 306 for many years. He spoke fondly of his trip with the Boy Scout troop to the National Boy Scout Jamboree in Washington, D.C. in 1981.

Terrell was also a member of the Okefenokee Lions Club, and was chosen as "Lion of the Year," as well as serving as house captain for many years during their "Christmas in April" event.

Keenager Choir, traveling to all 50 States, and daily walks with the "mall walkers" that ended with McDonald's biscuits were just some of the small joys that Terrell and Betty shared together.

Madam Speaker, I thank Terrell for all that he did to raise my wife, Amy, and for being the best father-in-law and grandfather anyone could ask for. We love you, and we will miss you.

MEDALS FOR WORLD WAR II VETERAN BERNARD E. STRICKLAND, M.D.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BARRAGÁN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Bernard E. Strickland, a constituent, a veteran, and a doctor. This is a long overdue recognition that he deserves for his contributions to our country and to our community.

Born on January 21, 1922, Dr. Strickland served courageously in the U.S. military during World War II from 1943 to 1946. During his service, he led a squadron of soldiers as a sergeant in the historic 761st Tank Battalion. Known as Patton's Panthers, they were the first African-American tank squad to see combat in Europe. They were not permitted to serve alongside White troops, and they were the ones who went in to liberate concentration camps.

Dr. Strickland and the rest of the battalion were crucial to advancing freedom internationally and racial equality domestically. The 761st Tank Battalion also assisted in making sure that those that were trapped—Jews that were liberated in these concentration camps—were able to get out. The things that he saw were horrific.

His son, Henry, had reached out to my office to let us know about his service and about the fact that he had not been recognized.

Today, I am proud to announce that Dr. Strickland will receive eight medals—eight awards—for his exemplary conduct, including the Good Conduct Medal; the American Campaign Medal; the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal; the World War II Victory Medal; the Army of Occupation Medal with Germany clasp; the Honorable Service Lapel Button World War II; the Expert Badge with machine gun bar; and the Sharpshooter Badge with rifle bar.

Following his honorable discharge, he continued to devote his life to helping others as a medical doctor practicing medicine for more than 25 years in California.

Madam Speaker, I thank Dr. Strickland for his tireless dedication to his country and to our community.

INFLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, the American people are facing persistent pain in their wallets and pocketbooks, with inflation in August hitting 8.3 percent, higher than expectations.

But yesterday, hours after new inflation figures revealed that price hikes are continuing to burden hardworking Americans, President Biden held an event to celebrate the signing of the deceptively-named Inflation Reduction Act into law, touting the radical legislation as a victorious success.

The Inflation Expansion Act a success? Not quite. Not even close.

Grocery costs have surged nearly 14 percent, gas rose more than 33 percent, electricity costs have increased nearly

16 percent, rent almost 7 percent, and transportation has soared 11 percent.

Republicans warned that burning through billions of dollars in order to expand the IRS by 87,000 new agents, advance Green New Deal initiatives, and deliver crushing tax hikes would only plunge our economy into deeper turmoil—worsening inflation and contributing to our ballooning national debt.

Yet, Speaker PELOSI, Senate Leader SCHUMER, and President Biden steamrolled ahead anyway—selfishly advancing their Big Government Socialist agenda that costs the American people over 1 month's pay every year. Yes, Americans are now losing a month's pay every year because of Biden inflation.

Enough is enough. Americans simply cannot afford the cost of one-party Democrat rule in Washington any longer. We must prioritize financial security and fiscal responsibility over runaway spending and reckless monetary policies in order to provide American workers, families, and small businesses, the economic relief they desperately need.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight the raging crisis that continues to plague our southern border.

Since President Biden stepped foot into the Oval Office, his failed policies and radical open border agenda have provoked an unprecedented illegal alien invasion at our southern border.

While Vice President KAMALA HARRIS, our so-called "Border Czar," comically claims that the southern border is secure, the American people know good and well that this is a blatant falsehood. But unlike our delusional Border Czar, the numbers don't lie.

Nearly 5 million illegal aliens have crossed the southern border since Biden and HARRIS took office. To make matters worse, 66 individuals on the Terrorist Screening Database have been stopped trying to illegally enter our country—this is more than double the last 5 years combined—double the last 5 years combined.

Furthermore, U.S. Customs and Border Protection has seized enough fentanyl in this fiscal year alone to kill almost 2.4 billion people—over seven times the U.S. population.

The southern border is, in fact, not secure, and the Biden administration knows it. After all, chaotic open borders have always been their plan. Unless the Biden administration abandons this sinister scheme, communities across the country will only continue to be ravaged by deadly drugs and border lawlessness.

It is simple: Americans deserve border security, not an administration actively manufacturing mayhem, advocating for mass amnesty, and emboldening dangerous cartels.

President Biden must immediately about-face on his open border agenda, commit to securing our southern bor-

der, and finally put American people first.

USDA LETTER

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to strongly oppose the Department of Agriculture's poultry line speed waiver rule.

Back in July, over 50 chicken plants that currently participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's waiver program received a notification from the Department stating that within 1 month these plants must participate in a third-party study in order to retain their line speed waivers.

In addition to granting a third-party group unlimited and unannounced access to poultry plants, the study also requires these plants to submit heaps of data and burdensome paperwork. Failure to participate in this study results in chicken plants slowing production by 25 percent, creating supply chain mayhem in the industry, and undeniably posing a serious threat to food availability.

The Biden administration's line speed waiver rule forces an ultimatum on poultry plants, burdening both consumers and workers already battling supply chain disruptions and hyperinflation, for the sake of a vague, intrusive, and unnecessary third-party study on worker safety.

Since I represent and serve the "Poultry Capital of the World," Gainesville, Georgia, I proudly led 34 of my colleagues in sending a letter to USDA Secretary Vilsack expressing grave concerns about the third-party study and urging the delay in the mandate.

Given the adverse effects this rule imposes on the industry and poultry production, Secretary Vilsack must immediately provide substantive answers to Congress about why this rule must be put in place.

Madam Speaker, I am fully committed to conducting proper congressional oversight into the USDA's line speed waiver so that we can continue to run at full capacity.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the Vice President.

300 DAYS SINCE WE SIGNED THE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Mrs. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LEE of Nevada. Madam Speaker, I rise today as this week marks 300 days since we signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act into law.

But we didn't stop there, we have accomplished so much more in the last 100 days.

For years, Washington has been all talk, no action when it comes to infrastructure. Congress after Congress, President after President, all promised to finally tackle our Nation's crumbling infrastructure. This Congress fi-

nally delivered—and delivered with bipartisan support.

It was truly a historic moment, but in the 300 days since it was signed into law—on this very floor, amidst all of the noise and divisiveness—this Congress has continued to make history.

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the most significant gun violence legislation in nearly 30 years. Now law.

The PACT Act, to provide generations of veterans and their families the care and benefits they have earned and deserve. Now law.

The CHIPS and Science Act, which will allow us to compete with China, boost our supply chains and American innovation, and bring jobs back to America. Now law.

The Inflation Reduction Act, the biggest step our country has taken to tackle climate change, while also delivering lower prices for prescription drugs and expanded access to affordable healthcare. This, too, is now law.

Nevada was ground zero for the economic devastation of this pandemic. Nevada was also ground zero for the most urgent effects of climate change, but Nevada also stands to gain the most from the Inflation Reduction Act. A record 14.5 million people—and more than 100,000 Nevadans—have signed up for coverage through the ACA marketplaces. Now, that coverage will be even more affordable with the expanded tax credits in the Inflation Reduction Act.

Medicare can finally negotiate lower drug prices, which means savings for our seniors and every single taxpayer. Not only that, the Inflation Reduction Act caps out-of-pocket costs for part D drugs and insulin for seniors and individuals with disabilities on Medicare.

All of this means better, more accessible healthcare, and more money in Nevadans' pockets. I am also incredibly proud that this bill will tackle our climate crisis and stand up for Nevada's future. The West is facing the worst drought in 12 centuries. In my district, the dire situation at Lake Mead is making headlines all over the world.

This bill will help mitigate the harmful effects of our drought by funding environmental restoration projects and investing in conservation projects to increase water levels in the Colorado River.

It is going to take all of us to fight the climate crisis. This bill supports Nevadans on the ground in their effort to save energy and save money all along the way.

Do you need to replace a stove or a refrigerator? Do you need to install solar panels or perhaps buy an electric vehicle? This bill will help you with direct rebates to buy more energy-efficient options.

Overall, Nevadan families that take advantage of the clean energy tax credits could save more than \$20,000 in a single year. All of this is fully paid for by cuts to our deficit by \$300 billion, by finally making the ultra-wealthy and big corporations finally begin to pay their fair share. Let me be clear, not

one person earning less than \$400,000 a year will pay a penny more in Federal taxes.

Madam Speaker, a lot can happen just in 300 days—from infrastructure to gun violence prevention to helping our veterans and building a stronger American economy. The Inflation Reduction Act is perhaps the biggest achievement of this Congress, and House Democrats delivered it alone.

Not one Republican voted to lower the cost of prescription drugs and insulin. Not one Republican voted to lower healthcare costs. Not one Republican voted for a fairer tax system.

Not one Republican voted to put people over their politics. The fight continues, and House Democrats will do everything in our power to deliver the results and put the American people first.

□ 1045

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today during Hispanic Heritage Month to recognize Carolina Padilla and the Intercultural Senior Center in my district.

Historically, National Hispanic Heritage Month has been a way to appreciate the contributions and influence Hispanic Americans have made to our history, culture, and achievements of the United States. I can think of no better way to recognize the achievements of Hispanic Americans in our district than by recognizing Carolina and the Intercultural Senior Center, which provides language interpretation, cultural insight, community events, as well as social workers, to better connect community members with outside resources.

Carolina, who was born in Guatemala City, immigrated to Omaha, Nebraska, in 1993 with her husband and three children. She then started her career in the United States by spending 12 years working for One World Community Health Center, a nonprofit primary healthcare facility. During her time at One World, she worked in a variety of health departments in both administrative and leadership positions.

Additionally, she worked for Catholic Charities, where she was the director of their Latina Resource Center. In this role, she worked to develop social service programs for women in need of assistance with English as their second language, as well as women facing issues of domestic violence.

During this time, Carolina realized that one segment of the population, the Latino elders, were largely overlooked and underserved. Inspired by her aging family in Guatemala and her need to serve others within her own community, Carolina founded the Intercultural Senior Center in 2009 in

the Latino neighborhood of South Omaha. The Intercultural Senior Center, however, has extended much farther than the Latino community as it now welcomes refugee communities, including Sudan, Somalia, Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Burma, as well as native English speakers.

Today, the Intercultural Senior Center is a unique place where seniors find enrichment and belonging, regardless of language, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and any other differences that too often create separation and isolation.

As Omaha's population ages and becomes more diverse, Ms. Padilla's mission and the Intercultural Senior Center will continue to embrace the elderly and bring awareness to the community about the aging population.

Congratulations again to Carolina Padilla and the Intercultural Senior Center on this amazing work you are doing within the Omaha community.

OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today during Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month to recognize women who have been diagnosed with ovarian cancer who have either survived or, unfortunately, lost their hard-fought battle. A rare but deadly disease, only about 19,880 women will receive a new diagnosis this year; but this past March, our communications director, Danielle Jensen was one of them.

The deadliest of the reproductive cancers, only 20 percent are diagnosed early in stages I or II, with a 5-year survival rate of over 93 percent. Unfortunately, the majority of cases are diagnosed in stages III or IV, and the survival rate can be as low as 30 percent.

The risk of a woman getting ovarian cancer is about 1 in 78 in her lifetime, and it is estimated that 12,810 women will lose their lives to ovarian cancer this year. Fortunately, Danielle was diagnosed at stage II and has recently completed chemotherapy.

There are several factors that can increase the risk of ovarian cancer. Age is the biggest one. Half of all ovarian cancers are found in women 63 years of age and older. Another is if a woman has never carried a pregnancy to full term or had a child after the age of 35. Hormone replacement therapy, a family history of ovarian, breast, or colorectal cancer, or a personal history of breast cancer are also risk factors.

There is no reliable screening or diagnostic test for ovarian cancer, so it is important to know the signs and symptoms, which includes back pain, bloating, frequent urination, feeling full quickly after eating, fatigue, upset stomach, heartburn, or constipation, pelvic or abdominal pain, or changes in the menstrual cycle. While these symptoms are most likely not signs of cancer, they should be of concern if they don't go away after two weeks following normal interventions such as changing diet and exercise. It is because of this that ovarian cancer is often referred to as the silent killer.

There are different treatments for ovarian cancer. Danielle had surgery and she went through six cycles of chemotherapy to kill any cancer cells that may have been left. Some women will also undergo radiation to treat it.

Finally, we are just thankful that Danielle was diagnosed early when she was and is on the path of being a survivor.

REMEMBERING THE EFFECTS OF HURRICANE IDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOWMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOWMAN. Madam Speaker, 1 year ago, the remnants of Hurricane Ida came through my district, resulting in catastrophic damage to our New York-16 community. This hurricane originated in the Gulf Coast and arrived in New York several days later, still so strong and dangerous that it led to the tragic death of several neighbors.

Among those killed were Fran and Ken Bailie, who were professors at Iona College. I stand here today in their memory, and in community with families, friends, and neighbors who lost loved ones.

Hurricane Ida brought historic levels of flooding to New York-16. The evening the storm hit was scary and chaotic. We were not collectively prepared for the amount of rain we received, and people watched with shock as their homes and neighborhoods flooded. At times in the night we got tornado warnings, followed by flood warnings, and then followed by more tornado warnings. This is not an area of the country that is used to these sorts of hurricanes, and I remember feeling terrified and confused as we all tried to stay safe.

In the days that followed, instead of a joyful return to New Rochelle High School for its students, students found themselves with a destroyed, completely destroyed library. Congregants in Bronxville were left with a flooded synagogue during Rosh Hashanah. The First Baptist Church in Mamaroneck was destroyed, and congregants are still picking up the pieces.

I visited constituents' homes and small businesses in Yonkers, Mamaroneck, Mount Vernon, Rye, and Pelham, and the sense of despair was palpable. People could not even travel to check in with loved ones because the Sawmill, Bronx River Parkway, Hutch, Sprain Brook, and Cross County Expressway were deep underwater.

Our immigrant neighbors in Mamaroneck had to reckon with the damage to their community resource center, and the Rye YMCA was left completely destroyed.

For thousands of neighbors, Hurricane Ida fundamentally changed their financial well-being and housing stability. The recovery process and trauma from that storm continues today.

In the days following, our community showed an incredible amount of

resilience. And as I reflect, these moments of hope and solidarity come to the forefront of my mind. First responders ensured everyone was safe. The Rye soccer team, Mamaroneck volleyball team, and countless others took to the streets to support our neighbors.

Teams like the Mamaroneck Tigers volunteered with the Fuller Center for Housing of Greater New York City to help members of the First Baptist Church remove pews that mothers would pray on and the hymnal books that contained songs of strength and power.

Organizations like the Red Cross and Feeding Westchester provided food to those in need. The incredible mayors, managers, councilmembers, trustees, and community leaders in the Bronx, Ardsley, Bronxville, Eastchester, Greenburgh, Hastings-on-Hudson, Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, Pelham, Pelham Manor, Rye, Scarsdale, and Tuckahoe, mobilized emergency resources to keep people safe.

We worked alongside County Executive Latimer, Bronx Borough President Diaz, Jr., and Governor Hochul to expedite damage assessments. These efforts led to President Biden declaring a state of emergency in New York and the allocation of much-needed FEMA resources. From there, we helped constituents with FEMA applications and hosted multiple visits with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to plan long-term recovery.

Let me be clear: The climate crisis is here, and it is real, and I refuse to let my district bear the brunt of inaction. We have worked to secure flood mitigation funds, advance flood prevention studies in Westchester County, and vote for the Inflation Reduction Act, which will help make our communities resilient and kick-start the clean energy revolution that we need. But more needs to be done.

As a father and former educator, I am deeply concerned about the impact that increased flooding will have on our children. That is why I introduced my Green New Deal for Public Schools to ensure our school buildings are resilient and that students can thrive.

As we mark this anniversary of Hurricane Ida, let's continue to recommit to supporting one another, to healing our communities, to confronting the climate crisis head on, and to ensuring that no one gets left behind.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF LARRY HOFF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to honor and recognize my friend and fellow Southwest Washingtonian and State Representative Larry Hoff, who is retiring at the end of this term.

Larry has been just an upstanding member of Southwest Washington's community for over 40 years. After serving in the Navy and graduating from college, Larry moved to Vancouver, where he was an executive in the financial services industry before successfully running to serve Clark County in the 18th Legislative District.

In Olympia, Larry fought hard to get things done for Southwest Washington's small businesses, for our farmers, families, and our communities. But it is really Larry's heart for serving our community that is what stands out to all of us who know him.

Whether it is his role on the board of the Doernbecher Children's Hospital Foundation, or the Clark County Department of Community Services, or the countless other stories of coming alongside his neighbors, Larry's infectious optimism and selflessness are apparent to all who meet him.

Thank you, Larry, for your many years of service and hard work to make our Evergreen State a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF BRANDON VICK

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to who honor and recognize Southwest Washingtonian and State Representative Brandon Vick, who is retiring at the end of this term.

Brandon is a lifelong resident of Southwest Washington and a rock-solid member of our community. In addition to serving in the State House of Representatives, he also gives his time to the Boy Scouts and to the Boys and Girls Club.

In Olympia, Brandon has been a champion for his home county, my home county, Clark County, for the last decade. Under his leadership on the Consumer Protection and Small Business Committee, 14 bills that he wrote and led have been signed into law, including recent legislation to help small businesses obtain work permits for rehabilitated individuals.

Brandon's work in the State Legislature has earned him many awards, including Vancouver Business Journal's "Accomplished and Under 40" list.

Thank you, Brandon, for your many years of service. I am hopeful that you are going to have more time to spend with your wonderful wife, Darci, and daughter, Makena. You have made Southwest Washington proud.

GOVERNMENTAL OVERREACH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, the Supreme Court of the United States delivered a gut punch to the body politic here in the United States with the Dobbs decision. This is the largest governmental overreach into the private lives of American citizens in the history of our lifetime. This is Big Government coming into our doctors' offices, coming into our bed-

rooms, a small group of people trying to control American citizens, make women second-class citizens. And I believe that the vast majority of the American people are absolutely exhausted and want the government out of their lives, out of our personal lives.

Justice Thomas' opinion about nullifying marriages, about getting rid of birth control, is an extreme overreach. This is a country built on freedom, and it is time for us to stand up; the exhausted majority, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, saying we want limited government, and we want it out of the private lives of American citizens, especially the women of the United States.

OPPORTUNITIES IN NATURAL GAS

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise to talk about a very important issue in this country. This country is a country that has been and was founded on the idea of freedom. This country has fed more people, clothed more people, cured more people, and liberated more people than all the other countries in the world combined. And the source of American power has always been the great American middle class which we need to have an aggressive policy to rebuild. And the strength of the American middle class has always been connected to our energy policy.

Do we have a policy in this country that will allow us to dominate the world in manufacturing, to dominate the industries of the future, to keep costs low for both business and consumers?

And so I am rising here today in support of this permitting process bill that we will be voting on here this week.

□ 1100

This is an important opportunity for us to mobilize and move the natural gas industry in places like Ohio to both reduce costs here for manufacturers and consumers and for us to export this product abroad to make sure our allies in Europe are able to get cheap natural gas so that they are not hooked on Vladimir Putin.

There is an opportunity here to sell to China, which is putting on one coal-fired power plant a week.

This is both a jobs bill; this is about putting money in people's pockets by reducing energy costs; and this is about helping our allies abroad.

The number one country to reduce CO₂ from 2005 to 2020 was the United States of America because natural gas replaced coal. If we do that around the world, we have an opportunity in the next 5 to 10 years to dramatically reduce carbon around the world and meet some of our climate change goals.

This permitting bill is acknowledging the fact that the average duration of some of these projects is 4½ years to get the permits, and 25 percent of these projects take 6 years. If you are doing a hydrogen project, 5 years and 11 Federal and State agencies.

You wonder why the average American is so frustrated or the average

businessperson is so frustrated to interface with the American Government. As a business or a consumer, for that matter, it is maddening. It is limiting our ability to create jobs here in the United States, to power the United States, and to meet our climate goals. This is a win across the board.

This permitting bill is for 42 percent of the DOE projects or for clean energy transmission or conservation. Only 15 percent is for fossil fuels. But it is all gummed up, and we can't get any progress.

This bill is an opportunity for us to provide some framework to streamline this process so that we can get moving on some of these projects so that we can dominate these industries in the future.

In my district, we have two natural gas power plants. We need more. We want to build electric vehicles, electric trucks, electric cars, electric tractors, batteries, solar panels. We want to move into hydrogen. We have so many opportunities in this country, but it is gummed up by an old, corroded government that doesn't know how to interface with business.

I am supportive of this permitting bill. I think we need to streamline this process. We need to juice up the natural gas industry, as well as the other industries in the future. This is a red, white, and blue energy policy and permitting process bill. We need to support it on both sides of the aisle.

FEDERAL RESERVE REPEATS CYCLE OF CORRUPTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. CAWTHORN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAWTHORN. Madam Speaker, what do you call a group of unelected, unethical, power-hungry bureaucrats making policy decisions? In many countries, we would call them an oligarchy. In the United States, though, we call them the Federal Reserve, which is funny because the Federal Reserve has no reserves, and they are absolutely not part of the Federal Government.

For decades now, the Federal Reserve has diluted the purchasing power of the U.S. dollar, decimated private industry, and divvied up the hard-won earnings of U.S. citizens amongst corrupt power brokers in Washington and Wall Street.

Let me be clear: Inflation is, at its root, a monetary fraud, and the Federal Reserve is the biggest counterfeiting operation in American history. This isn't a debate. At this point in our history, it is really no longer even a discussion.

Decade after decade, the Federal Reserve has repeated the same cycle of corruption and destroyed our economy in the process. The Federal Reserve buys bonds from the government, printing dollars to finance these purchases. Then they deceive us into ac-

cepting this newly printed and inflated paper as currency by making its new dollars look like real currency. This is the very essence of counterfeiting.

The Great Depression of the 1930s, the great inflation of the 1970s, the 2008 recession, and now the 2022 recession were caused in full, or in part, by the greatest currency fraud operation ever attempted, aided and abetted by this hallowed institution, and built on the broken backs and fractured families of millions of American citizens.

Madam Speaker, former President Garfield was right when he said whoever controls the volume of currency and money in any country is absolute master of all industry and commerce.

To the American people, I say that your master is not decided at the ballot box. It is not decided in public debate or open dialogue. You didn't vote for the person who controls your life. They would never let you.

Your master is the machine of Federal finance that, in the name of quantitative easing, stripped your right to property ownership away from you, turned your existence into a groveling attempt just to get by, and sucked every last drop of autonomy from the shriveled husk of what used to be a vibrant and prosperous Nation.

You didn't vote for the Chair of the Federal Reserve. You didn't vote for 9 percent inflation. But you can absolutely vote for people who are willing to destroy it and give the power back to the people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

RECOGNIZING BETHESDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievement of a very special church, Bethesda Presbyterian Church, located in Camden, South Carolina.

Bethesda Presbyterian Church was established before the American Revolutionary War. Its first sanctuary was destroyed during that war, and two more were built in 1790 and 1806. The sanctuary present today was designed by Robert Mills.

The edifice is more classical than some of his later work and is one of the few surviving ecclesiastical designs. The sanctuary, completed over 200 years ago in 1822, is the work of Mills' maturing architecture, strongly influenced by Jeffersonian classicism.

In front of the sanctuary is a monument that is dedicated to the memory of Baron DeKalb, a Continental Army soldier killed in 1780 at the Battle of Camden. In 1985, the church and the monument were declared national historic landmarks.

Bethesda Presbyterian Church's mission is: "To know, love, glorify, and

serve our Lord God." The church provides a strong sense of community, fellowship, and worship as the members walk in their faith journey during both the joyous times and challenging times. I know personally that their members experience tremendous personal and spiritual growth.

I am pleased to recognize Bethesda Presbyterian as an outstanding church faithfully serving the Camden community and proudly serving as a historic landmark in the Fifth District of South Carolina. May God continue to bless this church and its congregation.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

God, our rock and our salvation, our prayers are, once again, offered unto You on behalf of Ukraine. Many are its foes. The fearful within its borders yearn for the strength of Your justice. The adversaries who surround them are saying that You will not deliver them.

But You, O Lord, have proven to be a shield around them. You are the source of their strength, the one who lifts their heads to face their enemies.

In these seemingly never-ending days and months of conflict, in their waking and their sleeping, Lord, sustain the men and women of Ukraine. May they not give in to fear though they are continually assailed on every front. May their faith in You uphold them.

Arise, O Lord, and deliver the people of Ukraine. From You alone comes deliverance. May Your blessing be upon Your people.

In Your mighty name we pray.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the Chamber her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. DELBENE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania) laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Natural Resources:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
September 14, 2022.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: I write today to request to be removed from the House Natural Resources Committee to allow newly elected Representative Peltola from Alaska to serve on this important committee. I am confident Ms. Peltola will bring a unique and crucial perspective to the committee.

It has been an honor to serve on the Natural Resources Committee and to work on issues of vital importance to Massachusetts' citizens.

I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

LORI TRAHAN,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted. There was no objection.

RESIGNATIONS AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES AND COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignations as a member of the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Education and Labor:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2022.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: I write today to request to be removed from the House Armed Services Committee and the House Education and Labor Committee so that I can fulfill my new role as a member of the House Appropriations Committee.

It has been an honor to serve on the House Armed Services Committee and the House Education and Labor Committee during my time in Congress and I am grateful for the opportunities these committees provided to advocate for issues of vital importance to New York. I look forward to serving the people of New York in my new role on the House Appropriations Committee.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully submitted,

JOSEPH D. MORELLE,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignations are accepted.

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RECOGNIZING RICARDO MARQUES, JR.

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, today, we recognize the late Ricardo Marques, Jr., an outstanding American who passed away in July after battling cancer.

Everything that Rick did in his accomplished life was done for his family and in service to our great Nation. Rick was a marine who defended our Nation honorably prior to joining the Bureau of Prisons.

Rick spent nearly 30 years with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, working at both USP Lewisburg and FCC Allenwood in Pennsylvania's 12th Congressional District prior to retiring.

Having toured both of these facilities, it is clear that the men and women who work there are outstanding individuals. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that it takes an enormous amount of fortitude and sacrifice to do that work.

Everyone who knew Rick remembers him as a natural-born leader and as a man who left a lasting impression of love and respect on everyone he encountered. America is better off because of Rick's contributions and work.

It is my hope that Rick's family finds comfort in his legacy and lifetime of service.

U.S. MUST REGAIN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, under President Donald Trump, in 2020, America exported more petroleum than it imported for the first time since 1949. Donald Trump achieved energy independence.

However, since Biden came to office, the national average for a gallon of gasoline is over \$1.30 higher per gallon; electricity costs are 15 percent more; and at this point, Biden has leased fewer acres of offshore and Federal land for domestic oil and gas production than any President in 70 years. Also, on day one of his Presidency, Biden killed the Keystone XL pipeline, which could be supplying 800,000 barrels of oil a day from Canada to America.

Higher gas prices increase delivery costs, increasing Bidenflation, which destroys jobs.

Irresponsible decisions by Biden and the Democrats are responsible for the energy crisis.

God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years, as the global war on terrorism moves from a safe haven in Afghanistan to America. We will always cherish the service of Congresswoman Jackie Walorski. And God bless Ukraine victory.

ECONOMY IS CRATERING

(Mr. MOORE of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act is bringing fire and rain to the White House and to the American people.

Yesterday, Biden and a host of celebrities and politicians, highlighted by a James Taylor serenade, celebrated their Inflation Reduction Act even as the economy cratered in real time.

As the President spiked the football on his supposed accomplishment, the Dow tanked nearly 1,300 points and the Consumer Price Index rose to 8.3 percent.

President Biden and Speaker PELOSI have taken every opportunity to herald deficit reduction, the so-called Inflation Reduction Act, and what it would provide. But the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office just updated the score on the new law, and it is worse than we thought. The reckless government spending on the Green New Deal policies in this bill will increase our deficit spending through 2026.

This means the IRS will need to take an additional \$60 billion from middle-class Americans through increased audits to pay for this out-of-control spending.

It shouldn't surprise anyone that we are already suffering the negative effects of this spending. But Democrats are basking in the sunshine of their political accomplishment despite the economic storm it brings for the American people.

Remember: Democrats aren't just taking more money out of your wallet; they are celebrating it.

HELPING VETERANS ACCESS BENEFITS

(Mr. AGUILAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of my bill, H.R. 5916, the Wounded Warrior Access Act.

When veterans file claims to the VA, they are given what is called a c-file. My office has heard from countless numbers of veterans who have had trouble accessing these c-files through the VA's outdated and antiquated system. Our veterans need these files in order to access benefits that they have earned or appeal the VA's decisions about their claims.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, this legislation is so important. The veterans in the Inland Empire and across this country need an easy way to access

their information without jumping through these hoops. My bill is a commonsense solution that updates an antiquated system.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO and members of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for their leadership in bringing this bill to the floor, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting "aye" on H.R. 5916.

HONORING JOHN TREES

(Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Trees.

Mr. Trees lived in Springfield, Illinois, and was the loving husband to our own district office's Candice Trees. On September 28 of this year, they would have celebrated 48 years of marriage.

John was a proud veteran of the U.S. Air Force, serving during the Vietnam war. After his years of service, John went on to become a skilled laborer and accomplished carpenter.

Once retiring from the Illinois Department of Transportation, John had more time to do what he loved. Combining his love of food and serving others, John started his own catering business aptly named Two Drunks in the Dark Catering.

He truly enjoyed spending time with his wife, three daughters, and five grandchildren. Going on yearly trips to St. Louis Cardinal games or attending his grandchildren's sporting events were just a few things "Papa John" loved to do.

John would be the first to lend a hand and always had a welcoming door at his home. John was always great at providing advice and giving direction to those who needed him the most.

We honor John today, and I send my deepest condolences to Candice and the entire Trees family during this very difficult time.

FAMINE, BLACKOUTS, AND RATIONING

(Mrs. MILLER of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, by using diesel-powered equipment, nitrogen, and other fertilizers, American farmers feed our Nation and are the number one exporter of food worldwide.

My fellow farmers and I are alarmed because Joe Biden and his green bad deal team are in the process of creating a food crisis.

Radical leftists will destroy farms, especially family farms, with attacks on fertilizer and livestock. The leftists are pushing to replace the farmland we need for food with solar panels that are terrible for the environment and made in China.

Without farms, people starve. Radical leftists are causing famine, black-

outs, and rationing in other countries. We cannot let them control our food production.

□ 1215

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1347

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS: Mr. Morelle.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES: Mr. Ryan of New York, to rank immediately after Ms. Strickland.

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES: Mrs. Peltola, to rank immediately after Ms. Stansbury.

Mr. JEFFRIES (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IS CONGRESS DOING THEIR JOB

(Mr. CAWTHORN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CAWTHORN. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this institution can be synthesized into one word—"represent." But can we, as a hallowed and time-honored body truly sit here in the sacred Chamber and say with straight faces that we are fulfilling this calling?

Our woes as a Nation beset us upon every side, and this body has through inaction or, frankly, malicious action, made many crises worse. At the beginning of this Congress our border was in shambles. Can we honestly say the situation has improved even slightly?

At the start of 2021 our economy was teetering. Today the smog and dust of collapse have yet to settle. Today we are weaker domestically, and frighteningly vulnerable internationally. China rises, Russia marches, the Middle East implodes, and this body sits on its hands and names post offices.

Hear this: America cannot be saved through legislation. Men and women of virtue and value must rise to alter the very culture of our Nation. Christ, not Congress, will be what saves this country.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair

will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or if the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any recorded votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

CONSENSUS CALENDAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's designation, pursuant to clause 7(a)(1) of rule XV of H.R. 3173, as the measure on the Consensus Calendar to be considered this week.

IMPROVING SENIORS' TIMELY ACCESS TO CARE ACT OF 2022

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3173) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish requirements with respect to the use of prior authorization under Medicare Advantage plans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3173

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act of 2022".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHING REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO THE USE OF PRIOR AUTHORIZATION UNDER MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1852 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-22) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(o) PRIOR AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a Medicare Advantage plan that imposes any prior authorization requirement with respect to any applicable item or service (as defined in paragraph (5)) during a plan year, such plan shall—

“(A) beginning with the third plan year beginning after the date of the enactment of this subsection—

“(i) establish the electronic prior authorization program described in paragraph (2); and

“(ii) meet the enrollee protection standards specified pursuant to paragraph (4); and

“(B) beginning with the fourth plan year beginning after the date of the enactment of this subsection, meet the transparency requirements specified in paragraph (3).

“(2) ELECTRONIC PRIOR AUTHORIZATION PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(A), the electronic prior authorization program described in this paragraph is a program that provides for the secure electronic transmission of—

“(i) a prior authorization request from a provider of services or supplier to a Medicare Advantage plan with respect to an applicable item or service to be furnished to an individual and a response, in accordance with this paragraph, from such plan to such provider or supplier; and

“(ii) any attachment relating to such request or response.

“(B) ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION.—

“(i) EXCLUSIONS.—For purposes of this paragraph, a facsimile, a proprietary payer

portal that does not meet standards specified by the Secretary, or an electronic form shall not be treated as an electronic transmission described in subparagraph (A).

“(ii) STANDARDS.—An electronic transmission described in subparagraph (A) shall comply with—

“(I) applicable technical standards adopted by the Secretary pursuant to section 1173; and

“(II) other requirements to promote the standardization and streamlining of electronic transactions under this part specified by the Secretary.

“(iii) DEADLINE FOR SPECIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than July 1, 2023, the Secretary shall finalize requirements described in clause (ii)(II).

“(C) REAL-TIME DECISIONS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (iv), the program described in subparagraph (A) shall provide for real-time decisions (as defined by the Secretary in accordance with clause (vi)) by a Medicare Advantage plan with respect to prior authorization requests for applicable items and services identified by the Secretary pursuant to clause (ii) if such requests are submitted with all medical or other documentation required by such plan.

“(ii) IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS AND SERVICES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of clause (i), the Secretary shall identify, not later than the date on which the initial announcement described in section 1853(b)(1)(B)(i) for the third plan year beginning after the date of the enactment of this subsection is required to be announced, applicable items and services for which prior authorization requests are routinely approved.

“(II) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall consider updating the applicable items and services identified under subclause (I) based on the information described in paragraph (3)(A)(i) (if available and determined practicable to utilize by the Secretary) and any other information determined appropriate by the Secretary not less frequently than biennially. The Secretary shall announce any such update that is to apply with respect to a plan year not later than the date on which the initial announcement described in section 1853(b)(1)(B)(i) for such plan year is required to be announced.

“(iii) REQUEST FOR INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall issue a request for information for purposes of initially identifying applicable items and services under clause (ii)(I).

“(iv) EXCEPTION FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.—In the case of a prior authorization request submitted to a Medicare Advantage plan for an individual enrolled in such plan during a plan year with respect to an item or service identified by the Secretary pursuant to clause (ii) for such plan year, such plan may, in lieu of providing a real-time decision with respect to such request in accordance with clause (i), delay such decision under extenuating circumstances (as specified by the Secretary), provided that such decision is provided no later than 72 hours after receipt of such request (or, in the case that the provider of services or supplier submitting such request has indicated that such delay may seriously jeopardize such individual's life, health, or ability to regain maximum function, no later than 24 hours after receipt of such request).

“(v) DEFINITION OF REAL-TIME DECISION.—In establishing the definition of a real-time decision for purposes of clause (i), the Secretary shall take into account current medical practice, technology, health care industry standards, and other relevant information relating to how quickly a Medicare Advantage plan may provide responses with respect to prior authorization requests.

“(vi) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall use notice and comment rulemaking for each of the following:

“(I) Establishing the definition of a ‘real-time decision’ for purposes of clause (i).

“(II) Updating such definition.

“(III) Initially identifying applicable items or services pursuant to clause (ii)(I).

“(IV) Updating applicable items and services so identified as described in clause (ii)(II).

“(3) TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(B), the transparency requirements specified in this paragraph are, with respect to a Medicare Advantage plan, the following:

“(i) The plan, annually and in a manner specified by the Secretary, shall submit to the Secretary the following information:

“(I) A list of all applicable items and services that were subject to a prior authorization requirement under the plan during the previous plan year.

“(II) The percentage and number of specified requests (as defined in subparagraph (F)) approved during the previous plan year by the plan in an initial determination and the percentage and number of specified requests denied during such plan year by such plan in an initial determination (both in the aggregate and categorized by each item and service).

“(III) The percentage and number of specified requests submitted during the previous plan year that were made with respect to an item or service identified by the Secretary pursuant to paragraph (2)(C)(ii) for such plan year, and the percentage and number of such requests that were subject to an exception under paragraph (2)(C)(iv) (categorized by each item and service).

“(IV) The percentage and number of specified requests submitted during the previous plan year that were made with respect to an item or service identified by the Secretary pursuant to paragraph (2)(C)(ii) for such plan year that were approved (categorized by each item and service).

“(V) The percentage and number of specified requests that were denied during the previous plan year by the plan in an initial determination and that were subsequently appealed.

“(VI) The number of appeals of specified requests resolved during the preceding plan year, and the percentage and number of such resolved appeals that resulted in approval of the furnishing of the item or service that was the subject of such request, categorized by each applicable item and service and categorized by each level of appeal (including judicial review).

“(VII) The percentage and number of specified requests that were denied, and the percentage and number of specified requests that were approved, by the plan during the previous plan year through the utilization of decision support technology, artificial intelligence technology, machine-learning technology, clinical decision-making technology, or any other technology specified by the Secretary.

“(VIII) The average and the median amount of time (in hours) that elapsed during the previous plan year between the submission of a specified request to the plan and a determination by the plan with respect to such request for each such item and service, excluding any such requests that were not submitted with the medical or other documentation required to be submitted by the plan.

“(IX) The percentage and number of specified requests that were excluded from the calculation described in subclause (VIII) based on the plan's determination that such requests were not submitted with the med-

ical or other documentation required to be submitted by the plan.

“(X) Information on each occurrence during the previous plan year in which, during a surgical or medical procedure involving the furnishing of an applicable item or service with respect to which such plan had approved a prior authorization request, the provider of services or supplier furnishing such item or service determined that a different or additional item or service was medically necessary, including a specification of whether such plan subsequently approved the furnishing of such different or additional item or service.

“(XI) A disclosure and description of any technology described in subclause (VII) that the plan utilized during the previous plan year in making determinations with respect to specified requests.

“(XII) The number of grievances (as described in subsection (f)) received by such plan during the previous plan year that were related to a prior authorization requirement.

“(XIII) Such other information as the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(i) The plan shall provide—

“(I) to each provider or supplier who seeks to enter into a contract with such plan to furnish applicable items and services under such plan, the list described in clause (i)(I) and any policies or procedures used by the plan for making determinations with respect to prior authorization requests;

“(II) to each such provider and supplier that enters into such a contract, access to the criteria used by the plan for making such determinations and an itemization of the medical or other documentation required to be submitted by a provider or supplier with respect to such a request; and

“(III) to an enrollee of the plan, upon request, access to the criteria used by the plan for making determinations with respect to prior authorization requests for an item or service.

“(B) OPTION FOR PLAN TO PROVIDE CERTAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—As part of the information described in subparagraph (A)(i) provided to the Secretary during a plan year, a Medicare Advantage plan may elect to include information regarding the percentage and number of specified requests made with respect to an individual and an item or service that were denied by the plan during the preceding plan year in an initial determination based on such requests failing to demonstrate that such individuals met the clinical criteria established by such plan to receive such items or services.

“(C) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall, through notice and comment rulemaking, establish requirements for Medicare Advantage plans regarding the provision of—

“(i) access to criteria described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) to providers of services and suppliers in accordance with such subparagraph; and

“(ii) access to such criteria to enrollees in accordance with subparagraph (A)(ii)(III).

“(D) PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall publish information described in subparagraph (A)(i) and subparagraph (B) on a public website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Such information shall be so published on an individual plan level and may in addition be aggregated in such manner as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(E) MEDPAC REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date information is first submitted under subparagraph (A)(i), the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission shall submit to Congress a report on such information that includes a descriptive analysis of the use of prior authorization. As appropriate, the Commission should report on statistics including the frequency of appeals

and overturned decisions. The Commission shall provide recommendations, as appropriate, on any improvement that should be made to the electronic prior authorization programs of Medicare Advantage plans.

“(F) SPECIFIED REQUEST DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘specified request’ means a prior authorization request made with respect to an applicable item or service.

“(4) ENROLLEE PROTECTION STANDARDS.—For purposes of paragraph (1)(A)(ii), the Secretary shall, through notice and comment rulemaking, specify the following enrollee protection standards with respect to the use of prior authorization by Medicare Advantage plans for applicable items and services:

“(A) Adoption of transparent prior authorization programs developed in consultation with enrollees and with providers and suppliers with contracts in effect with such plans for furnishing such items and services under such plans;

“(B) Allowing for the waiver or modification of prior authorization requirements based on the performance of such providers and suppliers in demonstrating compliance with such requirements, such as adherence to evidence-based medical guidelines and other quality criteria; and

“(C) Conducting annual reviews of such items and services for which prior authorization requirements are imposed under such plans through a process that takes into account input from enrollees and from providers and suppliers with such contracts in effect and is based on consideration of prior authorization data from previous plan years and analyses of current coverage criteria.

“(5) APPLICABLE ITEM OR SERVICE.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘applicable item or service’ means, with respect to a Medicare Advantage plan, any item or service for which benefits are available under such plan, other than a covered part D drug.

“(6) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

“(A) GAO.—Not later than the end of the fourth plan year beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report containing an evaluation of the implementation of the requirements of this subsection and an analysis of issues in implementing such requirements faced by Medicare Advantage plans.

“(B) HHS.—Not later than the end of the fifth plan year beginning after the date of the enactment of this subsection, and biennially thereafter through the date that is 10 years after such date of enactment, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing a description of the information submitted under paragraph (3)(A)(i) during—

“(i) in the case of the first such report, the fourth plan year beginning after the date of the enactment of this subsection; and

“(ii) in the case of a subsequent report, the 2 plan years preceding the year of the submission of such report.”.

(b) ENSURING TIMELY RESPONSES FOR ALL PRIOR AUTHORIZATION REQUESTS SUBMITTED UNDER PART C.—Section 1852(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–22(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “and in accordance with paragraph (6)” after “paragraph (3)”;

(2) in paragraph (3)(B)(iii), by inserting “(or, subject to subsection (o), with respect to prior authorization requests submitted on or after the first day of the third plan year beginning after the date of the enactment of the Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act of 2022, not later than 24 hours)” after “72 hours”.

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) TIMEFRAME FOR RESPONSE TO PRIOR AUTHORIZATION REQUESTS.—Subject to paragraph (3) and subsection (o), in the case of an organization determination made with respect to a prior authorization request for an item or service to be furnished to an individual submitted on or after the first day of the third plan year beginning after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the organization shall notify the enrollee (and the physician involved, as appropriate) of such determination no later than 7 days (or such shorter timeframe as the Secretary may specify through notice and comment rulemaking, taking into account enrollee and stakeholder feedback) after receipt of such request.”.

SEC. 3. FUNDING.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund established under section 1817 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i) and the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund established under section 1841 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395t) (in such proportion as determined appropriate by the Secretary) to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account, of \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2022, to remain available until expended, for purposes of carrying out the amendments made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, more than 28 million seniors get healthcare through Medicare Advantage, including 600,000 in Washington State.

For these seniors and the physicians that care for them, we must deliver a quality product that allows providers to keep our seniors as healthy as possible while reducing wait times, paperwork, and hassle.

Unfortunately, the cumbersome and antiquated prior authorization process that many Medicare Advantage plans utilize often gets in the way. This involves multiple phone calls and faxing documents to insurance companies. It is 2022, and even Congress has moved beyond faxing.

The HHS Inspector General recently reported that prior authorization is responsible for delaying and even denying medically necessary care. That mirrors reports that we have heard from providers for years now.

In one case, the inspector general found that, due to prior authorization, a 76-year-old Medicare beneficiary with post-polio syndrome was denied a request for a walker.

In another case, a Washington State resident and professional fisherman had to miss this past summer’s fishing season in Alaska because his hip surgery was delayed for months.

According to the American Medical Association, one out of every four physicians report that prior authorization has led to a patient being hospitalized. Prior authorization is also a burden on providers, who spend 13 hours a week completing prior authorization paperwork, often for procedures that are approved over 95 percent of the time. That is time they could be spending with patients.

Today, the House of Representatives will take a major step forward in resolving this problem. The Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act will make commonsense changes to prior authorization to ensure our seniors are getting the care they need when they need it.

First, the bill would require all plans to use an electronic prior authorization system. That means no more phone calls, no more faxes, and no more wondering what information is needed to submit to insurance plans when requesting prior authorization.

Second, we establish a process for real-time decisionmaking. It doesn’t make sense that services in line with standard clinical practice guidelines or services that are approved more than 95 percent of the time are subject to prior authorization.

We also know that delayed approvals can result in patients falling through the cracks and missing out on care. Real-time decisions will help stop that.

Finally, this bill requires reporting on the number of prior authorization requests, the rates of approvals and denials, and the rates of successful appeals to increase transparency.

Collectively, this bill will help providers spend more time with patients and less time with paperwork.

Today’s vote and the teamwork that brought this legislation to this moment is a bipartisan success story that shows that Congress can come together and put the needs of the American people before the gridlock that we all know too well.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MIKE KELLY, our Republican lead, for his tireless work on this for years, also our co-leads, Dr. AMI BERA and LARRY BUCSHON, as well as Senator ROGER MARSHALL, who worked with us when he was in the House in the 116th Congress and has continued this effort in the Senate.

I thank the over 300 of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have cosponsored this bill. The support for this legislation has been overwhelming and it has been endorsed by over 500 healthcare organizations.

I particularly thank the Regulatory Relief Coalition and the American Medical Association that helped develop a quality bill and build support for it.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a list of endorsements and the letters

of support from the Regulatory Relief Coalition and the American Medical Association.

THE IMPROVING SENIORS' TIMELY ACCESS TO CARE ACT OF 2021 (S. 3018/H.R. 3173)

List of 500 Supporting Organizations (as of 7/6/2022)

NATIONAL SUPPORTERS

2020 Mom, ACCSES, Academy of Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry, Accuray, Inc., Advamed, Aimed Alliance, ALK Positive, Inc., Alliance for Aging Research, Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy, Alliance for Patient Access, Alliance of Specialty Medicine, ALS Association, Alzheimer's Association and Alzheimer's Impact movement, America's Physician Groups, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, American Academy of Dermatology Association, American Academy of Emergency Medicine, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, American Academy of Neurology, American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Academy of Otolaryngic Allergy, American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery, American Academy of PAs.

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, American Academy of Sleep Medicine, American Association for Hand Surgery, American Association for Homecare, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus, American Association for Physician Leadership, American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work, American Association of Clinical Endocrinology, American Association of Clinical Urologists, American Association of Neurological Surgeons, American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine, American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons, American Association on Health and Disability, American Clinical Laboratory Association, American Clinical Neurophysiology Society, American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, American College of Cardiology, American College of Emergency Physicians, American College of Gastroenterology, American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics, American College of Mohs Surgery, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

American College of Osteopathic Internists, American College of Osteopathic Surgeons, American College of Physicians, American College of Radiation Oncology, American College of Radiology, American College of Rheumatology, American College of Surgeons, American Counseling Association, American Epilepsy Society, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American Gastroenterological Association, American Geriatrics Society, American Glaucoma Society, American Group Psychotherapy Association, American Health Information Management Association, American Hospital Association, American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine, American Medical Association, American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association, American Medical Women's Association, American Mental Health Counselors Association, American Nurses Association, American Occupational Therapy Association, American Optometric Association, American Osteopathic Association, American Osteopathic College of Ophthalmology, American Physical Therapy Association, American Psychiatric Association, American Psychiatric Nurses Association, American Psychoanalytic Association, American Psychological Association, Amer-

ican Society for Clinical Pathology, American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy.

American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery, American Society for Radiation Oncology, American Society of Anesthesiologists, American Society of Breast Surgeons, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, American Society of Dermatopathology, American Society of Echocardiography, American Society of Hematology, American Society of Neuroradiology, American Society of Nuclear Cardiology, The American Society of Pain and Neuroscience, American Society of Plastic Surgeons, American Society of Retina Specialists, American Society of Transplant Surgeons, American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), American Society of Echocardiography, American Therapeutic Recreation Association, American Urogynecologic Society, American Urological Association, American Vein & Lymphatic Society, American Venous Forum, America's Essential Hospitals, Anxiety and Depression Association of America, Arthritis Foundation, Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare, Association for Clinical Oncology, Association of Academic Physiatrists, Association of Black Cardiologists, Association of Community Cancer Centers, Association of Freestanding Radiation Oncology Centers, Association of Mature American Citizens, Association of Rehabilitation Nurses, Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology.

Association of Women in Rheumatology, Better Medicare Alliance, Beyond Type 1, Boston Scientific, Brain Injury Association of America, Bridge the Gap—SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation, Cancer Support Community, CancerCare, Case Management Society of America, CHAMP—Coalition for Headache and Migraine Patients, Change Healthcare, Child Neurology Society, Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Chris CJ Johnson Foundation Inc., Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, Chronic Care Policy Alliance, Clinical Social Work Association, Coalition of Long-Term Acute-Care Hospitals, Cohere Health, College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists, Community Liver Alliance, Community Oncology Alliance, Congress of Clinical Rheumatology, Congress of Neurological Surgeons, Consortium of Multiple Sclerosis Centers, Continuum Therapy Partners, Cooley's Anemia Foundation, Cornea Society, Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance, Diabetes Leadership Council, Diabetes Patient Advocacy Coalition.

Driven To Cure, Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action, Endocrine Society, Epic Systems, Epilepsy Foundation, Eye Bank Association of America, Falling Forward Foundation, Federation of American Hospitals, Ferrell Foundation, Free2Care, Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, Global Healthy Living Foundation, Global Liver Institute, GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer, The Headache and Migraine Policy Forum, Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, HealthPRO-Heritage, Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association, Hyperemesis Education and Research Foundation, International Essential Tremor Foundation, International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis, International OCD Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, Judy Nicholson Kidney Cancer Foundation, KCCure (Kidney Cancer Research Alliance), The Kennedy Forum, Kidney Cancer Association, KidneyCAN, Lakeshore Foundation, LeadingAge, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance, Medical Device Manufacturers Associa-

tion, Medical Group Management Association, Medical Oncology Association of Southern California, Mental Health America, The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, Multiple Sclerosis Association of America, NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, National Alliance of Safety-Net Hospitals, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association for Behavioral Healthcare, National Association for Children's Behavioral Health, National Association for Home Care & Hospice, National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics, National Association for the Support of Long Term Care, National Association of ACOs, National Association of Epilepsy Centers, National Association of Rehab Providers & Agencies, National Association of Social Workers, National Association of Spine Specialists, National Association of State Head Injury Administrators, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, National Community Pharmacists Association, National Comprehensive Cancer Network, National Council for Mental Wellbeing, National Disability Rights Network, National Eating Disorders Association, National Federation of Families, National Hispanic Medical Association.

National Kidney Foundation, National League for Nursing, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, National Osteoporosis Foundation, National Patient Advocate Foundation, National Register of Health Service Psychologists, NHMH—No Health without Mental Health, Nomi Health, North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society, OCHIN, Outpatient Ophthalmic Surgery Society, Pacific Spine & Pain Society, Partnership for Quality Home Healthcare, Patients Rising, Patients Rising Now, Physician Hospitals of America, Physicians Advocacy Institute, Postpartum Support International, Premier, Private Practice Section (PPS) of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), Prostate Network, Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation, R.M.C. Inc., REDC Consortium, Regulatory Relief Coalition, Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA), Remote Cardiac Services Providers Group, Renal Physicians Association, RetireSafe, SMART Recovery, Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions, Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance, Society for Vascular Surgery.

Society of Cardiovascular Computed Tomography, Society of Gynecologic Oncology, Society of Hospital Medicine, Society of Interventional Radiology, The Society of Thoracic Surgeons, Spina Bifida Association, Spine Intervention Society, Susan G. Komen, Sterling Vision, Tourette Association of America, Treatment Communities of America, Triage Cancer, VHL Alliance, ZERO—The End of Prostate Cancer.

STATE SUPPORTERS

Medical Association of the State of Alabama, Alabama Academy of Ophthalmology, Alabama Association of Health Information Management, Alabama Cancer Congress, Alabama Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Alabama Society for the Rheumatic Diseases, Alaska Chapter, American College of Surgeons, The Arizona Clinical Oncology Society, Arizona Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Arizona Health Information Management Association, Arizona Neurosurgical Society, Arkansas Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Arkansas Medical Society, Arkansas Ophthalmological Society, Arkansas Orthopaedic Society, Arkansas Rheumatology Association, Association of Northern California Oncologists, Brooklyn-Long Island Chapter, American College of Surgeons, California Medical Association, California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, California Association of

Neurological Surgeons, Medical Oncology Association of Southern California, Inc., Centura Health.

Colorado Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Colorado Medical Society, Colorado Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons, Community Care Network of Kansas, Connecticut Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Connecticut Oncology Association, Connecticut State Medical Society, Medical Society of Delaware, Delaware Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Delaware Society for Clinical Oncology, Medical Society of the District of Columbia, Denali Oncology Group, DHR Health, Eastern Long Island Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Empire State Hematology and Oncology Society, Florida Medical Association, Florida Academy of Family Physicians, Florida Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Florida Health Information Management Association, Florida Neurosurgical Society, Florida Society of Clinical Oncology, The Florida Society of Neurology, Florida Society of Ophthalmology, Medical Association of Georgia, Georgia Neurological Society, Georgia Society of Clinical Oncology, Georgia Society of Ophthalmology.

Georgia Society of the American College of Surgeons, Guam Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Hawaii Medical Association, Hawaii Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Hawaii Society of Clinical Oncology, Idaho Medical Association, Idaho Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Illinois State Medical Society, Illinois Academy of Family Physicians, Illinois Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Illinois Medical Oncology Society, Illinois State Neurosurgical Society, Indiana State Medical Association, Indiana Academy of Ophthalmology, Indiana Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Indiana Neurological Society, Indiana Oncology Society, Iowa Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Iowa Medical Society, Iowa Oncology Society, Jacksonville Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Kansas Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Kansas Health Information Management Association, Kansas Hospital Association, Kansas Medical Society, Kansas Radiological Society, Kansas Society of Clinical Oncology.

Kentucky Medical Association, Kentucky Academy of Eye Physicians & Surgeons, Kentucky Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Kentucky Society of Clinical Oncology, Keystone Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Lake Plains Medical PLLC, Life Sciences Pennsylvania, Louisiana State Medical Society, Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians, Louisiana Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Louisiana Oncology Society, Maine Medical Association, Maine Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Maine Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, Maryland Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Maryland Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, Maryland/DC Society of Clinical Oncology, Massachusetts Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Massachusetts Health Information Management Association (MaHIMA), Massachusetts Medical Society, Massachusetts Society of Clinical Oncologists, Massachusetts Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons, MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, Metropolitan Chicago Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapter, American College of Surgeons.

Metropolitan Washington DC Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Michigan Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Michigan Society of Hematology and Oncology, Michigan State Medical Society, Midwest Association for Medical Equipment Services & Supplies, Midwest Rheumatology Association, Minnesota Medical Association, Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology, Min-

nesota Health Information Management Association, Minnesota Society of Clinical Oncology, Minnesota Surgical Society—a Chapter of the ACS, American College of Surgeons, Mississippi State Medical Association, Mississippi Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Mississippi Oncology Society, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Academy of Family Physicians, Missouri Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Missouri Oncology Society, Montana Medical Association, Montana Academy of Family Physicians, Montana and Wyoming Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Montana State Oncology Society, MSARS, Nebraska Medical Association, Nebraska Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, Nebraska Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Nebraska Neurological Society.

Nebraska Oncology Society, Neurosurgical Society of the Virginias, Nevada State Medical Association, Nevada Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Nevada Health Information Management Association, Nevada Oncology Society, New Hampshire Medical Society, New Hampshire Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Medical Society of New Jersey, New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology, New Jersey Chapter, American College of Surgeons, New Jersey Health Information Management Association, Medical Oncology Society of New Jersey, New Mexico Chapter, American College of Surgeons, New Mexico Medical Society, New Mexico Society of Clinical Oncology, Medical Society of the State of New York, New York Chapter, American College of Surgeons, New York State Academy of Family Physicians, New York State Neurosurgical Society, New York State Ophthalmological Society, North Carolina Chapter, American College of Surgeons, North Carolina Medical Society, North Carolina Oncology Association, North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, North Dakota Medical Association, North Dakota Chapter, American College of Surgeons.

North Texas Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Northern California Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society, Northwestern Pennsylvania Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Ohio State Medical Association, Ohio Academy of Family Physicians, Ohio Association of Rheumatology, Ohio Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Ohio Health Information Management Association, Ohio Hematology Oncology Society, Oklahoma State Medical Association, Oklahoma Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Oklahoma Society of Clinical Oncology, Oregon Medical Association, Oregon Academy of Family Physicians, Oregon Academy of Ophthalmology, Oregon Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Oregon Society of Medical Oncology, Pennsylvania Medical Society, Pennsylvania Academy of Ophthalmology, Pennsylvania Chapter of the American College of Cardiology, Pennsylvania Medical Society, Pennsylvania Neurosurgical Society, Pennsylvania Rheumatology Society, Pennsylvania Society of Oncology & Hematology, The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania, PHIMA.

Prodigy Rehabilitation Group, Inc., PT Northwest, Puerto Rico Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Puerto Rico Hematology and Medical Oncology Association, Rhode Island Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Rhode Island Health Information Management Association, Rhode Island Medical Society, Rhode Island Neurological Society, Rocky Mountain Oncology Society, San Diego Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Society of Utah Medical Oncologists, South Carolina Chapter, American College of Surgeons, South Carolina Oncology Society,

South Dakota Academy of Ophthalmology, South Dakota Chapter, American College of Surgeons, South Florida Chapter, American College of Surgeons, South Texas Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Southern California Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Southwest Missouri Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Southwestern Pennsylvania Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Tennessee Medical Association, Tennessee Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Tennessee Oncology Practice Society, Texas Medical Association, Texas Academy of Family Physicians.

Texas Hospital Association, Texas Ophthalmological Association, Texas Society of Clinical Oncology, Transitional Care Management, Utah Medical Association, Utah Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Utah Ophthalmology Society, Vermont Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Vermont Medical Society, Medical Society of Virginia, Virginia Association of Hematologist & Oncologist, Virginia Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Virginia Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, Washington D.C. Metropolitan Ophthalmological Society, Washington State Medical Association, Washington Academy of Eye Physicians & Surgeons, Washington Academy of Family Physicians, Washington Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Washington State Association of Neurological Surgeons.

Washington Rheumatology Alliance, Washington State Medical Oncology Society, West Virginia Chapter, American College of Surgeons, West Virginia Oncology Society, West Virginia Orthopaedic Society, Western New York Chapter, American College of Surgeons, Wisconsin Medical Society, Wisconsin Academy of Ophthalmology, Wisconsin Association of Hematology & Oncology, Wisconsin Health Information Management Association, Wisconsin Hospital Association, Wisconsin Neurological Society, Wisconsin Rheumatology Association, Wisconsin Surgical Society—a Chapter of the ACS, The Woman's Group, Wyoming Medical Society, Wyoming State Oncology Society.

REGULATORY RELIEF COALITION, September 12, 2022.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Republican Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER MCCARTHY: Members of the Regulatory Relief Coalition (RRC)—a group of national physician specialty organizations advocating for reduced regulatory burdens that interfere with patient care—thank you for scheduling a House floor vote on the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act on September 14, 2022.

This bipartisan bill is supported by more than 310 House co-sponsors and over 500 endorsing organizations representing patients, health care providers, medical technology and biopharmaceutical industry, health plans and others. The RRC's goal is to ensure that bureaucratic hurdles do not stand in the way of physicians providing medically necessary patient care.

The Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act would improve prior authorization in the Medicare Advantage (MA) program by:

Establishing an electronic prior authorization (ePA) program;

Standardizing and streamlining the prior authorization process for routinely approved services, including establishing a list of services eligible for real-time prior authorization decisions;

Ensuring prior authorization requests are reviewed by qualified medical personnel; and

Increasing transparency on MA prior authorization requirements and their use.

The RRC, which served as a lead stakeholder and key negotiator of the legislation, especially appreciates the tireless work of Reps. Suzan DelBene (D-WA), Mike Kelly (R-PA), Ami Bera, MD (D-CA) and Larry Bucshon, MD (R-IN) for their efforts leading up to this vote.

We urge the House to vote in favor of this critical legislation.

If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Tighe.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

The Regulatory Relief Coalition, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Neurology, American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, American Association of Neurological Surgeons, American College of Cardiology, American College of Rheumatology, American College of Surgeons, American Gastroenterological Association, American Osteopathic Association, Association For Clinical Oncology, Congress of Neurological Surgeons, Medical Group Management Association, National Association of Spine Specialists, Society for Cardiovascular Angiography & Interventions.

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,
September 13, 2022.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND RANKING MEMBER MCCARTHY: On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I write in strong support of H.R. 3173, the “Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act of 2022.” This legislation, as originally introduced, garnered more than 300 bipartisan House cosponsors and the support of approximately 500 physician, hospital, patient, and insurer organizations. We greatly appreciate the House of Representatives scheduling a vote on this bipartisan legislation, which was favorably reported out of the Ways and Means Committee in July, and strongly urge swift passage to help streamline, simplify, and standardize prior authorization processes within Medicare Advantage (MA) plans.

Prior authorization, which is the practice by insurance companies of reviewing and potentially denying medical services and pharmaceuticals prior to treatment, remains a principal frustration for patients and physicians. This utilization management policy is overused, costly, opaque, burdensome to physicians, and harmful to patients due to delays in care.

AMA data compiled from annual surveys of more than 1,000 practicing physicians continue to illustrate the negative impact of prior authorization policies. In fact, 34 percent of physicians who participated in a 2021 AMA survey reported that prior authorization led to a serious adverse event, such as hospitalization, disability, permanent bodily damage, or even death, for a patient in their care. The 2021 survey also highlights that 93 percent of physicians reported care delays associated with prior authorization, while 82 percent of respondents cited that these requirements can at least sometimes lead to patients abandoning treatments.

In addition, research from the federal government demonstrates that prior authorization leads to delays in patient care and inappropriate denials of medically necessary services. A 2018 report from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office

of Inspector General (OIG) concluded that, between 2014 and 2016, MA plans overturned 75 percent of their own prior authorization and payment denials when appealed by providers and beneficiaries. An April 2022 HHS OIG report also found that 13 percent of prior authorization requests denied by MA plans met Medicare coverage rules, and 18 percent of payment request denials met Medicare and MA billing rules.

We commend the House of Representatives for working in a bipartisan fashion to develop an amended version of the Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act. The modified legislation retains the crux of the original bill, the “Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act of 2021,” including mandating that MA plans implement electronic prior authorization programs that adhere to new standards adopted by the federal government. This will help ensure that physicians are no longer forced to resort to faxes and e-forms, or even disparate, proprietary portals that fail to comply with these newly developed standards, when seeking to complete prior authorization requests. In addition, the provisions requiring robust data reporting, such as the number and percentage of prior authorization requests approved, denied, or approved upon appeal, will bring much needed transparency to ensure MA prior authorization programs are not inappropriately denying medically necessary care to patients and overburdening physicians with unnecessary requirements.

Most importantly, the additional sections of the legislation mandating MA plans to issue faster prior authorization decisions are crucial policy improvements that will ensure more timely access to care and, as a result, improve patient health care outcomes and better stewardship of scarce Medicare resources. The AMA supports the requirements for health plans to provide real-time prior authorization decisions for routinely approved services, as defined in implementing regulations. We also appreciate that the bill directs MA plans unable to meet the real-time processing requirement in the event of “extenuating circumstances” to issue final prior authorization decisions within a 72-hour and 24-hour timeline for regular and emergent services, respectively. Notably, the legislation requires MA plans to report the number of prior authorizations subject to this exception, providing the transparency needed to deter abuse of this provision.

In addition, we sincerely appreciate the inclusion of provisions pertaining to more timely prior authorization decisions for all other services within Medicare Part C. Requiring MA plans to issue final decisions within 24 hours for emergent services and no later than seven days after receipt of regular prior authorization requests is a vast improvement over current MA program practices. The expedited timelines for MA plans to issue final prior authorization decisions, both for routinely approved care and all other services, will undoubtedly lessen the burden on physicians, and, most significantly, ensure timely patient care and improved health outcomes.

The AMA is proud to support the Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act. We commend the House of Representatives for voting on this legislation and stand ready to work to ensure bipartisan passage by the Senate.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. MADARA, MD.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I also thank the staff from the personal offices and from the committee and leadership offices that have spent countless hours researching this issue and working with stakeholders to develop this legislation.

In particular, I thank my former legislative director, Kyle Hill, who was truly integral in developing and advancing this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative DELBENE for being with me today.

We are really proud of this bill because it has taken a lot of time to get there, and it has taken so many people on both sides of the aisle looking at it and saying this is something that just makes sense.

The purpose of the Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act is very simple: it is to protect our seniors. They deserve fast, high-quality care when they see their doctor, not bureaucratic paperwork and delays. Unfortunately, our current prior authorization system often produces just that.

My office has heard countless stories of Pennsylvanians being affected by having their care delayed due to prior authorizations. One ophthalmology practice reported that they had problems getting both of a patients’ eyes authorized for a basic operation because the system rejected the second eye as a duplicate.

At the University of Pittsburgh’s Department of Neurosurgery, doctors can perform an advanced surgery with a Gamma Knife to control brain tumors. In many cases, these operations give patients life and more time. The problem is that it takes prior authorization, and care is delayed for way, way too long costing patients’ valuable time.

As a result, patients lose confidence in the medical system, and they also begin to lose hope. That is why we are here today, to move the prior authorization process into the 21st century and give doctors and health insurance plans the tools they need to make these decisions more quickly.

The current system allows insurance plans to take weeks to review prior authorization requests, leaving patients waiting. The process is often manual, requiring fax machines, phone calls, and paper submissions, meaning doctors cannot easily appeal these decisions.

The Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act requires prior authorization decisions to be done faster, helping seniors get care more quickly. Most routinely approved prior authorization items and services will receive a real-time electronic response.

For nonroutinely approved items, doctors and patients will have clear expectations of how long they are going to need to wait for a response, allowing them to better coordinate their care.

Additionally, health insurance plans must begin to disclose data on how many prior authorizations they approve or deny, along with an analysis of how they made that decision.

Truthfully, I have seen many similar situations in the business I have been in my whole life. I am an automobile dealer, and when we are working on an owner's car under warranty, too often it is a negotiation with a manufacturer on what repairs we are able to do.

The manufacturer does their own time studies on how long they think it should take and what they think should be repaired. But oftentimes those time studies are on a brand new car or truck just off the assembly line. As we all know, living in western Pennsylvania, we have a lot of steep hills, and we go through really rough winters where there are a lot of things put on the road—salt and whatever else—that can corrode different parts once they are in operation.

It is the same story with insurance companies when we are doing covered auto body work. We have to give the insurance company the estimates before we ever touch a car or truck, and then continuously negotiate with them as we get into the tear-down of the vehicle and find other damage. We have to go back and get authorization to do that, and that holds up the process.

As much as people say, now, wait, wait, wait, don't compare cars and trucks and that warranty work to patients. You know what? It is the same thing. It is the same thing. You are denied access to care that you need today, not tomorrow, not some time in the future. There is no reason why you should have to wait for it, not in today's world, and not with the way we are able to improve all of this.

I know when I talked to Dr. BERA or Dr. BUCSHON and especially with Ms. DELBENE, we think: Why in the world are we working on old ways of getting answers as opposed to being able to get them today and get them more quickly?

I just think what we are doing makes sense. I would rely more on a technician who has expert experience than somebody who does time studies on something that isn't actually the duplicate of what we are looking to do.

This whole thing is about protecting our seniors, the people who have done the most for this generation and previous generations, who have really put their shoulders to the wheel and have never ever complained and always done what they think is best.

Why in the world would we make it harder for them to get the healthcare they deserve? Why? That makes absolutely no sense to any of us. This is not a red concern or a blue concern. It is all about red, white, and blue. It is about Americans. It is not Republicans or Democrats or Libertarians or anything else. It is about this body's obligation to come together on issues that are really critical.

There never should be this type of work that we have had to go through to get this done. And then all of a sudden last night, by the way, the CBO decided after 11 months to weigh in on how we would score this legislation.

They waited until the 11th hour, and right after the 11th hour they pulled back what they had said they thought the cost was going to be.

I don't know how anybody runs a business like that.

I know if I give somebody an estimate or tell somebody something is going to be done at a certain time—and I know we make commitments to all of the people we represent, give them the right answer in the right time. Why make them wait for something that is so basic?

I know we always have this concern about fraud, waste, and abuse. My complaint really comes down to service. We can complain about a lot of things, but we cannot complain about what we owe our seniors.

We wrote and rewrote this bill over the course of the last several years to ensure it was as strong as possible, using everything that is available to us today to implement, to get answers quicker, not longer, not put people off, not tell them to wait in the waiting room, not tell them to stay on hold, but to get them an answer and get them the care that they need today.

□ 1230

Feedback is important. Honesty is more important. I know Ms. DELBENE and Dr. BERA and Dr. BUCSHON and so many of our colleagues agree the same way, and all the staff members that you mentioned.

This is not something that just happened very quickly and on the back of an envelope. This is something that a great deal of concern went into, a great deal of care went into, and a great deal of looking into went into.

So I am going to thank my colleagues, and I am going to ask everybody today, when this comes up for a vote, please vote for seniors. Please vote for all of those who have done so much for all of us. And take this opportunity to thank them in a way that really makes sense and, that is, by saying, you have played the game well; you have played the game long. You have done so much for all of us. Why don't we do something for all of you?

So I thank my colleague—it has been great—and all our colleagues for getting on board on this. It has been a really good example of how, when we actually work together on good policy and don't worry about the politics of it, amazing, amazing what can get done for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU), my colleague on the Ways and Means Committee, another leader of this legislation.

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of my colleague, Representative DELBENE's bill, the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act. I have heard from countless patients in my southern California district whose care has been delayed for

weeks and, in some cases, outright denied because of countless barriers and archaic approval methods. And I have heard directly from physicians who are at their wits end, unable to provide the care they know will help their patients because of endless red tape.

The Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act makes thoughtful and much-needed improvements to the Medicare system to correct these problems. The bill before us today will promote modernization of the prior authorization system to speed up approvals of routine procedures.

It moves the system of prior authorization into the 21st century, away from fax machines and toward electronic approval methods. By shortening the window by which insurance plans must respond to a prior authorization request, the bill will ensure patients get the care they need when they need it.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment also to thank the Regulatory Relief Coalition because they have been working hand in hand with us trying to contact as many members as they can. And today is an example of when we work together, what we can get done.

Mr. Speaker, I present one of the doctors in our Doctors Caucus from North Carolina, Dr. MURPHY, to give his actually on-the-job, on-the-field experience of what it is like to try to work through this massive group of—I don't know what you call these people. They are hard to work with and they don't represent us. They do represent something else. I think we need to represent just our folks back home.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives DELBENE and KELLY for putting forth the timely Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to explain to the public what pre-authorization means. I am a practicing physician, so if I order a test, I recommend a surgery, it then goes into a bucket at an insurance agency, and then we play the great waiting game. The patient is no longer in the office because we have no idea how long that waiting game is. It was put in and accepted for what I believe was a good cause. But as with many government programs, or institutions, or institutions of our bureaucracy in the private sector even, it is something that has gone bad and gone terribly wrong.

I may be waiting 2 or 3 or 4 weeks to speak with somebody who is not my peer. I am a surgeon. I may be speaking with a pediatrician or, even more, I might be speaking with a nurse practitioner who has no experience whatsoever in my field of study to get their approval of something that I know needs to happen. It is an absolutely antiquated system that does not work.

I am going to give you a couple of examples. Approximately 10 weeks ago, I saw a prostate cancer patient. There were two avenues to go on this: Either he needed to be operated on very quickly, or the cat was out of the bag, and he needed intensive chemotherapy quickly.

A week goes by, 2 weeks go by. What is that patient doing at home? He hasn't slept one wink because his entire future, his entire life, is then suspended in front of him.

It took 3 weeks, 3 weeks to get the study that every urologist in the country knew was necessary to get that answer. Yet, in the meantime, that patient has lost years, just in life as far as worry.

A second; one of my partners did a very complicated surgery on a patient. The patient was a bad diabetic; came in a week or two later with a wound infection. Fine, come in, get some intensive IV antibiotics. Try to get the patient out of the hospital because we know it is good to get patients out of the hospital when they don't need to be in the hospital.

He needed a certain oral antibiotic that was prescribed for him. It was denied. It was denied. It was denied. A week and a half later, he shows up in my office as an emergency. I have to send him over somewhat late in the afternoon, so that means he gets on the OR schedule at 10:00, 11:00, or 2 a.m., and has to have an abscess drained. And then he is in the hospital now another 2 weeks because he didn't get that antibiotic prescribed to him when he should have because it was denied, his authorization.

Mr. Speaker, I know the CBO score came in. I don't believe it. I have lived and breathed this for 30-plus years. I don't believe it. It doesn't pass the smell test. To come up at the last minute with this score, in my opinion, is erroneous and needs to be looked at again, because I look at the savings that we, as physicians, provide in knowing what is right for our patients in the moment versus some bureaucrat in an insurance company who is given the directive to deny, deny, deny, is not what we should be doing in medicine. Our medical system has become bankrupt and these pre-authorizations are part of it.

So I have a hard time going along with the CBO score of \$16 billion because I don't believe it. This is what is right for patients. This is decades past the time when this should have been done.

I look at the doctors that I have worked with, and we are just plagued in clinic, because we know what we are going to recommend for our patients after years of study and work with patients is going to be possibly denied by someone who has no experience who has been told by insurance companies, deny, deny, and deny until they wear out the doctor and wear out the patient.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is a travesty, I believe, to not pass this bill. I also do

not believe the CBO score, and I think it is a great injustice for our patients to be denied care because of this antiquated pre-authorization system.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, it is so important that we work with experts in the medical community to develop strong legislation, and we are incredibly fortunate to have as one of our co-leads on this bill one of our doctors in Congress, so I want to thank him for all of his incredible work getting us to where we are today.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA).

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I want to first thank my colleague from the great State of Washington, Ms. DELBENE, as well as my good friend from Pennsylvania, Mr. KELLY, as well as my fellow doctor, Dr. BUCSHON.

This was how legislative processes should work. You identify a challenge, you work on it, you work on it in a bipartisan way. But you put the American patient first because that is what this is about at the end of the day. How do we give efficient, quality care to America's patients, and, in this case, America's seniors.

I have been practicing medicine going back to 1995. And yeah, I have used a fax machine back in 1995. This is about coming into the 21st century, modernizing the practice of medicine.

It is also about letting us do what we went to medical school for, what we did residency for. After 4 years of undergrad, 4 years of medical school, anywhere from 3 to 7 years and longer of residency training, doctors want to be doctors. They want to take care of their patients.

Yes, there is a role for prior authorization in limited cases. There is also a role to go back and retrospectively look at how care is being delivered. But what is happening today is a travesty. It wasn't the intention of prior authorization. It is a prior authorization process gone awry. And let me give you some examples.

When I talk to my former colleagues, the folks I went to medical school with, they spend up to 40 percent of their time on paperwork, on administrative burden, on doing things that don't enhance clinical care or enhance their ability to take care of patients.

We heard Dr. MURPHY talk about the delays in care. That adds costs, that adds time, and in some cases, it occasionally will potentially kill a patient. That isn't what this is about.

This is about providing America's seniors efficient care, reducing the burden, and allowing doctors to do what we went to medical school for, take care of patients.

Let's bring this into the 21st century, and let's start to put the patient central in American healthcare. And that is how we are going to actually lower costs of care, deliver better outcomes, and improve satisfaction.

We see a lot of doctors leaving the practice of medicine because of that administrative burden, the hassle fac-

tor. That doesn't improve care. That actually makes care worse.

So let's move into the 21st century. Let's deliver that care, and let's move forward.

This is a shining example of how Congress should work. If you think about it, 320-plus Members of Congress, in a bipartisan way, of the House, support this legislation. All of the doctors in Congress support this legislation. You have got Senate support of this legislation. Over 500 groups of my colleagues support this legislation. It is about good medicine. It is about taking care of the patients.

I also want to recognize my prior senior healthcare legislative assistant, Colleen Nguyen, who worked incredibly hard on this, as well as my current healthcare legislative assistant, Harsh Patel. As Congresswoman DELBENE pointed out, it is the staff that makes us look good.

Everybody should vote for this, and we should pass it unanimously.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I know Dr. BERA is leaving the floor right now.

So often, when I am home and I am here, we always pick winners and losers and, somehow, that becomes the main objective of who won, who lost. So we are worried today about the score. It doesn't matter on the score because everybody wins on this. There is no loser on this.

And if we can't look to the people who have supported us our whole lives and have created opportunities that exist in this country on their backs, what in the world are we doing here?

Well, I can't tell you how much I appreciate the opportunity to be with Ms. DELBENE. This is incredible to get this done today.

I am urging every single Member to vote for this. Please throw out your scorecard and look at the picture in your wallet of who it is that parented you or grandparented you and say you know what, wouldn't it be nice to give them something back after they gave us their whole life? And let them have some peace of mind.

I don't think there is anything greater in your later years than peace of mind and being able to know that I am getting healthcare when I need it. I am not going to have to wait for somebody someplace else to determine whether I should get it.

So it has been a pleasure working with you. It has been a pleasure working with all of our colleagues. And for Dr. MARSHALL, who used to sit here with us but now is over in the senior area of this magnificent model—although, I think he is too young to be there. Now, I am sure my older Senators will say, hey, KELLY, please don't call us old. I won't. Let's just say the more seasoned Members.

But I am glad we can wrap this up on a really good note. I can't tell you how good I feel about this, that we can go

home and tell those people that we represent—I don't care how they vote. All I want them to know is we care about what they have done for us, and we are going to be able to supply them some peace of mind.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1245

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I think it is past time for us to help our seniors get timely care. It is past time to help our medical professionals, our doctors, our nurses, and others who are burdened with undue paperwork, to help them spend more time providing care. It is past time for us to move a strong piece of legislation that has strong bipartisan support.

I thank Chairman NEAL and everyone who has helped bring this legislation forward, folks on the Ways and Means Committee, including my colleague Mr. KELLY.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation, an incredible piece of work.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2022.

MR. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this important legislation to protect seniors' access to care in the Medicare Advantage program.

As many of you know, I have been a long-time champion of Medicare Advantage, and it's enjoyed tremendous popularity in Oregon. I believe that the way traditional fee-for-service Medicare operates is not sustainable and that Medicare Advantage is one of the tools we can use to demonstrate how we can incentivize value.

But this is only possible when the program operates as intended. I have been deeply concerned about the reports of delays in care, not only from the Inspector General, but from the constituents that come into my office. For patients and their families, being told that you need to wait longer for care that your doctor tells you that you need is incredibly frustrating and frightening. There's no comfort to be found in the fact that your insurance company needs time to decide if your doctor is right. For providers, the burden of prior authorization is immense. And at a time where we consistently hear that our health care workers are facing incredible burnout and are leaving the profession in alarming rates, it's critical that we remove unnecessary processes.

There is no reason that patients should be waiting for medically appropriate care especially when we know that this can lead to worse outcomes. The fundamental promise of Medicare Advantage is undermined when people are delaying care, getting sicker, and ultimately costing Medicare more money.

The legislation we are taking up today is commonsense policy that moves us towards the goals of the program and protects our patients and providers from unnecessary roadblocks to care. I want to commend Congresswoman DelBene for her leadership on this issue and I look forward to supporting this bipartisan legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3173, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 302, PREVENTING A PATRONAGE SYSTEM ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2988, WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 8326, ENSURING A FAIR AND ACCURATE CENSUS ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1339 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1339

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 302) to impose limits on excepting competitive service positions from the competitive service, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Reform now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or their respective designees; (2) the further amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2988) to amend title 5, United States Code, to modify and enhance protections for Federal Government whistleblowers, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or their respective designees. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Reform now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the

Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as the original bill for the purpose of further amendment under the five-minute rule and shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived.

SEC. 3. (a) No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution considered pursuant to subsection (b) and amendments en bloc described in section 4 of this resolution.

(b) Each further amendment printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules not earlier considered as amendments en bloc pursuant to section 4 of this resolution shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

(c) All points of order against the further amendments printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules or amendments en bloc described in section 4 of this resolution are waived.

SEC. 4. It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or her designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

SEC. 5. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such further amendments as may have been adopted. In the case of sundry further amendments reported from the Committee, the question of their adoption shall be put to the House en gros and without division of the question. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit.

SEC. 6. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 8326) to amend title 13, United States Code, to improve the operations of the Bureau of the Census, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or their respective designees. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Reform now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117-64, modified by the amendment printed in part D of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered

as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as the original bill for the purpose of further amendment under the five-minute rule and shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived.

SEC. 7. (a) No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in part E of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution considered pursuant to subsection (b) and amendments en bloc described in section 8 of this resolution.

(b) Each further amendment printed in part E of the report of the Committee on Rules not earlier considered as amendments en bloc pursuant to section 8 of this resolution shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

(c) All points of order against the further amendments printed in part E of the report of the Committee on Rules or amendments en bloc described in section 8 of this resolution are waived.

SEC. 8. It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or her designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in part E of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

SEC. 9. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such further amendments as may have been adopted. In the case of sundry further amendments reported from the Committee, the question of their adoption shall be put to the House en gros and without division of the question. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit.

SEC. 10. During consideration of H.R. 2988 and H.R. 8326, the Chair may entertain a motion that the Committee rise only if offered by the chair of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or her designee. The Chair may not entertain a motion to strike out the enacting words of the bill (as described in clause 9 of rule XVIII).

SEC. 11. (a) At any time through the legislative day of Friday, September 16, 2022, the Speaker may entertain motions offered by the Majority Leader or a designee that the House suspend the rules as though under clause 1 of rule XV with respect to multiple measures described in subsection (b), and the Chair shall put the question on any such motion without debate or intervening motion.

(b) A measure referred to in subsection (a) includes any measure that was the object of a motion to suspend the rules on the legislative day of September 13, 2022, September 14, 2022, September 15, 2022, or September 16, 2022, in the form as so offered, on which the yeas and nays were ordered and further proceedings postponed pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX.

(c) Upon the offering of a motion pursuant to subsection (a) concerning multiple measures, the ordering of the yeas and nays on postponed motions to suspend the rules with respect to such measures is vacated to the end that all such motions are considered as withdrawn.

SEC. 12. The requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of September 30, 2022, relating to a measure making or continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2023.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCHENTHALER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 1339, providing for consideration of three measures: H.R. 302, H.R. 2988, and H.R. 8326, all under structured rules.

For H.R. 302, the rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, makes in order one amendment, and provides a motion to recommit.

For H.R. 2988 and H.R. 8326, the rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform for each bill, makes in order four amendments for H.R. 2988 and three amendments for H.R. 8326, and provides en bloc authority for both bills and motions to recommit for both bills.

The rule further provides the majority leader or his designee the ability this week to en bloc requested roll call votes on suspension bills considered from September 13 to September 16.

Lastly, the rule provides same-day authority through September 30 for a measure dealing with continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2023.

□ 1300

Mr. Speaker, I rise proudly today in support of House Resolution 1339, the rule for three crucial bills, each of which will protect an essential institution in American Government and public life that came under serious attack in the previous administration: our

Federal civil service, whistleblowers acting against public corruption, and the Census Bureau. All three bills were marked up and passed by the House Committee on Oversight and Reform.

H.R. 302, the Preventing a Patronage System Act, is a bipartisan bill led by Congressman CONNOLLY of Virginia and Congressman FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania. This legislation will insulate our civil service against partisan political interference and ensure that no future President can fire government experts and civil servants simply to replace them with their own political loyalists and sycophants.

The civil service system was created in the 19th century with the explicit purpose of ending the so-called spoils system and ensuring that Federal employees are hired, promoted, and fired based on their qualifications and performance, not their political party connections or the political favors and services they are willing to render to elected officials.

The merit-based Federal workforce exists to effectively implement Federal laws and programs passed by Congress and signed into law by the President and translate those laws and programs into concrete results and benefits for the American people. Professional civil servants, like scientists, engineers, meteorologists, statisticians, economic researchers, and policy analysts must be able to do their jobs and advise government officials and the public based on empirical methods, facts and data, not ideological filters and bars of political correctness, and without fear of retaliation and discharge for political reasons.

But the previous administration attempted to turn our civil service, Mr. Speaker, into a top-down political and ideological party machine, the kind that the original architects of civil service tried to dismantle in the 19th century. In October of 2020, the former President issued Executive Order 13957 to create Schedule F, a sweeping new employment category for career civil servants who work on public policy issues. Schedule F specifically targeted about 50,000 presently nonpartisan policy experts, many of them holding advanced degrees and having served for decades as policy experts across different administrations with Presidents from different political parties.

For these civil servants, Schedule F would have stripped away their rights, their merit-based legal protections, and their professional independence. Civil servants transferred into the new Schedule F could have been fired and replaced at any time for any political or ideological reason or for no reason at all given by a hostile administration. The 50,000 civil servants deemed to be involved in formulating policy could have been swept up in a Schedule F political purge and replaced with unqualified loyalists and flunkies, with potentially catastrophic consequences for national security, the continuity of

governance, and the evenhanded and effective enforcement of Federal laws and programs.

The President already has the opportunity to appoint more than 4,000 political appointees. But Schedule F sought to go much further in radically transforming the civil service into an instrument of the chosen political ends and designs of the President.

Thankfully, President Joe Biden rescinded the order in January 2021. However, several top Republicans have already expressed support for picking up right where the previous administration left off with a new Schedule F.

Our civil servants must be hired based on their merits and then evaluated based on their actual job performance in office, not their political party membership, not their ideological viewpoints, and not their political campaign activism. Indeed, there are already processes in place for evaluating Federal employees' actual job performance, which is why in 2021, more than 10,000 Federal employees were removed from their jobs for not living up to job expectations. That is how you deal with people who are not actually doing their jobs. This bill is precisely about ensuring that civil servants will be evaluated based on their job performance and not the partisan political goals or extracurricular demands of a particular administration.

As a member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, which considered this legislation carefully and reported it favorably and the proud Representative of tens of thousands of Federal workers in Maryland's beautiful Eighth District, I am proud to advance this bill and urge all of my colleagues to support its passage on a bipartisan basis. We have an urgent mandate to protect the historic merit-based civil service and the integrity of the Federal Government against anyone who would turn the clock back more than a century to allow Presidents to convert our Federal workforce in service of agreed-upon Federal laws and programs into an instrument of personal ambition, campaign reelection, or party patronage.

Now, turning to H.R. 2988, the bipartisan Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act of 2021, led by Chairwoman MALONEY. This is another piece of critical legislation in defense of another critical democratic safeguard.

Whistleblowers are a great American institution and an important mechanism for guaranteeing the integrity of government. Our protection of whistleblowers reflects the fact that in our system of government, we have checks and balances all the way down. An individual Federal employee can hold even the most powerful government officials accountable to the rule of law, which binds all of us. Whistleblowers in American history have exposed self-dealing, bribery, kickbacks, sweetheart contracts, lost and stolen Federal property, national security failures, crimi-

nal coverups, other political corruption, war crimes, rape and sexual harassment in the military, major public health violations, episodes of environmental and toxic contamination, and the systematic waste or pilfering of taxpayer dollars.

This bill will improve current protections for whistleblowers by clearly prohibiting retaliatory investigations and other actions against Federal employees who share information with Congress, the House of Representatives, or the Senate, or with their supervisor. The bill limits the public disclosure of the identity of whistleblowers and extends whistleblower protections to new categories of Federal officers and employees, including Public Health Service workers and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's commissioned officers.

The bill also contains provisions to ensure a timely and fair procedure for whistleblowers facing discrimination and retaliation. Currently, the backlog at the Merit Systems Protection Board means that some whistleblowers may wait years for a hearing to be scheduled on their claims. This bill grants whistleblowers access to a jury trial in Federal district court if the Merit Systems Protection Board does not render a timely decision in their case.

Whistleblowers are integral to government transparency and accountability in our country. I strongly support this bill to ensure whistleblowers can come forward without fear of reprisal or punishment.

The last bill before us, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 8326, the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act, also led by Chairwoman MALONEY, will protect the Census Bureau against future efforts at political interference, and it will ensure the Bureau's independence in the performance of its essential duties.

The Census is a constitutional mandate and imperative. The U.S. Constitution requires an actual enumeration of the whole number of persons in the country for apportioning Representatives among the States and Congress. The Census is an expression of the original principle that democracy must rest on the Jeffersonian idea of the consent of the governed. And, therefore, we need to know everyone who is here and part of the sovereign people of the Nation. The Census determines congressional apportionment of House seats and the allocation of trillions of dollars of Federal spending. Even many businesses in the private sector rely on Census Bureau statistics to guide their decisions.

The previous administration's spectacular contempt for our constitutional system was on full display during its many efforts to interfere with the 2020 Census for purposes of political gain. The effort to complete a comprehensive and effective Census was undermined at every turn by efforts such as the unlawful plot to add the citizenship question to the short form, which was struck down by the Supreme

Court, or the installation of a record-breaking number of highly partisan political appointees to the ranks of the Bureau's leadership. The reforms contained in the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act will safeguard the integrity of the Census count against this type of sinister political interference in the many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman and my good friend from Maryland for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the rule before us today provides for consideration for three pieces of legislation that are laser-focused on a President who has not been in office for almost 2 years now.

Meanwhile, yesterday's CPI reading came in higher than expected, registering an 8.3 percent year-over-year increase. That is another 40-year high, literally the highest in my lifetime.

It is abundantly clear that Democrats are focused on their efforts of political gamesmanship, hoping to distract the American people from the absolute failures of the Biden administration.

Let's just go through these bills. The first bill, H.R. 302, makes it even harder for the President to remove insubordinate Federal employees in policymaking roles. All this legislation accomplishes is further shielding unelected career bureaucrats from accountability to the American voter, who are footing the bill for their salary. The Federal Government should be responsive to the voters and their elected Representatives, not the whims and the ideological leanings of unelected bureaucrats.

Additionally, this rule provides for consideration of H.R. 2988, the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act. Let me start by just saying that the need to protect whistleblowers is one of the most bipartisan points of agreement in Congress. However, this legislation does nothing to protect actual whistleblowers. There is a significant difference lost in this bill between retaliation against legitimate whistleblowers and the consequences in response to unacceptable actions taken by a government employee.

Finally, the rule provides for consideration of H.R. 8326, Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act. Yet, this bill does everything but ensure a fair and accurate Census. Specifically, H.R. 8326 provides the director of the Census Bureau with unprecedented power and authority to make all operational, statistical, and technical decisions for the Census.

Further, this bill constrains the ability of future Censuses to include critical questions, including a citizenship question, ensuring that future Censuses will be unfair and inaccurate.

Instead of focusing on real-life issues facing everyday Americans, House

Democrats this week are focusing on three bills that are completely irrelevant to the multiple crises created by Joe Biden's policies.

In fact, two of these bills have already passed in the House this Congress in larger packages. The failed policies of the far left and the Biden administration have plunged our economy into a recession. And, yes, it is a recession. They have stolen wages from the American workforce, they have destroyed seniors' retirement savings, and they have left families with the highest food prices since 1979. Let me repeat that. Grocery prices surged 13 percent in August, the largest increase in over 40 years.

Mr. Speaker, 80 percent of Americans say that inflation is the most important issue facing the country, but you wouldn't know it by the bills the Democrats are prioritizing and running on the floor this week.

I think it is time my Democratic colleagues listened to the people and work with Republicans on real economic solutions, rather than doubling down on these dangerous, reckless, out-of-control spending and far-left policy bills, the same policies that have created the crises that we are now facing.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1315

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to hear my good friend from Pennsylvania make his presentation. I was surprised that he described these three bills as completely irrelevant, given that one is about protecting the integrity of the Federal civil service, a force of more than 2 million people who are doing the work of the American people in the National Park Service, the Department of Energy, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security, and so on.

I don't know what is completely irrelevant about that. Nor do I understand what is completely irrelevant about protecting the rights and our encouragement of Federal workers to be whistleblowers when there is massive waste, fraud, abuse, or exploitation taking place with the taxpayers' money. That is an essential purpose of government.

We have a government that is an instrument of the will of the people, and we have a lot of public policies that are being enforced, but we want to make sure that they are being enforced correctly and that the people's taxpayer moneys are being respected.

The whistleblowers are helping us do that in blowing the whistle on hundreds of millions of dollars of waste, corruption, and abuse that have taken place. Why we would turn a blind eye to that and describe it as completely irrelevant is beyond me.

Of course, the Census is foundational to the workings of American democracy, and we want to prevent precisely

the kind of political finger-pointing all over the Census Bureau and our laws that we saw in the last administration.

I am just curious whether the gentleman really believes that if the current President suggested that we take 40,000 or 50,000 Federal workers who presently have civil service protection and put them directly under his control for political appointment, he would think that is a good idea because our legislation will prevent any President in the future from doing that, including this Democratic President, any future Democratic Presidents, any future Republican Presidents or Independents or anyone else.

We don't think that is a good idea, and I can't believe that my good friend from Pennsylvania would just be agnostic as to that proposition.

Let me just say, finally, about the whole question of what is relevant and what is irrelevant, it seems like all we are hearing from the other side is embodied in the big statement coming out of the Senate from Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, saying it is time for a national Federal ban on abortion that could even be exceeded by the States.

Now, originally, they said: Well, *Roe v. Wade* is settled precedent, and we accept that.

Then, they packed the Court with their Justices, who were determined, hellbent, on overturning *Roe v. Wade*, and they did it.

Then, we heard from our friends across the aisle: Well, this is a matter for the States. Let the States decide.

Now, we hear from our colleagues in Congress that, no, they want a national criminal ban on the right of women to make their own decisions about their health, their families, their careers, and their futures.

Then, they will even allow States to go beyond that to completely ban abortion, which is, of course, the essential pro-life position which we have heard from our colleagues across the aisle. That is what they are focused on.

Meantime, the President signed, this week, the Inflation Reduction Act, which will dramatically lower healthcare costs for tens of millions of Americans and, finally, overturn the Republican ban on the government negotiating in the Medicare program with Big Pharma for lower prescription drug prices.

We are actually making progress. They want to drag everyone into their insatiable efforts to ban the right to abortion in America.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RESCIENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I will double down on the comment that these bills are irrelevant. They are absolutely irrelevant in that two of them are superfluous. One has already passed. One passed in an amendment to the NDAA, and the other one is an unprecedented grant of authority to the Census, which is com-

pletely inappropriate. So, yes, these bills, I would argue, are irrelevant.

Do you know who would think they are irrelevant? Any person you talk to on the street. If you go up to somebody filling up their gas tank, and you ask them about these three bills, these are irrelevant to their lives. They are worried about the price of gas.

If you ask somebody at a grocery store who is trying to feed a family about these bills, these bills are irrelevant to their grocery bill.

If you are talking about real wages and fighting the loss of wages and inflation, these bills are irrelevant to that. A lot of blue-collar workers want wages to increase like they did under the last administration, not decrease like they are today.

So, yes, these bills are absolutely irrelevant to everyday Americans.

But let's just talk about the high cost of inflation. Inflation is the top concern reported by businesses and voters alike. However, instead of working to lower costs for businesses and workers, the SEC proposed burdensome new rules requiring businesses to disclose extensive climate-related data and additional climate risks.

That is why if we defeat the previous question, I will personally offer an amendment to the rule to immediately consider H.R. 8589, which would prohibit the SEC's woke climate rule from ever moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment into the RECORD, along with any extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. RESCIENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the Commonwealth of Kentucky (Mr. BARR), my good friend, to explain the amendment.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCIENTHALER) for yielding.

I rise to oppose the previous question so that we can immediately consider Representative FRENCH HILL's H.R. 8589 to prohibit the Securities and Exchange Commission from trading its independence and statutory authority away in the name of alarmist climate advocacy.

The proposed climate change rule from the Securities and Exchange Commission will further crush our fragile economy, and struggling families will ultimately pay the price.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Bureau of Labor Statistics released the Consumer Price Index numbers for the month of August. As has been mentioned already today, CPI surged to 8.3 percent, above projections, still a 40-year high, showing that this inflation crisis is not going away anytime soon.

Americans are paying more for everything, and rising prices continue to wreak havoc on farmers, middle-class families, and small businesses struggling to stay afloat all across America.

Of course, Democrats' overspending for the last year and a half has produced excess demand, pushing up prices, but no amount of Fed tightening can fix the inflationary supply-demand mismatch without also addressing the supply side.

At the heart of this inflation crisis is the Biden administration's war on American energy production. This policy of deliberately constraining the supply of energy is taking its toll on the American people. According to a Penn Wharton study, inflation reduced the purchasing power of American households by approximately \$6,000 last year. That is like taking an entire paycheck away for an entire month for every American household.

Real earnings, hourly earnings, dropped 2.8 percent over the year in August. Wages are down because of this inflation crisis. Credit card debt is up. It hit an all-time high last month.

One in six American households are now behind paying their electricity bills and in danger of losing their utility services altogether, with natural gas prices up 30 percent since last July. Effectively, electricity prices are now up 15 percent, a 14-year high.

When Joe Biden took office, the average price of gasoline was \$2.36 per gallon. Today, the average gas price in America is \$3.72 per gallon, and stubbornly, diesel prices are much, much higher. That goes into everything: transportation, manufacturing, farmers having to fill up the tank on their tractors. All of that is passed on at the retail point of sale. In less than 2 years, America has gone from energy dominant to energy desperate.

Mr. Speaker, ground zero for the Biden administration's war on American energy is the weaponization of financial regulation and the politicization of access to capital.

What do I mean by this? We all know that the Biden administration killed the Keystone XL pipeline and other critical energy infrastructure projects. We know that they are frustrating the construction of new refineries. We know that they have held up 4,400 drilling permits. But ground zero is the weaponization of financial regulation to deny American energy the access to the capital that they need to invest in a very capital-intensive business.

Throughout the executive branch, at the Treasury Department, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Reserve, the OCC, and other financial regulators, Biden has installed or nominated unelected climate alarmists and given them free rein to attack American energy businesses, all in the name of climate change.

The sad irony, Mr. Speaker, is that if we want to innovate and actually solve climate change, we wouldn't be denying American energy companies and

the scientists there access to financing. We would be giving them more financing to innovate and to solve the problem the American way, through free enterprise and innovation. One of these radical nominees even called for bankrupting American fossil fuel companies.

Perhaps the most dangerous regulation issued by the Biden administration to destroy American energy is the SEC's climate risk disclosure rule proposed in March. This 534-page monstrosity marks the transformation of the SEC from an independent agency dedicated to investor protection to an unaccountable and politicized bureaucracy intent on advancing radical environmental and social policy over which it has neither expertise nor jurisdiction.

This proposed rule is totally disconnected from the longstanding investor-driven materiality standard and will politicize the agency and reduce its credibility by hurting investors, elevating nonpecuniary factors above financial returns, and steering retail investors into lower performing, higher fee, and less-diversified ESG investments.

As a reminder, Mr. Speaker, the statutory mission of the SEC is to protect investors; maintain fair, orderly, and efficient markets; and facilitate capital formation. This is not about protecting investors. It is about hurting investors. It is not about capital formation. It is about capital destruction. It is definitively not to reduce carbon emissions or solve climate change, but the SEC is wading into environmental policy debates like climate change with its top-down, government-directed, one-size-fits-all mandatory environmental, social, and governance disclosure regulation, or ESG.

SEC Chair Gary Gensler claims that the requirements in the proposal are material because institutional investors are demanding this information. But according to a study conducted by the University of Chicago and FINRA, only 21 percent of surveyed retail investors in this country even knew what ESG stands for.

The fact of the matter is, retail investors are not demanding this information. They want returns, not politics, guiding their retirement and college savings.

What do retail investors really care about? Yesterday's bloodbath in the stock market when the Dow plummeted by over 1,000 points in a single day, the worst drop since June 2020.

That tells me what investors actually want, Mr. Speaker, and it is returns. They need returns. They don't need an inflationary environment that is eating away their purchasing power and rising interest rates because of it that result in turmoil in the financial markets, destroying retirement savings.

ESG funds are hurting American investors. They are tech-heavy, and in a market where tech stocks are in a mas-

sive sell-off and are vastly underperforming non-ESG funds that contain investments in energy, who are the losers? Retail investors who are unwittingly invested in and overexposed to ESG. On top of that, ESG funds charge 43 percent higher fees than non-ESG funds.

In short, the government is redirecting capital away from energy, and it is costing retail investors, which include teachers, police officers, and other ordinary Americans saving for retirement, extraordinary amounts of money.

But, today, Congress can actually do something to protect investors. I am leading this previous question that would amend the rule to immediately consider H.R. 8589, legislation offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL), my friend, to stop this SEC rule in its tracks before it causes more damage to retail investors and to Americans struggling to keep up with unsustainable energy prices.

Mr. Speaker, House Republicans will keep pushing for America to get back to basics. We need to deliver economic relief to the American people to alleviate the pain of inflation. To do that, we need to unleash the supply side. That means more, not less, financing of American energy to lower the price at the pump, to reduce the cost of heating your home.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we need financial advisers to get back to the basics of investing. That means diversified portfolios that include American energy, not just tech, because the point of investing your hard-earned money isn't to further a political agenda or some far-left view of America that some woke asset manager on Wall Street thinks. Instead, it is to generate a financial return that will enable you to send your kid to college, ensure you can live a comfortable life in retirement, or pursue some other aspect of your American Dream.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is about capital formation. It is about giving heroic American energy companies access to the capital and the financing that they need, not only to make energy affordable and reliable for the American people but to make America competitive in the global economy.

It is for all of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, that I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to join me in supporting this previous question.

□ 1330

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues tempt me to wander afield from what we have come here to talk about since they want to talk about seemingly everything else. So let me try to respond to a few of the points that have just been lobbed in our direction.

First, they seem to want to assign responsibility to the President of the United States for the inflation rate. But then, surely, they will assign responsibility to the President of the

United States for the unemployment rate, which now stands at around 3.5 percent, the lowest unemployment rate in 50 years. You have got to go back a half century to find the kind of job situation that President Biden has brought to the United States of America.

Last week, we learned that payroll employment is up by 315,000 in the month of August alone. Since President Biden came into office, we have added 668,000 manufacturing jobs.

Now, it is true the President has been fighting inflation ever since he got into office. Why?

Well, the economy started to come roaring back—not just in America, but all over the world in the wake of the pandemic. So we saw a tremendous demand with broken supply chains. So what happens under the law of supply and demand? The prices go up. But, unlike our colleagues who seem to want to chortle about it and use it as a campaign talking point, President Biden and the Democrats have been acting to bring inflation down. Every single day.

Yesterday's Consumer Price Index data showed continued progress in bringing global inflation down here in the U.S. economy. Gas prices are down an average of \$1.30 a gallon since the beginning of the summer. Price increases slowed at the grocery store this month. Still too high. But real wages went up again for a second month in a row, giving hardworking families more breathing room.

It is amazing to me that some of the time has been delegated to one of our distinguished colleagues who seem to want to blame these global economic conditions arising from COVID-19 and the pandemic and broken supply chains, as well as Vladimir Putin's filthy imperialist war in Ukraine, which fortunately, the people of Ukraine, with the support of a lot of people in this body—but not everybody—is starting to win. And we have seen dramatic reversal of fortune in that war as the democratic forces are beating Vladimir Putin and the autocrats in Russia.

But in any event, we just heard someone who wanted to blame all of these global economic conditions on an SEC regulation, which we are not here to discuss and, therefore, unfortunately, I can't address. I might agree with the gentleman, for all I know. It has nothing to do with the legislation before us, and it is hard for me to believe that that is the source of inflation around the world or the unemployment, which now is practically at the bottom level that we have ever seen in over a century.

But in any event, Mr. Speaker, back to the point at hand, I thought we were going to be distracted with Republican calls to ban abortion across the country. Well, the polls must be teaching them something because I am not hearing about abortion today.

For many years, all I heard from them was abortion is murder, and the

millions of persons who are being murdered by abortion. They demanded the overthrow of Roe v. Wade, and they got their way.

Yesterday, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM introduced legislation for a national criminal ban on abortion. But, of course, the so-called pro-life forces want to go further in the States and ban it completely. A lot of them don't even want to allow exceptions for rape or incest.

I thought our colleagues were going to explain what their position really is. I would invite them to do so as long as they don't want to talk about the legislation before us today.

Why don't they tell us what their position on abortion is, because America wants to know.

I think their position has changed somewhat. They are singing a somewhat different tune since the people of Kansas, by 20 points, destroyed their anti-choice agenda, and explained to them in numerical terms that the people of America are on the side of freedom and the rights of women and men and families to make their own decisions and not to have those decisions be made by LINDSEY GRAHAM, one Senator, who yesterday pronounced that he chose 15 weeks as the right point to criminalize abortion. He chose that himself.

What is their position now? America wants to know. What is their position?

Do they support a national criminal ban on abortion? Are they going to allow any exceptions for rape or incest? What is their position on it, if they don't want to talk about the legislation at hand?

Meantime, the Democrats continue to fight for lower drug prices, for a record, unprecedented, historic investment in renewable energy.

We are addressing the problems of the future. At the same time, we are defending the integrity of the Federal civil service and our workforce, which was compromised and abused in so many ways by the last administration.

We are defending the rights of whistleblowers to tell the truth about what is taking place in terms of political and public corruption and not to have to face retaliation from their supervisors. We are defending the institutions of democracy, including the Census, against all of the kinds of machinations and corruption and political abuse that we saw in the last administration.

We are glad that the Supreme Court struck down their last interference with the Census by trying to paste questions outside of the rule of law on the short form. This legislation is designed to protect the integrity of the Census along with the civil service, along with the whistleblowers.

But as long as my dear colleagues and friends don't want to talk about the legislation at hand, please clarify for America what their plan is to take away the health rights of American women and their families. Are they

supporting the plan we heard yesterday announced by LINDSEY GRAHAM for a nationwide Federal criminal ban?

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for just a few points in rebuttal.

Mr. Speaker, we keep hearing that inflation is a global issue, like somehow it is not Biden's fault and the fault of far-left Democrats—which it is.

The reason why this is a global issue—and remind my friends on the other side of the aisle—is because we are the world's largest GDP. We also just happen to be the world's reserve currency.

So, of course, when we have inflation, the world will have it. That is just economics. So it is amazing how the principles of economics are just cherry-picked to make points. But I would remind my colleagues of those two facts. In short, we are exporting the inflation.

Now, as far as what we are doing to cause the inflation, well, it is pretty simple. We have injected trillions of dollars into the economy. That causes inflation. And then to double down on the failed policy, Joe Biden unilaterally, and I would argue unconstitutionally, canceled the debt of a swath of college students so you now have even more liquidity in the market because of them.

And the sick irony here is that the guy that is driving the pickup truck, the guy that went to school to be a plumber, an HVAC repairman, that guy is now subsidizing the lawyer who is driving to his downtown job in a BMW. That is what is so perverse about what is happening.

Now let's just talk about gas prices.

My colleague and my friend from Maryland said gas prices are down. Yeah, they are down from like a week ago; they are not down from January 2021 when they were less than \$2.50 a gallon. So let's continue to move that goalpost.

You can't argue that gas prices are up. Americans know gas prices are up. They are feeling the pain at the pump. They are also feeling it in the higher cost of all energy and food.

Finally, blaming Putin on gas prices and issues. Yeah, Putin is partially to blame, but who encouraged Putin to invade Ukraine? That would be Joe Biden by his surrender of Afghanistan.

Let me be clear that any weakness on the foreign stage is an indication of aggression. When Joe Biden showed weakness by abandoning the Bagram Air Base, by leaving our allies on the ground to predations of the Taliban, that was weakness, and Putin seized on that to invade Ukraine.

Instead of giving the Ukrainians the MiGs they needed, the proper military supplies they needed, we decided to go halfway. Joe Biden didn't fully commit. Now we have a protracted war in Ukraine, which is going to lead to a humanitarian crisis not only in Central

Europe but all across Africa, for example, and higher energy prices here.

Mr. Speaker, but that is all traced back to Biden being weak on foreign policy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR).

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, let me respond to my friend from Maryland on some of the specific points that he made in rebuttal to my opposition to the previous question.

The gentleman says that we don't want to talk about the underlying bills.

What Republicans want to talk about is what the American people are worried about, which is rising prices. What we are focused on is opposing a previous question so that we could actually go and consider legislation that would actually help improve the record inflation, 40-year-high inflation that Americans are suffering with.

What we are talking about is how we are going to lower the pain at the pump and lower the cost of heating your home, which is at a 15-year high in America right now. That is what Republicans want to talk about; what the American people actually care about right now.

The gentleman says that, Oh, unemployment is down.

Let me tell you the statistic that matters.

It is the fact that we have 12 million unfilled jobs in America because the Democrats' spending spree has paid Americans to not go to work, because employers in my district and every district around the country can't find labor.

The supply-demand mismatch that has produced this inflation crisis is the result of fiscal policy errors. It is the result of a war on American energy constraining the supply of energy. It is because of excessive spending that has discouraged people to return to the labor force.

So we have excess demand from overspending, and we have constrained labor supply and constrained energy supply, which is impounded into everything and results in higher retail prices.

The gentleman says that, Oh, don't look here; don't look at us; don't look at the Biden administration's war on energy and labor supply. No, it is not that. It is not the Fed that continued to keep interest rates too low for too long and flooded our money supply at a time when all of these fiscal policy errors were going on. No, it is not that. It is global inflation.

Well, why is it, then, in March of 2021, at the precise time that this Congress passed the American recovery plan, \$2 trillion of unpaid-for spending, why is it then that U.S. inflation rates became untethered from global price increases? That is what happened, in synchronicity with their legislation.

Mr. Speaker, finally, he blames Vladimir Putin.

Gas prices on the day Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine were the highest in 40 years. Inflation was over 8 percent on the CPI, the highest in 40 years, the highest since 1981 on the day Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine.

This is not about Vladimir Putin. It is about Americans not producing energy anymore.

And why do we want this particular legislation, the legislation to block the SEC's climate disclosure rule? Because we need more financing of American energy.

Mr. Speaker, I would argue to my friend from Maryland, also, if the obsession on the other side with the climate, if that is the concern, if that is why we have this SEC rule, if that is why we have weaponized financial regulators to go after the American energy sector and redirect capital and financing away from the American energy sector, if that is the solution to climate change, I want the gentleman to explain that to me. Because the best scientists in the world working on the issue of carbon capturing, carbon sequestration, and harnessing the carbon cycle, they work at American energy companies.

The answer to climate change is not to centralize power in Washington and add a thousand pages to the Federal Register. That will not change the weather. What will solve climate change is to solve that problem the American way. The American way is through innovation, technology, and science, and that means robust, free enterprise. That means more, not less capital formation. That means more financing of American energy, more financing of innovation. That is the Republican solution to climate.

It is also the Republican solution to our energy crisis and our inflation crisis. That is what we are focused on, not these bills that the American people don't care about.

We are focused on lowering prices at the grocery store and at the pump and financing American competitiveness, American innovation, and American know-how.

That is what we want to do.

□ 1345

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, the very distinguished gentleman from Kentucky purported to speak for what Americans are worried about. Undoubtedly, many Americans are worried about inflation, which is why this administration has been taking strong action not just to get jobs for everybody who wants a job and good jobs and union jobs for people, but also to bring inflation down.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a New York Times article titled "U.S. Gas Prices Have Fallen for 91 Straight Days, a Relief for Consumers."

[From the New York Times, Sept. 13, 2022]

U.S. GAS PRICES HAVE FALLEN FOR 91 STRAIGHT DAYS, A RELIEF FOR CONSUMERS
(By Isabella Simonetti)

The price of gasoline continues to fall steadily, easing pressure on American con-

sumers as the cost of filling a tank continued to tumble from record levels reached earlier in the summer.

Gas prices fell 10.6 percent in August, which helped moderate still-sky-high inflation, Tuesday's Consumer Price Index report showed.

The energy index, which tracks gasoline and electricity among other energy sources, dropped 5 percent last month, as electricity and natural gas prices rose.

After peaking at \$5.02 in June, gasoline prices have dropped for 91 straight days, and the national average stood at just over \$3.70 a gallon on Tuesday, data from AAA show. But analysts point to a few reasons this streak of declines is unlikely to continue.

Because they're determined by oil prices, gasoline prices are also susceptible to a wide range of challenges, like hurricanes that knock out drilling in the Gulf of Mexico and efforts to punish Russia for its invasion of Ukraine by curbing its ability to sell crude on the global market.

While gas prices are down, the overall energy index still remains up 23.8 percent over the 12 months that ended in August. Electricity prices alone jumped 15.8 percent, representing the largest 12-month increase since August 1981, the inflation report said. The jump in electricity prices is largely attributable to the high cost of natural gas, said Laura Rosner-Warburton, an economist at MacroPolicy Perspectives.

As winter approaches, other fuel prices could influence inflation data. The cost of heating a home with natural gas, the most common source of home-heating fuel in the United States, is expected to jump more than 25 percent from last year, to \$952 for the six months from October through March, according to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association.

"You would expect that a hard winter could create a significant increase in demand in price of natural gas," said Bryan Benoit, U.S. national managing partner of energy at Grant Thornton. "And then of course all of this is further exacerbated by what's going on with the war in the Ukraine."

Mr. RASKIN. I want to talk about some of the other things that Americans are worried about since my colleague purported to speak for Americans because I saw a poll recently saying that Americans are worried about the attack on democracy and voting rights.

Part of that may be the fact that some of our colleagues seem to be ambivalent about whether or not to denounce the rampant violence that was unleashed against this institution, this body, on January 6, 2021, when thousands of rioters came and attacked our officers, wounding and injuring more than 150 of them, breaking their jaws, their necks, lost fingers, strokes, heart attacks, concussions, and contusions. And, of course, the former President says that his mob actually greeted the police with hugs and kisses.

Some of our colleagues shamefully have followed the former President in trying to whitewash the worst episode of domestic mass insurrectionary violence ever unleashed on the Capitol of the United States with an attack on the Vice President, Mike Pence. We heard those words, "Hang Mike Pence. Hang Mike Pence," bouncing off of the walls of the Capitol and against the Congress of the United States.

So, yes, people are worried about the state of our democracy with so many members of the GOP following Donald Trump in not only his terrible big lie, the first time we have ever seen that in American history, but also the big lie encompassing this mob violence and this insurrection against the Government of the United States.

Do you know what else Americans are worried about, Mr. Speaker? Americans are now worried about State politicians and Federal politicians trampling the rights of women. For more than a half century, women have had a right to make their most intimate procreative and reproductive decisions with their families, with their husbands, with their partners, with their ministers, and with their church leaders.

Then, they gerrymandered the Supreme Court. They kept Merrick Garland off the Supreme Court by not even giving him a hearing over on the Senate side.

Then, what do you know, Mr. Speaker? They followed what the RNC was asking for in all of their platforms for all of these years: Overturn *Roe v. Wade*. They overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

Then, we heard from our colleagues: Well, we just want the States to decide.

But, yesterday, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM unveiled what the real plan is: a nationwide criminal ban on abortion, and if they can go further in the States, they will go further in the States.

We have Republican proposals all over America to completely ban abortion from the moment of conception, which is the pro-life orthodoxy, which is life begins at conception.

We heard it in the Judiciary Committee. We have heard it in the Oversight and Reform Committee. We have been hearing it for years. But now they have fallen strangely and demurely silent. Why is that? Part of it is because of the good people of Kansas, who showed them just where America is on this.

America is a country committed to individual freedom and the rights of the people to make their own decisions and not having busybody, theocrat politicians in State capitals telling them how to make their own decisions about their careers, about their lives, about their families, and about their healthcare—and certainly not allowing LINDSEY GRAHAM to dictate to the women of America what their destiny will be.

They won't say a word about it. They will talk about an SEC regulation nobody heard of that we are not here to talk about today. They will blame Joe Biden for global inflation. They will blame Joe Biden for Vladimir Putin's filthy, imperialist invasion of Ukraine.

I hear them denouncing Joe Biden. They won't denounce Vladimir Putin for 1 second.

I would happily yield 1 minute if they would denounce Vladimir Putin, but they won't do it. We have heard people

over on their side cheerleading for Vladimir Putin. I heard the gentlewoman from Georgia say: Russia wins.

Guess what? Russia doesn't win. The people of Ukraine are winning today, and the people of America are with the people of Ukraine. We are on the side of democrats, small d democrats, all over the world against the autocrats like Putin, against the theocrats like people who would dictate to the women of America their own health decisions.

We are against the tyrants, the bullies, and the despots. We are against Presidents who get into office and try to dictate the political decisionmaking of individual members of the workforce and try to push their ideological program into the government. We are for defending whistleblowers; we are for defending the Census; and we are for defending democratic institutions in America.

I am just shocked that I hear from my good friend from Pennsylvania, someone I like and someone I trust, that he actually is defending Putin against Biden and blaming Joe Biden for Putin's long-running plan to invade Ukraine. That is a remarkable thing to me, and I hope we can have that clarified.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RESCENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I let my good friend from Maryland know that I like him, too, and I would certainly clarify the remarks on Putin.

I will denounce Putin right now. Remember, I was the one calling in the beginning of this conflict for a no-fly zone to be established led by the United States. I don't think there is anybody more hawkish on Russia and the Ukraine issue than myself on this side of the aisle. So, to say that I was up here defending Putin is ludicrous.

We, of course, needed to beat Putin. We should have been much more engaged from the beginning of this conflict, not just to send a message to the Russians but to send a message to the Iranians and a message to the Chinese vis-a-vis Taiwan. But I could go on.

I would say it is a total mischaracterization of my position to say that I am up here saying good things about dictator Putin.

I remind my friend from Maryland about the history of this building. In 1814, it was literally burned to the ground. In the seventies, Puerto Rican separatists stormed in and detonated a bomb. So, let's just get the historical context in place.

As far as denouncing violence, everyone on this side of the aisle has denounced political violence consistently. The inconsistency is from my friends from across the other side of the aisle who cherry-pick when they denounce political violence.

I remember that during the entire summer of 2020, my friends across the aisle treated the destructive BLM and

antifa protests that caused \$2 billion worth of damage, they treated those protesters with kid gloves. You had the current Vice President paying the bail for the protesters. You had the gentlewoman from New York, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, saying: "The whole point of protesting is to make people uncomfortable. . . . To folks who complain protest demands make others uncomfortable, that is the point." Those are the words of the Democrats, not of us. We could go on.

Chris Cuomo, CNN host: "Please, show me where it says protesters are supposed to be polite and peaceful." The last time I checked, that was a Democrat.

New York BLM cofounder Hawk Newsome said in response to Eric Adams trying to put plainclothes police officers on the street: "There will be riots; there will be fire; and there will be bloodshed."

It sounds to me that the political violence and the support for the rhetoric that is coming to support political violence and upheaval are coming from one side of the aisle, the Democrat side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) for more rebuttal.

Mr. BARR. We may have found a point of bipartisan agreement that we all dislike Vladimir Putin. But one of the main reasons why Vladimir Putin was able to invade Ukraine was the removal of deterrence: unilaterally waiving sanctions on Nord Stream 2, refusing to respond for a full year of a buildup, inviting aggression by retreating from Afghanistan, and signaling to our allies that we are not coming to help you. That might be one of the reasons why we have a problem with Vladimir Putin right now.

To the gentleman from Maryland's argument that we are just purporting to speak for all Americans, we are the Representatives of the American people, and we are their only voice in this Chamber. I am not purporting to speak for Americans. I am telling you what my constituents in Kentucky are telling me.

Charlie from Fleming County says that he can't afford to fill up his tractor as a farmer because diesel prices are where they are. He says: I don't know where they get their numbers in Washington, Congressman, but it feels three times 8 percent on the CPI.

Lorna from Mount Sterling, Kentucky, owns a floral business, a Main Street small business, and everything costs more. She said: This is not the America I know.

Then, Jamie, who is a mom of two kids, she goes to get baby formula. She goes to the grocery, and she can't afford groceries. She tries to fill up her car to take her kids on errands, and she can't afford it.

This is not purporting to speak for the American people. These are the American people, and they are suffering because this administration will not fix the supply side.

They raise taxes on businesses, which discourages business investment and capital expenditures that we need to fix the supply bottlenecks. They raise prices at the pump by declaring war on American energy production by weaponizing financial regulation. They refuse to take actions that actually will solve the supply problem by encouraging people to go back to work.

We don't need to be discouraging people from going back to work. We need to fill those 12 million unfilled jobs right now by encouraging productivity and American people going back to work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so that we can go to some legislation that would actually help lower prices, what the American people do care about, not what they purport to care about, what they tell us they care about, and that is lowering prices.

This bill would help us do that because it would unlock the financing we need to make America energy dominant once again and lower prices across the board.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, the CPI just released yesterday shows that prices have increased 8.3 percent from August of last year. Real wages are down 2.8 percent. The cost of electricity has skyrocketed 15.8 percent. That is the most since 1981, the most since I was alive.

As of August, nearly one quarter of all Americans reported forgoing basic needs like food and medicine just to be able to afford their energy bill. This number will only get worse because we are going to face even higher costs to heat our homes this winter, with natural gas prices nearing a 14-year high.

Yet, Democrats want to focus their efforts on, again, I would call it, irrelevant legislation that has already passed the House. It will not provide any relief to American workers and American families.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question and to vote "no" on the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Kentucky spoke about what his constituents are interested in. Apparently, they are interested only in the question of inflation.

My constituents are interested in that and are satisfied about the fact that we have had more than 90 days of decline in gas prices and that this administration is fighting to reduce inflation, including with the Inflation Reduction Act, which dramatically reduces healthcare costs, saying that nobody will have to spend more than \$35

a month on insulin—no diabetic in America—and no one in the Medicare program will have to spend more than \$2,000 a year on prescription drugs, generally.

How is that for getting inflation down?

But that is not all they care about. They care about women's right to choose and the GOP assault on the freedoms of the people, something which our colleagues maintain their demure and uncharacteristic circumspect silence about today. They didn't want to talk about this new GOP plan to ban abortion all across America. That is what we heard yesterday from Senator GRAHAM about his plan for America.

My constituents want freedom in America. They want democracy in voting rights. They don't want to see violence unleashed against the Capitol of the United States, against school boards, against State capitols, or any of the political violence we have seen from whatever source. I am happy to denounce all of it.

I wish my colleagues would denounce political violence when it comes to our very doors, when it enters this Chamber, rather than playing follow the leader with the former President who has disgraced himself as the first President in U.S. history to be impeached twice and continues to be embroiled in all the political corruption investigations all over the country, as it has been shown that he egged on armed protesters to come to try to attack this body, to drive Vice President Pence out of the body, and to drive us out of the body, as well, interfering with a Federal proceeding.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on this rule and the previous question.

The material previously referred to by Mr. RESCHENTHALER is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 1339

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 13. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall proceed to the consideration in the House of the bill (H.R. 8589) to prohibit the Securities and Exchange Commission from finalizing the proposed rule titled "The Enhancement and Standardization of Climate-Related Disclosures for Investors". All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 14. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 8589.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

□ 1400

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TONKO). The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on:

Adoption of the resolution, if ordered;

En bloc motion to suspend the rules, if offered; and

Motions to suspend the rules and pass:

H.R. 884;

H.R. 5774;

S. 2293; and

S. 442.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 213, nays 206, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 424]

YEAS—213

Adams	Espallat	McBath
Aguilar	Evans	McCollum
Auchincloss	Fletcher	McEachin
Axne	Foster	McGovern
Barragán	Frankel, Lois	McNerney
Bass	Gallego	Meeks
Beatty	Garamendi	Meng
Bera	Garcia (IL)	Moore (WI)
Beyer	Garcia (TX)	Morelle
Bishop (GA)	Golden	Moulton
Blumenauer	Gomez	Mrvan
Blunt Rochester	Gonzalez,	Murphy (FL)
Bonamici	Vicente	Napolitano
Bourdeaux	Gottheimer	Neal
Bowman	Green, Al (TX)	Neguse
Boyle, Brendan	Grijalva	Newman
F.	Harder (CA)	Norcross
Brown (MD)	Hayes	O'Halleran
Brown (OH)	Higgins (NY)	Ocasio-Cortez
Brownley	Himes	Omar
Bush	Horsford	Pallone
Bustos	Houlihan	Panetta
Butterfield	Hoyer	Pappas
Carbajal	Huffman	Payne
Cárdenas	Jackson Lee	Peltola
Carson	Jacobs (CA)	Perlmutter
Carter (LA)	Jayapal	Peters
Cartwright	Jeffries	Phillips
Case	Johnson (GA)	Pingree
Casten	Johnson (TX)	Pocan
Castor (FL)	Jones	Porter
Castro (TX)	Kahele	Pressley
Cherfilus-	Kaptur	Price (NC)
McCormick	Keating	Quigley
Chu	Kelly (IL)	Raskin
Cicilline	Khanna	Rice (NY)
Clark (MA)	Kildee	Ross
Clarke (NY)	Kilmer	Roybal-Allard
Cleaver	Kim (NJ)	Ruiz
Clyburn	Kind	Ruppersberger
Cohen	Kirkpatrick	Rush
Connolly	Krishnamoorthi	Ryan (NY)
Cooper	Kuster	Ryan (OH)
Correa	Lamb	Sánchez
Costa	Langevin	Sarbanes
Courtney	Larsen (WA)	Scanlon
Craig	Larson (CT)	Schakowsky
Crow	Lawrence	Schiff
Cuellar	Lawson (FL)	Schneider
Davids (KS)	Lee (CA)	Schraeder
Davis, Danny K.	Lee (NV)	Schrier
Dean	Leger Fernandez	Scott (VA)
DeFazio	Levin (CA)	Scott, David
DeGette	Levin (MI)	Sherman
DeLauro	Lieu	Sherrill
DelBene	Lofgren	Slotkin
Demings	Lowenthal	Smith (WA)
DeSaulnier	Luria	Soto
Deutch	Lynch	Spanberger
Dingell	Malinowski	Speier
Doggett	Maloney,	Stansbury
Doyle, Michael	Carolyn B.	Stanton
F.	Maloney, Sean	Stevens
Escobar	Manning	Strickland
Eshoo	Matsui	Suozy

Swalwell Trahan
Takano Trone
Thompson (CA) Underwood
Thompson (MS) Vargas
Titus Veasey
Tlaib Velázquez
Tonko Wasserman
Torres (CA) Schultz
Torres (NY) Waters

NAYS—206

Aderholt Garbarino
Allen Garcia (CA)
Amodei Gibbs
Armstrong Gimenez
Arrington Gohmert
Babin Gonzales, Tony
Bacon Gonzalez (OH)
Baird Good (VA)
Balderson Gooden (TX)
Banks Gosar
Barr Granger
Bentz Graves (LA)
Bergman Graves (MO)
Bice (OK) Green (TN)
Biggs Greene (GA)
Bilirakis Griffith
Bishop (NC) Grothman
Boebert Guest
Bost Guthrie
Brady Harris
Brooks Harshbarger
Buchanan Hartzler
Buck Hern
Bucshon Herrell
Burchett Hice (GA)
Burgess Higgins (LA)
Calvert Hill
Cammack Hinson
Carey Hollingsworth
Carl Hudson
Carter (GA) Huizenga
Carter (TX) Issa
Cawthorn Jackson
Chabot Jacobs (NY)
Cline Johnson (LA)
Cloud Johnson (OH)
Clyde Johnson (SD)
Cole Jordan
Comer Joyce (OH)
Conway Joyce (PA)
Crawford Katko
Crenshaw Keller
Curtis Kelly (MS)
Davidson Kelly (PA)
Davis, Rodney Kim (CA)
DesJarlais Kinzinger
Diaz-Balart Kustoff
Donalds LaHood
Duncan LaMalfa
Dunn Lamborn
Ellzey Latta
Emmer LaTurner
Estes Lesko
Fallon Letlow
Feenstra Long
Ferguson Loudermilk
Finstad Lucas
Fischbach Luetkemeyer
Fitzgerald Mace
Fitzpatrick Malliotakis
Fleischmann Mann
Flood Massie
Flores Mast
Foxy McCarthy
Franklin, C. McCaul
Scott McClain
Fulcher McClintock
Gaetz McHenry
Gallagher McKinley

NOT VOTING—13

Allred Nadler
Budd Pascrell
Cheney Rose
Herrera Beutler Salazar
Mfume Sewell

□ 1441

Ms. STEFANIK and Mr. CAWTHORN changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Ms. BOURDEAUX changed her vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE
RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Baird (Bucshon) Johnson (TX)
Barragán (Jeffries)
(Correa) Jones (Beyer)
Kirkpatrick
(Pallone)
Bass (Correa) Lawrence
(Beatty)
Bush (Bowman) Schiff (Deutch)
Cárdenas (Correa) Schrader
Conway (Valadao) (Correa)
(Evans)
DeSaulnier Levin (MI)
(Beyer) (Correa)
Dingell (Kuster) McEachin
(Beyer)
Fallon (Nehls) Miller (WV) (Kim)
Gaetz (Cawthorn) (CA)
Higgins (NY) Moore (WI)
(Pallone) (Beyer)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. RESCIENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 219, nays 209, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 425]

YEAS—219

Adams Doggett
Aguilar Doyle, Michael
Auchincloss F.
Axne Escobar
Barragán Eshoo
Bass Espallat
Beatty Evans
Bera Fletcher
Beyer Foster
Bishop (GA) Frankel, Lois
Blumenauer Gallego
Blunt Rochester Garamendi
Bonamici Garcia (IL)
Bourdeaux Garcia (TX)
Bowman Golden
Boyle, Brendan Gomez
F. Gonzalez,
Vicente
Brown (MD) Meng
Brown (OH) Mfume
Brownley Moore (WI)
Bush Grijalva
Bustos Harder (CA)
Butterfield Hayes
Carbajal Higgins (NY)
Cárdenas Himes
Carson Horsford
Carter (LA) Houlihan
Carterwright Hoyer
Case Huffman
Casten Jackson Lee
Castro (FL) Jacobs (CA)
Castro (TX) Jayapal
Cherfilus- Jeffries
McCormick Johnson (GA)
Chu Johnson (TX)
Cielline Jones
Clark (MA) Kahele
Clarke (NY) Kaptur
Cleaver Keating
Clyburn Kelly (IL)
Cohen Khanna
Connolly Kildee
Cooper Kilmer
Correa Kim (NJ)
Costa Kind
Courtney Kirkpatrick
Craig Krishnamoorthi
Crow Kuster
Cuellar Lamb
Davids (KS) Langevin
Davis, Danny K. Larsen (WA)
Dean Larson (CT)
DeFazio Lawrence
DeGette Lawson (FL)
DeLauro Lee (CA)
DelBene Lee (NV)
Demings Leger Fernandez
DeSaulnier Levin (CA)
Deutch Levin (MI)
Dingell Lieu

Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Speier

Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bentz
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brady
Brooks
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Comer
Conway
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Flores
Foxy
Franklin, C.
Scott
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garbarino

Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan

NAYS—209

Garcia (CA) Meuser
Gibbs Miller (IL)
Gimenez Miller (WV)
Gohmert Miller-Meeks
Gonzales, Tony Moolenaar
Gonzalez (OH) Mooney
Good (VA) Moore (AL)
Gooden (TX) Moore (UT)
Gosar Mullin
Granger Murphy (NC)
Graves (LA) Nehls
Graves (MO) Newhouse
Green (TN) Norman
Greene (GA) Obernolte
Griffith Owens
Grothman Palazzo
Guest
Guthrie Pence
Harris Perry
Harshbarger Pfluger
Hartzler Posey
Hern Reschenthaler
Herrell Rice (SC)
Herrera Beutler Rodgers (WA)
Hice (GA) Rogers (AL)
Higgins (LA) Rogers (KY)
Hill Rosendale
Hinson Rouzer
Hollingsworth Roy
Hudson Rutherford
Huizenga Salazar
Issa Scalise
Jackson Schweikert
Chabot Jacobs (NY) Scott, Austin
Cline Johnson (LA) Sempolinski
Cloud Johnson (OH) Sessions
Clyde Johnson (SD) Simpson
Cole Jordan Smith (MO)
Comer Joyce (OH) Smith (NE)
Conway Joyce (PA) Smith (NJ)
Crawford Katko Smucker
Crenshaw Keller Spartz
Curtis Kelly (MS) Stauber
Davidson Kelly (PA) Steel
Davis, Rodney Kim (CA) Stefanik
DesJarlais Kinzinger Steil
Diaz-Balart Kustoff Steube
Donalds LaHood Stewart
Duncan LaMalfa Taylor
Dunn Lamborn Tenney
Ellzey Latta Thompson (PA)
Emmer LaTurner Tiffany
Estes Lesko Timmons
Fallon Letlow Turner
Feenstra Long Upton
Ferguson Loudermilk Valadao
Finstad Lucas Van Drew
Fischbach Luetkemeyer Van Dyne
Fitzgerald Mace Wagner
Fitzpatrick Malliotakis Walberg
Fleischmann Mann Waltz
Flood Massie Weber (TX)
Flores Mast Webster (FL)
Foxy McCarthy Wenstrup
Franklin, C. McCaul Westernman
Scott McClain Williams (TX)
Fulcher McClintock Wilson (SC)
Gaetz McHenry Wittman
Gallagher McKinley Womack
Garbarino Meijer Zeldin

NOT VOTING—4

Allred Cheney
Budd Rose

□ 1458

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE
RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Baird (Bucshon)	Jones (Beyer)	Rice (NY)
Barragan	Kirkpatrick	(Deutch)
(Correa)	(Pallone)	Schiff (Deutch)
Bass (Correa)	Lawrence	Schrader
Bush (Bowman)	(Beatty)	(Correa)
Cárdenas	Lawson (FL)	Scott (VA)
(Correa)	(Evans)	(Beyer)
Conway	Levin (MI)	Scott, Austin
(Valadao)	(Correa)	(Cammack)
DeSaulnier	McEachin	Stansbury
(Beyer)	(Beyer)	(Pallone)
Dingell (Kuster)	Miller (WV) (Kim	Stevens (Kuster)
Fallon (Nehls)	(CA))	Tlaib (Bowman)
Gaetz (Cawthorn)	Moore (WI)	Upton (Katko)
Higgins (NY)	(Beyer)	Wexton (Beyer)
(Pallone)	Newman (Beyer)	
Johnson (TX)	Payne (Pallone)	
(Jeffries)	Pingree (Kuster)	

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES
AND PASS CERTAIN BILLS

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 11 of House Resolution 1339, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bills: H.R. 1468, S. 4205, H.R. 7939, H.R. 7846, H.R. 7735, H.R. 5916, H.R. 8260, and H.R. 5865.

The Clerk read the title of the bills.
The text of the bills are as follows:

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION REAL
ESTATE LEASING AUTHORITY REVOCATION ACT
H.R. 1468

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Securities and Exchange Commission Real Estate Leasing Authority Revocation Act”.

SEC. 2. LEASING OF SPACE FOR SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 3304 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) **LEASING OF SPACE FOR SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, on and after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Securities and Exchange Commission may not lease general purpose office space. The Administrator may lease such space for the Securities and Exchange Commission under section 585 and this chapter.”.

(b) **LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) may not be construed to invalidate or otherwise affect a lease entered into by the Securities and Exchange Commission before the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. INDEPENDENT LEASING AUTHORITIES.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the review described in subsection (b).

(b) **REVIEW.**—The Comptroller General shall complete a review under which the Comptroller General shall update the 2016 report of the Comptroller General (GAO-16-648) with a specific focus on the following:

(1) *Updating the information included in Appendix II: Federal Entities That Reported Having Independent Leasing Authority for Domestic Offices and Warehouses of such report.*

(2) *Determining to what extent Federal entities with independent leasing authorities have had such authorities rescinded or amended and the number and amount of office and warehouse space such entities lease.*

(3) *Determining to what extent have agencies with independent leasing authority utilized the*

General Services Administration for leasing, including utilization of delegation of authority.

(4) *Identifying progress made on implementing the recommendations in such report.*

PLANNING FOR ANIMAL WELLNESS ACT
S. 4205

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Planning for Animal Wellness Act” or the “PAW Act”.

SEC. 2. WORKING GROUP GUIDELINES.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(2) **WORKING GROUP.**—The term “working group” means the advisory working group established under subsection (b).

(b) **WORKING GROUP.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall establish an advisory working group.

(c) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The working group shall consist of—

(1) not less than 2 representatives of State governments with experience in animal emergency management;

(2) not less than 2 representatives of local governments with experience in animal emergency management;

(3) not less than 2 representatives from academia;

(4) not less than 2 veterinary experts;

(5) not less than 2 representatives from nonprofit organizations working to address the needs of households pets and service animals in emergencies or disasters;

(6) representatives from the Federal Animal Emergency Management Working Group; and

(7) any other members determined necessary by the Administrator.

(d) **DUTIES.**—The working group shall—

(1) encourage and foster collaborative efforts among individuals and entities working to address the needs of household pets, service and assistance animals, and captive animals, as appropriate, in emergency and disaster preparedness, response, and recovery; and

(2) review best practices and Federal guidance, as of the date of enactment of this Act, on congregate and noncongregate sheltering and evacuation planning relating to the needs of household pets, service and assistance animals, and captive animals, as appropriate, in emergency and disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

(e) **NO COMPENSATION.**—The members of the working group shall serve on the working group on a voluntary basis.

(f) **GUIDANCE DETERMINATION.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the working group shall determine whether the best practices and Federal guidance described in subsection (d)(2) are sufficient.

(g) **NEW GUIDANCE.**—Not later than 540 days after the date of enactment of this Act, if the Administrator, in consultation with the working group, determines that the best practices and Federal guidance described in subsection (d)(2) are insufficient, the Administrator, in consultation with the working group, shall publish updated Federal guidance.

(h) **SUNSET.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to paragraph (2), the working group shall terminate on the date that is 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) **EXTENSION.**—The Administrator may extend the date described in paragraph (1) if the Administrator determines an extension is appropriate.

STUDENT VETERAN EMERGENCY RELIEF ACT OF
2022

H.R. 7939

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Student Veteran Emergency Relief Act of 2022”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Educational assistance benefits during emergency situations.

Sec. 3. Extension of time limitations for use of entitlement.

Sec. 4. Extension of payment of vocational rehabilitation subsistence allowances.

Sec. 5. Payment of work-study allowances during emergency situations.

Sec. 6. Payment of allowances to veterans enrolled in educational institutions closed for emergency situations.

Sec. 7. Apprenticeship or on-job training requirements.

Sec. 8. Prohibition of charge to entitlement of students unable to pursue a program of education due to an emergency situation.

Sec. 9. Department of Veterans Affairs approval of certain study-abroad programs.

Sec. 10. Eligibility for educational assistance under Department of Veterans Affairs Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of certain individuals who receive sole survivorship discharges.

Sec. 11. Uniform application for Department of Veterans Affairs approval of courses of education.

Sec. 12. Notice requirements for Department of Veterans Affairs education surveys.

Sec. 13. Exception to requirement to submit verification of enrollment of certain individuals.

Sec. 14. Expansion of eligibility for self-employment assistance under veteran readiness and employment program.

Sec. 15. Possible definitions of certain terms relating to educational assistance.

Sec. 16. Department of Veterans Affairs loan fees.

Sec. 17. Termination of certain consumer contracts by servicemembers and dependents who enter into contracts after receiving military orders for permanent change of station but then receive stop movement orders due to an emergency situation.

Sec. 18. Residence for tax purposes.

Sec. 19. Portability of professional licenses of members of the uniformed services and their spouses.

Sec. 20. Determination of budgetary effects.

SEC. 2. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE BENEFITS DURING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Chapter 36 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subchapters I and II as subchapters II and III, respectively; and

(2) by inserting before subchapter II, as so redesignated, the following new subchapter:”.

“SUBCHAPTER I—EMERGENCY
SITUATIONS**“§ 3601. Definition of emergency situation**

“In this chapter, the term ‘emergency situation’ means a situation that—

“(1) the President declares is an emergency; and

“(2) the Secretary determines is an emergency for purposes of the laws administered by the Secretary.

“§3602. Continuation of educational assistance benefits during emergency situations

“(a) **AUTHORITY.**—If the Secretary determines under subsection (c) that an individual is negatively affected by an emergency situation, the Secretary may provide educational assistance to that individual under the laws administered by the Secretary as if such negative effects did not occur. The authority under this section is in addition to the other authorities of the Secretary to provide benefits in emergency situations, but in no case may the Secretary provide more than a total of four weeks of additional educational assistance by reason of any other such authority and this section.

“(b) **HOUSING AND ALLOWANCES.**—In providing educational assistance to an individual pursuant to subsection (a), the Secretary may—

“(1) continue to pay a monthly housing stipend under chapter 33 of this title, during a month the individual would have been enrolled in a program of education or training but for the emergency situation at the same rate such stipend would have been payable if the individual had not been negatively affected by the emergency situation, except that the total number of weeks for which stipends may continue to be so payable may not exceed four weeks; and

“(2) continue to pay payments or subsistence allowances under chapters 30, 31, 32, 33, and 35 of this title and chapter 1606 of title 10 during a month for a period of time that the individual would have been enrolled in a program of education or training but for the emergency situation, except that the total number of weeks for which payments or allowances may continue to be so payable may not exceed four weeks.

“(c) **DETERMINATION OF NEGATIVE EFFECTS.**—The Secretary shall determine that an individual was negatively affected by an emergency situation if—

“(1) the individual is enrolled in a covered program of education of an educational institution or enrolled in training at a training establishment and is pursuing such program or training using educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary;

“(2) the educational institution or training establishment certifies to the Secretary that such program or training is truncated, delayed, relocated, canceled, partially canceled, converted from being on-site to being offered by distance learning, or otherwise modified or made unavailable by reason of the emergency situation; and

“(3) the Secretary determines that the modification to such program or training specified under paragraph (2) would reduce the amount of educational assistance (including with respect to monthly housing stipends, payments, or subsistence allowances) that would be payable to the individual but for the emergency situation.

“(d) **EFFECT ON ENTITLEMENT PERIOD.**—If the Secretary determines that an individual who received assistance under this section did not make progress toward the completion of the program of education in which the individual is enrolled during the period for which the individual received such assistance, any assistance provided pursuant to this section shall not be counted for purposes of determining the total amount of an individual's entitlement to educational assistance, housing stipends, or payments or subsistence allowances under chapters 30, 31, 32, and 35 of this title and chapter 1606 of title 10.

“§3603. Continuation of educational assistance benefits for certain programs of education converted to distance learning by reason of emergency situations

“In the case of a program of education approved by a State approving agency, or the Secretary when acting in the role of a State approving agency, that is converted from being offered on-site at an educational institution or training establishment to being offered by distance learning by reason of an emergency or health-related situation, as determined by the Secretary, the Secretary may continue to provide educational assistance under the laws administered by the Secretary without regard to such conversion, including with respect to paying any—

“(1) monthly housing stipends under chapter 33 of this title; or

“(2) payments or subsistence allowances under chapters 30, 31, 32, and 35 of this title and chapter 1606 of title 10.

“§3604. Effects of closure of educational institution and modification of courses by reason of emergency situation

“(a) **CLOSURE OR DISAPPROVAL.**—Any payment of educational assistance described in subsection (b) shall not—

“(1) be charged against any entitlement to educational assistance of the individual concerned; or

“(2) be counted against the aggregate period for which section 3695 of this title limits the receipt of educational assistance by such individual.

“(b) **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE DESCRIBED.**—Subject to subsection (d), the payment of educational assistance described in this subsection is the payment of such assistance to an individual for pursuit of a course or program of education at an educational institution under chapter 30, 31, 32, 33, or 35 of this title or chapter 1606 of title 10, if the Secretary determines that the individual—

“(1) was unable to complete such course or program as a result of—

“(A) the closure of the educational institution, or the full or partial cancellation of a course or program of education, by reason of an emergency situation; or

“(B) the disapproval of the course or a course that is a necessary part of that program under this chapter because the course was modified by reason of such emergency; and

“(2) did not receive credit or lost training time, toward completion of the program of education being so pursued.

“(c) **HOUSING ASSISTANCE.**—In this section, educational assistance includes, as applicable—

“(1) monthly housing stipends payable under chapter 33 of this title for any month the individual would have been enrolled in a course or program of education; and

“(2) payments or subsistence allowances under chapters 30, 31, 32, and 35 of this title and chapter 1606 of title 10 during a month the individual would have been enrolled in a course or program of education.

“(d) **PERIOD NOT CHARGED.**—The period for which, by reason of this section, educational assistance is not charged against entitlement or counted toward the applicable aggregate period under section 3695 of this title shall not exceed the aggregate of—

“(1) the portion of the period of enrollment in the course from which the individual did not receive credit or with respect to which the individual lost training time, as determined under subsection (b)(2); and

“(2) the period by which a monthly stipend is extended under section 3680(a)(2)(B) of this title.

“(e) **CONTINUING PURSUIT OF DISAPPROVED COURSES.**—(1) The Secretary may treat a course of education that is disapproved

under this chapter as being approved under this chapter with respect to an individual described in paragraph (2) if the Secretary determines, on a programmatic basis, that—

“(A) such disapproval is the result of an action described in subsection (b)(1)(B); and

“(B) continuing pursuing such course is in the best interest of the individual.

“(2) An individual described in this paragraph is an individual who is pursuing a course of education at an educational institution under chapter 30, 31, 32, 33, or 35 of this title or chapter 1606 of title 10, as of the date on which the course is disapproved as described in subsection (b)(1)(B).

“(f) **STATUS AS FULL-TIME STUDENT FOR PURPOSES OF HOUSING STIPEND CALCULATION.**—In the case of an individual who, as of the first day of an emergency situation was enrolled on a full-time basis in a program of education and was receiving educational assistance under chapter 33 of this title or subsistence allowance under chapter 31 of this title, and for whom the Secretary makes a determination under subsection (b), the individual shall be treated as an individual enrolled in a program of education on a full-time basis for the purpose of calculating monthly housing stipends payable under chapter 33 of this title, or subsistence allowance payable under chapter 31 of this title, for any month the individual is enrolled in the program of education on a part-time basis to complete any course of education that was partially or fully canceled by reason of the emergency situation.

“(g) **NOTICE OF CLOSURES.**—Not later than 5 business days after the date on which the Secretary receives notice that an educational institution will close or is closed by reason of an emergency situation, the Secretary shall provide to each individual who is enrolled in a course or program of education at such educational institution using entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 30, 31, 32, 33, or 35 of this title, or chapter 1606 of title 10 notice of—

“(1) such closure and the date of such closure; and

“(2) the effect of such closure on the individual's entitlement to educational assistance pursuant to this section.

“§3605. Payment of educational assistance in cases of withdrawal

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In the case of any individual who withdraws from a program of education or training, other than a program by correspondence, in an educational institution under chapter 31, 34, or 35 of this title for a covered reason during the period of an emergency situation, the Secretary shall find mitigating circumstances for purposes of section 3680(a)(1)(C)(ii) of this title.

“(b) **COVERED REASON.**—In this section, the term ‘covered reason’ means any reason related to an emergency situation, including—

“(1) illness, quarantine, or social distancing requirements;

“(2) issues associated with accessibility;

“(3) access or availability of childcare;

“(4) providing care for a family member or cohabitants;

“(5) change of location or residence due to the emergency situation or associated school closures;

“(6) employment changes or financial hardship; and

“(7) issues associated with changes in format or medium of instruction.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to subchapter II and inserting the following new item:

“SUBCHAPTER III—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS”.

(2) by striking the item relating to subchapter I and inserting the following new item:

“SUBCHAPTER II—STATE APPROVING AGENCIES”.

(3) by inserting before the item relating to subchapter II the following new items:

“SUBCHAPTER I—EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

“3601. Definition of emergency situation.

“3602. Continuation of educational assistance benefits during emergency situations.

“3603. Continuation of educational assistance benefits for certain programs of education converted to distance learning by reason of emergency situations.

“3604. Effects of closure of educational institution and modification of courses by reason of emergency situation.

“3605. Payment of educational assistance in cases of withdrawal.”.

(c) CONFORMING REPEALS.—The following provisions of law are repealed:

(1) Sections 1102, 1103, and 1104 of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-315).

(2) Public Law 116-128.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF TIME LIMITATIONS FOR USE OF ENTITLEMENT.

(a) MONTGOMERY GI BILL.—Section 3031 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i) In the case of an individual eligible for educational assistance under this chapter who is prevented from pursuing the individual’s chosen program of education before the expiration of the 10-year period for the use of entitlement under this chapter otherwise applicable under this section because the educational institution or training establishment closed (temporarily or permanently) under an established policy based on an Executive order of the President or due to an emergency situation, such 10-year period—

“(1) shall not run during the period the individual is so prevented from pursuing such program; and

“(2) shall again begin running on the first day after the individual is able to resume pursuit of a program of education with educational assistance under this chapter.”.

(b) POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3321(b)(1) of such title is amended—

(A) by inserting “(A)” before “Subsections”; and

(B) by striking “and (d)” and inserting “(d, and (i))”; and by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) Subsection (i) of section 3031 shall apply with respect to the running of the 15-year period described in paragraphs (4)(A) and (5)(A) of this subsection in the same manner as such subsection applies under section 3031 with respect to the running of the 10-year period described in section 3031(a).”.

(2) TRANSFER PERIOD.—Section 3319(h)(5) of such title is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A) by inserting “or (C)” after “subparagraph (B)”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.—In any case in which the Secretary determines that an individual to whom entitlement is transferred under this section has been prevented from pursuing the individual’s chosen program of education before the individual attains the age of 26 years because the educational institution or training establishment closed (temporarily or permanently)

under an established policy based on an Executive order of the President or due to an emergency situation, the Secretary shall extend the period during which the individual may use such entitlement for a period equal to the number of months that the individual was so prevented from pursuing the program of education, as determined by the Secretary.”.

(c) VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND TRAINING.—

(1) PERIOD FOR USE.—Section 3103 of such title is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “or (g)” and inserting “(g), or (h)”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) In any case in which the Secretary determines that a veteran has been prevented from participating in a vocational rehabilitation program under this chapter within the twelve-year period of eligibility prescribed in subsection (a) due to an emergency situation, such twelve-year period—

“(1) shall not run during the period the individual is so prevented from participating such program; and

“(2) shall again begin running on the first day after the individual is able to resume participation in such program.”.

(2) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—Section 3105(b) of such title is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and (3)”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3)(A) In any case in which the Secretary determines that a veteran has been prevented from participating in counseling and placement and postplacement services described in section 3104(a)(2) and (5) of this title due to an emergency situation, the Secretary shall extend the period during which the Secretary may provide such counseling and placement and postplacement services for the veteran for a period equal to the number of months that the veteran was so prevented from participating in such counseling and services, as determined by the Secretary.

“(B) In any case in which the Secretary determines that a veteran has been prevented from participating in a vocational rehabilitation program under this chapter due to an emergency situation, the Secretary shall extend the period of the veteran’s vocational rehabilitation program for a period equal to the number of months that the veteran was so prevented from participating in the vocational rehabilitation program, as determined by the Secretary.”.

(d) EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE SELECTED RESERVE.—Section 16133(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) In any case in which the Secretary concerned determines that a person entitled to educational assistance under this chapter has been prevented from using such person’s entitlement due to an emergency situation, the Secretary concerned shall extend the period of entitlement prescribed in subsection (a) for a period equal to the number of months that the person was so prevented from using such entitlement, as determined by the Secretary.”.

(e) EMERGENCY SITUATION DEFINED.—

(1) POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—Section 3301 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) The term ‘emergency situation’ has the meaning given such term in section 3601 of this title.”.

(2) MGIB.—Section 3002 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(9) The term ‘emergency situation’ has the meaning given such term in section 3601 of this title.”.

(3) VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND TRAINING.—Section 3101 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(10) The term ‘emergency situation’ has the meaning given such term in section 3601 of this title.”.

(4) EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE SELECTED RESERVE.—Section 16133 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) The term ‘emergency situation’ has the meaning given such term in section 3601 of title 38.”.

(f) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 6 of the Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-140) is repealed.

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF PAYMENT OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3104 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) In the case of any veteran whom the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines is satisfactorily following a program of employment services provided under subsection (a)(5) during the period of an emergency situation, the Secretary may pay the veteran a subsistence allowance, as prescribed in section 3108 of this title for full-time training for the type of program that the veteran was pursuing, for two additional months, if the Secretary determines that the veteran is negatively affected by the emergency situation.”.

(b) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 8 of the Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-140) is repealed.

SEC. 5. PAYMENT OF WORK-STUDY ALLOWANCES DURING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3485 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f)(1) In case of an individual who is in receipt of work-study allowance pursuant to an agreement described in subsection (a)(3) as of the date on which an emergency situation occurs and who is unable to continue to perform qualifying work-study activities described in subsection (a)(4) by reason of the emergency situation—

“(A) the Secretary may continue to pay work-study allowance under this section or make deductions described in subsection (e)(1) during the period of such emergency situation, notwithstanding the inability of the individual to perform such work-study activities by reason of such emergency situation; and

“(B) at the option of the individual, the Secretary shall extend the agreement described in subsection (a)(3) with the individual for any subsequent period of enrollment initiated during the emergency situation, notwithstanding the inability of the individual to perform work-study activities described in subsection (a)(4) by reason of such emergency situation.

“(2) The amount of work-study allowance payable to an individual under paragraph (1)(A) during the period of an emergency situation shall be an amount determined by the Secretary but may not exceed the amount that would be payable under subsection (a)(2) if the individual worked 25 hours per week paid during such period.

“(3) The term ‘emergency situation’ has the meaning given that term in section 3601 of this title.”.

(b) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 3 of the Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-140) is repealed.

SEC. 6. PAYMENT OF ALLOWANCES TO VETERANS ENROLLED IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS CLOSED FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3680 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) PAYMENTS DURING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.—(1) The Secretary may pay allowances to an eligible veteran or eligible person under subsection (a)(2)(A), if the veteran or person is enrolled in a program or course of education that—

“(A) is provided by an educational institution or training establishment that is closed by reason of an emergency situation; or

“(B) is suspended by reason of an emergency situation.

“(2) The total number of weeks for which allowances may be paid by reason of this subsection may not exceed four weeks.

“(3) Any amount paid under this subsection shall not be counted for purposes of the limitation on allowances under subsection (a)(2)(A).”

(b) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 4 of the Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 (Public Law 116–140) is repealed.

SEC. 7. APPRENTICESHIP OR ON-JOB TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3687(e) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following new paragraph (2):

“(2)(A) Subject to subparagraphs (B) and (C), for any month in which an individual fails to complete 120 hours of training, the entitlement otherwise chargeable under paragraph (1) shall be reduced in the same proportion as the monthly training assistance allowance payable is reduced under subsection (b)(3).

“(B) In the case of an individual who is unemployed by reason of an emergency situation during any month, the 120-hour requirement under subparagraph (A) for that month shall be reduced proportionately to reflect the individual’s period of unemployment, except that the amount of monthly training assistance otherwise payable to the individual under subsection (b)(3) shall not be reduced.

“(C) Any period during which an individual is unemployed by reason of an emergency situation shall not—

“(i) be charged against any entitlement to educational assistance of the individual; or

“(ii) be counted against the aggregate period for which section 3695 of this title limits the receipt of educational assistance by such individual.

“(D) Any amount by which the entitlement of an individual is reduced under subparagraph (A) shall not—

“(i) be charged against any entitlement to educational assistance of the individual; or

“(ii) be counted against the aggregate period for which section 3695 of this title limits the receipt of educational assistance by such individual.

“(E) In the case of an individual who fails to complete 120 hours of training during a month, but who completed more than 120 hours of training during the preceding month, the individual may apply the number of hours in excess of 120 that the individual completed for that month to the month for which the individual failed to complete 120 hours. If the addition of such excess hours results in a total of 120 hours or more, the individual shall be treated as an individual who has completed 120 hours of training for that month. Any excess hours applied to a different month under this subparagraph may only be applied to one such month.

“(F) This paragraph applies to amounts described in section 3313(g)(3)(B)(iv) and section 3032(c)(2) of this title and section 16131(d)(2) of title 10.

“(G) In this paragraph:

“(i) The term ‘unemployed’ includes being furloughed or being scheduled to work zero hours.

“(ii) The term ‘fails to complete 120 hours of training’ means, with respect to an individual, that during any month, the individual completes at least one hour, but fewer than 120 hours, of training, including in a case in which the individual is unemployed for part of, but not the whole, month.”

(b) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 1106 of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law 116–315) is repealed.

SEC. 8. PROHIBITION OF CHARGE TO ENTITLEMENT OF STUDENTS UNABLE TO PURSUE A PROGRAM OF EDUCATION DUE TO AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.

(a) PERMANENT APPLICABILITY.—Section 3699(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking “and” at the end and inserting “or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) the temporary closure of an educational institution or training establishment or the temporary closure or termination of a course or program of education by reason of an emergency situation; and”

(b) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 5 of the Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 (Public Law 116–140) is repealed.

SEC. 9. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROVAL OF CERTAIN STUDY-ABROAD PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3680A(f) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(2) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting “(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) In the case of a covered study-abroad course, the Secretary may approve the course for a period of not more than five years, if the contract or other written agreement under which the course is offered provides that—

“(i) the educational institution that offers a course that is approved under this chapter agrees to—

“(I) assume responsibility for the quality and content of the covered study-abroad course; and

“(II) serve as the certifying official for the course for purposes of this chapter; and

“(ii) the educational institution that offers the covered study-abroad course agrees to seek the approval of the course under this chapter by not later than five years after the date of the agreement.

“(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘covered study-abroad course’ means a course that—

“(i) is provided as a part of a program of education offered by an educational institution under a contract or other written agreement by another educational institution that offers a course that is approved under this chapter;

“(ii) is provided at a location in a foreign country; and

“(iii) has not been approved under this chapter.”

(b) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COURSES.—In the case of any covered study-abroad course, under the meaning given such term in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) of subsection (f) of section 3680A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), that is being offered under a contract or other written agreement as of the date of the enact-

ment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may approve such course under such paragraph (2) for the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, if such contract or other written agreement meets the criteria provided in subparagraph (A) of such paragraph.

SEC. 10. ELIGIBILITY FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVE SOLE SURVIVORSHIP DISCHARGES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Sgt. Wolf Kyle Weninger Veterans Education Fairness Act of 2022”.

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—Subsection (b)(2) of section 3311 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “who”;

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii);

(3) by inserting before clause (i), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraph (A):

“(A) who—”;

(4) in clause (ii), as so redesignated—

(A) by striking “subparagraph (A)” and inserting “clause (i)”; and

(B) by striking the period and inserting “or by reason of a sole survivorship discharge (as that term is defined in section 1174(i) of title 10); or”;

(5) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph (B):

“(B) who—

“(i) commencing on or after September 11, 2001, completes at least 30 continuous days of service described in subsection (d) (1) or (2); and

“(ii) after completion of service described in clause (i), is discharged or released by reason of a sole survivorship discharge (as that term is defined in section 1174(i) of title 10).”

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (d) of such section is amended by striking “The following” and inserting “Except as provided in subsection (b)(2)(B), the following”.

SEC. 11. UNIFORM APPLICATION FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 36 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 3672 the following new section:

“§ 3672A. Uniform application

“(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The Secretary, in partnership with State approving agencies, educational institutions, and training establishments, shall require the use of a uniform application by any educational institution or training establishment seeking the approval of a new course of education under this chapter.

“(2) The Secretary shall maintain one uniform application for institutions of higher learning and one such application for other educational institutions and training establishments.

“(3) In the case of any State that uses approval criteria not covered by a uniform application under this section, the State approving agency for that State shall require the use of the uniform application and may require the submittal of additional information.

“(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The uniform application required under subsection (a) shall meet the following requirements:

“(1) A requirement that the appropriate executive of the educational institution or training establishment seeking the approval of a course of education attests on behalf of

the educational institution or training establishment that the educational institution or training establishment—

“(A) is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations relating to the approval of courses of education under this chapter; and

“(B) during the five-year period preceding the date of the application—

“(i) has not been subject to, or been party to a contract with any individual or entity that has been subject to, any adverse administrative or judicial action that—

“(I) related to the instruction or training, including with respect to the quality of education, provided by the institution or establishment; and

“(II) resulted in a fine or penalty in an amount equal to or more than five percent of the amount of funding provided to the institution or establishment under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 for the fiscal year preceding the year in which the application is submitted; or

“(ii) has not employed an individual, or been party to a contract with any individual or entity, that has been convicted of a Federal fraud charge related to the instruction or training provided by the institution or establishment.

“(2) In the case of any educational institution or training establishment that is not participating in title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, a requirement for the inclusion of—

“(A) a copy of—

“(i) the articles of incorporation filed on behalf of the institution or establishment or proof of licensing to operate as an educational institution or training establishment in the State where the institution or establishment is located; and

“(ii) the financial position of the institution or establishment, as prepared by an appropriate third-party entity; or

“(B) other adequate evidence, as determined by the Secretary, that the institution or establishment is authorized to provide post-secondary education or training in the State where the institution or establishment is located.

“(3) In the case of any course of education that is offered by an educational institution or training establishment that has never offered a course of education that was approved under this chapter, a requirement for the inclusion of information about the course of education covered by the application, including—

“(A) the number of students who have entered and graduated from the course during the preceding two-year period; and

“(B) if available, the cohort default rate for funds provided to the institution or establishment under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

“(4) In the case of any educational institution or training establishment that is not an institution of higher learning, a requirement for the inclusion of—

“(A) a list of individuals who will serve as fully qualified instructors for the course of education, as of the date of the application, and an attestation that such individuals—

“(i) have a degree or other training, as appropriate, in the field of the course;

“(ii) effectively teach the skills offered under the course; and

“(iii) have demonstrated relevant industry experience in the field of the course; and

“(B) a list of individuals who will serve as career services employees for students enrolled in the course and an attestation that such individuals are skilled at identifying professions in the relevant industry that are in need of new employees to hire, tailoring the course of education to meet market

needs, and identifying the employers likely to hire graduates.

“(C) REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE APPROVING AGENCIES.—During the approval process with respect to a uniform application submitted by an educational institution or training establishment, a State approving agency, or the Secretary when acting in the role of a State approving agency, shall contact the Secretary of Education to determine whether the course of education subject to such approval process has withdrawn, or been denied or suspended, from receiving for benefits under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

“(d) APPROPRIATE EXECUTIVE.—In this section, the appropriate executive of an educational institution or training establishment is a senior executive official, senior administrator, owner, or operator designated by the institution or establishment.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3672 the following new item:

“3672A. Uniform application.”

(c) APPLICABILITY.—The application required by section 3672A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall—

(1) be developed by not later than October 1, 2023; and

(2) be required for the approval of any new course of education proposed on or after that day.

SEC. 12. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EDUCATION SURVEYS.

(a) RISK-BASED SURVEY.—Section 3673A of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) NOTICE.—To the maximum amount feasible, the Secretary, or a State approving agency, as applicable, shall provide not more than one business day of notice to an educational institution before conducting a targeted risk-based survey of the institution under this section.”

(b) COMPLIANCE SURVEYS.—Section 3693 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

“(c) To the maximum extent feasible, the Secretary, or a State approving agency, as applicable, shall provide not more than ten business days of notice to an educational institution or training establishment before conducting a compliance survey of the institution or establishment under this section.”

SEC. 13. EXCEPTION TO REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT VERIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.

Section 3313(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “The Secretary” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (4), the Secretary”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following new paragraph (4):

“(4) EXCEPTION.—An educational institution is not required to submit verification of an individual under paragraph (1)(A) if—

“(A) the individual is enrolled in a course or program of education offered by the educational institution on at least a full-time basis before the date on which the individual is able to withdraw from the course or program of education without penalty;

“(B) the educational institution charges the same amount of tuition and fees for students who are enrolled on a full-time basis and students who are enrolled on a more-than-full-time basis; and

“(C) the individual remains enrolled in the course or program of education after the

date on which the individual is able to withdraw from the course or program of education without penalty.”

SEC. 14. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SELF-EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE UNDER VETERAN READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

(a) EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Paragraph (12) of subsection (a) of section 3104 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(12) Such license fees and essential equipment, supplies, and minimum stocks of materials as the Secretary determines to be necessary for a veteran to begin self-employment and are within the criteria and cost limitations that the Secretary shall prescribe in regulations for the furnishing of such fees, equipment, supplies, and stocks.”

(b) PRIORITY.—Subsection (c)(1) of such section is amended by inserting before the first period the following: “, including with respect to providing priority for services under subsection (a)(12) to veterans with the most severe service-connected disabilities who require homebound training or self-employment, or both homebound training and self-employment”.

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—Section 3117 of such title is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)(C), by striking “this clause” and inserting “this subparagraph”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “insure” and inserting “ensure”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “clause” both places it appears and inserting “paragraph”.

SEC. 15. POSSIBLE DEFINITIONS OF CERTAIN TERMS RELATING TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report containing possible definitions of the Secretary for each of the following terms:

- (1) Student services.
- (2) Marketing.
- (3) Classroom instruction.

SEC. 16. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LOAN FEES.

The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “January 14, 2031” each place it appears and inserting “January 19, 2031”.

SEC. 17. TERMINATION OF CERTAIN CONSUMER CONTRACTS BY SERVICEMEMBERS AND DEPENDENTS WHO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS AFTER RECEIVING MILITARY ORDERS FOR PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION BUT THEN RECEIVE STOP MOVEMENT ORDERS DUE TO AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 305A of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. 3956) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking “TELEPHONE, MULTICHANNEL VIDEO PROGRAMMING, AND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE” and inserting “CERTAIN CONSUMER”; and

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the heading, by adding “OR DEPENDENT OF A SERVICEMEMBER” at the end;

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “after the date the servicemember receives military orders to relocate for a period of not less than 90 days to a location that does not support the contract.” and inserting “after—”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(A) the date the servicemember receives military orders to relocate for a period of not less than 90 days to a location that does not support the contract; or

“(B) the date the servicemember, while in military service, receives military orders for

a permanent change of station, thereafter enters into the contract, and then receives a stop movement order issued by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of Homeland Security in response to a local, national, or global emergency, effective for an indefinite period or for a period of not less than 30 days, that prevents the servicemember from using the services provided under the contract.”; and

(C) in paragraph (4), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) The spouse or dependent of a servicemember, described in paragraph (1)(B), who accompanies such servicemember during the period of relocation.”;

(3) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) COVERED CONTRACTS.—A contract described in this subsection is a contract—

“(1) for—

“(A) commercial mobile service;

“(B) telephone exchange service;

“(C) internet access service;

“(D) multichannel video programming service;

“(E) a gym membership or fitness program; or

“(F) home security services; and

“(2) entered into by a servicemember before receiving the military orders referred to in subsection (a)(1).”; and

(4) in subsection (g)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) as paragraphs (3), (4), and (5), respectively; and

(B) by inserting, after paragraph (1), the following new paragraph (2):

“(2) The terms ‘military orders’ and ‘permanent change of station’ have the meanings given such terms in section 305.”.

(b) RETROACTIVE APPLICATION.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to stop movement orders issued on or after March 1, 2020.

SEC. 18. RESIDENCE FOR TAX PURPOSES.

Section 511(a) of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. 4001(a)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) SPOUSES.—A spouse of a servicemember shall neither lose nor acquire a residence or domicile for purposes of taxation with respect to the person, personal property, or income of the spouse by reason of being absent or present in any tax jurisdiction of the United States solely to be with the servicemember in compliance with the servicemember’s military orders.

“(3) ELECTION.—For any taxable year of the marriage, a servicemember and the spouse of such servicemember may elect to use for purposes of taxation, regardless of the date on which the marriage of the servicemember and the spouse occurred, any of the following:

“(A) The residence or domicile of the servicemember.

“(B) The residence or domicile of the spouse.

“(C) The permanent duty station of the servicemember.”.

SEC. 19. PORTABILITY OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSES OF MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES AND THEIR SPOUSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. 4021 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 705 (50 U.S.C. 4025) the following new section:

“SEC. 705A. PORTABILITY OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSES OF SERVICEMEMBERS AND THEIR SPOUSES.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In any case in which a servicemember or the spouse of a servicemember has a covered license and such servicemember or spouse relocates his or her

residency because of military orders for military service to a location that is not in the jurisdiction of the licensing authority that issued the covered license, such covered license shall be considered valid at a similar scope of practice and in the discipline applied for in the jurisdiction of such new residency for the duration of such military orders if such servicemember or spouse—

“(1) provides a copy of such military orders to the licensing authority in the jurisdiction in which the new residency is located;

“(2) remains in good standing with—

“(A) the licensing authority that issued the covered license; and

“(B) every other licensing authority that has issued to the servicemember or the spouse of a servicemember a license valid at a similar scope of practice and in the discipline applied in the jurisdiction of such licensing authority;

“(3) submits to the authority of the licensing authority in the new jurisdiction for the purposes of standards of practice, discipline, and fulfillment of any continuing education requirements.

“(b) INTERSTATE LICENSURE COMPACTS.—If a servicemember or spouse of a servicemember is licensed and able to operate in multiple jurisdictions through an interstate licensure compact, with respect to services provided in the jurisdiction of the interstate licensure compact by a licensee covered by such compact, the servicemember or spouse of a servicemember shall be subject to the requirements of the compact or the applicable provisions of law of the applicable State and not this section.

“(c) COVERED LICENSE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘covered license’ means a professional license or certificate—

“(1) that is in good standing with the licensing authority that issued such professional license or certificate;

“(2) that the servicemember or spouse of a servicemember has actively used during the two years immediately preceding the relocation described in subsection (a); and

“(3) that is not a license to practice law.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 705 the following new item:

“Sec. 705A. Portability of professional licenses of servicemembers and their spouses.”.

SEC. 20. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

VETERANS’ COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2022

H.R. 7846

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2022, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2022, for the payment of dis-

ability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation under the provisions specified in subsection (b).

(b) AMOUNTS TO BE INCREASED.—The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to subsection (a) are the following:

(1) WARTIME DISABILITY COMPENSATION.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1114 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1115(1) of such title.

(3) CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—The dollar amount under section 1162 of such title.

(4) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING SPOUSE.—Each of the dollar amounts under subsections (a) through (d) of section 1311 of such title.

(5) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO CHILDREN.—Each of the dollar amounts under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

(c) DETERMINATION OF INCREASE.—Each dollar amount described in subsection (b) shall be increased by the same percentage as the percentage by which benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 2022, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(d) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons under section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who have not received compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in section 2(b), as increased under that section, not later than the date on which the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year 2023.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE VA HOME LOAN BENEFIT ACT OF 2022

H.R. 7735

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Improving Access to the VA Home Loan Benefit Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING APPRAISAL DELIVERY TIMES.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives recommendations for improving the delivery times for appraisals for loans guaranteed by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 3. UPDATE OF APPRAISAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN LOANS GUARANTEED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) UPDATED REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall prescribe updated regulations or program requirements to clarify when an appraisal is required, how an appraisal is to be conducted, and who is eligible to conduct an appraisal for a loan guaranteed by the Department of Veterans Affairs under chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, for any purpose described in section 3710(a) of such title. In prescribing updated

regulations or program requirements under this section, the Secretary shall take into consideration the recommendations of the Secretary submitted under section 2.

(b) **WAIVER OF REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN PROPERTIES.**—In prescribing updated regulations or program requirements under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consider making changes applicable to—

- (1) certification requirements for appraisers;
- (2) minimum property requirements;
- (3) the process for selecting and reviewing comparable sales;
- (4) quality control processes;
- (5) the Assisted Appraisal Processing Program; and
- (6) the use of waivers or other alternatives to existing appraisal processes.

(c) **DESK TOP APPRAISALS.**—In prescribing updated regulations or program guidance under subsection (a), the Secretary shall provide guidance for the use of the authority under section 3731(b)(3) of title 38, United States Code, taking into consideration—

- (1) situations in which the use of such authority would provide for cost savings for the borrower; and
- (2) situations in which a traditional appraisal requirement could cause a delay substantial enough to jeopardize the ability of a borrower to complete a transaction.

SEC. 4. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

WOUNDED WARRIOR ACCESS ACT H.R. 5916

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Wounded Warrior Access Act”.

SEC. 2. ELECTRONIC REQUEST OF CERTAIN RECORDS MAINTAINED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **ELECTRONIC RECORD REQUESTS.**—Section 5702 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and
- (2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

“(b)(1) The Secretary shall establish and maintain a secure website or online tool for a claimant or a duly recognized agent or representative of that claimant to submit an electronic request for such records.

“(2) The Secretary, upon receipt of a valid request made through the website or online tool established under paragraph (1), shall provide to the requestor—

- “(A) not later than 10 days after receipt, confirmation of such receipt; and
- “(B) not later than 120 days after receipt, such records requested in the form selected by the requestor.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 5702(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “in writing” and inserting “in writing, including an electronic request submitted through the website or online tool established under subsection (b).”;
- (2) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the end;

- (3) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;
- (4) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) the format in which such copy is desired, including whether in printed form or by downloadable file.”.

(c) **DEADLINE; ESTABLISHMENT OF WEBSITE OR ONLINE TOOL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish the website or online tool required under section 5702(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, as added by this Act, and, to the extent practicable, the Secretary shall utilize existing online resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of such establishment.

SEC. 3. WARNINGS TO CLAIMANTS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS REGARDING UNRECOGNIZED REPRESENTATIVES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 5901 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) by inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—” before “Except”;
- (2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) **WARNINGS ABOUT POTENTIAL PREDATORY PRACTICES.**—(1) The Secretary shall ensure that, each time a claimant under a law administered by the Secretary logs in to a website or online tool of the Department, such website or online tool issues to the claimant, in plain language—

“(A) a warning about individuals who seek to act in violation of this chapter;

“(B) a link to an online tool of the Department through which the claimant may report such an individual;

“(C) a link to an online tool of the Department through which the claimant may search for a recognized agent, attorney, or other entity recognized by the Secretary for the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of any claim under laws administered by the Secretary; and

“(D) a link to a website or an online tool of the Department providing final decisions on discipline of agents, attorneys, and entities, described in subparagraph (C), by the Secretary for violations of this chapter.

“(2) The Secretary shall provide all information under paragraph (1) in the following languages:

- “(A) English.
- “(B) Spanish.
- “(C) Tagalog.
- “(D) The seven other languages most commonly spoken in the United States.”.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out subsection (b) of such section, as added by subsection (a) of this section—

- (1) after consulting with stakeholders (including veterans service organizations recognized under section 5902 of such title) regarding the wording of the warning under such subsection; and
- (2) not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

FASTER PAYMENTS TO VETERANS’ SURVIVORS ACT OF 2022 H.R. 8260

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Faster Payments to Veterans’ Survivors Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. TIMEFRAME FOR DESIGNATION OF ALTERNATE BENEFICIARIES AND PAYMENT OF BENEFITS UNDER DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) **NATIONAL SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE.**—Section 1917(f)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

- (1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “two years” and inserting “one year”; and
- (2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “four” and inserting “two”.

(b) **UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE.**—Section 1952(c)(1) of such title is amended—

- (1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “two years” and inserting “one year”; and
- (2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “four” and inserting “two”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to the death of an insured person occurring on or after the date that is two years before the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION PROCESS UNDER DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) **NSLI.**—Section 1917 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a)(1) A person who enrolls in insurance maturing on or after August 1, 1946, may designate a beneficiary of the insurance policy. The insured shall, subject to regulations, at all times have the right to change the beneficiary or beneficiaries of such insurance without the consent of such beneficiary or beneficiaries.

“(2) If a person enrolled in insurance maturing on or after August 1, 1946, does not designate a beneficiary under paragraph (1) before the veteran dies, or if a designated beneficiary predeceases the veteran, the Secretary shall determine the beneficiary in the following order:

“(A) The surviving spouse of the insured person.

“(B) The children of the insured person and descendants of deceased children by representation.

“(C) The parents of the insured person or the survivors of the parents.

“(D) The duly appointed executor or administrator of the estate of the insured person.

“(E) Other next of kin of the insured person entitled under the laws of domicile of the insured person at the time of the death of the insured person.”.

(b) **USGLI.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1949 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1949. Beneficiaries

“(a) **DESIGNATION.**—A person who enrolls in United States Government life insurance may designate a beneficiary of the insurance policy. Subject to regulations, the insured person shall at all times have the right to change the beneficiary or beneficiaries of a United States Government life insurance policy without the consent of such beneficiary or beneficiaries.

“(b) **DETERMINATION IN CASES OF NON-DESIGNATION.**—If a person enrolled in United States Government life insurance does not designate a beneficiary under subsection (a) before the insured person dies, or if a designated beneficiary predeceases the insured person, the Secretary shall determine the beneficiary in the following order:

“(1) The surviving spouse of the insured person.

“(2) The children of the insured person and descendants of deceased children by representation.

“(3) The parents of the insured person or the survivors of the parents.

“(4) The duly appointed executor or administrator of the estate of the insured person.

“(5) Other next of kin of the insured person entitled under the laws of domicile of the insured person at the time of the death of the insured person.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 19 of

such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 1949 and inserting the following new item:

“1949. Beneficiaries.”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to the death of an insured person occurring on or after the date that is two years before the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IMPROVEMENT OF TREATMENT OF UNDISBURSED LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS.

(a) **IMPROVEMENT OF PROCESSES.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall improve the processes and procedures of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to identifying, locating, and paying hard-to-find beneficiaries of life insurance policies issued under chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code, including by—

(1) improving the search tools available on the website of the Department;

(2) conducting outreach to veterans, veterans service organizations, and the general public with respect to such search tools;

(3) improving the processes for searching for information relating to potential recipients through internal Department sources and sources available through other Federal agencies, State government agencies, and non-government entities; and

(4) ensuring the Department has sufficient dedicated staff whose primary responsibilities are identifying, locating, and paying hard-to-find beneficiaries, with the goal of disbursing by not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, all funds that, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, are owed to a beneficiary of a life insurance policy issued under chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should work with interagency partners to determine the types of records, reports, and other materials that may be required to identify, locate, and disburse undisbursed life insurance benefits to hard-to-find beneficiaries.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the progress of the Secretary in carrying out this section.

(d) **UNDISBURSED LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS DEFINED.**—The term “undisbursed life insurance benefits”—

(1) means any amount of money that is owed to a beneficiary of a life insurance policy issued under chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code, and that has not been disbursed for a period of two years or longer; and

(2) does not include any amount of money that—

(A) has not been disbursed due to a contested claim; or

(B) is in dispute by two or more parties over who is the entitled beneficiary.

SEC. 5. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

LEONARD SCARCELLA POST OFFICE BUILDING
H.R. 5865

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. LEONARD SCARCELLA POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) **DESIGNATION.**—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4110 Bluebonnet Drive in Stafford, Texas, shall be known and designated as the “Leonard Scarcella Post Office Building”.

(b) **REFERENCES.**—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the “Leonard Scarcella Post Office Building”.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11 of House Resolution 1339, the ordering of the yeas and nays on postponed motions to suspend the rules with respect to such measures is vacated to the end that all such motions are considered as withdrawn.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bills.

The question was taken.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 397, nays 29, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 426]

YEAS—397

Adams	Carter (TX)	Emmer
Aderholt	Cartwright	Escobar
Aguilar	Case	Eshoo
Allen	Casten	Espallat
Amodei	Castor (FL)	Evans
Armstrong	Castro (TX)	Fallon
Arrington	Cawthorn	Feenstra
Auchincloss	Chabot	Ferguson
Axne	Cherfilus-	Finstad
Babin	McCormick	Fischbach
Bacon	Chu	Fitzgerald
Baird	Cicilline	Fitzpatrick
Balderson	Clark (MA)	Fleischmann
Banks	Clarke (NY)	Fletcher
Barr	Cleaver	Flood
Barragán	Cline	Flores
Bass	Cloud	Foster
Beatty	Clyburn	Fox
Bentz	Clyde	Frankel, Lois
Bera	Cohen	Franklin, C.
Bergman	Cole	Scott
Beyer	Comer	Fulcher
Bice (OK)	Connolly	Gallagher
Bilirakis	Conway	Gallego
Bishop (GA)	Cooper	Garamendi
Bishop (NC)	Correa	Garbarino
Blumenauer	Costa	Garcia (CA)
Blunt Rochester	Courtney	Garcia (IL)
Bonamici	Craig	Garcia (TX)
Bost	Crenshaw	Gibbs
Bourdeaux	Crow	Gimenez
Bowman	Cuellar	Golden
Boyle, Brendan	Davidson	Gomez
F.	Davidson	Gonzales, Tony
Brady	Davis, Danny K.	Gonzalez (OH)
Brown (MD)	Davis, Rodney	Gonzalez,
Brown (OH)	Dean	Vicente
Brownley	DeFazio	Gottheimer
Buchanan	DeGette	Granger
Bucshon	DeLauro	Graves (LA)
Burchett	DeBene	Graves (MO)
Burgess	Demings	Green, Al (TX)
Bush	DeSaulnier	Griffith
Bustos	DesJarlais	Grijalva
Butterfield	Dutch	Grothman
Calvert	Diaz-Balart	Guest
Cammack	Dingell	Guthrie
Carbajal	Doggett	Harder (CA)
Cárdenas	Donalds	Harshbarger
Carey	Doyle, Michael	Hartzler
Carl	F.	Hayes
Carson	Duncan	Hern
Carter (GA)	Dunn	Herrell
Carter (LA)	Ellzey	Herrera Beutler

Higgins (LA)	McBath	Scanlon
Higgins (NY)	McCarthy	Schakowsky
Hill	McCaul	Schiff
Himes	McClain	Schneider
Hinson	McClintock	Schrader
Hollingsworth	McCollum	Schrier
Horsford	McEachin	Scott (VA)
Houlahan	McGovern	Scott, Austin
Hoyer	McHenry	Scott, David
Huffman	McKinley	Sempolinski
Huizenga	McNerney	Sewell
Issa	Meeks	Sherman
Jackson	Meijer	Sherrill
Jackson Lee	Meng	Simpson
Jacobs (CA)	Meuser	Sires
Jacobs (NY)	Mfume	Slotkin
Jayapal	Miller (IL)	Smith (MO)
Jeffries	Miller (WV)	Smith (NE)
Johnson (GA)	Miller-Meeks	Smith (NJ)
Johnson (LA)	Moolenaar	Smith (WA)
Johnson (OH)	Mooney	Smucker
Johnson (SD)	Moore (AL)	Soto
Johnson (TX)	Moore (UT)	Spanberger
Jones	Moore (WI)	Spartz
Jordan	Morelle	Speier
Joyce (OH)	Moulton	Stansbury
Kahele	Mryan	Stanton
Kaptur	Mullin	Staubert
Katko	Murphy (FL)	Steel
Keating	Murphy (NC)	Stefanik
Keller	Nadler	Steil
Kelly (IL)	Napolitano	Stevens
Kelly (MS)	Neal	Strickland
Kelly (PA)	Neguse	Suozi
Khanna	Nehls	Swalwell
Kildee	Newhouse	Takano
Kilmer	Newman	Tenney
Kim (CA)	Norcross	Thompson (CA)
Kim (NJ)	O'Halleran	Thompson (MS)
Kind	Obenolt	Thompson (PA)
Kinziger	Ocasio-Cortez	Tiffany
Kirkpatrick	Omar	Timmons
Krishnamoorthi	Palazzo	Titus
Kuster	Pallone	Tlaib
Kustoff	Panetta	Tonko
LaHood	Pappas	Torres (CA)
LaMalfa	Pascarell	Torres (NY)
Lamb	Payne	Trahan
Lamborn	Peltola	Trone
Langevin	Pence	Turner
Larsen (WA)	Perlmutter	Underwood
Larson (CT)	Perry	Upton
Latta	Peters	Valadao
LaTurner	Phillips	Van Drew
Lawrence	Pingree	Van Duyne
Lawson (FL)	Pocan	Vargas
Lee (CA)	Porter	Veasey
Lee (NV)	Posey	Velázquez
Leger Fernandez	Pressley	Wagner
Lesko	Price (NC)	Walberg
Letlow	Quigley	Waltz
Levin (CA)	Raskin	Wasserman
Levin (MI)	Reschenthaler	Schultz
Lieu	Rice (NY)	Waters
Lofgren	Rice (SC)	Watson Coleman
Long	Rodgers (WA)	Weber (TX)
Loudermilk	Rogers (AL)	Webster (FL)
Lowenthal	Rogers (KY)	Welch
Lucas	Ross	Wenstrup
Luetkemeyer	Rouzer	Westerman
Luria	Roybal-Allard	Wexton
Lynch	Ruiz	Wild
Mace	Ruppersberger	Williams (GA)
Malinowski	Rush	Williams (TX)
Malliotakis	Rutherford	Wilson (FL)
Maloney,	Ryan (NY)	Wilson (SC)
Carolyn B.	Ryan (OH)	Wittman
Maloney, Sean	Salazar	Womack
Mann	Sánchez	Yarmuth
Manning	Sarbanes	Zeldin
Matsui	Scalise	

NAYS—29

Biggs	Gosar	Palmer
Boebert	Green (TN)	Pfuger
Brooks	Greene (GA)	Rosendale
Buck	Harris	Roy
Crawford	Hice (GA)	Schweikert
Curtis	Joyce (PA)	Sessions
Estes	Massie	Steube
Gohmert	Mast	Stewart
Good (VA)	Norman	Taylor
Gooden (TX)	Owens	

NOT VOTING—6

Cheney	Hudson
Gaetz	Rose

□ 1514

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bills were passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE
RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Baird (Buchson)	Kirkpatrick	Pingree (Kuster)
Bass (Correa)	(Pallone)	Rice (NY)
Bush (Bowman)	Lawrence	(Deutch)
Cárdenas	(Beatty)	Schiff (Deutch)
(Correa)	Lawson (FL)	Schrader
Conway	(Evans)	(Correa)
(Valadao)	Levin (MI)	Scott (VA)
DeSaulnier	(Correa)	(Beyer)
(Beyer)	McEachin	Scott, Austin
Dingell (Kuster)	(Beyer)	(Cammack)
Fallon (Nehls)	Miller (WV) (Kim	Stansbury
Higgins (NY)	(CA))	(Pallone)
(Pallone)	Moore (WI)	Stevens (Kuster)
Johnson (TX)	(Beyer)	Tlaib (Bowman)
(Jeffries)	Newman (Beyer)	Upton (Katko)
Jones (Beyer)	Payne (Pallone)	Wexton (Beyer)

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSMAN HAL
ROGERS AS DEAN OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I had the honor of introducing Alaska's newly elected Representative after she took her oath of office.

Representative PELTOLA makes history in joining the House, and we are very glad to have her. The seat to which she was elected, however, became vacant because of an event for which we are all very, very saddened. The passing of our friend, a great friend of this institution, Representative Don Young, marked the end of an era for this House.

Don was a repository of institutional knowledge and a keeper of the House's traditions. He was our dean, the most senior Member of either party.

Today, as we reflect upon that loss for the House, for Alaska, and for all of us who were his friends, we recognize a new dean to succeed Don in that role. I join the Republican leader in congratulating Representative HAL ROGERS.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky has achieved that distinction to become our new dean of the House. It is humbling to think that our dean is from the same freshman class as I am. He was here just shy of 5 months before me, as does the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH). When we arrived here, we met the dean of the House, Jamie Whitten of Mississippi, who served in the House 122 years. I don't want to offend anyone from Mississippi. I know it was short of that time, but it was a long time.

Mr. Whitten had been elected first in 1941. He, himself, came to the office when the dean of the House had been elected in 1907, and the person who had been dean at that time was elected in 1879, which is to say there aren't a lot of deans of the House. And the day that Member ended as freshman, Abraham Lincoln was first sworn in as President

of the United States. Fewer deans, by far, than Presidents of the United States.

So we are connected to the 37th Congress of the United States and the Lincoln Presidency by just four individual Members' span of service.

HAL ROGERS now inherits the title once held by former President John Quincy Adams, Speaker Sam Rayburn, and my dear friend, DEBBIE DINGELL's husband, John Dingell.

Those of us who know HAL can testify to the respect and love he has for this institution and for the role of dean. He will surely uphold its traditions and continue to carry forward this chain of history for the House and for our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the dean of the House, HAL ROGERS of Kentucky.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), Republican leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. And as you spoke, you are runner-up, almost, to the dean, too, so I appreciate your service.

Before I begin, I do want to take a moment to recognize and talk about our former Member, Don Young. He took this job very seriously, and he is greatly missed.

And to the new dean, there are some similarities to you and Don. You both had your assigned seats. Don was in the back, but you are up front.

Don was a yeller. You are more of a southern gentleman. Don preferred a knife in his boot. You just like cigars, which I think is a little improvement.

Mr. Speaker, I have known HAL for the 15 years I have been here. I don't know of another person that has a greater respect for this institution or is more caring for Members on both sides of the aisle.

I have watched HAL in a position of power, as chair of the Appropriations Committee, work with people on the other side simply because the issue was right. I watched him defy his party, to stand up to do what is right.

I have traveled with him throughout his district, which is not a wealthy district at all, but I watched him, no matter how many years he has served, to continue to have the ability to listen.

I watched him be on the forefront of watching an opioid epidemic in America and him leading to do something about it, simply because he watched something in his district.

If you haven't ever had a moment of time—if you get Representatives WOMACK or COLE to step aside—take a moment and sit with HAL. He might speak soft and at times he is hard of hearing, especially when he goes through the magnetometers, but he will tell you stories that a historian would love. He will tell you the times before of what this body would do together. He will tell you the moments of the highs and the lows, and all of them would end in a story with America being a little better for tomorrow.

Now, HAL, I know the first question you are going to ask me. No, you get no more extra pay for being the dean, but you have a lot of responsibility, and, in essence, you are the mentor to the House. I know you will do your job well because all you have ever wanted to do was do what was right.

Your love for the institution, your love for the body, but more importantly, your love for the country.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL AVIATION
PREPAREDNESS PLAN ACT OF 2022

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 884) to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a national aviation preparedness plan for communicable disease outbreaks, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 293, nays 133, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 427]

YEAS—293

Adams	Clark (MA)	Garcia (TX)
Aguilar	Clarke (NY)	Gimenez
Amodei	Cleaver	Golden
Auchincloss	Clyburn	Gomez
Axne	Cohen	Gonzalez (OH)
Bacon	Cole	Gonzalez,
Balderson	Connolly	Vicente
Barr	Conway	Gottheimer
Barragán	Cooper	Graves (LA)
Bass	Correa	Graves (MO)
Beatty	Costa	Green, Al (TX)
Bera	Courtney	Grijalva
Beyer	Craig	Guthrie
Bice (OK)	Crow	Harder (CA)
Bishop (GA)	Cuellar	Hayes
Blumenauer	Davidson (KS)	Herrera Beutler
Blunt Rochester	Davis, Danny K.	Higgins (NY)
Bonamici	Davis, Rodney	Himes
Bourdeaux	Dean	Hinson
Bowman	DeFazio	Horsford
Boyle, Brendan	DeGette	Houlahan
F.	DeLauro	Hoyer
Brady	DelBene	Hudson
Brown (MD)	Demings	Huffman
Brown (OH)	DeSaulnier	Issa
Brownley	Deutch	Jackson Lee
Buchanan	Diaz-Balart	Jacobs (CA)
Bush	Dingell	Jacobs (NY)
Bustos	Doggett	Jayapal
Butterfield	Doyle, Michael	Jeffries
Calvert	F.	Johnson (GA)
Carbajal	Dunn	Johnson (OH)
Cárdenas	Escobar	Johnson (SD)
Carson	Eshoo	Johnson (TX)
Carter (GA)	Espallat	Jones
Carter (LA)	Evans	Joyce (OH)
Cartwright	Fallon	Kahele
Case	Fitzpatrick	Kaptur
Casten	Fletcher	Katko
Castor (FL)	Flood	Keating
Castro (TX)	Foster	Kelly (IL)
Cawthorn	Frankel, Lois	Kelly (PA)
Chabot	Gallagher	Khanna
Cherfilus-	Gallego	Kildee
McCormick	Garamendi	Kilmer
Chu	Garbarino	Kim (CA)
Cicilline	Garcia (IL)	Kim (NJ)

Kind
Kinzinger
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
LaHood
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lucas
Luria
Lynch
Malinowski
Malliotakis
Maloney,
Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Mann
Manning
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCarthy
McCaul
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McNerney
Meeks
Meijer
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton

Mrvan
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newhouse
Newman
O'Halleran
Oberholte
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Peltola
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rice (NY)
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (KY)
Ross
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Rutherford
Ryan (NY)
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sempolinski

Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Speier
Stansbury
Stanton
Stefanik
Stevens
Strickland
Suozi
Swalwell
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Upton
Valadao
Van Duyne
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Waltz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Womack
Yarmuth

NAYS—133

Aderholt
Allen
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Baird
Banks
Bentz
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brooks
Buck
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (TX)
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Comer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson
DesJarlais
Donalds
Duncan
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fleischmann

Flores
Foxy
Franklin, C.
Scott
Fulcher
Garcia (CA)
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hern
Herrell
Hice (GA)
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hollingsworth
Huizenga
Jackson
Johnson (LA)
Jordan
Joyce (PA)
Keller
Kelly (MS)
Kustoff
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Latta
LaTurner
Lesko
Letlow
Long

Loudermilk
Luetkemeyer
Mace
McClain
McClintock
Miller (IL)
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Mullin
Murphy (NC)
Nehls
Norman
Owens
Palazzo
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Rogers (AL)
Rosendale
Roy
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sessions
Smith (NJ)
Stauber
Steel
Steil
Steube
Stewart
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Van Drew
Wagner
Walberg
Weber (TX)

Webster (FL)
Wenstrup

Westerman
Williams (TX)

Wittman
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—6

Alfred
Budd

Cheney
Norcross

Rice (SC)
Rose

□ 1533

Mr. MCCARTHY changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Baird (Bucshon)
Bass (Correa)
Bush (Bowman)
Cárdenas
(Correa)
Conway
(Valadao)
DeSaulnier
(Beyer)
Dingell (Kuster)
Fallon (Nehls)
Gaetz (Cawthorn)
Higgins (NY)
(Pallone)
Johnson (TX)
(Jeffries)
Jones (Beyer)

Kirkpatrick
(Pallone)
Lawrence
(Beatty)
Lawson (FL)
(Evans)
Levin (MI)
(Correa)
McEachin
(Beyer)
Miller (WV) (Kim)
(CA)
Moore (WI)
(Beyer)
Newman (Beyer)
Payne (Pallone)
Pingree (Kuster)

Rice (NY)
(Deutch)
Schiff (Deutch)
Schrader
(Correa)
Scott (VA)
(Beyer)
Scott, Austin
(Cammack)
Stansbury
(Pallone)
Stevens (Kuster)
Tlaib (Bowman)
Upton (Katko)
Wexton (Beyer)

EXPEDITING DISASTER RECOVERY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5774) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to ensure that unmet needs after a major disaster are met, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 406, nays 20, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 428]

YEAS—406

Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Auchincloss
Axne
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Bice (OK)

Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NC)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Boebert
Bonamici
Bost
Bordeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady
Brown (MD)
Brown (OH)
Brownley
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield

Calvert
Cammack
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carey
Carl
Carson
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Case
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cherfilus-
McCormick
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver

Cline
Cloud
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Comer
Connolly
Conway
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis, Danny K.
Davis, Rodney
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DeBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Doyle, Michael
F.
Duncan
Dunn
Ellzey
Emmer
Escobar
Español
Evans
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fletcher
Flood
Flores
Foster
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, C.
Scott
Fulcher
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
Garcia (CA)
Garcia (IL)
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Golden
Gomez
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez (OH)
Gonzalez,
Vicente
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Green, Al (TX)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Harder (CA)
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hayes
Hern
Herrell
Herrera Beutler

Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Issa
Jackson
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jacobs (NY)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kabele
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Keller
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kinzinger
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamb
Lamborn
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
LaTurner
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Lesko
Letlow
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Lowenthal
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luria
Lynch
Mace
Malinowski
Malliotakis
Maloney,
Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Mann
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCarthy
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McKinley
McNerney
Meeks
Meijer
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (IL)

Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Murphy (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (NC)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nehls
Newhouse
Newman
Norcross
O'Halleran
Oberholte
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Peltola
Perlmutter
Peters
Pfluger
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Posey
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Ross
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Rutherford
Ryan (NY)
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sempolinski
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Speier
Stansbury
Stanton
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stevens

Stewart	Trahan	Weber (TX)	Banks	Fitzgerald	Lee (NV)	Ryan (OH)	Spartz	Valadao
Strickland	Trone	Webster (FL)	Barr	Fitzpatrick	Leger Fernandez	Salazar	Speier	Van Drew
Suozi	Turner	Welch	Barragán	Fleischmann	Letlow	Sánchez	Stansbury	Van Duyne
Swalwell	Underwood	Wenstrup	Bass	Fletcher	Levin (CA)	Sarbanes	Stanton	Vargas
Takano	Upton	Westerman	Beatty	Flood	Levin (MI)	Scalise	Stauber	Veasey
Taylor	Valadao	Wexton	Bentz	Flores	Lieu	Scanlon	Steel	Velázquez
Tenney	Van Drew	Wild	Bera	Poster	Lofgren	Schakowsky	Stefanik	Wagner
Thompson (CA)	Van Duyne	Williams (GA)	Bergman	Frankel, Lois	Long	Schiff	Steil	Walberg
Thompson (MS)	Vargas	Williams (TX)	Beyer	Franklin, C.	Lowenthal	Schneider	Stevens	Waltz
Tiffany	Veasey	Wilson (FL)	Bice (OK)	Scott	Lucas	Schrader	Stewart	Wasserman
Timmons	Velázquez	Wilson (SC)	Bilirakis	Fulcher	Luetkemeyer	Schrier	Strickland	Wasserman
Titus	Walberg	Wittman	Bishop (GA)	Gallagher	Luria	Scott (VA)	Suozi	Schultz
Tlaib	Waltz	Womack	Blumenauer	Gallego	Lynch	Scott, Austin	Swalwell	Waters
Tonko	Wasserman	Yarmuth	Blunt Rochester	Garamendi	Mace	Scott, David	Takano	Watson Coleman
Torres (CA)	Schultz	Zeldin	Bonamici	Garbarino	Malinowski	Sempolinski	Taylor	Webster (FL)
Torres (NY)	Watson Coleman		Bost	Garcia (CA)	Malliotakis	Sessions	Tenney	Welch
			Bourdeaux	Garcia (IL)	Maloney,	Sewell	Thompson (CA)	Wenstrup
			Bowman	Garcia (TX)	Carolyn B.	Sherman	Thompson (MS)	Westerman
			Boyle, Brendan	Gibbs	Maloney, Sean	Sherrill	Timmons	Wexton
			F.	Gimenez	Mann	Simpson	Titus	Wild
			Brady	Golden	Manning	Sires	Tlaib	Williams (GA)
			Brown (MD)	Gomez	Mast	Slotkin	Tonko	Williams (TX)
			Brown (OH)	Gonzales, Tony	Matsui	Smith (MO)	Torres (CA)	Wilson (FL)
			Brownley	Gonzalez (OH)	McBath	Smith (NE)	Torres (NY)	Wilson (SC)
			Buchanan	Gonzalez,	McCarthy	Smith (NJ)	Trahan	Wittman
			Bucshon	Vicente	McCaul	Smith (WA)	Trone	Womack
			Burchett	Gottheimer	McClain	Smucker	Turner	Yarmuth
			Bush	Graves (LA)	McClintock	Soto	Underwood	Zeldin
			Bustos	Graves (MO)	McCollum	Spanberger	Upton	
			Butterfield	Green (TN)	McEachin			
			Calvert	Green, Al (TX)	McGovern			
			Cammack	Grijalva	McHenry	Babin	Foxx	Loudermilk
			Carbajal	Grothman	McKinley	Biggs	Gohmert	Massie
			Cárdenas	Guest	McNerney	Bishop (NC)	Good (VA)	Miller (IL)
			Carey	Guthrie	Meeks	Boebert	Gooden (TX)	Norman
			Carl	Harder (CA)	Meijer	Brooks	Gosar	Pence
			Carson	Harshbarger	Meng	Buck	Granger	Perry
			Carter (GA)	Hartzler	Meuser	Burgess	Greene (GA)	Rosendale
			Carter (LA)	Hayes	Mfume	Carter (TX)	Griffith	Roy
			Cartwright	Hern	Miller (WV)	Cline	Harris	Schweikert
			Case	Herrell	Miller-Meeks	Cloud	Hice (GA)	Steube
			Casten	Herrera Beutler	Moolenaar	Clyde	Jackson	Tiffany
			Castor (FL)	Higgins (LA)	Mooney	Estes	Joyce (PA)	Weber (TX)
			Castro (TX)	Higgins (NY)	Moore (AL)	Ferguson	Lesko	
			Cawthorn	Hill	Moore (UT)			
			Chabot	Himes	Moore (WI)	Allred	Davis, Rodney	Thompson (PA)
			Cherfilus-	Hinson	Morrell	Budd	Gaetz	
			McCormick	Hollingsworth	Moulton	Cheney	Rose	
			Chu	Horsford	Mrvan			
			Cicilline	Houlihan	Mullin			
			Clark (MA)	Hoyer	Murphy (FL)			
			Clarke (NY)	Hudson	Murphy (NC)			
			Cleaver	Huffman	Nadler			
			Clyburn	Huizenga	Napolitano			
			Cohen	Issa	Neal			
			Cole	Jackson Lee	Neguse			
			Comer	Jacobs (CA)	Nehls			
			Connolly	Jacobs (NY)	Newhouse			
			Conway	Jayapal	Newman			
			Cooper	Jeffries	Norcross			
			Correa	Johnson (GA)	O'Halleran			
			Costa	Johnson (LA)	Obermole			
			Courtney	Johnson (OH)	Ocasio-Cortez			
			Craig	Johnson (SD)	Omar			
			Crawford	Johnson (TX)	Owens			
			Crenshaw	Jones	Palazzo			
			Crow	Jordan	Pallone			
			Cuellar	Joyce (OH)	Palmer			
			Curtis	Kahele	Panetta			
			Davids (KS)	Kaptur	Pappas			
			Davidson	Katko	Pascarell			
			Davis, Danny K.	Keating	Payne			
			Dean	Keller	Peltola			
			DeFazio	Kelly (IL)	Perlmutter			
			DeGette	Kelly (MS)	Peters			
			DeLauro	Kelly (PA)	Pfluger			
			DelBene	Khanna	Phillips			
			Demings	Kildee	Pingree			
			DeSaulnier	Kilmer	Pocan			
			DesJarlais	Kim (CA)	Porter			
			Deutch	Kim (NJ)	Posey			
			Diaz-Balart	Kind	Pressley			
			Dingell	Kinzing	Price (NC)			
			Doggett	Kirkpatrick	Quigley			
			Donalds	Krishnamoorthi	Raskin			
			Doyle, Michael	Kuster	Reschenthaler			
			F.	Kustoff	Rice (NY)			
			Duncan	LaHood	Rice (SC)			
			Dunn	LaMalfa	Rodgers (WA)			
			Ellzey	Lamb	Rogers (AL)			
			Emmer	Lamborn	Rogers (KY)			
			Escobar	Langevin	Ross			
			Eshoo	Larsen (WA)	Rouzer			
			Espallat	Larson (CT)	Roybal-Allard			
			Evans	Latta	Ruiz			
			Fallon	LaTurner	Ruppersberger			
			Feenstra	Lawrence	Rush			
			Finstad	Lawson (FL)	Rutherford			
			Fischbach	Lee (CA)	Ryan (NY)			

NAYS—20

Biggs	Good (VA)	Perry
Brooks	Hice (GA)	Rosendale
Buck	Hollingsworth	Roy
Casten	Massie	Schweikert
Estes	McHenry	Wagner
Foxx	Norman	Waters
Garcia (TX)	Pence	

NOT VOTING—6

Allred	Cheney	Rose
Budd	Gaetz	Thompson (PA)

□ 1546

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Baird (Bucshon)	Kirkpatrick	Pingree (Kuster)
Bass (Correa)	(Pallone)	Rice (NY)
Bush (Bowman)	Lawrence	(Deutch)
Cárdenas	(Beatty)	Schiff (Deutch)
(Correa)	Lawson (FL)	Schrader
Conway	(Evans)	(Correa)
(Valadao)	Levin (MI)	Scott (VA)
DeSaulnier	(Correa)	(Beyer)
(Beyer)	McEachin	Scott, Austin
Dingell (Kuster)	(Beyer)	(Cammack)
Fallon (Nehls)	Miller (WV) (Kim	Stansbury
Higgins (NY)	(CA))	(Pallone)
(Pallone)	Moore (WI)	Stevens (Kuster)
Johnson (TX)	(Beyer)	Tlaib (Bowman)
(Jeffries)	Newman (Beyer)	Upton (Katko)
Jones (Beyer)	Payne (Pallone)	Wexton (Beyer)

CIVILIAN RESERVIST EMERGENCY WORKFORCE ACT OF 2021

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2293) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide certain employment rights to reservists of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 387, nays 38, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 429]

YEAS—387

Adams	Amodei	Axne
Aderholt	Armstrong	Bacon
Aguilar	Arrington	Baird
Allen	Auchincloss	Balderson

NAYS—38

Foxx	Loudermilk
Gohmert	Massie
Good (VA)	Miller (IL)
Gooden (TX)	Norman
Gosar	Pence
Granger	Perry
Greene (GA)	Rosendale
Griffith	Roy
Harris	Schweikert
Hice (GA)	Steube
Jackson	Tiffany
Joyce (PA)	Weber (TX)
Lesko	

NOT VOTING—7

Allred	Davis, Rodney	Thompson (PA)
Budd	Gaetz	
Cheney	Rose	

□ 1554

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Baird (Bucshon)	Kirkpatrick	Pingree (Kuster)
Bass (Correa)	(Pallone)	Rice (NY)
Bush (Bowman)	Lawrence	(Deutch)
Cárdenas	(Beatty)	Schiff (Deutch)
(Correa)	Lawson (FL)	Schrader
Conway	(Evans)	(Correa)
(Valadao)	Levin (MI)	Scott (VA)
DeSaulnier	(Correa)	(Beyer)
(Beyer)	McEachin	Scott, Austin
Dingell (Kuster)	(Beyer)	(Cammack)
Fallon (Nehls)	Miller (WV)	Stansbury
Higgins (NY)	(Kim (CA))	(Pallone)
(Pallone)	Moore (WI)	Stevens (Kuster)
Johnson (TX)	(Beyer)	Tlaib (Bowman)
(Jeffries)	Newman (Beyer)	Upton (Katko)
Jones (Beyer)	Payne (Pallone)	Wexton (Beyer)

BULB REPLACEMENT IMPROVING GOVERNMENT WITH HIGH-EFFICIENCY TECHNOLOGY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 442) to amend title 40, United States Code, to require the Administrator of General Services to procure the most lifecycle cost effective and energy efficient lighting products and

to issue guidance on the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of those products, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 347, nays 78, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 430]

YEAS—347

Adams	DeLauro	Johnson (LA)
Aderholt	DelBene	Johnson (SD)
Aguilar	Demings	Johnson (TX)
Amodel	DeSaulnier	Jones
Armstrong	DesJarlais	Joyce (OH)
Auchincloss	Deutsch	Kahele
Axne	Diaz-Balart	Kaptur
Bacon	Dingell	Katko
Baird	Doggett	Keating
Balderson	Doyle, Michael	Keller
Barr	F.	Kelly (IL)
Barragán	Dunn	Kelly (MS)
Bass	Emmer	Kelly (PA)
Beatty	Escobar	Khanna
Bentz	Eshoo	Kildee
Bera	Española	Kilmer
Bergman	Evans	Kim (CA)
Beyer	Fallon	Kim (NJ)
Bice (OK)	Feenstra	Kind
Bilirakis	Finstad	Kirkpatrick
Bishop (GA)	Fischbach	Krishnamoorthi
Blumenauer	Fitzgerald	Kuster
Blunt Rochester	Fitzpatrick	Kustoff
Bonamici	Fleischmann	LaHood
Bost	Fletcher	Lamb
Bourdeaux	Flood	Langevin
Bowman	Flores	Larsen (WA)
Boyle, Brendan	Foster	Larson (CT)
F.	Frankel, Lois	Latta
Brady	Franklin, C.	LaTurner
Brown (MD)	Scott	Lawrence
Brown (OH)	Gallagher	Lawson (FL)
Brownley	Galligo	Lee (CA)
Buchanan	Garamendi	Lee (NV)
Bucshon	Garbarino	Leger Fernandez
Bush	Garcia (CA)	Letlow
Bustos	Garcia (IL)	Levin (CA)
Butterfield	Garcia (TX)	Levin (MI)
Calvert	Gibbs	Lieu
Carbajal	Gimenez	Lofgren
Cárdenas	Golden	Long
Carl	Gomez	Lowenthal
Carson	Gonzales, Tony	Lucas
Carter (LA)	Gonzalez (OH)	Luetkemeyer
Cartwright	Gonzalez,	Luria
Case	Vicente	Lynch
Casten	Gottheimer	Malinowski
Castor (FL)	Graves (LA)	Malliotakis
Castro (TX)	Graves (MO)	Maloney,
Cawthorn	Green (TN)	Carolyn B.
Chabot	Green, Al (TX)	Maloney, Sean
Cherfilus-	Grijalva	Mann
McCormick	Guest	Manning
Chu	Guthrie	Mast
Cicilline	Harder (CA)	Matsui
Clark (MA)	Hartzler	McBath
Clarke (NY)	Hayes	McCarthy
Cleaver	Hern	McCaul
Clyburn	Herrell	McClain
Cohen	Herrera Beutler	McClintock
Cole	Higgins (NY)	McCollum
Connolly	Hill	McEachin
Conway	Himes	McGovern
Correa	Hinson	McHenry
Costa	Hollingsworth	McKinley
Courtney	Horsford	McNerney
Craig	Houlahan	Meeks
Crawford	Hoyer	Meijer
Crenshaw	Hudson	Meng
Crow	Huffman	Mfume
Cuellar	Huizenga	Miller (WV)
Curtis	Issa	Miller-Meeks
Davids (KS)	Jackson Lee	Moolenaar
Davis, Danny K.	Jacobs (CA)	Mooney
Davis, Rodney	Jacobs (NY)	Moore (AL)
Dean	Jayapal	Moore (UT)
DeFazio	Jeffries	Moore (WI)
DeGette	Johnson (GA)	Morelle

Moulton	Ruppersberger	Takano
Mrvan	Rush	Tenney
Murphy (FL)	Ryan (NY)	Thompson (CA)
Murphy (NC)	Ryan (OH)	Thompson (MS)
Nadler	Salazar	Thompson (PA)
Napolitano	Sánchez	Timmons
Neal	Sarbanes	Titus
Neguse	Scanlon	Tlaib
Nehls	Schakowsky	Tonko
Newhouse	Schiff	Torres (CA)
Newman	Schneider	Torres (NY)
Norcross	Schrader	Trahan
O'Halleran	Schrier	Trone
Ocasio-Cortez	Scott (VA)	Turner
Omar	Scott, Austin	Underwood
Palazzo	Scott, David	Upton
Pallone	Sewell	Valadao
Palmer	Sherman	Van Drew
Panetta	Sherrill	Vargas
Pappas	Simpson	Veasey
Pascarell	Sires	Velázquez
Payne	Slotkin	Walberg
Peltola	Smith (MO)	Waltz
Perlmutter	Smith (NJ)	Wasserman
Peters	Smith (WA)	Schultz
Phillips	Smucker	Waters
Pingree	Soto	Watson Coleman
Pocan	Spanberger	Welch
Porter	Spartz	Wenstrup
Pressley	Speier	Westerman
Price (NC)	Stansbury	Wexton
Raskin	Stanton	Wild
Reschenthaler	Stauber	Williams (GA)
Rice (NY)	Stefanik	Williams (TX)
Rodgers (WA)	Stefanik	Wilson (FL)
Rogers (AL)	Stell	Wilson (SC)
Rogers (KY)	Stevens	Wittman
Ross	Strickland	Womack
Roybal-Allard	Suozzi	Yarmuth
Ruiz	Swalwell	Zeldin

NAYS—78

Allen	Fulcher	Mullin
Arrington	Gaetz	Norman
Babin	Gohmert	Oberholte
Banks	Good (VA)	Owens
Biggs	Gooden (TX)	Pence
Bishop (NC)	Gosar	Perry
Boebert	Granger	Pfleger
Brooks	Greene (GA)	Posey
Buck	Griffith	Rice (SC)
Burchett	Grothman	Rosendale
Burgess	Harris	Rouzer
Carmack	Harshbarger	Roy
Carey	Hice (GA)	Rutherford
Carter (GA)	Higgins (LA)	Scalise
Carter (TX)	Jackson	Schweikert
Cline	Johnson (OH)	Sempolinski
Cloud	Jordan	Sessions
Clyde	Joyce (PA)	Smith (NE)
Comer	LaMalfa	Steube
Davidson	Lamborn	Stewart
Donalds	Lesko	Taylor
Duncan	Loudermilk	Tiffany
Elizy	Mace	Van Duyne
Estes	Massie	Wagner
Ferguson	Meuser	Weber (TX)
Foxx	Miller (IL)	Webster (FL)

NOT VOTING—7

Allred	Cooper	Rose
Budd	Kinzinger	
Cheney	Quigley	

□ 1603

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I was participating in a Presidential Delegation to the Republic of Kenya and absent during the time of votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

YE A on Roll Call No. 424, H. Res. 1339, on Ordering the Previous Question;

YE A on Roll Call No. 425, H. Res. 1339, on Agreeing to the Resolution;

YE A on Roll Call No. 426, Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass Certain Bills (H.R.

1468, S. 4205, H.R. 7939, H.R. 7846, H.R. 7735, H.R. 5916, H.R. 8260, and H.R. 5865);

YE A on Roll Call No. 427, H.R. 884, the National Aviation Preparedness Plan Act;

YE A on Roll Call No. 428, H.R. 5774, the Expediting Disaster Recovery Act;

YE A on Roll Call No. 429, S. 2293, the Crew Act; and

YE A on Roll Call No. 430, S. 442, the BRIGHT Act.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Baird (Bucshon)	Kirkpatrick	Rice (NY)
Bass (Correa)	(Pallone)	(Deutch)
Bush (Bowman)	Lawrence	Schiff (Deutch)
Cárdenas	(Beatty)	Schrader
(Correa)	Lawson (FL)	(Correa)
Conway	(Evans)	Scott (VA)
(Valadao)	Levin (MI)	(Beyer)
DeSaulnier	(Correa)	Scott, Austin
(Beyer)	McEachin	(Cammack)
Dingell (Kuster)	(Beyer)	Stansbury
Fallon (Nehls)	Miller (WV)	(Pallone)
Gaetz (Cawthorn)	(Kim (CA))	Stevens (Kuster)
Higgins (NY)	Moore (WI)	Tlaib (Bowman)
(Pallone)	(Beyer)	Upton (Katko)
Johnson (TX)	Newman (Beyer)	Wexton (Beyer)
(Jeffries)	Payne (Pallone)	
Jones (Beyer)	Pingree (Kuster)	

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2021

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the bill before us today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1339 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2988.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1608

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2988) to amend title 5, United States Code, to modify and enhance protections for Federal Government whistleblowers, and for other purposes, with Mr. BLUMENAUER in the chair.

The CHAIR. The House is in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of H.R. 2988, which the Clerk will report by title.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or their respective designees.

The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the

gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 2988, the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act of 2021. In May 2021, I introduced the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act, along with Representative NANCY MACE, ranking member of the Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Subcommittee.

Federal whistleblowers serve a critical role by shedding a light on government corruption, waste, fraud, and abuse and wrongdoing, often through reporting such actions to Congress. Their disclosures protect taxpayers' dollars, improve Federal programs, and even save lives. Unfortunately, the Oversight Committee has seen too many examples of employers retaliating against whistleblowers. In one instance, the TSA, the Transportation Security Administration, that provides security at airports, moved an airport employee hundreds of miles away to a new duty station when they revealed security flaws at the TSA at the airports.

In another troubling example, a White House supervisor moved files beyond the reach of a disabled employee after the employee disclosed violations of security clearance procedures.

A GAO report earlier this year also revealed that employees at four scientific research agencies did not report instances of political interference in scientific decisionmaking out of fear of retaliation and uncertainty of how to best voice their concerns.

As these examples make clear, whistleblowers often make disclosures at great personal risk. That is why protections for whistleblowers have long received bipartisan support in this Congress. I thank my colleagues, including Representative MACE, for continuing that tradition today.

The Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act would enact long-overdue reforms to protect whistleblowers from retaliation to the greatest extent possible, and to provide meaningful remedies if whistleblowers still encounter retaliation.

The bill would prohibit agencies from launching retaliatory investigations against employees who blow the whistle and would limit the public disclosure of a whistleblower's identity.

The bill would also provide Federal whistleblowers with faster legal recourse for retaliation claims and would allow them to have their claims tried before a jury in a Federal District Court. Access to jury trials has long been a priority of whistleblower advocates.

The last major reform to whistleblower protection was in 2012. I am proud to continue this important bipartisan effort to protect whistleblowers today.

The bill we are considering also clarifies that whistleblowers who prevail are entitled to recover attorney's fees and to receive the necessary relief to make them whole.

Finally, the bill would make clear that no Federal employee, including the President or the Vice President of the U.S., may interfere or retaliate against a whistleblower for disclosing information to Congress.

The Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act has received public support from more than 100 stakeholder organizations, including the Government Accountability Project, the National Taxpayers Union, the Project on Government Oversight, the Taxpayer Protection Alliance, and Whistleblowers of America.

Mr. Chair, I include in the RECORD a letter of support from 100 different organizations.

JULY 14, 2022.

HON. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: During the last month, our nation has been fixated on evidence about threats to our democracy exposed in the January 6 Select Committee hearings. The undersigned organizations commend your leadership creating the January 6 Committee for exposing the truth. The undersigned organizations now seek your leadership protecting those who provide the evidence.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform has marked up HR 6762, the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act (WPIA). The legislation deserves floor time for a House vote so that we can highlight its passage on July 30, 2022, National Whistleblower Appreciation Day. The House has voted for this reform in the Protect Our Democracy Act, but Senate action requires standalone legislation.

The WPIA would be the fifth generation of pioneering whistleblower rights first passed in 1978. These rights have been excellent global pacesetters that Congress unanimously has reaffirmed three times since 1978, the last in the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012. The two Achilles heels, however, have been loopholes and lack of credible due process enforcement.

Those problems only have become worse since 2012. For example, the administrative Merit Systems Protection Board has a monopoly on enforcement, but its vulnerability to political pressure blocked confirmations and led to an empty Board with a 3,500 case back log. Lacking judicial independence, its Administrative Judges who conduct hearings rule against whistleblowers in over 95% of initial merits decisions.

The WPIA addresses both the loopholes and due process gaps by providing parity for federal civil service employee whistleblower rights with those enacted by Congress 16 times in each of 17 private sector whistleblower law enacted since 2002. To illustrate it would—

Permit jury trials if there is no timely administrative decision. This would take the politics out of whistleblower justice for federal employees the nation's only major labor group denied a day in court to challenge violation of their free speech rights despite making the disclosures most significant for voters.

Permit lawsuits when retaliatory investigations are opened. Investigations are a kneejerk first reaction to find any dirt on whistleblowers that will distract from gov-

ernment fraud, waste and abuse. As long as a probe is open, it has a broad chilling effect even if later dropped. This key provision would establish parity with all other whistleblower laws, even the Military Whistleblower Protection Act.

Establish realistic legal burdens to obtain temporary relief. Temporary relief is almost never available under current law and is essential when cases commonly drag out over five years. By that time, even winning may be too late for those who have lost their homes, gone bankrupt frequently lost their families and had their professional deputations irrevocably ruined.

Close loopholes that erase the law's benefits. Currently, Public Health Service (PHS) whistleblowers are excluded from the Whistleblower Protection Act and limited to military remedies, as are employees of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA). However, these are the professionals from whom we need the truth about public health threats like the pandemic and environmental threats like climate change. Loopholes in remedies mean that whistleblowers still can "lose by winning." The WPIA fills these and similar gaps.

This legislation is a political opportunity supported by 86% of likely voters in a Marist Poll survey just before the last election, and more than 265 organizations across the issue and political spectrum have already expressed support for its passage. It extends the same rights to federal employees defending the public that Congress repeatedly has provided to corporate employees defending the shareholders. We need your leadership, so that those who defend the public can defend themselves.

Sincerely,

20/20 Vision DC, Academics Stang Against Poverty, Accountability Lab, Affiliation of Christian Engineers, African Centre for Media & Information Literacy, Alliance to Counter Crime Online, American Association for Justice, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Animals Are Sentient Beings Inc, Arab American Institute, Bekker Compliance Consulting Partners, LLC, Blueprint for Free Speech, Broward for Progress, Center for Auto Safety, Center for Progressive Reform, Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) Citizens' Environmental Coalition, Clean Elections Texas, Climate Science Legal Defense Fund.

Columbia Legal Services, Community Science Institute, Inc., Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety, Consumer Action, Cook Inletkeeper, Corruption kills, Council for a Livable World, Demand Progress, DemCast USA, Dr. Yolanda Whyte Pediatrics, Equal Justice Society, Federally Employed Women, Fight for the Future, Food & Water Watch, Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, Government Accountability Project, Government Information Watch, Harrington Investments, Inc., Human Environmental and Leadership Prevalent Center (HELP Center), Indivisible Santa Fe.

Information Trust, International Association of Whistleblowers (IAW), International Fund for Animal Welfare, Iowa Institute for Public Accountability, Jacobs Institute of Women's Health, Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP), League of Conservation Voters, Liberty Shared, Mainers for Accountable Leadership, Mehri & Skalet PLLC, Michiganders for Fair & Transparent Elections, Muslim American Law Enforcement Association, National Air Disaster Foundation, National Coalition Against Censorship, National Employment Law Project, National Organization for Women, National Whistleblower Center, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, No Violence.org, Open

MIC (Open Media and Information Companies Initiative).

Open The Government, Oregonizers, Pax Christi USA, People's Parity Project, Project Censored and Media Freedom Foundation, Project On Government Oversight (POGO), Protect All Children's Environment, Protect Democracy, Public Citizen, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), Public Justice Center, Restore The Fourth, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, Rock the Vote, RootsAction.org, Rural Coalition, Secure Elections Network, Shriver Center on Poverty Law, Society of Professional Journalists, Strategies For Justice, BWMP LLC.

Taxpayers Protection Alliance, The Center for International Policy, The Coalition For Change Inc. (C4C), The Digital Democracy Project, The Ecotopian Society, The Freedom BLOC, The James Madison Project, The Revolving Door Project, The Rutherford Institute, The Signals Network, The Vindman Group, The Workers Circle, Transparency International—U.S. Office, Truckers Justice Center, Tully Center for Free Speech, Syracuse University.

Union of Concerned Scientists, Washington Coalition for Open Government, Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), WESPAC Foundation, Inc., Whistleblower Network News, Whistleblowers of America, WhistleblowersUK, Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom US, Women's Action for New Directions (WAND), Workplace Fairness, X-Lab.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill and to support the heroes and heroines who disclose wrongdoing and corruption in our government, leading to reforms to make our government stronger and better able to serve the American people.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1615

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I will admit the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act has a great name because Congress cares about protecting whistleblowers. As the ranking member of the Oversight Committee, I appreciate and value whistleblowers' service and sacrifice to make government better.

In fact, ensuring whistleblowers have protections against abuse or retaliation is a bipartisan issue here in Congress. That probably explains why there are already so many protections that whistleblowers have access to in statutes, regulations, executive orders, and agency policies. There is the Whistleblower Protection Act, the Intelligence Community Whistleblower Protection Act, the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act, the very catchy Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act.

Congress has consistently sought to protect people working in the Federal Government who report waste, fraud, and abuse—and for good reason. Whistleblowers are often the only means of knowing what is happening in an agen-

cy, and that is especially important under the Biden administration when the Democrats in Congress have refused to conduct any meaningful or serious oversight.

But how many more whistleblower laws do we need with so many already on the books?

Further, Republicans oppose this bill because it is a step too far. A simple version of this bill would have just applied the existing whistleblower protections to the few corners of the Federal Government that aren't already covered by the law. However, H.R. 2988 goes much further by making it nearly impossible—and only after a long, expensive process—to address performance or employment issues in anyone claiming to be a whistleblower, even if the person is not really a whistleblower but just bad at his or her job.

In the real world, if you are undermining your boss, participating in misconduct, or just lazy, your employer has options to hold you accountable. In the Federal Government, if you claim you are a whistleblower, you can be as terrible as you want and almost any attempt to remove you from your station is characterized as retaliation.

There is a difference between retaliation and plain repercussions, but this bill would make them the same. It would prohibit opening an investigation into someone who claims to be a whistleblower, even if there is good reason to investigate the employee's conduct.

Under this bill, it would be nearly impossible to reveal the identity of a whistleblower in order to evaluate the validity of his or her claims.

In large part, this bill is just an excuse to further idolize the people who pushed the sham impeachment against former President Trump. The actions of President Trump were, of course, vindicated by the Senate.

Entrenching Federal Government employees by enacting laws like H.R. 2988 is, in large part, why President Trump got elected in the first place: to drain the swamp. Democrats may be wise to remember this concern of the American people and stop working to further entrench the executive branch bureaucracy.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Operations.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chair, I thank the distinguished chairwoman of our committee for yielding time.

I hardly think President Donald Trump drained the swamp. He filled it with alligators.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2988, the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act. I am committed to protecting, supporting, and empowering our 2.1 million civil servants to use their acumen and expertise to do what is right for the country.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Operations, I am intimately familiar with how whistleblowers and the inspector general community protect our government's most valuable asset, the Federal workforce.

The Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act would bolster whistleblower protections, ensure due process and equitable relief, and expand protections for more Federal employees. The bill clarifies that no one may interfere with a Federal employee's right to provide information to Congress, including the President of the United States.

During the Trump Presidency, we saw repeated and consistent efforts to silence and retaliate against brave whistleblowers. In May, the Department of Defense IG found that Trump loyalists retaliated against Colonel Yevgeny Vindman, who bravely reported that President Trump had an unlawful phone call with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy.

Even in the wake of a damning impeachment trial, and in full view of the public, Mr. Trump felt emboldened to attack Active Duty servicemembers who had the courage and common sense to expose that extortion.

Federal employees must feel safe and supported when rooting out waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption. We must celebrate expertise and adherence to principles of law, transparency, and deliberation that serve as the foundation of our democratic system. We must protect public servants and defend the Federal merit system against partisan interference.

I thank the chair of the Oversight Committee, Mrs. MALONEY, for sponsoring this bill and for always lifting up the subcommittee's work on whistleblowers and inspectors general.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), the distinguished chairwoman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's Subcommittee on Highways and Transit.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chair, I thank my good friend, the chair of our committee, for yielding time.

I come to speak in strong support of the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act, of which I am a cosponsor. I especially appreciate this bill since, as a Member of Congress for the District of Columbia, many Federal employees are my constituents.

Importantly, this bill would expand whistleblower protections and ensure due process and enable relief for whistleblowers. We should appreciate and celebrate our Federal employees, especially our whistleblowers, and I am particularly pleased that this bill would clarify that Federal employees cannot be retaliated against for sharing information with Congress.

It is important that Congress have full information about the operations

of our government, and this good-governance measure will help with that goal.

I am grateful to Chairwoman MALONEY for introducing this important bill, and I am pleased to speak in support of it.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, there are no more speakers, and I am prepared to close if my colleagues on the Republican side are ready to close, as well.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, whistleblowers in the Federal Government are covered by some of the most comprehensive protections for employees in the country.

Whistleblowers serve a valuable role in our government, especially in an administration like the Biden administration, which is subject to almost no oversight by Congress.

But giving this bill a great title, Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act, does not and should not provide cover for the actual requirements and consequences of this bill. Bill titles don't govern our government, but the substance within them does.

The Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act is a step too far and would help further entrench Federal Government employees in their jobs.

Mr. Chair, I oppose H.R. 2988, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, this bill does not prohibit agencies from investigating actual misconduct. It merely prohibits launching an investigation as retaliation for blowing the whistle.

When an agency becomes aware of a disclosure of waste, fraud, and abuse, the concern of the agency should be addressing those issues rather than retaliating against the employee who discloses the problems.

This change fills a critical role created by the 2020 appeals court decision that held that current whistleblower laws only prohibit a retaliatory investigation if the investigation ultimately resulted in a significant change in the employee's working conditions. This decision ignored the effect that a retaliatory investigation has on a whistleblower when an investigation is going on. So, I disagree with the gentleman's statement, and I am now prepared to close.

Mr. Chair, I want to stress the urgency and importance of this legislation and talk about how important it is to protect our whistleblowers.

They play a critical role in exposing wrongdoing within the government, sometimes at great personal risk. They need to be able to alert agency leaders and Congress without fear of retaliation.

Passing H.R. 2988 would help give whistleblowers the protection they de-

serve. The key reforms in the bill would prohibit agencies from launching retaliatory investigations and extend whistleblowers the right to a jury trial, which they have long sought, and permit whistleblowers to receive attorney fees if they win their lawsuits.

This bill establishes new protections for whistleblowers who have a crucial role in shedding light on government corruption and wrongdoing.

This bill is also strongly supported by well over 100 stakeholder organizations. Just today, the National Taxpayers Union announced its inclusion of this bill as one of its "No Brainers" list for bills that Congress should pass. Only a few bills receive this kind of recognition. This is landmark legislation, both for freedom of speech and for government accountability.

I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have cosponsored this important legislation and spoken in support of it. Mr. Chair, I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Reform printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part B of House Report 117-464, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as an original bill for purpose of further amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered as read.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2988

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.

(a) INVESTIGATIONS AS PERSONNEL ACTIONS.—(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2302(a)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in clause (xi), by striking "and" at the end;

(B) by redesignating clause (xii) as clause (xiii); and

(C) by inserting after the clause (xi) the following:

"(xii) for purposes of subsection (b)(8)—

"(I) the commencement, expansion, or extension of an investigation, but not including any investigation that is ministerial or nondiscretionary (including a ministerial or nondiscretionary investigation described in section 1213) or any investigation that is conducted by an Inspector General of an entity of the Government of an employee not employed by the office of that Inspector General; and

"(II) a referral to an Inspector General of an entity of the Government, except for a referral that is ministerial or nondiscretionary; and"

(2) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to any investigation opened, or referral made, as described under

clause (xii) of section 2302(a)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code, as added by such paragraph, on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) RIGHT TO PETITION CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2302(b)(9) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking "or" at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by adding "or" after the semicolon at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(E) the exercise of any right protected under section 7211;"

(2) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to the exercise of any right described in section 2302(b)(9)(E) of title 5, United States Code, as added by paragraph (1), occurring on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) PROHIBITION ON DISCLOSURE OF WHISTLEBLOWER IDENTITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2302 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(g)(1) No employee of an agency may willfully communicate or transmit to any individual who is not an officer or employee of the Government the identity of, or personally identifiable information about, any other employee because that other employee has made, or is suspected to have made, a disclosure protected by subsection (b)(8), unless—

"(A) the other employee provides express written consent prior to the communication or transmission of their identity or personally identifiable information;

"(B) the communication or transmission is made in accordance with the provisions of section 552a;

"(C) the communication or transmission is made to a lawyer for the sole purpose of providing legal advice to an employee accused of whistleblower retaliation; or

"(D) the communication or transmission is required or permitted by any other provision of law.

"(2) In this subsection, the term 'officer or employee of the Government' means—

"(A) the President;

"(B) a Member of Congress;

"(C) a member of the uniformed services;

"(D) an employee as that term is defined in section 2105, including an employee of the United States Postal Service, the Postal Regulatory Commission, or the Department of Veterans Affairs (including any employee appointed pursuant to chapter 73 or 74 of title 38); and

"(E) any other officer or employee in any branch of the Government of the United States."

(2) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to any transmission or communication described in subsection (g) of section 2302 of title 5, United States Code, as added by paragraph (1), made on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) RIGHT TO PETITION CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 7211 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"§ 7211. Employees' right to petition or furnish information or respond to Congress

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Each officer or employee of the Federal Government, individually or collectively, has a right to—

"(1) petition Congress or a Member of Congress;

"(2) furnish information, documents, or testimony to either House of Congress, any Member of Congress, or any committee or subcommittee of the Congress; or

"(3) respond to any request for information, documents, or testimony from either House of Congress or any Committee or subcommittee of Congress.

"(b) PROHIBITED ACTIONS.—No officer or employee of the Federal Government may interfere

with or deny the right set forth in subsection (a), including by—

“(1) prohibiting or preventing, or attempting or threatening to prohibit or prevent, any other officer or employee of the Federal Government from engaging in activity protected in subsection (a); or

“(2) removing, suspending from duty without pay, demoting, reducing in rank, seniority, status, pay, or performance or efficiency rating, denying promotion to, relocating, reassigning, transferring, disciplining, or discriminating in regard to any employment right, entitlement, or benefit, or any term or condition of employment of, any other officer or employee of the Federal Government or attempting or threatening to commit any of the foregoing actions protected in subsection (a).

“(c) APPLICATION.—This section shall not be construed to authorize disclosure of any information that is—

“(1) specifically prohibited from disclosure by any other provision of Federal law; or

“(2) specifically required by Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs, unless disclosure is otherwise authorized by law.

“(d) DEFINITION OF OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘officer or employee of the Federal Government’ includes—

“(1) the President;

“(2) a Member of Congress;

“(3) a member of the uniformed services;

“(4) an employee (as that term is defined in section 2105);

“(5) an employee of the United States Postal Service or the Postal Regulatory Commission; and

“(6) an employee appointed under chapter 73 or 74 of title 38.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subchapter II of chapter 72 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking the item related to section 7211 and inserting the following:

“7211. Employees’ right to petition or furnish information or respond to Congress.”.

SEC. 3. ENHANCEMENT OF WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.

(a) DISCLOSURES RELATING TO OFFICERS OR EMPLOYEES OF AN OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Section 1213(c) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) If the information transmitted under this subsection disclosed a violation of law, rule, or regulation, or gross waste, gross mismanagement, abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, by any officer or employee of an Office of Inspector General, the Special Counsel may refer the matter to the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, which shall comply with the standards and procedures applicable to investigations and reports under subsection (c).”.

(b) RETALIATORY REFERRALS TO INSPECTORS GENERAL.—Section 1214(d) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) In any case in which the Special Counsel determines that a referral to an Inspector General of an entity of the Federal Government was in retaliation for a disclosure or protected activity described in section 2302(b)(8) or in retaliation for exercising a right described in section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), the Special Counsel shall transmit that finding in writing to the Inspector General within seven days of making the finding. The Inspector General shall consider that finding and make a determination on whether to initiate an investigation or continue an investigation based on the referral that the Special Counsel found to be retaliatory.”.

(c) ENSURING TIMELY RELIEF.—

(1) INDIVIDUAL RIGHT OF ACTION.—Section 1221 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “section 2302(b)(8) or section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), or (D),” each place it appears and inserting “section 2302(b)(8), section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), (D), or (E), section 2302(b)(13), or section 2302(g).”.

(2) STAYS.—Section 1221(c)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(2) Any stay requested under paragraph (1) shall be granted within 10 calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) after the date the request is made, if the Board determines—

“(A) that there is a substantial likelihood that protected activity was a contributing factor to the personnel action involved; or

“(B) the Board otherwise determines that such a stay would be appropriate.”.

(3) APPEAL OF STAY.—Section 1221(c) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) If any stay requested under paragraph (1) is denied, the employee, former employee, or applicant may, within 7 days after receiving notice of the denial, file an appeal for expedited review by the Board. The agency shall have 7 days thereafter to respond. The Board shall provide a decision not later than 21 days after receiving the appeal. During the period of appeal, both parties may supplement the record with information unavailable to them at the time the stay was first requested.”.

(4) ACCESS TO DISTRICT COURT; JURY TRIALS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 1221(i) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(i) by striking “(i) Subsections” and inserting “(i)(1) Subsections”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(2)(A) If, in the case of an employee, former employee, or applicant for employment who seeks corrective action from the Merit Systems Protection Board based on an alleged prohibited personnel practice described in section 2302(b)(8), section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), (D), or (E), section 2302(b)(13), or section 2302(g), no final order or decision is issued by the Board within 180 days after the date on which a request for such corrective action has been duly submitted to the Board, such employee, former employee, or applicant may, after providing written notice to the Special Counsel and the Board and only within 20 days after providing such notice, bring an action for review de novo before the appropriate United States district court, and such action shall, at the request of either party to such action, be tried before a jury. Upon filing of an action with the appropriate United States district court, any proceedings before the Board shall cease and the employee, former employee, or applicant for employment waives any right to refile with the Board.

“(B) If the Board certifies (in writing) to the parties of a case that the complexity of such case requires a longer period of review, subparagraph (A) shall be applied by substituting ‘240 days’ for ‘180 days’.

“(C) In any such action brought before a United States district court under subparagraph (A), the court—

“(i) shall apply the standards set forth in subsection (e); and

“(ii) may award any relief which the court considers appropriate, including any relief described in subsection (g).”.

(B) APPLICATION.—

(i) The amendments made by subparagraph (A) shall apply to any corrective action duly submitted to the Merit Systems Protection Board, during the five-year period preceding the date of enactment of this Act, by an employee, former employee, or applicant for employment based on an alleged prohibited personnel practice described in section 2302(b)(8), 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), or (D), or 2302(b)(13) of title 5, United States Code, with respect to which no final order or decision has been issued by the Board.

(ii) In the case of an individual described in clause (i) whose duly submitted claim to the Board was made not later than 180 days before the date of enactment of this Act, such individual may only bring an action before a United States district court as described in section 1221(i)(2) of title 5, United States Code, (as added by subparagraph (A) if that individual—

(I) provides written notice to the Office of Special Counsel and the Merit Systems Protection Board not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(II) brings such action not later than 20 days after providing such notice.

(d) RECIPIENTS OF WHISTLEBLOWER DISCLOSURES.—Section 2302(b)(8)(B) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “or to the Inspector General of an agency or another employee designated by the head of the agency to receive such disclosures” and inserting “the Inspector General of an agency, a supervisor in the employee’s direct chain of command up to and including the head of the employing agency, or to an employee designated by any of the aforementioned individuals for the purpose of receiving such disclosures”.

(e) ATTORNEY FEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 7703(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) If an employee, former employee, or applicant for employment is the prevailing party under a proceeding brought under this section, the employee, former employee, or applicant for employment shall be entitled to attorney fees for all representation carried out pursuant to this section. In such an action for attorney fees, the agency responsible for taking the personnel action shall be the respondent and shall be responsible for paying the fees.”.

(2) APPLICATION.—In addition to any proceeding brought by an employee, former employee, or applicant for employment on or after the date of enactment of this Act to a Federal court under section 7703 of title 5, United States Code, the amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to any proceeding brought by an employee, former employee, or applicant for employment under such section before the date of enactment of this Act with respect to which the applicable Federal court has not issued a final decision.

(f) EXTENDING WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION ACT TO CERTAIN EMPLOYEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2302(a)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code, is amended in the matter following clause (xiii)—

(A) by inserting “subsection (b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), (D), or (E), subsection (b)(13), or subsection (g),” after “subsection (b)(8).”; and

(B) by inserting after “title 31” the following: “, a commissioned officer or applicant for employment in the Public Health Service, and an officer or applicant for employment in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 261 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3071) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by striking paragraph (8); and

(ii) by redesignating paragraphs (9) through (26) as paragraphs (8) through (25), respectively; and

(B) in subsection (b), by striking the second sentence.

(3) APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to an officer or applicant for employment in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the amendments made by paragraphs (1) and (2) shall apply to any personnel action taken against such officer or applicant on or after the date of enactment of

the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-259) for making any disclosure protected under section 2302(8) of title 5, United States Code.

(B) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any personnel action with respect to which a complaint has been filed pursuant to section 1034 of title 10, United States Code, and a final decision has been rendered regarding such complaint.

(g) RELIEF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 7701(b)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “upon the making of the decision” and inserting “upon making of the decision, necessary to make the employee whole as if there had been no prohibited personnel practice, including training, seniority and promotions consistent with the employee’s prior record”.

(2) APPLICATION.—In addition to any appeal made on or after the date of enactment of this Act to the Merit Systems Protection Board under section 7701 of title 5, United States Code, the amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to any appeal made under such section before the date of enactment of this Act with respect to which the Board has not issued a final decision.

SEC. 4. CLASSIFYING CERTAIN FURLOUGHS AS ADVERSE PERSONNEL ACTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7512 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking “and” at the end; and

(2) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

“(5) a furlough of more than 14 days but less than 30 days; and

“(6) a furlough of 13 days or less that is not due to a lapse in appropriations.”.

(b) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to any furlough covered by such section 7512(5) or (6) (as amended by such subsection) occurring on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. CODIFICATION OF PROTECTIONS FOR DISCLOSURES OF CENSORSHIP RELATED TO RESEARCH, ANALYSIS, OR TECHNICAL INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2302 of title 5, United States Code, as amended by section 2(c)(1), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h)(1) In this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘applicant’ means an applicant for a covered position;

“(B) the term ‘censorship related to research, analysis, or technical information’ means any effort to distort, misrepresent, or suppress research, analysis, or technical information; and

“(C) the term ‘employee’ means an employee in a covered position in an agency.

“(2)(A) Any disclosure of information by an employee or applicant for employment that the employee or applicant reasonably believes is evidence of censorship related to research, analysis, or technical information—

“(i) shall come within the protections of subsection (b)(8)(A) if—

“(I) the employee or applicant reasonably believes that the censorship related to research, analysis, or technical information is or will cause—

“(aa) any violation of law, rule, or regulation; or

“(bb) gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety; and

“(II) such disclosure is not specifically prohibited by law or such information is not specifically required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs; and

“(ii) shall come within the protections of subsection (b)(8)(B) if—

“(I) the employee or applicant reasonably believes that the censorship related to research,

analysis, or technical information is or will cause—

“(aa) any violation of law, rule, or regulation; or

“(bb) gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety; and

“(II) the disclosure is made to the Special Counsel, or to the Inspector General of an agency or another person designated by the head of the agency to receive such disclosures, consistent with the protection of sources and methods.

“(3) A disclosure shall not be excluded from paragraph (2) for any reason described under subsection (f)(1) or (2).

“(4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to imply any limitation on the protections of employees and applicants afforded by any other provision of law, including protections with respect to any disclosure of information believed to be evidence of censorship related to research, analysis, or technical information.”.

(b) REPEAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 110 of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-199) is hereby repealed.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or otherwise affect any action under such section 110 commenced before the date of enactment of this Act or any protections afforded by such section with respect to such action.

SEC. 6. TITLE 5 TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

Title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 1212(h), by striking “or (9)” each place it appears and inserting “, (b)(9), (b)(13), or (g)”;

(2) in section 1214—

(A) in subsections (a) and (b), by striking “section 2302(b)(8) or section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), or (D)” each place it appears and inserting “section 2302(b)(8), section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), (D), or (E), section 2302(b)(13), or section 2302(g)”;

(B) in subsection (i), by striking “section 2302(b)(8) or subparagraph (A)(i), (B), (C), or (D) of section 2302(b)(9)” and inserting “section 2302(b)(8), subparagraph (A)(i), (B), (C), (D), or (E) of section 2302(b)(9), section 2302(b)(13), or section 2302(g)”;

(3) in section 1215(a)(3)(B), by striking “section 2302(b)(8), or 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), or (D)” each place it appears and inserting “section 2302(b)(8), section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), (D), or (E), section 2302(b)(13), or section 2302(g)”;

(4) in section 2302—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or (g)” after “subsection (b)”;

(ii) in paragraph (2)(C)(i), by striking “subsection (b)(8) or section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), or (D)” and inserting “section 2302(b)(8), section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), (D), or (E), section 2302(b)(13), or section 2302(g)”;

(B) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by striking “paragraph (8) or subparagraph (A)(i), (B), (C), or (D) of paragraph (9) of subsection (b)” and inserting “paragraph (8), subparagraph (A)(i), (B), (C), or (D) of paragraph (9), or paragraph (13) of subsection (b) or subsection (g)”;

(5) in section 7515(a)(2), by striking “paragraph (8), (9), or (14) of section 2302(b)” and inserting “paragraph (8), (9), (13), or (14) of section 2302(b) or section 2302(g)”;

(6) in section 7701(c)(2)(B), by inserting “or section 2302(g)” after “section 2302(b)”;

(7) in section 7703(b)(1)(B), by striking “section 2302(b)(8), or 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), or (D)” and inserting “section 2302(b)(8), section 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), (D), or (E), section 2302(b)(13), or section 2302(g)”.

The Acting CHAIR. No further amendment to the bill, as amended,

shall be in order except those printed in part C of House Report 117-464 and amendments en bloc described in section 4 of House Resolution 1339.

Each such further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or her designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in part C of the report not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the committee or their designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC OFFERED BY MRS.

CAROLYN B. MALONEY OF NEW YORK

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, pursuant to House Resolution 1339, I offer amendments en bloc.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc consisting of amendment Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, printed in part C of House Report 117-464, offered by Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR.

AUCHINCLOSS OF MASSACHUSETTS

At the end of section 3(c)(4), insert the following:

(C) GAO REPORT.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall—

(i) conduct a study on actions brought before Federal court pursuant to paragraph (2) of section 1221(i) of title 5, United States Code (as added by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph) that, at the minimum, examines the timeliness of Merit Systems Protection Board whistleblower complaint rulings, the rates of individuals opting for a district court trial under such paragraph, and recommendations for the Board to make improvements to its whistleblower claim review process; and

(ii) submit a report on such study to Congress and publish such report on the Government Accountability Office’s public website.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON

LEE OF TEXAS

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 7. INSPECTOR GENERAL WHISTLEBLOWER INFORMATION COLLECTION SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of each Federal agency and each designated Federal entity (as those terms are defined in sections 12(5) and 8G, respectively, of the Inspector General Act of 1978) shall establish and thereafter maintain a mechanism for the inspector general to receive anonymous whistleblower information (including fraud, waste, and abuse).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) ANONYMITY.—Any whistleblower mechanism established under subsection (a) by an

inspector general shall maintain total anonymity for any individual who submits information through such mechanism.

(2) **ACCEPTABLE SYSTEMS.**—In order to maintain anonymity, any such mechanism may not include the use of any computer or telephone systems in collecting such information, but may include the use of the United States mail, physical receptacles for receiving information, or any other system that can assure anonymity.

(3) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or otherwise prohibit an inspector general from using computer or telephone systems when carrying out any other program, project, or activity not authorized by this section.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. PORTER OF CALIFORNIA

Insert the following at the end of section 3: (h) **IG SEMIANNUAL REPORTS.**—Section 5(a)(20) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) the number of instances in which the Office did not make a determination regarding whether there were reasonable grounds to believe that a prohibited personnel practice had occurred, existed, or was to be taken within 240 days after receiving a whistleblower retaliation complaint;”.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. SPANBERGER OF VIRGINIA

Page 3, line 13, strike “(xiii)” and insert “(xiv)”.

Page 4, line 6, strike “and”.

Page 4, after line 12, insert the following

(3) **SECURITY CLEARANCES.**—Section 2302(a)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code, as amended by paragraph (1), is further amended by inserting after clause (xii) the following:

“(xiii) a suspension, revocation, denial, or other determination relating to a security clearance or any other access determination made by an agency; and”.

Page 15, line 25, strike “(xiii)” and insert “(xiv)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1339, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I rise to offer amendments en bloc.

The amendment offered by Congresswoman KATIE PORTER would require inspectors general to report in their semiannual reports the number of times their office was not able to resolve a whistleblower retaliation complaint within 8 months of receiving that complaint. This requirement ensures that inspectors general are promptly investigating whistleblower retaliation complaints.

The next amendment, offered by Congressman JAKE AUCHINCLOSS, would require the Government Accountability Office to examine and report on whistleblower protection actions, including the timeliness with which the Merit Systems Protection Board issues rulings on whistleblower complaints, how

often individuals choose a jury trial, and recommendations to improve the claim review process.

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This requirement evaluates whether the whistleblower review process is effective and identifies areas for improvement.

The amendment offered by Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE would require inspectors general to maintain a mechanism to receive anonymous whistleblower reports. In certain instances, this offers the protection and comfort a whistleblower needs to report government abuses and corruption.

The next amendment, offered by Congresswoman ABIGAIL SPANBERGER, would enable whistleblowers, outside the intelligence community, to appeal adverse security clearance actions to the Merit Systems Protection Board.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to adopt this commonsense package of amendments, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I rise to oppose the amendments en bloc. I rise in opposition to the en bloc package of amendments offered by Chairwoman MALONEY.

This package contains an amendment offered by Representative AUCHINCLOSS, which would require the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study of whistleblower complaints ruled on by the Merit Systems Protection Board and make recommendations about the whistleblower review process.

The problem with this amendment is that the MSPB's Office of General Counsel already performs the oversight functions for the MSPB under the Inspector General Act of 1978. This office is capable of doing the work the amendment would task to the GAO.

Reviewing the MSPB determinations and monitoring the Federal courts is not a smart use of the GAO's limited resources. The GAO needs to remain focused on pending statutorily mandated work.

I also oppose the amendment offered by Representative JACKSON Lee, which is trying to help inspectors general offices receive anonymous whistleblower information, but it actually makes it far more difficult.

This amendment won't allow IG offices to use any telephone or computer systems to receive the anonymous whistleblower information. Instead, they will have to rely on receiving such sensitive information by mail, which is obviously problematic, including complicating an IG's ability to evaluate the validity and authenticity of these tips and complaints.

I also oppose the amendment offered by Representative PORTER, which attempts to create another unnecessary reporting requirement for the inspectors general to report to Congress on the timeliness of resolving whistleblower retaliation complaints.

The problem is that IG offices are already required to include this informa-

tion in their semiannual report to Congress, provided every 6 months. This includes information on what, if any, consequences have been imposed to hold the official who engaged in retaliation accountable. This amendment's duplicative reporting requirement only wastes more time than an IG should be spending on investigating waste, fraud, and abuse.

Finally, I oppose the amendment offered by Representative SPANBERGER, which would prohibit the suspension, revocation, denial, or other determination relating to a security clearance of a whistleblower. This complete prohibition could put national security at risk.

For example, an employee working to undermine a national security policy or program could claim that he or she is a whistleblower and continue to have access to sensitive information, even while the agency evaluated the merits of the whistleblower's accusation.

There are approved procedures for whistleblowing in the intelligence community, but this amendment would prohibit revoking a security clearance, even if the so-called whistleblower ignores those procedures. This is an unacceptable risk to our Nation. Those holding security clearances have assumed a special level of public trust, and with that comes special expectations.

Mr. Chair, I oppose these amendments, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), the distinguished chairwoman of the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman for her work as chairwoman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform. Again, I give her my deepest appreciation for the enormous legacy of leadership that she has given to issues of empowerment, civil rights, civil liberties, and the rights of women. I thank Chairwoman MALONEY.

I rise today to support the underlying bill, H.R. 2988, and address my amendment, of which I am very grateful has been included in the en bloc.

It does make a difference. Whistleblowers can help change governments for the best. They are part of the constitutional infrastructure of ensuring due process and the rights of the vulnerable.

My amendment reinforces the spirit of confidentiality by providing another way to communicate whistleblower information to an OIG that poses less risk of confidentiality being lost or being breached while not affecting existing mechanisms, especially in some cases when there is a concern about the threat of retaliation. A potential whistleblower might be unwilling to provide information for fear of consequences if their identity is disclosed.

I am very glad to say that the Government Accountability Project is supporting my amendment. They wrote in their letter of support for my amendment: "This is solid, commonsense legislation to restore what works if we let it. For many whistleblowers, the decisive factor whether they bear witness or remain silent observers is whether they will remain anonymous."

"It will increase the flow of evidence and prevent retaliation."

Mr. Chair, I include in the RECORD the Government Accountability Project letter dated September 13, 2022. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT,

Washington, DC, September 13, 2022.

Hon. SHEILA JACKSON LEE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE LEE: This letter is to express support and appreciation for your amendment to the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act that would upgrade the safety of channels for anonymous whistleblowing disclosures to Offices of Inspector General. The amendment would require OIG's to restore traditional, effective channels to share evidence that had been canceled for more convenient but unreliable high tech options such as the internet or telephones. In addition to those channels, agencies would have to restore services such as secure drop boxes and accept anonymous disclosures by mail.

This is solid, common-sense legislation to restore what works if we let it. For many whistleblowers, the decisive factor whether they bear witness or remain silent observers is whether they will remain anonymous. Unfortunately, many understandably do not trust OIG confidentiality safeguards, because OIG's routinely breach them with impunity. While nearly all IG's have anonymous hotlines or phone channels, those engaging in surveillance often are one step ahead with tactics that expose the witness. This is an instance where the old-fashioned way is the safest. But at too many agencies it no longer is available, as risky high-tech options now monopolize the disclosure channel.

The bottom line is that sometimes tried and true approaches can work best, even if less convenient. Your amendment would apply that truth where it counts most—shielding the identity of endangered whistleblowers. It will increase the flow of evidence and prevent retaliation.

Appreciatively,

TOM DEVINE,
Legal Director.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I ask my colleagues to support the en bloc, the underlying legislation, and the Jackson Lee amendment.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2988, the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act, and thank you for bringing this important legislation to the floor today.

I applaud the Committee on Oversight and Reform for this timely and purposeful bill. By strengthening whistleblower protections, H.R. 2988 would enhance the capabilities of the Offices of Inspector General at each government agency to improve government accountability and transparency.

Whistleblowers are uniquely positioned to know of actions that derogate from laws, regulations, stated government objectives, and the best interests of the American people.

As a matter of public policy, potential whistleblowers should be encouraged to come forth with information that improves our gov-

ernment's operations, efficiency, and effectiveness.

To incentivize such noble conduct, whistleblowers must be assured of protection and insulated from retaliation for the accountability they facilitate when an OIG pursues their leads.

Indeed, being a whistleblower is an act of patriotism—helping our government serve Americans more responsibly—and those who provide this service should be honored, not vilified.

I would also like to thank the Rules Committee for making my amendment in order, and the Committee on Oversight and Reform for including it in the En Bloc amendment.

My amendment adds a key mechanism to amplify the operational impact of the bill, and it is supported by the Government Accountability Project.

H.R. 2988 addresses very important aspects of the handling of whistleblower complaints, whistleblower rights against any retaliatory action, and vital protections to avoid disclosures of identity, breaches of confidentiality, and retaliation.

My amendment reinforces the spirit of confidentiality by providing another way to communicate whistleblower information to an OIG that poses less risk of confidentiality being breached, while not affecting existing mechanisms.

In some cases—especially when there is concern about a threat of retaliation—a potential whistleblower might be unwilling to provide information for fear of consequences if their identity is disclosed.

To encourage whistleblowers to share information in these situations, my amendment directs the Office of Inspector General in each agency to establish a mechanism to receive whistleblower information that is completely anonymous and assured of remaining anonymous.

By being able to submit information in a way that anonymity is assured, some potential whistleblowers who might otherwise not be willing to share information with the OIG may be willing to do so.

As the Government Accountability Project wrote in their letter of support for my amendment, "This is solid, common-sense legislation to restore what works if we let it. For many whistleblowers, the decisive factor whether they bear witness or remain silent observers is whether they will remain anonymous. . . . It will increase the flow of evidence and prevent retaliation."

The anonymous method could be by sending a letter through the mail, dropping a paper note into a receptacle, or some other mechanism devised by the OIGs that cannot be traced back to the whistleblower.

These approaches assure anonymity, unlike submission through a website or phone call, which could be traced back to the person submitting the information.

By submitting facts with full anonymity, a whistleblower does not run the risk of their identity being disclosed either accidentally, by court order, or by other means.

Ideally, an OIG may prefer to know the identity of the person providing insights so they can contact them for more details.

Yet, since some people with vital information may refuse to submit it due to the risk of exposure, the public interest in receiving useful insights from an anonymous source outweighs an OIG's interest in contacting them.

With the information that it receives, the OIG could pursue facts and elevate its investigation through other channels.

My amendment would create a channel for this to occur.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. AUCHINCLOSS), the vice chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation.

Mr. AUCHINCLOSS. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of my amendment to the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act.

Historically, there has been a double standard between Federal and corporate whistleblowers seeking reprieve for retaliatory actions taken against them. While corporate whistleblowers can have their day in court, Federal whistleblowers' cases fall only under the jurisdiction of the Merit Systems Protection Board. The Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act would remedy this by allowing certain Federal whistleblowers to file their claims in district court.

My amendment would ensure that we continue to make evidence-based improvements to the Federal whistleblower case review process by requiring the GAO to study the outcomes of this bill. Specifically, my amendment calls on the GAO to report on the timeliness of MSPB rulings and the rates of Federal whistleblowers opting for district court trials. It requires the GAO to offer recommendations for the MSPB to make improvements to its review process so that Federal whistleblowers who put their jobs, careers, and reputations on the line to call out wrongdoing are given the respect of a timely review.

This bill is critical to improving protections for Federal whistleblowers and enhancing accountability across the Federal Government. My amendment would ensure that we collect the evidence necessary to continue to make improvements.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support the amendments en bloc.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Let me conclude by saying this: We have countless rules on the books pertaining to whistleblower protection. We have good whistleblower rules. I can assure my friends on the other side of the aisle, we have plenty of whistleblowers coming forward now with issues, and they are going to be protected. The rules on the books will protect those whistleblowers.

What my friends on the other side of the aisle are trying to do, I fear, is create a situation where any poor-performing employee who is receiving

poor reviews from their agency can claim to be a whistleblower, and therefore, they will be on the Federal payroll for the rest of their career. Then they can retire and draw a pension for the rest of their life.

This is unacceptable in the private sector. We care about whistleblowers. We welcome whistleblowers to come to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform to speak to the Republican minority members. They are and they will be protected because we have good whistleblower laws on the books.

These proposed amendments make our good whistleblower laws worse, and we need to oppose them.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The underlying bill is both landmark legislation for freedom of speech and for government accountability. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this landmark legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I move that the committee now rise.

The CHAIR. Will the gentlewoman withdraw her motion?

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I withdraw my motion.

The CHAIR. The motion is withdrawn.

The question is on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentlewoman from New York will be postponed.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. VEASEY) having assumed the chair, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2988) to amend title 5, United States Code, to modify and enhance protections for Federal Government whistleblowers, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

A FAIR AND ACCURATE CENSUS ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 8326.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1339 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 8326.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1642

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 8326) to amend title 13, United States Code, to improve the operations of the Bureau of the Census, and for other purposes, with Mr. BLUMENAUER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or their respective designees.

The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) will each control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 8326, the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act.

The decennial Census is a critical part of our democratic system. In fact, it is required by the Constitution. The results of the Census determine the distribution of over \$1.5 trillion in Federal funds, apportionment of the House of Representatives and State legislative districts, and public and private sector investments.

□ 1645

It is critical that the Census count is complete, fair, and accurate. The Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act will help make sure that it is.

This bill is informed by the Oversight Committee's multi-year investigation into political interference by the previous administration during the 2020 Census, including the effort to add a citizenship question despite strong opposition from expert statisticians and demographers at the Census Bureau.

In fact, the Census Bureau's top data scientist warned that the citizenship question "harms the quality of the Census count."

The Supreme Court ruled in favor with the Democrats and ultimately stepped in to block the citizenship question, ruling that the rationale for adding it to the Census "seems to have been contrived."

The previous administration took other steps that risked undermining the independent, nonpartisan nature of the Census. They appointed an unprecedented eight political appointees where there were previously only three, and they tried to rush the processing of the Census data, despite repeated warnings from career staff that this would compromise the integrity of the Census count.

Partisan manipulation of the Census is simply wrong. My bill would protect the Census and ensure this cannot happen again, regardless of which party is in power.

We are considering this legislation at a critical time. While the 2030 Census is years away, the design and planning began at the Bureau even before the 2020 numbers were released.

As our Nation's largest peacetime mobilization, the Census requires detailed and thorough planning. However, even the best plans face challenges in the field, and the 2020 Census faced unprecedented obstacles.

In the runup to the 2020 Census, the Bureau was consistently denied the appropriations—the funding that it needed—to execute its operational plans. Among other impacts, this uncertainty forced cutbacks in outreach to communities that are considered hard to reach.

The coronavirus pandemic forced the Census Bureau to suspend field operations at the most critical time; and most damaging, the previous administration demanded a last-minute, untested question on citizenship, and installed a record number of political appointees with unclear duties to get that done.

This legislation would vest key decision-making authority over the Census in the appropriate Senate-confirmed official, the Census Director. It would limit the number of political appointees within the Bureau to no more than four, which is consistent with historical precedent.

This bill would also require that new Census questions be thoroughly researched and analyzed, certified by the Secretary of Commerce, evaluated by the GAO, and shared with Congress before being added to the Census questionnaire.

This bill will also increase transparency and support long-term planning by requiring the Bureau to submit its projected 5-year budget estimates to both the President and Congress.

Finally, the bill codifies existing advisory committees charged with engaging with hard-to-count communities and advancing best practices in the field of data science. It also establishes an advisory committee aimed directly at ensuring the 2030 Census is successful.

I am proud that my bill has the support of four former directors of the Census Bureau, who served under administrations led by both Democrats and Republicans. These former directors have 15 years of experience serving

as Census Directors supporting five decennial censuses.

In a statement, they commended the bill's objective and said that it "protects the independence and integrity of the scientific mission of the Census Bureau." These former directors concluded, "trust in our Nation's official data is essential to the democracy and the economy, and this legislation will undergird" and build that trust.

Mr. Chair, I include their statements in the RECORD as well as an editorial from "The Washington Post" titled: "The Trump Administration's Assault on the Census Must Not Happen Again," along with two additional editorials, and a letter from Population Association of America and Association of Population Centers.

Mr. Chair, this editorial concluded, "The Trump administration's assault on the integrity of the Census should be an urgent warning. Too much rests on the decennial count to allow it to be exploited for partisan gain."

STATEMENT BY FORM U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
DIRECTORS—JULY 12, 2022

IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE LEGISLATION "ENSURING
A FAIR AND ACCURATE CENSUS ACT"

We applaud the legislation introduced this week by the Chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY) that we believe will help preserve and protect the independence and integrity of the scientific mission at the U.S. Census Bureau.

Having helped to plan, execute or lead five decennial censuses serving nine Presidents of both parties, and having closely observed the 2020 Decennial process, we strongly feel the reforms in the "Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act" would help build greater trust and confidence in the essential data the Census Bureau supplies to the nation. Collectively, the provisions of this bill strengthen the professional roles of career scientists, provide greater transparency into methods and processes across the 130 Census surveys and censuses, and enhance Congressional oversight over Bureau functions.

Trust in the nation's official data is essential to the democracy and the economy, and this legislation will undergird that trust.

VINCENT BARABBA,
(1973-76 & 1979-81).

ROBERT GROVES,
(2009-2012).

KENNETH PREWITT,
(1998-2001).

JOHN THOMPSON,
(2013-2017).

[From the Washington Post Editorial Board,
July 26, 2022]

OPINION: THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S AS-
SAULT ON THE CENSUS MUST NOT HAPPEN
AGAIN

The Trump administration engaged in a years-long, multi-pronged effort to sabotage the U.S. census, largely centered on adding a question on citizenship to the 2020 count. A new report, released last week by the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, paints a grim picture of what was happening behind the scenes.

A draft of an August 2017 memo, prepared by a political appointee in the Commerce Department, examined the idea of using citizenship data for apportioning seats in the House of Representatives, concluding it would likely be unconstitutional. Later versions omitted that language and came down in favor of including the question.

The newly released documents undercut the Trump administration's repeated claims that the citizenship question had nothing to do with apportionment. The Constitution plainly states: "Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State."

At the time, then-Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and other officials offered various unconvincing justifications for adding the question, most frequently that it would help enforce the Voting Rights Act. The Supreme Court blocked the move, with Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. calling the rationale "contrived." The House report reinforces that conclusion.

The census is a crucial tool, used not only for apportionment and redistricting, but also for allocating approximately \$1.5 trillion in annual federal aid to states and localities. Experts warned that a citizenship question would frighten immigrants and lead to the undercounting of minority communities.

Though the question was ultimately not included, the lengthy and public battle over it appears to have been enough: The Census Bureau reported that Black, Hispanic and Native Americans were undercounted at higher levels in 2020 compared with 2010—Hispanics by a statistically significant amount—while White and Asian Americans were overcounted. Never mind that this might have backfired on Republicans, with the bureau reporting it significantly undercounted populations in Florida and Texas—red states with large minority communities—and overcounted populations in blue states such as Rhode Island and Minnesota. The accuracy of the census depends in no small part on its credibility, which has been severely damaged.

The next census is in 2030, but—given the scale of the undertaking and importance of the results—Congress should work quickly to insulate it from political interference. A bill recently introduced by Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-N.Y.), chairwoman of the House Oversight Committee, would do just that. The Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act would restrict the number of political appointees at the Census Bureau, bar the removal of a bureau director without just cause and require new questions to be submitted to Congress ahead of time. It would also mandate new questions be "researched, tested and certified" by the commerce secretary and "evaluated by the Government Accountability Office."

Though it was not able to implement its most drastic plans, the Trump administration's assault on the integrity of the census should be an urgent warning. Too much rests on the decennial count to allow it to be exploited for partisan gain.

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 13, 2020]

OPINION: THE CENSUS IS ON THE VERGE OF
DISASTER

(By the Editorial Board)

Here is one of the least surprising revelations ever leaked from the federal government: According to an internal Census Bureau document, major, uncorrectable errors may result from forcing the bureau's enumerators and number-crunchers to rush through the decennial count. House Oversight and Reform Committee Chair Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY) revealed the document this month, claiming it was a presentation for Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, who oversees the bureau. It shows that the decision of Senate Republicans and the Trump administration to give the bureau no more time to finish a count that started late and has encountered pandemic-related problems threatens to corrupt for a decade the process

of distributing congressional seats and doling out some \$1.5 trillion in annual federal aid.

"A compressed review period creates risk for serious errors not being discovered in the data—thereby significantly decreasing data quality," the document warns.

To be clear, this would not be the fault of the bureau's professionals, whom Republicans have put in an impossible position. They are facing a statutory deadline requiring that they deliver their count by Dec. 31. The bureau had previously asked for more time. House Democrats authorized a deadline extension. Senate Republicans failed to do so, and the Trump administration ordered last month that door-knocking conclude by Sept. 30, weeks earlier than the experts had hoped.

The newly revealed document shows that, at the time the short timetable was announced, the bureau knew that "abbreviated processes or eliminated activities . . . will reduce accuracy." Not only would door-knocking end weeks sooner, but also the number-crunching needed after the door-knockers finished their work would be compressed into 92 days. Since 1990, the number-crunching has consumed between 140 and 185 days, according to Ms. Maloney. "Serious errors discovered in the data may not be fixed—due to lack of time to research and understand the root cause or to re-run and re-review one or multiple state files," the document warns. "A compressed review period creates risk for errors being present in the data."

The only perspective from which this is not a potential disaster is that of Republicans seeking maximum partisan advantage. The Trump administration already tried once to skew the count by adding a citizenship question to the census form, which would have deterred immigrants, even legal ones, from responding. The Supreme Court halted that move. Yet rushing the census might help Republicans because poor and minority communities tend to be the ones undercounted, which would make many Democratic-leaning states appear to be less populous than they are—and therefore due less money and political representation.

The Senate should have passed a covid-19 relief bill months ago, with a census deadline extension in it. With the bureau up against a wall, senators should not wait to agree on the rest of a relief package to give the counters more time. The census needs clarity, now.

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND RE-
FORM, HOUSE OF REPRESENTA-
TIVES,

Washington, DC.

DEAR COLLEAGUE: I urge you to support H.R. 8326, the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act. The editorial board piece below appeared in the N.Y. Daily News today. The bill works to improve the operations at the Census Bureau and guards against political meddling.

The bill has the support of four former, bipartisan, Directors of the Census Bureau as well as the Population Association of America and the Association of Population Centers.

[From New York Daily News, Sept. 14, 2022]
KEEPING THE CENSUS HONEST: REP. CAROLYN
MALONEY HAS THE RIGHT BILL TO STOP
POLITICIZATION OF THE COUNT

(By Daily News Editorial Board)

Donald Trump and his secretary of commerce, Wilbur Ross, tried to inject politics into the U.S. Census Bureau for the 2020 decennial count of every person in America. They did it by seeking to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census. But New York

led 18 states in suing and won before the U.S. Supreme Court in 2019, which blocked the Trump/Ross citizenship question.

That we know, but now Rep. Carolyn Maloney's Committee on Oversight and Reform has found even more evidence and proof that it was all a political ploy, not rooted in any legitimate demographic reasoning. To prevent future such manipulation, Maloney has a bill on the House floor today to protect the integrity of the Census Bureau. We hope that the measure passes with large majorities of both parties.

After Chief Justice John Roberts and the high court stopped the citizenship question, Trump and Ross tried again in the summer of 2020, after the count was completed, with a memorandum instructing the Census Bureau to exclude undocumented immigrants from the apportionment process which divides up the 435 House seats among the states based on population gains and losses in the prior decade. Again, the federal courts stepped in and the clearly unconstitutional maneuver was abandoned.

Still, the sustained efforts targeting immigrants undoubtedly had the intended effect to dampen the participation rate of non-citizens, documented or not, which was Trump's goal from the beginning.

Maloney's bill protects the director of the Bureau of the Census from meddling by secretary of commerce, an appointee and supporter of the president. Any new questions on the census forms must be submitted in advance to Congress and certified that they satisfy established statistical policies and procedures (not just because a president wants it). The Congress is also to receive a biannual report detailing preparations for the next big count.

We got lucky last time that the courts stopped Trump and Ross from trying to warp the census numbers. Next time we shouldn't have to take that risk. Pass the Maloney bill.

Sincerely,

CAROLYN B. MALONEY,
Chairwoman.

POPULATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA,
Alexandria, VA, September 12, 2022.

Hon. CAROLYN MALONEY,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN MALONEY: On behalf of the organizations we lead, the Population Association of America and Association of Population Centers, we are writing to express support for your efforts to enact constructive reforms at the U.S. Census Bureau. Your bill, H.R. 8326, Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act, contains several provisions that would strengthen the Census Bureau as the nation's principal statistical agency.

We are pleased that the bill, for example, would empower the Census Bureau to communicate its annual funding needs more directly to the public and clarify the process by which the agency adds and approves questions on the decennial census. Further, we applaud provisions that reauthorize existing advisory committees, such as the Census Scientific Advisory Committee and the National Advisory Committee, both of which have served as effective forums for data users and experts, including population scientists, to engage with the Census Bureau.

H.R. 8326 is an important first step to ensure the Bureau can sustain its critical mission and operations while undergoing necessary adaptations in preparation for the 2030 Census. We congratulate you on your leadership and look forward to working with you

and your colleagues as it proceeds through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

DR. SONALDE DESAI,
President, Population Association of America.
DR. SARA R. CURRAN,
President, Association of Population Centers.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, this bill is sensible and is driven by facts uncovered in our investigation and input from both civil rights groups and professionals at the Census Bureau.

We must have a full, fair, and accurate Census count so that every American can have faith that they and their communities are receiving the representation and the services that they deserve. To do that, we need a non-partisan, expert-driven Census Bureau. This bill is a strong first step to meet that goal.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, Americans continue to face several crises created by the Biden administration: Sky-high inflation, painfully high gas prices, and supply chain shortages.

President Biden's border crisis is allowing waves of illegal immigrants and fentanyl shipments to flood across our southern border.

Our children are suffering from historic learning losses and a mental health crisis because this administration allowed radical teachers unions to keep schools closed.

Yet what are Democrats prioritizing today instead of these crises impacting Americans' everyday lives? The Democrats' Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act.

This bill has nothing to do with the American people's priorities. In fact, it will do nothing to make the Census more fair and accurate. Instead, it places a great deal of power in the hands of unelected bureaucrats and hamstrings future Presidents.

During the prior Census, the President sought to include in the Census a question simply asking respondents whether they were American citizens. The Supreme Court found this was constitutional but that the Census Bureau had gone about it improperly.

This bill would prevent the inclusion of such a question in the future, a question key to upholding the principle of one citizen, one vote.

Now, under the Biden administration, there are questions about whether the Department of Commerce delivered accurate apportionment results derived from the Census. Those results were critical because they determined the apportionment of this body's 435 congressional districts among the several States. We still don't know for sure whether the apportionment results were fair and accurate.

But this bill does nothing to fix that problem or any of the other real problems associated with the 2020 Census.

Indeed, it will make it easier for future Census results to drive the apportionment of congressional districts unfairly to favor blue, Democrat-leaning States over red, Republican-leaning States.

Why is that?

Because the bill weakens the accountability of the Census Bureau to the President and the Secretary of Commerce, committing by statute all operational, statistical, and technical decisions about the Census to the Census Bureau's Director.

The bill makes it harder to overrule the Director even when the President, the Secretary, or Congress are concerned, the Director's decisions will yield an unfair or inaccurate Census.

Making matters worse, the bill allows only an unaccountable career employee to serve as acting director when no Senate-confirmed director is in place.

Finally, the bill severely constrains the ability of future Censuses to include important new questions, such as the citizenship question, which a majority of Americans want asked on the Census.

But it is precisely the counting of actual citizens that ensures Census results will produce congressional districts fairly, representing all citizens in Congress.

During the Oversight and Reform Committee's consideration of this bill, Republicans offered amendments that would have cured these problems. These amendments would have made sure Census Bureau officials remained accountable to the voters through the President. They would have made sure a question on citizenship would have been included in future Censuses, guaranteeing a fair basis for the apportionment of congressional districts.

But were Democrats concerned then about ensuring a fair and accurate Census by supporting these amendments? No. Democrats voted them down on a party-line vote.

Mr. Chairman, the American people deserve better from this legislative body. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Operations for the Oversight Committee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 8326, the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act.

When Democrats took majority in the House in 2018, I was asked what our top oversight projects were going to be. When I said, among them, the Census, it elicited surprise and even some laughs.

The Census is a huge dataset that underpins whether we fairly represent Americans and how we spend the entire Federal budget.

The Trump administration and its partisan Census Bureau undermined this critical task in March of 2018 when it planned to add a citizenship question

to the Census that would have violated the Constitution and reduced response rates, and they knew it.

I joined my colleague and friend, the late Chairman Elijah Cummings, in leading the fight against this question. I then partnered with Chairwoman MALONEY to block the Trump administration from cutting off the Census deadline early and excluding undocumented immigrants from the Census count.

Our committee's dogged oversight work prevented these illegal and immoral attempts to subvert our very democracy as enshrined in the Constitution. However, we need permanent reforms to ensure that no matter the President or political environment, the Census remains apolitical. That is why we must support this act.

This bill requires the Secretary of Commerce to certify that any new questions on the decennial Census must meet best practices standards, and it caps the Census Bureau at three political appointees, eliminating a President's ability to flood the Bureau with his acolytes and loyalists.

Congress must bolster the Census Bureau now, so we are prepared for a fair and accurate 2030 Census.

Mr. Chair, I thank Chairwoman MALONEY for her leadership and for sponsoring this bill.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS).

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to this bill. The intention of this bill is clear: It is to prevent a future Republican President from adding a citizenship question to the United States Census.

And yet the question of citizenship was first offered by President Thomas Jefferson in 1800; and from its introduction in the Census of 1820 through 1950, that question was included on every Census.

Now, when you think about the language of the Constitution itself, it gives Congress the authority to call a Census to enumerate the population. And for what was the purpose? The main purpose, of course, was for apportionment, for representation of the citizens of the United States.

The reality, though, is it has become far more than that, and that seems to be permissible within certain limits of the Constitution itself.

Since 1950, there have been additional Federal surveys that have included some form of the question of citizenship, not necessarily included in the Census itself.

But in the recent case cited by Chairwoman MALONEY just moments ago, where she said that they threw it out and said you can't ask that question, it was not because of the question. In fact, the Supreme Court specifically said in *Department of Commerce v. New York* that Congress has the right to ask that question, and the Department of Commerce has the authority to include the question of citizenship.

The decision states, "The enumeration clause permits Congress, and by extension the Secretary, to inquire about citizenship on the questionnaire."

□ 1700

That rationale does not work from the chairwoman. I realize a lot of my colleagues don't realize and understand and appreciate what is happening on our southern border. From October of last year through the end of July, Border Patrol has reported nearly 2 million encounters along our southern border, that does not include who entered and have gotten away.

Nearly a quarter of the encounters feature a person who had at least one prior encounter in the past 12 months. We, as policymakers, if we are going to get policy and data, which was just alluded to by Mr. CONNOLLY, we should have some of the most important data, and that is who is in this country illegally and who is a citizen and who is not.

Whether someone is a citizen is an important datapoint that should be recorded on the Census and on other Federal surveys. It is well past time that Congress direct the Census Bureau to ask this question like it did for over 100 years.

This bill is, instead, an attempt to cynically block the inclusion of the citizenship question on the Census and seeks to insulate career staff at the Census Bureau from any accountability. This is not—this is not a good bill.

This bill does not help us get to where we need to get in terms of understanding what is going on in this country so we can make policy that is good.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this bill does not address Congressional apportionment. It is about making the Census fair and accurate.

Nevertheless, our Census count has never been limited based on citizenship and there is no doubt that doing so would violate the Constitution. The 14th Amendment says seats in Congress are based on the whole number of persons in each State. Persons, not citizens.

Last Congress, I chaired a hearing with four former Census directors who served under both Democrats and Republicans. All four agreed that excluding undocumented immigrants from the apportionment count violated the Constitution. That is also the position taken by previous administrations, including under Republican Presidents.

In fact, my committee recently uncovered a draft internal legal memo from the Trump administration about the citizenship question. That memo admitted that using citizenship data to exclude immigrants from the apportionment counts would violate, "over 200 years of precedent." That damning language was removed from the final memo used to push the citizenship question.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairwoman for her outstanding leadership of this committee. It has been a pleasure to serve with you and under you and know that your interests go far beyond anything that I have heard this evening.

As a matter of fact, the Census is very important for far more reasons than just apportionment or just for looking at one issue or looking at immigration. I guess I have been involved in Census-taking for about 40 years, and every 10 years we go through this angst in my community, whether or not we are going to get a fair and accurate count, whether or not the people who are there are going to be counted so that resources which come as a result will flow back to the area.

Well, that has not happened. And even after the expressions of the last round, it was determined that there were undercounts, that there were people missed. And so everything that we can do to try and make sure that the Census taken is fair, accurate, and comprehensive, we need to do that.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I have no more speakers on the underlying bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the U.S. House of Representatives should focus on helping the American people survive economic turmoil and defending our borders and national security.

I urge House Democrats to get back to what the American people elected us to do: Conduct oversight over the Federal Government and the Biden administration, which is on a path to destroy America.

We need to hold hearings, conduct oversight, and pass legislation addressing the crises affecting America today. That is our constitutional responsibility. But instead, we are spending valuable resources and time on divisive political messaging bills.

I am just amazed that the Democrats advocate for legislation on the House floor pertaining to the Census, which would ask a question about your sexual preference, but they want to pass legislation to oppose asking the question whether you are a legal citizen or not. That is just another example of tone-deaf leadership. That is not what the American people want.

Mr. Chairman, I oppose H.R. 8326, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I stress the urgency and importance of this legislation. The United States Census Bureau is a foundational institution and one that we must take all necessary steps to protect.

The Census is for all people and should count every person. Efforts to politicize the Bureau have real consequences that can reduce response rates and thereby lessen the representation and resources available to communities.

I thank my colleagues for speaking in support of this bill, the former directors and advocates that have lent their support, and I encourage us all to vote in favor of ensuring a fair and accurate Census count.

No matter the party affiliation, every one of us has an interest in providing our best services to our constituents.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 8326 and the underlying amendments, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 8326, the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act, and thank you for bringing this vital legislation to the floor today.

I applaud the Committee on Oversight and Reform for this necessary and thoughtful bill. By establishing structural and functional standards, H.R. 8326 would insulate the Census Bureau from the type of tactics and abuse it encountered in the few years preceding the 2020 decennial census count.

Among its key provisions are the statutory codification of the Director's and Deputy Director's roles. Doing so would improve the Census Bureau's operational effectiveness, accountability, and transparency.

Specifying their duties also provides the opportunity to establish responsibilities that will enhance the work product of the Census by improving the fair and accurate counting of all Americans.

In that context, I offered an amendment to H.R. 8326, and I would like to thank the Rules Committee for making my amendment in order, and the Committee on Oversight and Reform for including it in the En Bloc amendment.

By reforming the operations of the Census Bureau, this bill enables us to ensure that racial and ethnic equity in the decennial count will be a priority in future decennial counts.

My amendment would enhance the bill's operational impact.

It would specify that the deputy director appoint an official with responsibility to optimize racial and ethnic equity in the Census count. To ensure that equity be a priority, this official would report directly to the director and deputy director.

My amendment directs the equity official to engage and collaborate with organizations that have influence with racial and ethnic groups, develop strategies and tactics to maximize participation of these populations, and rectify the undercount that has been typical of recent Census counts, especially among immigrants and homeless people.

The status of the efforts to optimize racial and ethnic equity will also be included in the Census Bureau's biannual reports to Congress, to ensure accountability and bolster the likelihood of progress.

Optimization of racial and ethnic equity in the Census count requires designation of a high-ranking official with direct responsibility for achieving this goal and reports directly to the Census leadership.

My amendment establishes that function, makes racial and ethnic equity in the decennial count a priority, specifies key strategies that must be undertaken, and ensures that Congress receives regular reports about the progress toward the goal.

H.R. 8326 is an excellent bill with vital reforms that are aptly augmented by my amendment's use of this opportunity to, at the same time, advance equity in the Census count.

In light of the decennial count's extremely consequential impact in terms of funding allocation formulas, political district apportionment, and other uses, it is imperative that the Census Bureau elevate racial and ethnic equity to a top priority in its counting strategies and procedures.

My amendment would create a framework for achieving this objective.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. CARTER of Louisiana). All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Reform, printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee print 117-464, modified by the amendment printed in part D of House Report 117-464, shall be considered as adopted.

The bill, as amended, shall be considered as an original bill for purpose of further amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 8326

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act".

SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN BUREAU OF THE CENSUS AUTHORITIES.

(a) BUDGET REQUESTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 1 of title 13, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 13 the following:

"§ 14. Budget requests

"(a) With respect to the budget request of the Bureau for fiscal year 2027 and each fiscal year thereafter submitted to the President for inclusion in the annual budget submission under section 1105(a) of title 31, the Director shall include in such request to the Secretary the estimated costs of carrying out the duties of the Bureau during the five-year period beginning on the fiscal year covered by such request.

"(b) On the date that the estimate of costs is submitted to the Secretary under subsection (a), the Director shall submit such estimate to the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, the Committees on the Budget of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate."

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for such subchapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 13 the following new item:

"14. Budget requests."

(b) DUTIES.—Section 21(c) of the title 13, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"(c) DUTIES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall perform such duties as may be imposed upon the Director by law, regulations, or orders of the Secretary. The Director shall report directly to the Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

"(2) DECENNIAL CENSUS.—Any operational, statistical, or technical decision for any decennial census of population may be made only by the Director."

(c) ADVISORY COMMITTEES; DEPUTY DIRECTOR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 21 of title 13, United States Code, as amended by subsection (b), is further amended—

(A) in the section heading, by striking "duties" and inserting "Deputy Director; advisory committees"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(d) DEPUTY DIRECTOR.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be in the Bureau a single Deputy Director of the Bureau, to be appointed by the Director. The position of Deputy Director shall be a career reserved position (as that term is defined in section 3132(a)(8) of title 5). The Deputy Director shall be selected from among any career appointee (as that term is defined in section 3132(a)(4) of such title) at any agency. The individual appointed to the position of Deputy Director shall be made from individuals who have a demonstrated ability in managing large organizations and experience in the collection, analysis, and use of statistical data.

"(2) FUNCTIONS.—The Deputy Director shall perform such functions as the Director shall designate. During any absence or disability of the Director, the Deputy Director shall act as Director.

"(3) VACANCY.—In the event of a vacancy in the office of Director, or when the Director is absent or unable to serve, the Deputy Director shall act as Director until a Director is appointed. If no individual is serving as Deputy Director, the highest level career employee of the Bureau shall act as Director until a Deputy Director or Director is appointed. This paragraph shall serve as the exclusive means of designating an acting Director.

"(e) ADVISORY COMMITTEES.—

"(1) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), and subject to paragraph (2), the Director may establish advisory committees to provide advice with respect to the mission of the Bureau. Members of any such committee, including a committee established under paragraph (2), shall serve without compensation, but shall be entitled to transportation expenses and per diem in lieu of subsistence in accordance with section 5703 of title 5.

"(2) SPECIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEES.—

"(A) BUREAU OF THE CENSUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL QUALITY STANDARDS.—The Director shall appoint a committee, to be known as the 'Advisory Committee on Statistical Quality Standards', composed of five members to review and provide recommendations on the statistical quality standards of the Bureau that guide the production and release of all Bureau decennial census products.

"(B) NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—There are hereby established the Bureau of the Census Scientific Advisory Committee and the Census Bureau National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations, as described in the charters for each such committee published on March 15, 2022, and March 23, 2022, respectively, or any subsequent charters. Such advisory committees shall operate under the terms and conditions set forth in the applicable charter.

“(C) 2030 CENSUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The Director shall appoint an advisory committee, substantially similar to the 2010 Census Advisory Committee, consisting of up to 20 member organizations to address policy, research, and technical issues related to the design and implementation of the 2030 decennial census and the American Community Survey.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subchapter II of chapter 1 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 21 and inserting the following:

“21. Director of the Census; Deputy Director; advisory committees.”.

(d) POSITION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 22 of title 13, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “All permanent” and inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—All permanent”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) POSITIONS.—Each position within the Bureau shall be a career position within the civil service, except for the position of the Director and not more than three other positions.”.

SEC. 3. LIMITATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DECENNIAL CENSUS.

Section 141 of title 13, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (i); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (f) the following:

“(g) LIMITATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) NOTICE TO CONGRESS OF SUBJECTS, TYPES OF INFORMATION, AND QUESTIONS.—In the 2030 decennial census of population and each decennial census thereafter, the Secretary may not include any subject, type of information, or question that was not submitted to Congress in accordance with subsection (f).

“(2) BIENNIAL REPORTS.—

“(A) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than April 1 of the calendar year beginning after the date of enactment of the Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act and biennially thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that—

“(i) describes each component of the operational plan for the subsequent decennial census of population; and

“(ii) includes a detailed statement on the status of all research, testing, and operations that are part of the Bureau's comprehensive plan for the decennial census.

“(B) INTERNET PUBLICATION.—On the date on which the Secretary submits a report under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall publish the report on the public internet website of the Bureau.

“(3) SECRETARY CERTIFICATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, upon the date of submission of the report required by subsection (f)(2), shall submit, to the committees of Congress having legislative jurisdiction over the census, a certification stating that any question that has not appeared on the previous two decennial censuses has been researched, studied, and tested according to established statistical policies and procedures.

“(B) GAO REVIEW.—Not later than 6 months after the Secretary submits a certification under paragraph (2), the Comptroller General of the United States shall review such certification and submit a report to Congress on whether the questions to be included in the census have been researched, studied, and tested according to established statistical policies and procedures.”; and

(3) in subsection (i), as so redesignated, by inserting “DEFINITION.—” before “As used in”.

SEC. 4. DECENNIAL CENSUS LIFECYCLE COST ESTIMATES.

Section 141 of title 13, United States Code, as amended by section 3, is further amended by inserting after subsection (g) the following:

“(h) LIFECYCLE COSTS.—

“(1) ESTIMATE.—Not later than January 1, 2026, and every ten years thereafter, the Director shall transmit to the chairs of the committees described in paragraph (3) a lifecycle cost estimate for the decennial census of population first occurring after the date of such transmittal. Such estimate shall include the following with respect to such lifecycle:

“(A) An estimate of costs by each fiscal year.

“(B) Estimates of capital versus operating expenses.

“(C) Staffing projections for each year.

“(D) Assumptions about response rates, wages, and other economic variables.

“(2) UPDATE.—On the date the President submits the annual budget under section 1105(a) of title 31 during any calendar year a decennial of census of population is taken under this section, and on the date such annual budget is submitted during the immediately preceding four calendar years, the Director shall transmit a report describing any changes to the applicable lifecycle estimate transmitted under paragraph (1). Such report shall include the following:

“(A) The basis for any such changes.

“(B) Projected impacts on response rates, staffing requirements, or costs throughout the lifecycle.

“(C) An explanation of any differences in budgetary resources between the amount requested in the President's annual budget request and the lifecycle cost estimate, as updated by this paragraph.

“(3) COMMITTEES.—The committees described in this paragraph are the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate.”.

The Acting CHAIR. No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in part E of House Report 117-464 and amendments en bloc described in section 8 of House Resolution 1339.

Each such further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Oversight and Reform or her designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in part E of the report not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the committee or their designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC OFFERED BY DANNY K. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chair, as the designee of the gentleman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), I rise to offer amendments en bloc.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc consisting of amendment Nos. 1 and 3 printed in part E of House Report 117-464, offered by DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

Page 4, after line 16, insert the following:

“(4) CENSUS EQUITY OFFICIAL.—The Deputy Director shall appoint an employee within the Bureau, who shall report directly to the Deputy Director, and who shall be responsible for optimizing racial and ethnic equity in the decennial census of population, including by—

“(A) enhancing outreach to, and collaborating with, organizations and stakeholders that have demonstrated their influence with racial and ethnic communities that historically have had census participation rates that are lower than those of the overall population;

“(B) maximizing participation among racial and ethnic demographic cohorts that have historically had census participation rates that are lower than those of the overall population;

“(C) rectifying the undercount of cohorts of the population that have been undercounted in recent decennial census counts; and

“(D) any other strategies, initiatives, activities, or operations that would optimize such equity.”.

Page 8, line 4, after “census” insert the following: “, and including a detailed statement on the status of any initiatives, developments, and operations within the purview of the official appointed by the Deputy Director under section 21(d)(4)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. CASE OF HAWAII

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 5. REPORT ON LOCAL-LEVEL DATA AND LOCAL FIELD OPERATIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Bureau of the Census shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) reviews the Bureau's current processes for consulting and engaging with jurisdictions and local partners in conducting the decennial census, including as it relates to preventing and addressing inaccuracies;

(2) provides an update on the Bureau's progress in implementing several of the Government Accountability Office's recommendations as it relates to the collection and utilization of local-level data and coordination of local field operations; and

(3) outlines additional resources needed to support and improve the Bureau's capacity to conduct an accurate count of the Nation's population.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1339, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I strongly support these

amendments. Black, Latino, and indigenous communities all were significantly undercounted in the 2020 Census.

One of the key provisions of this bill is to codify the Bureau's National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations in order to help reduce these undercounts.

Ms. JACKSON LEE's amendment will enhance this objective by ensuring there is a senior employee within the Census Bureau who is dedicated to enhancing racial and ethnic equity in the decennial Census.

The Constitution requires an enumeration that is fair and complete, one in which all people are counted so that all communities obtain the representation and services that they deserve. This amendment will help achieve that.

I also support the amendment offered by Representative CASE, which requires the Census Bureau to submit a report to Congress on the agency's process for consulting and engaging with jurisdictions and local partners in conducting the decennial Census.

We know that certain communities are traditionally harder to count, including groups that are mistrustful of the government, students and transient populations, minority communities, migrant communities, and communities with unique geographic challenges.

Engaging with local stakeholders is essential to reaching these communities and ensuring that the Census counts everyone in the United States, regardless of where they live. This amendment will increase transparency around the Bureau's process for engaging with jurisdictions and local partners and ensure that Congress and the American people can support the Census Bureau in this crucial effort.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I rise to oppose the amendments en bloc.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the en bloc package of amendments offered by Chairwoman MALONEY.

Specifically, I am opposed to the amendments offered by Representative JACKSON Lee and Representative CASE and will address them each.

First, Ms. JACKSON LEE's amendment requires the Deputy Director of the Census to appoint a new employee within the Census Bureau whose sole responsibility is to, "optimize racial and ethnic equity in the decennial Census population."

The core mission of the Census Bureau, as it already stands, is to conduct an accurate count of all people residing in the United States on Census day when the decennial Census is being conducted.

This is the mission for every employee who works on the Census. This

new position is completely unnecessary and redundant of the Census Bureau's preexisting mission to count everyone in the United States regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Because this amendment appears to be an attempt to inject identity politics into the Census Bureau's work, and because it would duplicate efforts already underway at the Census Bureau, I must oppose.

□ 1715

I turn to Representative CASE's amendment, which requires the Census Bureau to create and submit yet another report to Congress, but it fails to require the Census Bureau to actually do anything substantive to improve.

The Census Bureau already conducts extensive engagement campaigns with local jurisdictions to ensure an accurate count of all people during the decennial Census. This report would require the Census Bureau to outline additional processes for engaging with local jurisdictions.

The amendment would also require that the Census Bureau report to Congress on progress in implementing open GAO recommendations, but it does not outline any deadlines for implementing those open recommendations.

Finally, the amendment contains an open-ended invitation for the Census Bureau to ask for "additional resources." This is Washington speak to throw even more taxpayer money at the Census Bureau in the near future.

I fear this amendment will merely waste precious Census Bureau time and resources with an additional report with the sole purpose of justifying future taxpayer expenditures.

Therefore, I must oppose both of these amendments.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from Illinois will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. HICE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part E of House Report 117-464.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike section 2(b) (relating to for-cause removal and duties) and redesignate subsequent subsections accordingly.

Page 3, line 7, strike "DEPUTY DIRECTOR". Page 3, beginning on line 9, strike "as amended by subsection (b), is further amended—" and insert "is amended by adding at the end the following:".

Page 3, strike line 11 and all that follows through page 4, line 16.

Page 4, line 17, redesignate subsection (e) as subsection (d).

Page 6, in the matter following line 13, strike "Deputy Director;".

Strike section 2(d) (relating to position requirements).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 1339, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HICE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

With all due respect, this bill will do anything but ensure a fair and accurate Census. Instead, it threatens to produce an unfair and inaccurate Census.

As ranking member of the Government Operations Subcommittee, I have stressed time and time again that we need reforms that will ensure a more accountable Federal workforce. But time and time again, Democrats show that they want anything but accountability for civil servants.

In fact, it is as though they view Federal employees as a protected and privileged class, and when a Federal bureaucracy is unaccountable, well, that is when it is most likely to threaten the American people with rogue activity like, in this case, providing an unfair and inaccurate Census.

First, it makes the Director of the Census unremovable except for "inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office." Then, it commands that only the Director can make operational, statistical, and technical decisions about the Census.

Mr. Chairman, what is the Secretary of Commerce supposed to do if he or she believes that the Census Director is making decisions that will lead to an unfair or inaccurate Census? Further, what is going to happen if there is no Director in place? Under the terms of the bill, only a career Census Bureau official can serve as the Acting Director.

This bill is a perfect example of how Democrats think unelected civil servants should be running our government and, in essence, that civil servants should be the ones who are governing the American people. This bill literally is having them attempt to influence who represents them. That is not the way our system is supposed to work.

My amendment would strip those provisions out of the legislation. If we are to ensure a fair and accurate Census, then we must ensure an accountable Census Bureau.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the Hice amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I oppose the amendment proposed by Representative HICE of Georgia. His amendment would weaken the protections in this bill that safeguard the Census Bureau from partisan manipulation. His amendment eliminates two key provisions from the bill.

First, the amendment would remove the provision requiring that the Bureau have a single Deputy Director position, which would be filled by a career official with relevant knowledge and experience, including experience in collecting and analyzing data and a demonstrated ability to manage large organizations. Experts agree that a single, qualified Deputy Director is important for ensuring smooth operations within the Bureau, including when there is an absence of a Senate-confirmed Census Director. Having a single Deputy Director also avoids disruptions that can be caused when multiple Deputy Directors are appointed with unclear job descriptions.

That is exactly what happened in the last administration. In August 2020, while the Census count was already underway, former President Trump appointed his third Deputy Director to the Census Bureau. The unclear duties and qualifications of these appointees sparked an internal inquiry by the Commerce Department's Inspector General's Office.

The amendment would also remove the cap on political appointees at the Census Bureau. The bill caps that number at four, which is consistent with historical precedent. During the last administration, there were an unprecedented eight political appointees at the Census Bureau. That is far too many political appointees for a nonpartisan agency like the Census Bureau, and it makes the danger of political manipulation much greater.

I am committed to protecting the integrity of the Census Bureau and improving each decennial count. Unfortunately, this amendment would make these goals harder to achieve.

Mr. Chairman, I urge all Members to oppose Representative HICE's amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER), who is the ranking member of the House Oversight and Reform Committee.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment offered by the Government Operations Subcommittee ranking member, my colleague, JODY HICE.

I support this sensible amendment, which will preserve vital accountability mechanisms for the Director of the Census Bureau. The bill attempts to insulate the Census Bureau Director and empower an unaccountable career

Deputy Director. We should not be tying the hands of a future President to properly exercise executive oversight over the management of the Census Bureau.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage my colleagues to support the commonsense Hice amendment.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HICE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. BOURDEAUX) having assumed the chair, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 8326) to amend title 13, United States Code, to improve the operations of the Bureau of the Census, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REMEMBERING MOON LANDRIEU

(Mr. CARTER of Louisiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, today, I am honored to remember a groundbreaking public servant, personal mentor, and inspiring New Orleanian, the Honorable Moon Landrieu, mayor of the city of New Orleans.

A son, father, husband, grandfather, brother, and lawyer, Moon Landrieu first served in the Louisiana House of Representatives in 1960 and next on the New Orleans City Council. He was elected mayor of the city of New Orleans from 1970 to 1978, served as U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1979 to 1982, and was a circuit court judge.

Throughout his career, he fought for equality and justice, opposing Jim Crow legislation and successfully outlawing segregation in public accommodations, standing as a shining light during our Nation's darkest times.

He passed away on September 5, but the Honorable Moon Landrieu and his indelible impact will never be forgotten in our world.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 1 of House Resolution

1230, the House stands adjourned until noon tomorrow.

Thereupon (at 5 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, September 15, 2022, at noon.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-5221. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Lieutenant General Bryan P. Fenton, United States Army, to wear the insignia of the grade of general, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5222. A letter from the Undersecretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing 16 officers to wear the insignia of the grade of major general or brigadier general, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5223. A letter from the Senior Bureau Official, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a Memorandum of Justification for a drawdown; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC-5224. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting a legislative proposal aimed to help agencies recruit and retain a highly skilled federal workforce; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

EC-5225. A letter from the Chief, Regulatory Coordination Division, USCIS Office of Policy and Strategy, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility [CIS No. 2715-22; DHS Docket No. USCIS-2021-0013] (RIN: 1615-AC74) received September 14, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-5226. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report for Fiscal Year 2017 entitled "Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program" per section 2610(b) of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 8629(b); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Education and Labor.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. H.R. 4819. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to revitalize existing university infrastructure relating to nuclear science and engineering and establish new university-based nuclear science and engineering facilities, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 117-466). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following

titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself and Mrs. KIM of California):

H.R. 8817. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to support and stabilize the existing nursing workforce, establish programs to increase the number of nurses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. BUSH (for herself, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. NORTON, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BOWMAN, Mr. CARSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 8818. A bill to direct the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue an occupational safety and health standard to protect workers from wind-related injuries; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Ms. BUSH (for herself, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. TLAB, and Mr. BOWMAN):

H.R. 8819. A bill to provide employment protection and paid emergency leave to workers impacted by certain climate disasters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia (for himself, Mrs. HARSHBARGER, Mr. MOORE of Utah, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. MANN, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. BUCK, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. ELLZEY, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. POSEY, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. BABIN, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. BACON, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. CLYDE):

H.R. 8820. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit governmental discrimination against certain health care providers with certain objections to abortion; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CASTEN (for himself, Ms. BUSH, Ms. BASS, and Mr. PAYNE):

H.R. 8821. A bill to require the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration to produce and make available at no cost to certain individuals in the United States an identification for the purpose of allowing such individuals to meet certain identification requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Ms. GARCIA of Texas (for herself, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. BASS, Mrs. DEMINGS, Ms. DEAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CORREA, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 8822. A bill to direct the Secretary of Education to carry out a grant program to support the placement of students and licensed professional social workers in public libraries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas:

H.R. 8823. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to advance meritorious asylum claims, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GOTTHEIMER (for himself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 8824. A bill to amend title 3, United States Code, to reform the Electoral Count Act, and to amend the Presidential Transi-

tion Act of 1963 to provide clear guidelines for when and to whom resources are provided by the Administrator of General Services for use in connection with the preparations for the assumption of official duties as President or Vice President; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Reform, and Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 8825. A bill to provide authority for small cultivators of marijuana and small manufacturers of marijuana products to ship marijuana and marijuana products using the mail, and for other purpose; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota:

H.R. 8826. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to expand working hours for employees between the ages of 14 and 16 years during periods in which schools are in session, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. KILMER (for himself and Mr. TIMMONS):

H.R. 8827. A bill to permit the Chief Administrative Officer to pay salaries in or under the House of Representatives twice per month in certain cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. KUSTER:

H.R. 8828. A bill to address potential conflicts of interest among entities serving as Food and Drug Administration contractors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. MENG (for herself and Mrs. LESKO):

H.R. 8829. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to treat certain menstrual products as misbranded if their labeling does not list each component of the product, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio (for himself and Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio):

H.R. 8830. A bill to develop a scenario-based training curriculum for law enforcement personnel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself and Mr. DESAULNIER):

H.R. 8831. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize certain claims for personal injury or death caused by medical malpractice onboard certain naval vessels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself and Mr. CRAWFORD):

H.J. Res. 95. A joint resolution to provide for the resolution of issues in a railway labor-management dispute, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. JEFFRIES:

H. Res. 1347. A resolution electing certain Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself and Mr. GRIFFITH):

H. Res. 1348. A resolution expressing support for the designation of September 15, 2022, as "National Brain Health Day"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GARAMENDI (for himself, Mr. TURNER, Mr. KINZINGER, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H. Res. 1349. A resolution congratulating the United States Air Force on the occasion of its 75th anniversary; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. NORTON:

H. Res. 1350. A resolution expressing support for dance as a form of valuable exercise and of artistic expression, and for the designation of September 17, 2022, as "National Dance Day"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. SPEIER, and Mr. VALADAO):

H. Res. 1351. A resolution condemning Azerbaijan's unprovoked military attack on Armenia; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. CURTIS, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio):

H. Res. 1352. A resolution supporting the designation of "Telehealth Awareness Week"; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

ML-229. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of New Hampshire, relative to House Resolution No. 16, calling for the federal government to construct a nuclear waste repository to permanently store our nation's nuclear waste; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

ML-230. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of New Hampshire, relative to House Resolution No. 15, expressing support for the people of Hong Kong and commending the Republic of China (Taiwan) for its strong democratic system; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

ML-231. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Wisconsin, relative to Joint Resolution No. 18, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the states to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ML-232. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of New Hampshire, relative to House Resolution No. 9, renewing its commitment to all of the unalienable rights of its citizens and all of the constitutional civil authority reserved for the individual state of New Hampshire; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ML-233. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of New Hampshire, relative to House Resolution No. 8, respectfully urging the Congress, Department of Defense, and Department of Veterans Affairs to continue to investigate whether opioids, benzodiazepines, exposure to agent orange, insecticides, pyridostigmine bromide, nerve agents, vaccines administered to military personnel, and constant long term stress from service are contributing to the high number of suicides by veteran members of the armed forces; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs.

ML-234. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of Michigan, relative to Senate Resolution No. 150, opposing the designation of additional wilderness areas in Michigan's Upper Peninsula; jointly to the Committees on Natural Resources and Agriculture.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER:

H.R. 8817.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. BUSH:

H.R. 8818.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Ms. BUSH:

H.R. 8819.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 8820.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. CASTEN:

H.R. 8821.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Ms. GARCIA of Texas:

H.R. 8822.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas:

H.R. 8823.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. GOTTHEIMER:

H.R. 8824.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all laws that shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 8825.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota:

H.R. 8826.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 8827.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. KUSTER:

H.R. 8828.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Taxing and Spending Clause: "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for

the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States . . ."

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 8829.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution [page H10170]

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio:

H.R. 8830.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

"The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution."

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 8831.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.J. Res. 95.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 68: Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 151: Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Ms. STANSBURY.

H.R. 475: Mr. HUIZENGA.

H.R. 708: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 725: Mrs. LESKO.

H.R. 792: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 1106: Ms. DEAN.

H.R. 1282: Mr. LUCAS and Mr. HUIZENGA.

H.R. 1378: Mr. MRVAN and Mr. CLYBURN.

H.R. 1434: Mrs. LESKO.

H.R. 1442: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1553: Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.

H.R. 1695: Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma.

H.R. 1744: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 1800: Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 2126: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 2187: Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 2252: Mr. MOONEY, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. SIREs, Ms. BUSH, Mr. LAMB, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. OBERNOLTE, and Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas.

H.R. 2373: Ms. STRICKLAND and Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 2525: Mr. NEGUSE, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. KHANNA, and Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 2542: Mr. PAPPAS.

H.R. 2549: Ms. KUSTER, Ms. OMAR, and Mr. MORELLE.

H.R. 2565: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 2814: Ms. CHU.

H.R. 2826: Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK.

H.R. 2972: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 2974: Ms. TLAIB, Ms. STEVENS, and Mr. TIFFANY.

H.R. 3085: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Ms. HOULAHAN.

H.R. 3149: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 3173: Mrs. TORRES of California, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, and Mrs. FISCHBACH.

H.R. 3271: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 3382: Ms. STRICKLAND.

H.R. 3461: Mr. FALLON.

H.R. 3488: Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas.

H.R. 3512: Ms. DEAN.

H.R. 3733: Mr. CROW, Mrs. LEE of Nevada,

Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. GOLDEN.

H.R. 3759: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 3834: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 3860: Mr. JACKSON.

H.R. 3988: Mr. TONKO, Ms. DEAN, and Ms. STANSBURY.

H.R. 4146: Mr. RUIZ, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. MALINOWSKI, Mr. BOWMAN, and Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas.

H.R. 4151: Mr. PETERS and Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 4202: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 4213: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 4436: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. MANNING, and Mr. COLE.

H.R. 4700: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 4792: Mr. BUDD.

H.R. 4836: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 4944: Mrs. DEMINGS.

H.R. 5227: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 5244: Ms. HOULAHAN.

H.R. 5342: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 5458: Mr. FLOOD.

H.R. 5468: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 5532: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 5536: Mr. PAPPAS and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 5605: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 5607: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 5727: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 5916: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 6036: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 6037: Mr. FLOOD.

H.R. 6319: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 6394: Mr. VAN DREW.

H.R. 6520: Ms. HOULAHAN.

H.R. 6613: Ms. STRICKLAND.

H.R. 6670: Ms. BROWN of Ohio.

H.R. 6817: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.

H.R. 6823: Mr. BOWMAN, Mr. STANTON, and Mr. KIM of New Jersey.

H.R. 6860: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 6875: Ms. ROSS.

H.R. 6964: Ms. DELBENE and Ms. SCHRIER.

H.R. 7089: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 7249: Ms. ESHOO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Ms. DEAN.

H.R. 7382: Mr. VAN DREW, Mrs. TORRES of California, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 7462: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.

H.R. 7492: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.

H.R. 7560: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 7589: Ms. BROWNLEY.

H.R. 7591: Ms. OMAR.

H.R. 7628: Mr. FLOOD.

H.R. 7644: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 7758: Ms. HOULAHAN.

H.R. 7837: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 7925: Ms. BASS, Mr. BERA, Mr. AGUILAR, and Ms. BROWNLEY.

H.R. 7933: Mr. KEATING and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 7946: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 7972: Mr. LIEU and Ms. STANSBURY.

H.R. 7993: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 8052: Mr. CLINE.

H.R. 8069: Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina.

H.R. 8109: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 8111: Ms. WEXTON, Mrs. TRAHAN, Ms. SHERILL, and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 8153: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 8233: Mrs. RADEWAGEN.

H.R. 8264: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. STANTON.

H.R. 8303: Mr. LIEU.

H.R. 8364: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.

H.R. 8374: Mr. BUCK and Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 8427: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 8432: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Ms. SLOTKIN.

H.R. 8446: Ms. SPANBERGER and Mr. PFLUGER.

H.R. 8452: Mr. McEACHIN.

H.R. 8528: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 8558: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mrs. TRAHAN, and Ms. OMAR.

H.R. 8600: Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 8616: Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 8622: Mr. BERA, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. LAMALFA, and Ms. BARRAGAN.

H.R. 8632: Mr. FALLON.

H.R. 8655: Mr. OWENS.
 H.R. 8681: Mr. PHILLIPS, Mr. SHERMAN, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
 H.R. 8685: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. OBERNOLTE, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Mr. NEAL.
 H.R. 8686: Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 8687: Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 8693: Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 8699: Ms. SLOTKIN.
 H.R. 8710: Mr. CLINE.
 H.R. 8731: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. DONALDS, Mrs. HARTZLER, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
 H.R. 8765: Mr. NADLER.
 H.R. 8767: Mrs. BOEBERT.
 H.R. 8770: Mr. GREEN of Texas and Ms. DELBENE.
 H.R. 8776: Mr. ROUZER.
 H.R. 8813: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Mr. SHERMAN.
 H.R. 8814: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida and Mr. ROUZER.
 H.J. Res. 1: Mr. CORREA.
 H.J. Res. 12: Mr. FLOOD.
 H.J. Res. 60: Ms. CRAIG.
 H.J. Res. 91: Mr. LATTA.

H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. KEATING.
 H. Res. 70: Mr. MOONEY.
 H. Res. 174: Ms. ESCOBAR.
 H. Res. 832: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
 H. Res. 891: Ms. STRICKLAND and Ms. DEGETTE.
 H. Res. 1172: Mr. COURTNEY.
 H. Res. 1183: Mr. DONALDS.
 H. Res. 1266: Mr. BANKS, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. CLINE.
 H. Res. 1292: Mr. PAPPAS.
 H. Res. 1342: Mr. SHERMAN and Ms. BROWN of Ohio.
 H. Res. 1346: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. GOTTHEIMER.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

PT-143. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Alpena County Board of Commissioners of the state Michigan, relative to Resolution 2022-13, urging the United States

Department of Labor to abandon a proposed rule change and urging Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Congressional Delegation to support local control by the Workforce Development Boards and oppose the rule and notify the Department of Labor Secretary that it would have an adverse impact on the Michigan "One Stop" workforce development system; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

PT-144. Also, a petition of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, relative to Senate Resolution No. 591, expressing support of S. 405, better known as the "Vieques Recovery and Redevelopment Act", introduced in the 117th Congress; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

PT-145. Also, a petition of the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church, relative to a resolution passed at the 2022 Annual Conference calling for Congress to give Puerto Rico statehood by passing bills H.R. 1522 and S. 780; to the Committee on Natural Resources.



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No. 148

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, Lord of hosts, we praise You for choosing to make Yourself known to us in the unfolding of Your loving providence. Our hearts expand with joy because of Your presence. Empower us to keep our minds steadfastly on You.

Lord, use our Senators to make a better Nation and world. Give them an openness of mind and heart that they may receive the fullness of Your grace. Consecrate them to the laudable task of permitting Your kingdom to flourish in this generation and beyond.

Lord, make our lawmakers instruments of Your peace.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LUJÁN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Lara E. Montecalvo, of Rhode Island, to be United States Circuit Judge for the First Circuit.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

ABORTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, was truly a tale of two parties. While one party—the Democrats—gathered at the White House to celebrate the passage of our job-creating agenda, the other party—the MAGA Republicans—spent their day introducing a nationwide ban on abortions.

If the American people want to know what the difference is between the two parties, look no further. One party is

focused on jobs—that is us; the other is focused on nationwide abortion bans—that is the extreme MAGA Republicans.

One party wants to lower inflation and help families make ends meet, to tackle the generational challenges we face and has passed major legislation to that effect, now law. The other party, apparently, wants to eliminate women's autonomy over their own bodies.

Here is how you know Republicans are dangerously out of touch. Months after women had their freedom of choice taken away by the MAGA Supreme Court, a nationwide abortion ban was actually their attempt to seem more mainstream. Can you believe it? To seem more mainstream? Heaven help us. Heaven help us. It shows just how extreme they are.

The core problem is that far from being mainstream, a large portion of the Republican Party harbors truly extreme views on a woman's right to choose. In the few months since the Dobbs decision, Republican State legislatures in places like Indiana, South Carolina, and others have either introduced or enacted new abortion restrictions, with alarmingly few exceptions of rape or incest.

In this Chamber, Senate Republicans spent years confirming judges hostile to freedom of choice, including three sitting Supreme Court Justices who joined with the majority in overturning Roe. And the then-majority leader, now minority leader, Leader MCCONNELL, has repeatedly said his greatest accomplishment is putting these judges on the Court. His greatest accomplishment is putting judges on the Court who overturned Roe v. Wade. Do the American people want that? I don't think so.

And for all the hemming and hawing we heard yesterday from Republicans about where they really stand on the issue, they cannot run away from their

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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record. Setting aside yesterday's proposal, the fact is that 45 Senate Republicans—including Leader MCCONNELL—remain cosponsors of another nationwide abortion ban previously introduced by the Senator from South Carolina.

Leader MCCONNELL himself told USA Today earlier this year that without Roe, proposals for a nationwide ban on abortions were now “possible,”—his words—“possible” if Republicans controlled the Senate. Do the American people want that? Do they want MCCONNELL, Leader MITCH MCCONNELL, to be majority leader and work to impose a nationwide ban on abortions? I don't think so.

Now, they are sort of running away from what their real beliefs are, but they are like the dog who caught the bus. For years they pushed to make this happen, unfortunately, to the detriment of over 100 million American women. It happened, and now they don't know quite what to do.

They are not backing off their horrible MAGA principles, but they want to hide from it at the same time because they know how unpopular it is.

And to show you just where the party is at, almost immediately after the Court overturned Roe, Mike Pence, former Republican Vice President, now running for President possibly in 2024 said Republicans “must not rest” until abortion is illegal everywhere. That means a nationwide ban. That doesn't leave it up to the States.

In fact, he doubled down on just this last night, saying a national abortion ban “is profoundly more important” than Republicans' short-term interests. That is one of the leaders of the Republican Party, which has moved so far to the right that even someone like Pence, who doesn't always go along with Trump, feels compelled to take that extreme position.

And lest we forget, folks, nearly every Senate Republican—nearly every Senate Republican—already voted to push national abortion bans in 2020, in 2018, and 2015. During one of these votes, the Senator from South Carolina, who introduced the nationwide ban again yesterday, said:

These pieces of legislation will continue to be advanced until they pass.

How do we know that Republicans will put a national abortion ban on the floor if they control the Senate? Not only has Senator GRAHAM committed to doing it, they have done it before, three times. And they will do it again if they get the majority. America, beware. America, beware.

So the truth is not hard to grasp. Republicans do not care about leaving abortion in the hands of the States. No way. They do not care that a majority of Americans supported Roe and support abortion rights.

What MAGA Republicans care about deep down is eliminating freedom of choice across America, period. And they are already at work right now on legislation, as we heard yesterday, that

will take us down that terrible, terrible path.

Well, it is my view that the American people aren't going to be fooled by Republicans' desperate attempts to seem mainstream. You can't fake your way through an issue so personal and so important as a woman's right to make her own healthcare choices. They are not going to be able to run and duck and bob and weave and tie themselves in pretzel knots. Everyone knows where they are at. LINDSEY GRAHAM made it clear again yesterday. And people will know the Republican view: abolish abortion everywhere. That is not going to change no matter what some on the other side might think.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022

Mr. President, now, on the positive impacts of the Democratic agenda, a much happier note. As I said a moment ago, while MAGA Republicans spent yesterday touting their extreme agenda, Democrats focused on the things that matter most right now to the American people: lowering costs, creating good-paying jobs, and protecting our planet for future generations.

The Inflation Reduction Act has not been law for even a month—not just a month—and already it is spurring new investments that will generate years, if not decades, of robust economic activity, in industries that will stay here in America—here in America, not in China, not anywhere else—for a very long time.

A remarkable number of companies in the energy, automotive, and clean tech sectors have announced that they are either approving or accelerating new plans to grow their businesses.

One of the most significant areas of activity is happening in EVs and battery manufacturing, so crucial to meeting our country's growing demand for electric vehicles. China has dominated battery manufacturing for too long, and we are bringing these jobs back to America—not just talking about it, doing it.

Honda and LG, for instance, have teamed up to invest \$4 billion for a new battery plant with an annual production of 40 GWh.

Hyundai, meanwhile, has announced they might actually accelerate their timetable for building new state-of-the-art EV and battery plants in Savannah, GA. Plans called for getting started early next year, and now they are saying it could happen sooner. And it is the votes of people and the activity of people like RAPHAEL WARNOCK and JON OSSOFF that have made that happen.

Of course, the benefits of our bill extend well beyond EVs and batteries. Solar Energy Industries Association projects that by 2027, the U.S. solar market will grow 40 percent more than expected thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act. And numerous companies focused on renewables, carbon capture, and heat pumps are announcing a flurry of investments, very often citing our bill—now law—the IRA.

All of these examples share something important: These are the jobs of tomorrow. These industries are going to stick around for decades as our country makes the transition away from fossil fuels and towards cleaner forms of energy. The impacts will be felt everywhere. It is going to take millions of workers to build these vehicles, reshape our infrastructure, and install these technologies in our homes and offices.

And because so much of this will be done by union labor, these will be good-paying jobs, at good wages, with good benefits, lifting up the middle class, keeping those who are in the middle class there and allowing many others who are climbing that ladder to get into the middle class and stay there. It is a wonderful and beautiful thing. In a certain sense we did the right thing making sure our planet doesn't burn up, but it had so many other effects, like good-paying jobs and strengthening the middle class.

And had we not taken action to encourage these investments, it is likely many of these jobs would end up going overseas to Asia, to Europe. America would have lost out. Instead, we have a real chance to lead the way again.

This is the result of Democrats leading the way here in Congress. We are proud, every one of us is proud of the steps we have taken to lower energy costs, to create jobs that have a real future in this country, and to give working families a chance to climb up those ladders and get into that middle class.

It is all about restoring that sunny American optimism that has been at the core of our economic prosperity for so long, that some felt had passed us by; but, no, we Democrats said it hasn't passed us by. The best of our future is yet to come.

RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT

Mr. President, on marriage equality, over the past few months, both sides have engaged in good-faith conversations about how to pass marriage equality into law. I truly hope, for the sake of tens of millions of Americans, that there will be at least 10 Republicans who will vote with us to pass this important bill soon.

Democrats are ready to make it happen and willing to debate reasonable compromises on the specifics, so I urge my colleagues on the other side to join us. Around the country, the feeling is sinking in that this is a dark time for individual rights, so codifying marriage equality is one of the best things we can do to provide peace of mind to millions of Americans who are gay Americans, LGBTQ Americans who are married, and to their families, to their friends. It extends way beyond the individual couple who is married. It is an issue that hits home for many of us in this Chamber, including me.

If we ever find ourselves in the awful situation of having marriage equality overturned by the Supreme Court, I dare say the vast majority of us would

see impacts in our own personal lives or the personal lives of our close family and friends in one way or another.

It would be risky and perhaps foolish to think that such a day could never come. Maybe a few months ago people would think that, no more. Justice Thomas put his cards on the table. He said that he is very open that the Supreme Court's decision protecting same-sex marriage should, in fact, be reconsidered. And often when Justice Thomas says it, his other four MAGA Republican Supreme Court colleague Justices are thinking the same thing.

To anyone who says that the High Court would never be so reckless as to overturn a decision that has protected this fundamental right of millions of people, all I say to this is: Wake up. Look what they did in the Dobbs decision.

Passing marriage equality in the Senate is all about making sure such a danger never—never—materializes. Millions of Americans, tens of millions of Americans will breathe a huge sigh of relief if we do this. And it is the right thing to do.

We know that America has trod on the long path towards greater equality. We know that when the Constitution was written, millions of Americans were enslaved. In many States, you had to be a White male Protestant property owner to vote, that would leave the presiding officer and me out. They know that, and they know that most Americans are proud that we have made progress.

There are some dark forces encapsulated, embodied in the MAGA Republicans, so many of whom are in this Chamber, who want to take steps backward. We are not going to let it happen. We shouldn't let it happen.

So I truly hope, for the sake of tens of millions of Americans, that there will be at least 10 Republicans who will vote with us to pass this very, very important bill.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

INFLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the American people's No. 1 priority is runaway inflation that is smashing their family budgets and crushing our economy.

Yesterday, the latest inflation report showed that soaring prices are still completely out of control. Inflation has totaled 13.2 percent since the day President Biden took office. We just had the worst 12 months for both food inflation and electricity inflation since the fallout from the Carter administration.

President Biden and our Democratic colleagues chose to celebrate—celebrate—this awful inflation report with a so-called inflation reduction party yesterday at the White House. While the Dow Jones plummeted over 1,000 points, while the S&P 500 lost more

than 4 percent of its value in 1 day, while American families can't afford gas, groceries, or electricity, Washington Democrats partied on the White House lawn to celebrate their policies. That is what happened yesterday.

This is what Democrats do while our economy crumbles. They subsidize luxury electric cars; they make plumbers and retail workers eat the graduate school debt of doctors and lawyers; and they throw a party for themselves on the White House lawn.

CRIME

Mr. President, now on an entirely different matter, when you combine the border crisis and the violent crime crisis, law and order ranks as the American people's No. 2 priority, second only to the inflation crisis.

While Democrats' economic policies have waged war on working families' financial security, their soft-on-crime policies have eroded America's physical security. Cities, towns, and neighborhoods across the country are reeling from a wave of violent crime. Just last weekend my State, Kentucky, experienced a spate of murders and attempted murders that rattled residents and literally overwhelmed the police.

Lexington saw four separate shooting incidents on Saturday night alone, leaving nine hurt, some with life-threatening injuries. A Lexington Police Department veteran described it as "a pretty much unprecedented night in my 20 years." Officers were so tied up that they were unable to respond to other crimes and disorder.

Louisville also saw a flurry of violence; the second highest number of homicides in one weekend this year; six people murdered in just 3 days.

Both cities documented record homicide numbers last year, and Lexington is on track to do so again. For Louisville, this is the third consecutive year of triple-digit killings.

Now, of course, this crisis isn't just hitting Kentucky. These trends are nationwide.

For years, the far left has impugned the motives and honor of police officers and taken aim at their funding.

For years, top liberal donors have poured money into campaigns of radical district attorneys from big cities whose whole stated agenda is to not prosecute crimes.

For years, Democratic elites have pushed for letting violent criminals out of prison. Democrats just nominated and confirmed a Supreme Court Justice who argued as a DC district judge that COVID justified—listen to this—letting every single prisoner in Washington, DC, custody out of jail and back on the streets.

This has been an intentional, strategic campaign from the far left, and now Americans are being robbed, carjacked, assaulted, and murdered. Their families are being poisoned with illegal drugs.

Just weeks ago, Senator RUBIO gave the Senate a vote to increase funding for fighting crime and keeping dan-

gerous criminals locked up. Every Senate Republican supported this; every Democrat joined on party lines to block it.

Later today, our colleagues from Tennessee will hold a press conference to discuss the horrifying case of Eliza Fletcher, a 34-year-old mom and teacher in Memphis, whom a career criminal forced into an SUV and murdered while she was out for her morning run. The suspect had multiple violent crimes on his rap sheet dating back to age 14 and had just been let out of prison early for a prior kidnapping.

So there are far too many tragic stories like Eliza Fletcher's being written every day and every week all across our country.

Entire neighborhoods have become unwalkable. In many places, public transit has become nearly unusable.

A few months ago, the Washington Post profiled 1 day in the life of a female immigrant busdriver in Denver who gets screamed at and threatened by lunatics on a daily basis.

Just yesterday, a 49-year-old was stabbed in the back while riding the subway in New York City after he asked another passenger to just quiet down.

Our Democratic friends like to talk about fairness and compassion. There is nothing fair or compassionate about letting cities descend into violence and chaos. There is nothing fair or compassionate about legislating like career criminals deserve fifth and sixth chances more than young mothers deserve the right to go out for a morning jog and come home alive.

Stable prices, reliable energy, secure borders, and basic public safety are four of the most basic duties that any government in a civilized country owes its citizens. These things are the absolute minimum that American families ought to be able to count on—the bare minimum—and the Democrats' one-party government cannot deliver it.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, on another matter, it has been encouraging to see good news regarding the Ukrainian people's fight to defend or reclaim their sovereignty.

Latest reports indicate that Ukraine has recently liberated 2,400 square miles of their own territory from Russian hands.

The sight of a democratic nation beating back totalitarian aggression continues to inspire the free world. It should make other thugs think twice about following in Putin's footsteps. But, obviously, it is not nearly time to ease up. An axis of authoritarians is still pushing hard for Ukraine to fail.

Iran is equipping the Russian military with armed drones like the ones they and their proxies have used against American forces in Syria and Iraq and against our Israeli, Emirati, and Saudi partners.

North Korea is reportedly refilling Russia's artillery stockpiles, and the PRC has publicly supported Moscow's narrative through every Russian atrocity.

So our Ukrainian friends may still face a long, hard struggle to achieve victory as they define it, but Western countries can help by stepping up the pace of our collective assistance.

Ukraine's hard-won successes on the battlefield could have come actually even earlier if the Biden administration and European allies that take their cues from Washington had been quicker and more proactive to deliver the capabilities Ukraine actually needed.

Ukrainian forces are working wonders with Western equipment. They have quickly integrated cutting-edge systems like HIMARS and Javelin and Stinger missiles.

The West's hesitance to put these capabilities in the right hands has cost lives. Horrors could have been avoided if the Biden administration and our European partners hadn't been self-deterred from providing these tools sooner.

The Ukrainians need more of the weapons we have been giving them; they need to start getting them faster; and they also need new capabilities like longer range, ATACMS, larger drones, and tanks.

Not all of these weapons need to come from America. Make no mistake, our allies are looking to us for signals. President Biden should be clear with Western Europe about the need for them to make meaningful, specific contributions to Ukraine and to do it quickly.

He should be clear with our allies that our defense holiday is over. It is time for all of us to rebuild our militaries and defense industrial bases. This will take urgent investments, regulatory reform, and prioritization to expand our capacity to produce critical munitions and systems. These short- and long-term steps alike are in Europe's vital interests, America's vital interests, and the entire free world's.

Beijing, Tehran, and other authoritarian regimes cannot think for 1 minute that trampling free people's sovereignty will go unpunished.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF LARA E. MONTECALVO

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues who voted yesterday, on a bipartisan basis, to advance the nomination of Lara Montecalvo to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. I look forward to her confirmation later today.

She will soon fill the seat that is being vacated by Judge O. Rogerie Thompson, who is a trailblazing and outstanding jurist whom I was proud to recommend and who is taking senior

status. She will continue to hear cases on a more limited basis, along with Judge Bruce Selya, another distinguished judge from Rhode Island who has taken senior status and who continues to hear cases on the First Circuit.

Like Judge Thompson and Judge Selya, Lara Montecalvo is someone with great integrity, intellect, and capacity for judicial independence. I am delighted that President Biden nominated her for Rhode Island's traditional seat on the First Circuit. I am pleased that the Judiciary Committee reported her nomination on a bipartisan vote. And I am grateful to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who voted yesterday to advance her nomination.

Her resume speaks for itself. As Rhode Island's chief public defender, Ms. Montecalvo has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to upholding our constitutional rights, including the Fifth Amendment right to due process and the Sixth Amendment right to counsel.

Ms. Montecalvo was a gifted student, who holds degrees from Swarthmore College and Boston College Law School, where she graduated magna cum laude in 2000.

After graduating from law school, she was immediately drawn to public service. She started her legal career at the Department of Justice for 4 years, focusing on civil tax matters in the Federal courts. In 2004, she joined the Rhode Island Public Defender's Office and has risen through the ranks to lead that office.

Ms. Montecalvo has more than 20 years of experience as a trial and appellate attorney. She has appeared in just about every court in Rhode Island, including in the State's highest court. Her extensive courtroom experience will add valuable perspectives to the deliberations of the First Circuit.

But it is more than her resume. Within the Rhode Island legal community, Ms. Montecalvo is known for her zealous advocacy for her clients and her keen sense of justice. She has won accolades from judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement officials. And individuals across the political spectrum have endorsed her nomination, including five Rhode Island attorneys general and two former U.S. attorneys, one appointed by President Obama and one by President Trump.

I know Ms. Montecalvo will serve on the First Circuit with honor and distinction as she has at every step of her legal career.

I urge my colleagues to confirm this highly qualified nominee to serve as a judge on the First Circuit.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AGRICULTURE AND INFLATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon, Democrats and the President gathered at the White House to celebrate their so-called Inflation Reduction Act—a bill that will do absolutely nothing to reduce inflation.

You don't have to take my word for it. The nonpartisan Penn Wharton Budget Model said this about the bill's impact on inflation:

The impact on inflation is statistically indistinguishable from zero.

“[S]tatistically indistinguishable from zero.”

Or you could take the word of the Democrat chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, who admitted on the Senate floor right here that the so-called Inflation Reduction Act would not reduce inflation. That is right.

To describe yesterday's celebration at the White House as tone deaf would be putting it mildly. Democrats had a big party to celebrate a bill that may fulfill some of their Big Government fantasies but will do nothing to fix the inflation crisis facing our country. Meanwhile, Americans were dealing with the release of August inflation numbers, which were even higher than expected and made it very clear that the soaring prices will continue for the foreseeable future.

One of President Obama's top economic advisers noted yesterday:

Today's CPI report confirms that the US has a serious inflation problem. Core inflation is higher this month than for the quarter, higher this quarter than last quarter, higher this half of the year than the previous one, and higher last year than the previous one.

That is from one of President Obama's top economic advisers, who made that statement yesterday.

Yet Democrats and the President somehow thought yesterday was a good day to celebrate fulfilling some of their Big Government fantasies.

I guess Americans struggling to afford their soaring grocery bills can be comforted by the fact that, thanks to Democrats' legislation, their tax dollars will now be going to fund electric vehicle tax credits for wealthy Americans, not to mention road equity and identifying gaps in tree canopy coverage—yes, provisions in the bill that they were celebrating yesterday. Meanwhile, the pain of inflation is permeating every aspect of our economy.

During the month of August, I spent a lot of time traveling around South Dakota, and naturally I spent a lot of time talking to farmers and ranchers. One thing I heard over and over is the toll that inflation is taking on agriculture.

In addition to the normal challenges every American is facing from inflation, like high utility bills and high grocery prices, farmers and ranchers are facing massive increases in the price of essential inputs like fertilizer

and fuel. Under the Biden administration, farm production expenses will reach a record high this year. Fertilizer prices are on track to increase by 84 percent—84 percent. That is a staggering increase. Fuel prices are on track to increase 65 percent. And there is no end in sight.

Farmers are facing a huge increase in interest costs thanks to a combination of higher interest rates and record-high farm debt. Gross farm income is actually supposed to reach a record level this year, but those gains are expected to be entirely wiped out by inflation—and then some. Thanks to inflation, net farm income is expected to decrease. At a time when gross farm income is expected to reach a record level—14 percent higher year over year than last year—net farm income, inflation adjusted, is actually going to go down because of the impact of inflation.

Meanwhile, Democrats were at the White House celebrating a bill that will not only do nothing to address our inflation crisis but will drive up energy bills for American farmers and American families.

Agriculture is the lifeblood of my State of South Dakota, and addressing the needs of farmers and ranchers is always one of my top priorities here in the Senate. While it is, unfortunately, going to be difficult to stop Democrats from prolonging our inflation crisis as long as they are in charge in Washington, in the meantime, I am doing everything I can to make life easier for our farmers and ranchers.

One of my top priorities right now is preparing for the 2023 farm bill, to make it as effective as possible in addressing the challenges that are facing our farmers and ranchers. I have been holding roundtables in South Dakota to hear directly from producers about their priorities for the farm bill. So far, I have held roundtables covering row crops, conservation, and livestock. I also participated in a farm bill panel at Dakotafest and an Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce farm bill discussion at the Brown County Fair.

I look forward to continuing to receive input from producers as the time to draft the farm bill approaches. I have also begun introducing legislation—based on my conversations with farmers and ranchers—that I will work to get included in the farm bill.

In March, I introduced the Conservation Reserve Program Improvement Act, which would make CRP grazing a more attractive option for farmers and ranchers by providing cost-share payments for all CRP practices for the establishment of grazing infrastructure, including fencing and water distribution. It would also increase the annual payment limit for CRP, which has not changed since 1985, to help account for inflation and the increase in land value.

In May, I joined Senator KLOBUCHAR to introduce the Agricultural Innovation Act. Currently, the U.S. Depart-

ment of Agriculture collects reams of data on conservation practices. The problem is that a lot of this data is often not analyzed and presented in a way that would be useful for farmers and ranchers.

The legislation Senator KLOBUCHAR and I introduced would provide for better processing and development of the data that the USDA collects so that farmers and ranchers can evaluate the impact of conservation and other production practices on things like soil health, crop yields, and profitability. Our bill would make it easier for farmers and ranchers to decide what conservation practices to adopt by, among other things, helping producers identify the ways that adopting conservation practices can improve their bottom line.

In the next couple of weeks, I will be introducing another piece of legislation for the 2023 farm bill to improve the effectiveness of livestock disaster assistance for producers. Too often, producers find that accessing disaster relief programs at the Department of Agriculture is an arduous and lengthy process. I am working on legislation that would make it easier for farmers and ranchers to access the Livestock Forage Disaster Program and the Emergency Conservation Program so that producers can receive timely assistance in the wake of natural disasters like drought and flooding.

The U.S. Drought Monitor plays a critical role in triggering USDA disaster assistance, and I am working to build on my previous efforts to improve weather monitoring and the accuracy of the Drought Monitor.

This isn't a farm bill issue per se, but I am also introducing legislation today to prevent Democrats from using funding in the recently passed and misnamed, as I pointed out earlier, Inflation Reduction Act to monitor livestock methane emissions.

It is very clear that elements of the radical environmental left would like to see U.S. livestock producers out of business entirely. My legislation is designed to forestall future attempts to curtail beef production by preventing the Biden Environmental Protection Agency from using funds in the Democrats' bill to monitor livestock emissions.

Agriculture is a challenging way of life. In addition to backbreaking work in all weather, our Nation's farmers and ranchers have to contend with the uncontrollable whims of the weather, which can wipe out a herd or a crop in a day. And as if the actual challenges of the job weren't enough, over the course of the Biden administration, our Nation's farmers and ranchers have had to deal with soaring inflation.

I am incredibly grateful for all the South Dakota farmers and ranchers and all of our Nation's farmers and ranchers who continue to persevere during these difficult circumstances. I will continue to do everything I can in Washington to make their jobs easier

and to support them as they do the essential work of feeding our Nation and the world.

NOMINATION OF LARA E. MONTECALVO

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Lara Montecalvo to serve on the First Circuit Court of Appeals. Ms. Montecalvo has significant litigation experience at both the trial and appellate level and will be an outstanding addition to the bench.

She attended Swarthmore College and Boston College Law School. Ms. Montecalvo then worked in the Justice Department's Tax Division as a trial attorney. In 2004, Ms. Montecalvo began working in the Rhode Island Public Defender's Office. She became the Rhode Island Public Defender in 2020.

As a DOJ trial attorney and as a State public defender, Ms. Montecalvo gained experience in both State and Federal court. She has tried more than 20 cases to verdict, including 15 as sole counsel. In addition, she has personally handled more than 80 appeals. The American Bar Association rated her "well qualified" to serve on the First Circuit, and she has the strong support of Senators Reed and Whitehouse.

Ms. Montecalvo has shown that she is committed to equal justice. I will be supporting her and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. THUNE. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON MONTECALVO NOMINATION

Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Montecalvo nomination?

Ms. ERNST. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 335 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Collins	Heinrich
Bennet	Coons	Hickenlooper
Blumenthal	Cortez Masto	Hirono
Booker	Duckworth	Kaine
Brown	Durbin	Kelly
Cantwell	Feinstein	King
Cardin	Gillibrand	Klobuchar
Carper	Graham	Leahy
Casey	Hassan	Lujan

Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murkowski
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla

Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Sinema
Smith

Tester
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

[Rollcall Vote No. 336 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Collins
Coons
Cortez Masto
Duckworth
Durbin
Feinstein
Gillibrand
Graham
Hassan

Heinrich
Hickenlooper
Hirono
Kaine
Kelly
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Lujan
Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murkowski
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla

Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Sinema
Smith
Tester
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—47

Barrasso
Blackburn
Blunt
Boozman
Braun
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Cornyn
Cotton
Cramer
Cruz
Daines
Ernst
Fischer

Grassley
Hagerty
Hawley
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Inhofe
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
Lummis
Marshall
McConnell
Moran
Paul
Portman

Risch
Romney
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Tuberville
Wicker
Young

NOT VOTING—1

Stabenow

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 1032, Sarah A.L. Merriam, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sherrod Brown, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith, Jeanne Shaheen, Chris Van Hollen, Elizabeth Warren, Catherine Cortez Masto, Raphael G. Warnock, Tim Kaine, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher Murphy, Maria Cantwell, Christopher A. Coons, Jack Reed, Gary C. Peters, Tammy Duckworth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Sarah A.L. Merriam, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

NOT VOTING—1

Stabenow

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 47.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Sarah A. L. Merriam, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

CONFIRMATION OF E. MARTIN ESTRADA

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the confirmation of Martin Estrada to be U.S. attorney for the Central District of California.

The Central District of California is the largest Federal judicial district in the country. It serves over 19 million Californians, almost twice as many people as the next largest district, and it serves about half the population of the State of California.

It spans from San Luis Obispo County, home of Los Padres National Forest, all the way to Riverside County and the Mojave Desert. It spans from the Pacific Ocean to the eastern border with Arizona and Nevada. And it is home to some of the most diverse communities in the country.

So having painted that picture of the district that it serves, you can imagine that to effectively serve as the chief Federal law enforcement officer for such a large and diverse district, you need someone with a proven track record of experience, of credibility with the community, and the character to fight for truth and fairness in our judicial system.

Martin Estrada is exactly the right person for the job. He is a proud son of immigrants from Guatemala. Martin has spent most of his life in and around the Central District community that he will now serve as U.S. attorney.

He was raised near Costa Mesa in Orange County and earned his undergraduate degree at the University of California, Irvine. After earning his law degree at Stanford Law School, Martin returned home to the Central District, where he clerked for Federal District Judge Robert Timlin and then later for Judge Arthur Alarcon for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

After spending time as an associate at the highly regarded Los Angeles law firm of Munger, Tolles & Olson, Martin served for 7 years as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Central District, working to protect communities from major crimes. Now, since 2014, he has been a partner at Munger, Tolles & Olson, and he has represented clients from before both Federal and State courts in a diverse array of legal practice areas. Meanwhile, he has maintained a significant pro bono practice, fighting for equal justice and equal access to justice for Dreamers, Latinos, Native American students, students with disabilities, and more. He has excelled at every stage of his career, and he is more than qualified to serve as U.S. attorney for California's Central District.

I have no doubt that he will bring a temperament, intelligence, and work ethic worthy of the community he will now once again serve.

I want to thank all of you, colleagues. I want to thank you for supporting his confirmation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4845

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, in the last few weeks, students in Uvalde and the rest of Texas started a new school year. Three and a half months ago, on May 24, 19 innocent children and 2 teachers were murdered by a deranged, evil gunman.

There are no words to describe a monster who enters a school and murders little children—19 children, 19 families in Uvalde who lost their little boys and their little girls, 2 teachers who are no longer here with us.

I was in Uvalde the day after the shooting. I sat down with local officials and law enforcement. I went to the prayer vigil that night where the entire Uvalde community came together, praying, weeping, and mourning the unbelievable loss of those 19 precious children and 2 teachers.

The Uvalde shooting was the deadliest school shooting in Texas history. Before that, I was in Santa Fe, where yet another evil madman killed eight students and two teachers. I was also at Sutherland Springs, the worst church shooting in U.S. history. I was in El Paso. I was in Midland-Odessa. I was in Dallas.

There have been too damn many mass shootings. With kids going back to school all across the country, we need to again revisit what we can do to keep them safe from mass shooters.

Many students, especially in Uvalde, are scared. Their parents are scared, and they have expressed concerns that the security measures at schools in Uvalde haven't improved enough to make them feel safe.

Today, I want to put forth two bills that would address this problem.

Inevitably, when a mass murder occurs, Democrats in this Chamber and the media implore Congress: Do something.

Well, in just a moment, the Senate can do something. The first bill I am going to ask this body to pass is the Secure Our Schools Act, which would spend unused COVID education funds on hiring police officers in schools and hiring school-based mental health professionals. This bill would be the most serious, the most significant, the most major investment in school security Congress has ever enacted. This bill would double the number of police officers on campus. So if, God forbid, the next deranged madman shows up trying to commit murder, before that madman gets into the school, into the classroom, he would encounter an armed police officer who could stop him outside the school before he commits murder.

This bill also funds \$10 billion for 15,000 new mental health counselors in schools. So many of these deranged killers have a long and horrifying descent into mental illness before they commit their crimes. We see the pattern of the lone, alienated, angry, deranged, young man who seeks to commit the most unspeakable evil. If we had additional mental health resources on campuses, they would be in a position to spot the warning signs, to see the young man heading down that dangerous path, and to intervene and stop them.

Recently, the National Center for Education Statistics, which is part of the U.S. Department of Education, found that 88 percent of public schools did not "strongly agree" when asked whether they had the funding and the mental health professionals they needed in the schools. Eighty-eight percent said: We need more mental health professionals in schools and more funding to hire them.

My bill would address both of these problems by ensuring that we are doubling the number of police officers so there are armed police officers to protect our kids and keep them safe and so there are mental health counselors to spot a dangerous young man before he goes down the road of committing a horrific mass murder.

This bill is common sense, and in a sane political environment, it would be passed 100 to nothing.

My colleague Senator BARRASSO wants to make some additional remarks on our bill. So I yield the floor to Senator BARRASSO.

(Ms. ROSEN assumed the Chair.)

Mr. BARRASSO. Well, Madam President, I come to the floor today to join my colleague and friend from Texas in support of this very important piece of legislation.

What happened in Uvalde was a tragedy. It was horrendous. I commend the citizens of that community for their strength in a time of heartache.

Every Member of this body agrees that we need to find the best way to protect children who go to school. Whether in Washington, DC, or Wheatland, WY, we need to find a way to protect those students.

That is why Senator CRUZ and I have introduced the Safe Kids, Safe Schools, Safe Communities Act of 2022. Our bill provides the kind of safety and the kind of security that our children, our schools, and our communities desperately need. And we do this while always protecting the constitutional rights of law-abiding Americans.

Now, as a doctor who served in our State legislature in Wyoming and now in this body, I have seen the devastating impact of mental health challenges, and Senator CRUZ talked specifically about those, and that is why we addressed them in this bill. I have seen how much those challenges contribute and what we have seen in these terrible acts. Our bill would make a difference—make a difference by providing mental health professionals with the resources they need to identify and to address these behavioral health needs of our students.

Our bill would hire 15,000 more mental health professionals at middle schools and high schools.

It also significantly increases the physical safety of our schools. Our bill would double the number of police officers in our schools. It would help schools buy more security equipment and metal detectors, door locks, and alarms.

Our bill also would do all of these things at no cost to the taxpayer. It wouldn't add to inflation. People might ask, how? Well, it is because our bill would redirect money that has already been allocated in the Democrats' spending bills. Our bill would work, and it wouldn't cost taxpayers a dime.

School is back in session now all across the country, and now is the time to take the real action that we need to keep our kids and our schools safe. No child should live in fear of going to school. No parent should live in fear of sending their child to school. And no law-abiding gun owner should be denied his or her constitutional rights.

So I want to thank my friend and colleague from Texas for introducing this vital piece of legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 4845, which is at the desk; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and

passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, what we just saw on this floor was stunning. I am genuinely at a loss for words.

This bill is common sense. There is not a constituent in Texas or Nevada or Connecticut who, if you asked: Would it be a good thing to have more police officers keeping our kids safe, wouldn't say: Of course it would. There is not a constituent of ours who, if you asked: Would it be a good thing to have more mental health counselors on campus to stop people from committing crimes, wouldn't say: Of course it would.

I was informed a few days ago that when I was going to seek unanimous consent, the Senator from Connecticut was going to object. Now, the Senator from Connecticut styles himself the leading advocate of gun control in the U.S. Senate.

I was asked by reporters: Why are the Democrats objecting to this?

I will tell you what I told reporters: I have no idea. They haven't said. They haven't told me why they object to it.

So I was genuinely looking forward to seeing the Senator from Connecticut's remarks. I was sitting here waiting to see, why do you oppose more police officers to keep our kids safe? Why do you oppose mental health counselors in schools?

I have been in the Senate 10 years. The Senator from Connecticut and I were elected at the same time. I have engaged in many debates on this floor, including with the Senator from Connecticut. The fact that he chose not to say a word about why he objects is stunning. I find myself genuinely flabbergasted.

I will say that one of reasons I think the Senator from Connecticut feels content not only not to argue but now to walk off the floor and not even listen to the debate he is ostensibly participating in, one of reasons he feels free to do so is, if you look up in the Senate Gallery—I can count them—there are precisely zero reporters in this Gallery. Not a single one of the corporate media will report on this, and I think the Senator from Connecticut feels absolutely certain, when he walks out, he will have reporters that will say: Tell me how terrible Donald Trump is.

He will lean in and say: Oh, Donald Trump is really terrible.

But not one of the reporters will ask: Hey, wait a second, why don't you want police officers keeping our kids safe?

None of them will. The Democrats are protected by a dishonest army of propagandists in the corporate media.

CNN will not have a panel sitting around discussing why is it that the

Democrats simply do not care to defend their positions.

Let me tell you, when there is a mass murdering and the Democrats stand up and give speeches and they point at Republicans and say: Blood is on your hands, it is great political rhetoric. It is dishonest, but, boy, it gins up their donors. It gets people to go and write checks to Democrats and fund their campaigns.

What we just saw reveals that Democrats have one objective when a mass murder happens, and that is to take away the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens. That is always, always, always their solution. Never mind that it doesn't work. Never mind that it doesn't stop violent crime. Never mind that if you look at the jurisdictions across the country with the strictest gun control laws, almost every single one of them consistently has among the highest crime rates and murder rates.

Earlier this year, the Senator from Connecticut authored his big gun control package, rammed it through this body—a package which will do nothing, zero, to stop mass murders. We will see another mass murder. I pray that we don't, but evil exists in the world, and if another lunatic attacks a school, and there is not a police officer at the front door to stop him, remember right now. Remember this moment when the Democrats said: No, we will not protect our kids.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4586

Madam President, there are lots of arguments the Senator from Connecticut could have made. He chose to make none of them.

If he does not like how the money in this bill is specifically spent, I am now going to propound a second unanimous consent bill.

There is right now \$135 billion in unspent COVID relief funds to schools. Under the rules the Democrats have put in place, those funds cannot be spent on school security.

The second bill that I am going to ask this body to pass is a bill that is very simple. It is one page. It says schools can spend some of that \$135 billion on school security. They can decide what to spend it on, but if they decide they want to hire an additional police officer, they can spend the money on that. If they decide they want to enhance the physical security of their campus to make their students safer, they can spend it on that. They can invest in school security. Right now, the Democrats have blocked them from doing this.

These are funds Congress has already appropriated that haven't been spent. And this bill is unbelievably simple. It says the schools can choose to invest in school security.

Therefore, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 4586 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate

consideration; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, the Senator is right—I am not going to engage in a colloquy on the merits of this request or the previous request. This isn't real. This is a TV show. This is click bait. This is theater. This isn't an actual attempt to pass legislation.

Senator LANKFORD approached me about this particular bill on the floor a week ago and asked to engage in a dialogue with me about it. I thought it was a legitimate request, and I set my team to the task of trying to work something out with Senator LANKFORD. And now there is a unanimous consent request to pass a bill that is under negotiation and discussions between serious legislators who actually want to find a result.

So, no, I am not going to debate the merits of these UCs. This isn't real.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, the Senator from Connecticut just gave us the sum total of his wisdom as he walks off the floor again, which is, he says this isn't real.

The Presiding Officer is well aware of how the Senate operates. When a Senator arises for a unanimous consent request, one of two things happens: A Senator objects, or the bill passes.

I have stood on this floor and passed unanimous consent requests because our colleagues chose not to object.

One of the more notable instances was following multiple instances in the House of House Democrats making anti-Semitic comments. The House tried to pass a resolution condemning anti-Semitism. Sadly, the radical left in the Democratic caucus objected, and the House Democrats couldn't pass a resolution condemning anti-Semitism.

I joined with our colleague Senator KAINE from Virginia, a Democrat. We authored a resolution, the Cruz-Kaine resolution—a bipartisan resolution that was a clear and unequivocal condemnation of anti-Semitism. It condemned BDS as anti-Semitism. It condemned explicitly the anti-Semitic comments made by those House Democrats at the outset of the dispute.

When Senator KAINE and I came to the Senate floor, we did not know if a Senator would object. There were numerous Senators in this body who did not join the resolution and could easily have walked out on the floor and objected. We stood up and asked unanimous consent, and much to our very pleasant surprise, the opposing party chose not to object, and the resolution passed. It passed 100 to nothing.

When the Senator from Connecticut says this isn't real, the only reason this bill has not passed the U.S. Senate is because the Senator from Connecticut stood up and uttered two magic words: I object. Had he done something really simple—just shut up, just shut his mouth, just sat there—we would be standing in a position where both of these bills would have passed into law.

What does it say about the Democrats' view of the American people that they don't engage in debate, they don't engage in discussion, they don't defend their positions? They, instead, arrogantly say no and have full confidence that their compliant cheerleaders in the media will never even tell anyone about it.

I don't know how you defend the position he just took. I was genuinely looking forward to hearing some form of an argument.

I can tell you, when I forced a vote on the Cruz-Barrasso bill on this floor and the Democrats voted, party line, no, we don't want more police officers in school; no, we don't want more mental health counselors in school; no, we don't want additional funding for school safety, to the best of my knowledge, no reporter asked a single Democrat: Why are you leaving our kids vulnerable? Why aren't you acting to protect children in school? Because, you know what, there is no money on the left for actually stopping these crimes. The money is for disarming law-abiding citizens. It is a narrow-minded, political focus.

We could have just passed the most significant school safety legislation ever passed by the Federal Government. Why didn't we? Because the Democrats objected. That objection is wrong, it is irresponsible, and it shows a willingness to play political games while demonstrating contempt for our constituents.

Today, the U.S. Senate failed the American people. Today, the U.S. Senate failed the schoolchildren of America. And I pray that the consequences are not truly horrific. I pray that this body will show up and do its damn job: Debate real issues and pass real legislation that will actually stop crime rather than the empty political gestures of the left.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, "Help Wanted." I see the signs in nearly every county I visit in Iowa on my 99-county tour. Small businesses and public services are struggling to maintain the workforce that is vital to our communities. The Des Moines Public School District, for example, has over 100 vacancies and is providing \$50,000 incentives for retiring teachers, nurses, and administrators to stay in school.

Faced with a declining number of soldiers, the Iowa National Guard is offering signing bonuses to new recruits,

along with other incentives to encourage current members to reenlist.

Police departments across the State are also facing recruitment challenges so the Iowa State Patrol is raising salaries and starting outreach efforts with kids as young as the sixth grade to get them to start thinking about careers in law enforcement.

And this need for essential workers, well, it isn't limited to just Iowa. America is facing a shortage of teachers, doctors, nurses, childcare providers, construction workers, truck drivers, pilots, and even accountants.

And with the Democrats' latest tax-and-spend spree, a shortage of accountants is something taxpayers everywhere now need to be concerned about. The Democrats' response to the nationwide need for essential workers is to hire 87,000 new IRS agents. The reckless tax-and-spend bill passed by DC Democrats last month more than doubles the size of the IRS, which already has nearly 80,000 full-time employees.

So what are the new IRS agents being hired to do? Well, audit America, of course—and very aggressively, if a recent job announcement on the Agency's website is any indication. The IRS says it is seeking armed accountants willing to participate in "life-threatening situations on the job."

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office says, with the supersized staff, the IRS audit rate "would rise for all taxpayers," regardless of income. CBO warns it will also result in audits of innocent Americans who have paid all of their taxes and don't owe the IRS a cent. That is right. Even if you have paid your taxes, you still could be subjected to an unfair and costly audit by the Biden administration's army of IRS agents.

Folks, Washington doesn't need any more tax collectors; it needs to simplify the Tax Code. If it wasn't so complicated to calculate your tax bill, it would be a lot easier to complete your return and avoid making mistakes.

Ironically, hundreds of employees at the IRS itself may have willfully failed to pay their own tax bills, including tax collectors and even a criminal investigator. In total, 1,250 IRS employees were identified who had not paid their tax bills in full or on time by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. More than 300 of these employees were repeat offenders. Yet the tax-collecting Agency did little to discipline the tax evaders on its very own payroll.

The IRS staffers gave a variety of excuses for not paying their taxes, including forgetting to report all of their income or being unable to use TurboTax. Yep, folks, you heard that right. We have a real problem if the IRS staff who enforce the tax law aren't paying their own taxes and can't even understand how to properly fill out their own tax forms.

I have heard enough of the excuses and these Washington double standards. That is why I have asked the in-

spector general to audit the IRS to ensure that the tax collectors themselves are paying the taxes they owe, and, on behalf of taxpayers in Iowa and the rest of the country, I am grateful that the IG has agreed.

Before Biden's army of auditors starts harassing innocent taxpayers, let's first make sure that tax collectors have paid their own taxes.

And if the threat of being audited wasn't bad enough, the reckless tax-and-spend bill also increases taxes, which will further add to the burden of small businesses already struggling with the higher costs resulting from Bidenomics. And that is the real issue. Washington's misplaced priorities are creating problems for the rest of America.

No one in Iowa whom I talk to is begging for more IRS auditors, but I do hear about the urgent need for more teachers and daycare providers because these folks are absolutely essential to communities across Iowa. The childcare staffing crisis has an even bigger ripple effect on families because it can determine where, when, and even if a parent can work. Yet four in five childcare centers across the country are understaffed. This is particularly pressing for my home State because we lead the Nation in the percentage of families where both parents work away from home.

Gov. Kim Reynolds is working hard to increase the availability and affordability of childcare, and part of her plan is to pay recruitment and retention bonuses to childcare providers to recognize them for their hard work.

In addition, most of Iowa's restaurants and bars are also shortstaffed, which is resulting in reduced hours of service for customers and also longer shifts for current employees. To retain and attract employees, restaurants are increasing benefits like free meals, more flexible schedules, paid time off, and retirement contributions. And, folks, that is great news for these hard-working Iowans, but it also increases the cost of doing business.

So instead of increasing taxes on Iowa's small businesses to pay for the IRS's new army of auditors, Washington should allow job creators to keep more of their own earnings which can be put toward hiring more of those essential workers—whether that be childcare providers, construction workers, or food service employees—whom we all rely upon. That is the help that America really wants. And while my Democratic friends are working overtime to audit Americans, you can rest assured that Republicans—we are auditing the IRS.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ABORTION

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, yesterday, my Republican colleagues

introduced a national abortion ban and made it clear that they are coming after the rights of my constituents and they are coming after the rights of people across the country.

This atrocious bill threatens the people of Kansas who just voted overwhelmingly to protect abortion rights. It threatens the hundreds of thousands of people in Michigan who just signed a petition for a referendum vote to protect abortion and States like mine which already have strong abortion protections on our books.

Up to now, Republicans have tried to play down their abortion extremism. They have tried to run away from the consequences of their extreme agenda, even as patients have been denied prescriptions that they need, even as doctors have been forced to wait until patients' lives are in danger before they can take action, even as healthcare crises they have caused spill across State lines to disastrous effect.

But despite their empty rhetoric about leaving it to States, the truth has been painfully clear: They think they know better than women when it comes to reproductive healthcare decisions. They have shown, again and again, they do not trust women to have full control over their own bodies, and they are also willing to go after doctors.

They have blocked the most basic bills like Senator CORTEZ MASTO's bill that would have made sure people can still travel to other States for legally available care or my bill making sure that doctors in States where abortion is legal cannot be punished for doing their job.

Over and over, they have stood in the way of Democrats' efforts to protect women's abortion rights, and it is crystal clear why. This bill shows the true Republican position. They want to ban abortion for everyone, in every single State, and they want to punish doctors. They want to put them in prison for doing their jobs.

So, to anyone who lives in a blue State like mine, anyone who thinks they are safe from these attacks, here is the painful reality: Republicans are coming after your rights, and you don't have to take my word for it. The Senator from South Carolina said yesterday:

If we take back the House and the Senate, I can assure you we'll have a vote on our bill.

There it is. It couldn't be clearer. That is the MAGA agenda for all 50 States: rights stripped away and doctors in prison.

Regardless of your circumstances, regardless of what is best for your health, regardless of your family plans—of your hopes or your fears or your dreams for your future—Republicans want to control your personal decisions. They don't trust you to have full control over your own body. This is horrifying.

When he unveiled the bill yesterday, the Senator from South Carolina also said

I'll make a prediction: we stay on this and we keep talking about it, maybe less than a decade from now, this will be law.

"This will be law." This is the future that they want—a national abortion ban.

Well, let me tell you something. The Senator from South Carolina may not have been paying attention, but Democrats are already talking about this issue every week, every day, every opportunity. And women across the country have been with us, fighting for the right to abortion and fighting back against Republicans' harmful attacks. We saw it in Kansas. We are seeing it in Michigan. And I am seeing it everywhere I go in Washington State.

I have been talking to doctors and patients and women and men across our country, and they are outraged—outraged—that Republicans want to take away their rights, that Republicans want to put doctors in prison. And I am too. I have never been madder.

So here is my message to Republicans: If you want to go after my constituents' rights, if you want to go after women's bodies and futures, if you want to pass a national abortion ban like this extreme bill, you are going to have to go through me because Democrats are going to keep standing up for women and men across the country who do not want their rights taken away.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The senior Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, we are here today because Republicans are seeking a national ban on abortion. And if we say it once here, we should say it 10 times, 100 times, because literally months ago it would have been virtually unimaginable—first, that *Roe v. Wade* would be struck down and, second, that Republicans would propose a national ban on abortion.

Women across Connecticut and the country are scared and angry. And to those who say those fears and outrage are illusory or unjustified, all you have to do is read their words. Listen to what they say. They are promising the American people that there will be a national ban on abortion.

And to the people of Connecticut who think we have a safe haven because our legislature and Governor have courageously established protections for *Roe v. Wade* and for women who come to Connecticut seeking abortion services and for doctors who depend on our safeguards, there will be no safe haven in this country—none, nowhere—if Republicans go where they say, explicitly, they are heading.

I trust women with their doctors and their clergy and their family to make decisions about when and whether to become pregnant, whether to have children, and when to terminate a pregnancy short of term. I trust women—not the government, not politicians—

to make these preeminently important decisions.

And I promise the people of Connecticut I will not back down. I will not stand for this kind of national ban on abortion.

Republicans have said, historically: We will let the States decide. It should be a matter of State legislatures making these decisions.

This ban on abortion takes away power from women and from States, contrary to their promises over years and years about States' rights. But more than a theoretical or hypothetical argument about the powers of State legislatures or the allocation of responsibility in our Federal system, this law will have destructive and catastrophic consequences for millions of women. It will impair the everyday lives of women and families across America.

It is not just a woman's issue. It is on all of us to say we will not back down; we will not stand for a national ban on abortion.

It is part of a tireless and seemingly boundless campaign against women's rights, but these attacks on reproductive rights and personal freedom apparently know no limits. Remember, first, Republican-controlled State legislatures moved to outlaw abortion entirely, forcing women suffering from ectopic pregnancies to bleed out in hospitals and refusing to care for child rape victims. But now Republicans are moving forward with plans to ban abortion everywhere, under any circumstances, and they are wresting a woman's right to make her own personal healthcare decision, sometimes a decision made during a devastating medical diagnosis out of her hands, putting those decisions into government's hands.

Make no mistake, the 15 weeks—all of the technical stuff that Republicans invoke, doesn't take away from the fact that it is a national ban that will eviscerate Connecticut's law. Congressional Republicans will decide whether or not women can access this vital help.

Eliminating access to abortion services as a result of the Dobbs decision has already caused devastating consequences. The loss of reproductive services in some States has caused a ripple effect for healthcare providers across the United States, which proves, for anyone who doubted, that banning reproductive services doesn't stop women from seeking those services. It just adds additional barriers and danger. In fact, it unnecessarily puts their lives at risk.

This bill would place a ban on abortion across the country, and it would include New York and Massachusetts, not just Connecticut and Delaware. Go across the country and pick those States where these rights have been protected.

When I was in the State legislature, and then as attorney general, I helped write the law that incorporates and

codifies *Roe v. Wade* in Connecticut statute. And now Connecticut has moved beyond that statute to provide a safe haven. But all of it would be gone. All of it would be overwritten by this law.

Americans should have no doubt about where Republicans stand now on this issue. They want to punish women. They want to punish doctors. They will do it at the State level. They will do it at the national level. No State, not even Connecticut, is safe from this threat. They are coming after our laws in Connecticut. They are coming after women in Connecticut and men who believe in the rights of women as a matter of constitutional and personal freedom to make these decisions.

Our laws should protect the rights of women seeking to make their own personal decisions about their reproductive health in consultation with medical providers, and I will fight tooth and nail this effort and any other effort that seeks to control, criminalize, and dehumanize women making this choice and the healthcare providers compassionately giving them care.

The American people are in our corner. American people—whatever they may think about abortion in their own lives, for their own family, for their daughters or wives or others—they support the rights of those women to control their own healthcare decision. It is an intensely personal decision, when it has to be made, and sometimes a threat of life, something going horribly wrong in a pregnancy, is the reason for it.

I will continue to fight for all in Connecticut who believe in this fundamental right. It is a matter of our constitutional DNA in Connecticut, beginning with *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which laid the groundwork for the right of privacy which is the underpinning for that constitutional freedom. And all of us, I hope, will reject this effort to ban abortion in the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, in June, as we are hearing, the Supreme Court struck down *Roe v. Wade*, reversing nearly 50 years of law that recognized a woman's fundamental right to reproductive freedom. We also know that Justice Kavanaugh's concurring opinion repeatedly insisted that the Court's decision would return the issue of abortion to the States. But this was never about States' rights, really, to my rightwing colleagues who want to restrict a woman's fundamental rights, and we know that because now they are pushing for a national abortion ban.

Yesterday, as we have heard, Senator GRAHAM introduced a strict national abortion ban with criminal penalties for doctors who provide critical care. If it passes, this bill will preempt the laws in States across the country

where abortion is still legal, including my own State of Nevada. In Nevada, our voters approved a ballot initiative in 1990 to enshrine a woman's right to choose in our State laws.

So what happened to my colleagues' claims of respecting the rights of States to make that decision? Well, apparently it wasn't enough to pack the Court with Supreme Court Justices who would vote to deprive women of the right that they have held for 50 years, under the guise of States' rights. Now, when far-right Republicans disagree with a State's decision, like mine, they plan to impose their own laws.

The current legislation introduced by Senator GRAHAM stops the people in pro-choice States—like mine, like Nevada—from choosing to protect the rights of women. At the same time, it leaves in place stricter abortion bans in 14 States.

What these far-right Republicans are effectively saying now is this: Anti-choice States, you are free to choose however harsh you want your abortion bans to be. But you pro-choice States, you are out of luck. Whatever the voters want in your States, it really doesn't matter because we are going to impose our own laws.

Look, Nevadans, as I have said, in 1990, we worked to codify *Roe v. Wade* because we know that it is impossible to walk in another woman's shoes. We know that for each woman, this is an important decision for each individual woman to make with her doctor, with her loved ones, about her healthcare, about her family planning.

I do not know what another woman is going to go through, and I do not want to restrict her access to any type of care, nor should any of us be imposing our beliefs, our experiences, our religion on someone else.

That is what this is about, and that is why Nevada voters voted in 1990 to codify *Roe v. Wade* and give women the right to make this decision.

Right now, we are seeing some politicians once again declare that they know what is best for every family in this Nation. They want to force the State of Nevada and other States like Nevada to limit women's freedoms, even though voters in my State voted to legally protect the right to choose that Nevada women have had for 50 years.

I have been saying for months now that some of my colleagues would never be satisfied with just overturning *Roe* and that they wouldn't rest until there was a national abortion ban. This bill shows every American that not only are women's rights under attack, but so is the democratic process in States like Nevada. If we don't have an abortion ban on the books, our State rights don't matter. That is just unacceptable. We can't let our nieces, our daughters, our granddaughters grow up in a world where they have fewer rights than we have had in the past.

So I, for one, will keep fighting back because this is about a fundamental

right for American women and the will of people in States like Nevada to make that decision and help and vote for the right of women to choose.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, when the extreme far-right Supreme Court overturned *Roe*, my Republican colleagues lauded this horrendous decision, claiming that a woman's right to an abortion should be left to the States. But now they are admitting what we knew all along: that this was never about States' rights. This has always been about Republicans using their power to control women and our bodily autonomy.

Despite the fact that the vast majority of the American public supports reproductive freedom and despite the fact that voters across the country are overwhelmingly voting to protect this freedom, Republicans are pandering—I think that is a really good word, apt word—pandering—to the extreme MAGA base and have now introduced a nationwide ban on abortion after 15 weeks.

Why 15 weeks, you ask? Because that is what the senior Senator from South Carolina who introduced this legislation said he would “feel comfortable at.” So we now have a Republican Senator attempting to restrict the bodily autonomy of women across the country because that is what he feels comfortable at. It is not enough that the overturning of *Roe* has created fear and confusion all across the country. We now have the introduction of a nationwide abortion ban further adding to the chaos.

This is not some sort of hypothetical debate or “hysteria,” as some of my Republican colleagues have claimed. If Republicans take control of the Senate, we now know what they will do. They will work to pass a national abortion ban, which would mean even in my home State of Hawaii, which was the first State in the country to decriminalize abortion even before the *Roe* decision—we did this in Hawaii in 1970. And for voters in States who are pushing back against their radical legislators and exercising their right to bring the issue of abortion to the ballot, including States like Kansas and Michigan, this bill would overrule their efforts.

But, of course, to add to their utter hypocrisy, if States like Texas or Mississippi want to be even more restrictive, even more harmful to women than a 15-week ban, that would be A-OK, according to the Senator from South Carolina and his extreme bill.

Allowing Republicans to regain control of Congress would be catastrophic not only for women, but for our entire country because when we women can't control what we do with our bodies, of course this impacts our families, our communities, our economy.

So this November, people are going to have a choice: Do you want to let

extreme MAGA Republicans tell you what you can and can't do with your own body, or do you want to hold these politicians accountable for pushing their far-right extreme agenda and perpetuating the chaos, confusion, and fear of women, families, communities, and our healthcare professionals? Let's not forget all the doctors who are out there wondering how they can provide the kind of care that they are trained to do right now, how they can do that in the face of this kind of ban in so many States across the country, not to mention a nationwide abortion ban. The chaos and confusion being experienced all across the country following the Dobbs' decision has only multiplied by this nationwide abortion ban bill.

Talk about government overreach. I hear my colleagues talking about how it should be States' rights or government should not be telling us what to do. The word “hypocrites” doesn't even go far enough to call them out on what they are doing. This is an outright attack on women in this country. That is how I see it. That is how more and more women and those who support our right to make decisions about our own bodies, that is how we see it. And why? Because that is what is happening. This is literally a call to arms in our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I come to the floor to discuss the new Graham legislation to create a national abortion ban. The centerpiece of the Senator's argument is that Senator GRAHAM wants our country to believe that his national abortion ban is a moderate proposal—his words. Wrong, wrong, wrong.

A moderate bill would not institute criminal penalties for doctors providing lifesaving medical care. That is what this so-called moderate bill does. A moderate bill would not take rights away from American women, no matter where they live. That is what this so-called moderate bill does. A moderate bill would not create a presumption of women's guilt by requiring them to report a rape or seek counseling before they get an abortion. This so-called moderate bill does that, too.

Just think about that last point. If you are trying to assess our colleague from South Carolina's argument that his bill is moderate, under Senator GRAHAM's new restrictions, a 12-year-old rape victim, regardless of the terror she feels or the danger she faces, would have to find a way to report her assault to police before she could get the care she needs. That is a stunning overreach and there is absolutely nothing that is moderate about this proposal. The reality is this is not a moderate proposal. It is an extreme proposal, way out of step with the overwhelming opinion of the American people.

The other important argument I wanted to discuss was this whole matter of how so many of my colleagues on

the other side of the aisle have pledged loyalty—pledged loyalty—to the importance of States' rights that they are going to leave the decision on abortion to the States. But Senator GRAHAM has shown us that all his talk about States' rights means that the States have to agree with Senator GRAHAM. That is what his idea about States' rights is all about.

His bill tramples, for example, on the rights of Oregonians, who sure don't share Senator GRAHAM's view on this, and people in many other States, women and men who voted to protect abortion, women's healthcare, and women's individual freedom.

Senator GRAHAM's bill is about control. It is about government—government—mind these words—government having control over women's bodies rather than women having control over their bodies.

It is also clear that what has always been envisioned is not just a nationwide ban on abortions but criminalizing this with women and doctors at some point, I gather, possibly locked behind bars.

It is election season and Senator MCCONNELL wants everybody to forget the Republicans' top priorities include passing these extreme restrictions through Congress and the courts. I believe that Americans know better. When it comes to this kind of legislation that is so far removed—far removed—from the moderate claim of its sponsor, I think we ought to recognize what we are looking at is a total national abortion ban, criminalization, and the rights of women curtailed and the power of government over them increased.

Senator GRAHAM's bill is the next step in that direction for Republicans. Introducing his proposal, Senator GRAHAM basically confirmed that:

If [we] take back the House and Senate, I can assure you we'll have a vote [on our bill].

Madam President, I think we have a lot of speakers coming, but I think the American people ought to take Senator GRAHAM at his word. This is what his agenda is about. This is what he is going to be championing from sea to shining sea. I just hope we do everything we can here in the Senate—in this country—to make sure that the Graham bill does not see the light of day.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INFLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, yesterday, new data showed what Texans have known and felt for months: that inflation simply is not letting up. Last month, prices were up 8.3 percent from a year ago.

Economist Larry Summers, a well-known former president of Harvard University and member of Presidential Cabinets, said that this CPI report, Consumer Price Index report, confirms that the United States has a serious inflation problem.

Rent is up 6.7 percent. If you go to the grocery store to feed your family, groceries are 13.5 percent over what they were last year. If you are a senior citizen suffering through the hot Texas summer and need your air-conditioner to work overtime, electricity to make that air-conditioner run is up 16 percent. Of course, that is just since last August, just a year ago, when we were already battling runaway inflation.

But here is an even more shocking figure: Since President Biden took office on January 20, 2021, prices have risen 13 percent. So 13 cents out of every dollar that you earn—poof—has gone away. You are that much poorer. Your standard of living has been decreased by 13 percent.

Inflation, of course, far outpaces wage growth, meaning the average American has effectively been handed a pay cut. A single paycheck doesn't go nearly as far today as it did a year ago.

This is exactly what was predicted by leading economists when our Democratic colleagues ran off with the taxpayer credit card at the end of last year. They abused the rules of the Senate to spend an additional \$2 trillion in the name of COVID relief even though less than 10 percent of the money was directly related to the pandemic.

I want to differentiate between what we did together on a bipartisan basis to deal with COVID when we spent nearly \$5 trillion on a bipartisan basis. There is no doubt this was a grave emergency, a public health emergency, economic emergency. We did what we had to do, and we got through it. But even after that, our Democratic colleagues couldn't seem to kick the spending habits and unilaterally spent an extra \$2 trillion. As I said, even though 10 percent of that money was related to the pandemic, 90 percent, then, was unrelated.

Then the so-called Inflation Reduction Act, which the President was celebrating yesterday when the stock market fell 1,200 points—this partisan bill amounts to another \$240 billion in unnecessary spending, while raising taxes at the same time.

As I said, our colleagues ironically call this bill the Inflation Reduction Act, and the White House chose yesterday—the day that the latest disappointing inflation figures were released—to celebrate its passage.

Inflation Reduction Act is false advertising. The Penn Wharton economic review of the Inflation Reduction Act said there is no reduction of inflation for at least 2 full years, and, indeed, it may actually get worse. But we all knew this intuitively, that if you keep spending this much money, you are basically pouring gasoline on the inflation fire. It is going to get worse and

worse and worse, and middle-class working families all across this country have gotten hurt as a result.

Since our Democratic colleagues took control of both Houses of Congress and the White House, Texans' lives have gotten harder, not easier. Inflation I have spoken to has skyrocketed, real wages have fallen, and our economy has fallen into a recession.

Now, this is one of the other curious things about defining terms. Our Democratic colleagues want to argue about whether two consecutive quarters of negative GDP are actually a recession or not. Well, they were when Republicans were in charge, but apparently when Democrats are in charge, that definition doesn't apply.

Much as they tried but failed to convince the American people that the Inflation Reduction Act would actually reduce inflation, it didn't, and it won't anytime soon.

Well, we know that the response to inflation by the Federal Reserve has been to raise interest rates, and they are projected to raise them at least three-quarters of 1 percent or 75 basis points, which will also slow down the economy and hurt job creation. So it looks like even more pain is coming.

RAILWAY LABOR MANAGEMENT DISPUTE

Madam President, well, unfortunately, we are also told that there is a looming rail strike that will have a tremendously negative impact on our economy. Our economy, as we all know, depends on a network of tractor-trailers, planes, trains, and cargo ships to transport products around the United States and beyond. These are the very same transportation modes that make sure that your grocery store is fully stocked, that the manufacturing plants have inventory they need in order to make their products, and that, yes, our packages that we order show up on our front door step on time.

But a massive disruption in rail transportation is likely to occur in less than 2 days' time. The unions that represent more than 115,000 rail workers have not been able to reach a contract agreement with railroad companies. Unless they reach a breakthrough soon, rail workers will go on strike this Friday, causing a national rail shutdown.

If you don't think that will have a negative impact on our economy on top of what we have already mentioned, think again. The rail system carries nearly 30 percent of America's freight, everything from agriculture to retail products, heavy equipment, automobiles, coal, lumber. We are talking about the critical products that impact virtually every sector of the economy.

It is tough to overstate the negative impact this will have. Just look at agriculture. On the front end of production, farmers and ranchers need fertilizer, seed, animal feed, and heavy equipment, all of which are likely to travel by rail at some point. Then, at harvest time, our producers rely on

timely rail service to transport their products to processing plants and then communities across the country.

If this strike goes into effect, all of those shipments will be stalled, and this comes right as we are heading into the fall harvest. Farmers and ranchers will be left with huge amounts of products they can't even transport or sell, many of these perishable products, which will simply spoil. The consequence for consumers is we will continue to see empty shelves at the grocery stores, along with higher prices due to inflation and short supply.

But this won't just impact us in the United States. Railroads move roughly a third of U.S. grain exports, which are desperately needed in global markets, particularly with what is happening in Ukraine, with Russia impeding the growing and transportation of grain to places like Africa, where people are literally starving for lack of food. The war in Ukraine has exacerbated this food insecurity. If this shutdown here in America goes into effect, the squeeze will be compounded and will be even tighter.

Of course, this is just a snapshot of the impact a shutdown will have on one sector of the economy, but the same struggles will play out when it comes to energy, rail, manufacturing, automotive, and literally just about every other sector of the economy.

This massive logjam will take a serious toll on our economy on top of inflation and the recessionary pressures we are already feeling. The freight industry estimates that a rail shutdown could cost the U.S. economy more than \$2 billion a day—\$2 billion a day.

Our country is hurtling toward a logistical nightmare, and unfortunately the Biden administration appears to be frozen and undecided about what to do. For years, our Democratic colleagues who depend on organized labor for a major part of their political support have put the demands of labor unions ahead of the needs of consumers and the rest of the American people. They have romanced the powerful labor lobby at every turn, and one of the fiercest union defenders now occupies the Oval Office.

Now, I am not opposed to people joining unions. They are entitled to collectively bargain and try to advance their livelihood and their family's way of life. But to let one special interest group basically create a logistical nightmare with this looming rail strike is just indefensible.

Well, we are seeing the consequences of this kowtowing to organized labor above the interests of any and all other Americans.

To hopefully prevent this looming crisis, President Biden has established an emergency Board to help reach a resolution and prevent this strike, if possible. The Board released its recommendations to resolve this dispute nearly a month ago, but a deal is still nowhere in sight.

In recent weeks, a number of administration officials have joined the

unions and freight companies at the negotiating table. The Secretaries of Labor, Transportation, and Agriculture have all tried to help resolve the impasse, but they have not moved the needle at all.

I don't know how much havoc is in store, but it is not looking good. Many shipments have already stopped out of fear that the operations will stop midjourney. I read that even commuter trains like Amtrak have already canceled some of their routes because they know what sort of impact this strike will have if no deal is reached by Friday.

Inflation has already sent prices to an untenable high. The supply chain breakdown is sure to send those prices even higher.

Families can anticipate product shortages across the board from grocery stores to car lots. Shoppers can expect packages that they have ordered to be delayed for days or even weeks on end. And drivers should expect to see more trucks on the highway to fill the gap when the railroad shuts down.

This is just another example of the failure of the Biden administration to anticipate and to address the problems that the American people are facing. It seems there is a huge disconnect between what is happening here in Washington among our Democratic friends and the Biden administration and what I hear from my constituents back home. And I think that is true largely across the Nation; that the elites in Washington have become completely decoupled from the rest of the country.

What that produces is special interest legislation that pleases some constituents: labor unions, climate activists, and open borders advocates.

The Biden administration and our Democratic majority have used their power in Washington to spend trillions of dollars on things that the American people don't want while compounding the problems that they are facing day in and day out: inflation, a recession, a paralyzing supply chain shutdown on the horizon, a spike in crime, and then, of course, an open border, which has allowed enough illegal drugs to be imported into the United States that it took 108,000 American lives last year. And 71,000 of those 108,000 lives were as a result of synthetic opioids like fentanyl.

Synthetic opioids are raging like a brush fire across the entire country, and we are seeing, for example, at middle schools and high schools in places like Hays County, right outside of Austin, TX, where I live, that young people, unbeknownst to themselves, ingest small amounts of this fentanyl and ultimately end up overdosing and dying from it.

So there are huge challenges facing our country. We need to do our job. We need to work together. No one is suggesting that we give up our principles. Republicans are Republicans and Democrats are Democrats for a reason—because they view the role and

the size of the government differently. Our Democratic colleagues seem to think that Washington and government is the answer to every problem. Republicans and conservatives, on the other hand, tend to favor individual initiative and entrepreneurship and investment to create jobs and an opportunity for people to get jobs and provide for their family and pursue their dream.

But there is plenty of overlap where we can agree, but we have to fight inflation. We have to deal with things like the paralyzing supply chain and the threat from a rail strike that appears now to be imminent.

We have got to do more to support our men and women in uniform—the police—as they battle crime in our neighborhoods and our communities, which seems to have gone up exponentially in recent years.

And then, of course, there is the one big, gaping, open sore that our Democratic colleagues have ignored completely, and that is our open border.

I mentioned the drugs, but in addition to the drugs, we have seen 2.3 million migrants show up at the border just since President Biden became President because they know they are going to be able to get into the country.

And they are probably going to be able to stay because the Biden administration simply does not have any plan in place to decide asylum claims—who has legitimate claims and who does not—so they engage in a program of catch-and-release. With the litigation backlogs in our immigration courts, it is no surprise that when years go by and your ticket comes up and you are told to show up in immigration court, that people simply fade into the great American landscape and avoid detection.

The only people benefiting from this, beyond the occasional migrant, are the drug cartels and the transnational criminal organizations that network people from around the world.

I know of many people who aren't from a border State like I am who think that these migrants are just from Mexico or Central America. But if you talk to the Border Patrol sector chiefs in Del Rio or the Rio Grande Valley, they will tell you they are detaining people from as many as 150 different countries.

Now, surely, the majority are from Mexico and Central America, but it ought to cause us a lot of concern when somebody can get to our back door from another country and then falsely claim asylum only to be released into the interior of the United States and never heard from again.

These are all fixable problems if we will work together, but so far, while the American people may have thought they elected Joe Biden, a moderate, they basically have seen BERNIE SANDERS' agenda.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 4483

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, have you ever gone out to eat at a restaurant with a group of people, but your order was cheaper than everyone else's? Maybe you weren't as hungry or the restaurant the group picked was more expensive than you could afford so you were selective about what you ordered. Then, when the check comes, someone suggested the group split it evenly.

Now, what is your immediate reaction? You are upset, of course, because you ordered the salad not the filet mignon or you drank water, not the expensive bottle of wine. You ordered what you wanted, and they ordered what they wanted; you shouldn't be on the hook for their cost.

Sadly, this illustration is far too real, as last month, Joe Biden announced that he would cancel billions of dollars in student loans.

Now, let's be clear. He isn't canceling student debt. No, he is transferring that debt to every American taxpayer. Now a construction worker in Florida is having to foot the bill for the loans of a Harvard grad, which they voluntarily accepted for an education they received.

So here is what Democrats are trying to say to that construction worker: You didn't go to college; Democrats don't care. You will pay the debt of lawyers and doctors, and you will pay for those who want Ph.D.s in poetry. Talk about poetic injustice. You went to community college or a State school and worked to graduate debt-free. Tough luck. Joe Biden wants you to pay for the advanced degrees of the privileged few. Your tax dollars are now the money pot for other people's student debt.

Of course, Joe Biden's plan doesn't even begin to address the real reason for rising higher education costs. That is universities' decades-long practice of unnecessarily raising tuition.

As Governor of Florida, I addressed that problem and challenged our universities to keep education affordable.

Look at the University of Florida. Undergraduate tuition and fees for this academic year are less than \$6,500. It is the fifth best public university in the country. You will get a fantastic education there. Meanwhile, at Harvard, tuition fees for an academic year cost more than \$57,000.

There are ways to make education affordable, but the Democrats and elites aren't interested in those solutions. That is why Joe Biden is engaging in this reckless move even though it doesn't solve the real issue and even though he lacks the proper constitutional authority.

Everybody knows this. That is why, in July of last year, NANCY PELOSI herself denied that the President had such power.

She said:

The president can't do it . . . That's not even a discussion.

Yet now the Department of Justice is engaging in interpretive gymnastics to co-opt legislation that was passed to help our servicemembers in the aftermath of 9/11. It is a desperate attempt to stretch a good law well beyond its intent so that Joe Biden can give handouts to his liberal voters and Harvard pals.

Biden wants to spend money that Congress has not appropriated for a loan forgiveness that Congress has not authorized. It is illegal. It is unconstitutional. It is a gross abuse of authority, and I won't stand for it. Congress must assert its authority here. We have the power of the purse, not the President.

That is why I have introduced the Debt Cancellation Accountability Act. My bill would require the Department of Education to get an express appropriation from Congress before they could propose waiving, discharging, or reducing student loan debt to two or more borrowers in an amount greater than \$1 million. If we want to transfer the debt of some and make everyone pay for it, then Congress has to make that decision.

We should simply put it up for a vote. Of course, the Democrats here in the Senate won't do that. Surely, they could have passed a bill by now if they had really wanted to, but they wanted Biden to do it alone. It is easy to see why. In just the past few weeks, we have heard families from across the country speaking out against Biden's unfair and disastrous proposal. I am hearing about it from Floridians every day, and I know my colleagues are too.

I would like to thank Senators BARASSO, LUMMIS, and BRAUN for supporting my Debt Cancellation Accountability Act and for choosing to stand with me against Biden's overreach.

Let's pass this bill today to reverse Joe Biden's unlawful decision and force Congress to decide this issue.

Before I ask for unanimous consent, I would like to turn to my colleague Senator BRAUN from the great State of Indiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. I thank Senator SCOTT.

Mr. President, President Biden's student loan debt transfer does not cancel or forgive anything. These debts will still be paid. It is not like they go away.

What else does it say about the whole idea that, when you take on an obligation and you agree to it, you can just shirk it or get rid of it? There are many people across the country who would want to be in on that gambit as well. He has simply shifted the cost of repayment on to everyone, including to the 65 percent of American workers who chose not to get a college degree.

What about the aspiring plumber or electrician who borrowed \$20,000, \$30,000, or \$40,000 for his or her own business? There would be no end to it.

We should focus on getting more value out of colleges rather than giving them another reason to hike prices. Sadly, the only place where that has been focused on is in my own home State, where Mitch Daniels, the ex-Governor of Indiana, froze tuition into 10 years. That is getting more value out, and that is why their enrollment has gone way up.

With a national debt of nearly \$31 trillion, we can't continue to pile on more debt. When Senator SCOTT and I got here just a little over 3½ years ago, we were \$18 trillion in debt. We throw "trillions" around now like we used to "hundreds of billions," and it is on the backs of our kids and grandkids every time we do it.

Today, Federal Student Aid owns \$1.6 trillion in outstanding Federal assets—in other words, student loans. The loan program needs to be completely redone so that colleges will be motivated to lower costs. This is an excuse to do the opposite.

Finally, President Biden's actions are illegal in the first place. The President doesn't have the authority to cancel all of this debt. I am hoping it gets taken to court, because what does it say, again, for future generations or anyone who makes a commitment to take on debt who can shirk it with the stroke of a pen?

Even Speaker PELOSI agreed on this point, saying she didn't think it was legal. Yet it doesn't make any difference in this day and age as we plow forward.

This is why the Debt Cancellation Accountability Act requires the Department of Education to get express appropriation from Congress to pay for any Federal student loan the Department proposes to waive, discharge, or reduce.

I yield the floor to Senator SCOTT.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I am so thankful for Senator BRAUN's support on this bill and for all of the work he has done to raise awareness about Biden's reckless spending agenda and to stand for fiscal sanity.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 4483 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, this is a shameful attempt by the Republicans to keep working Americans buried under mountains of student debt.

President Biden's decision to cancel up to \$20,000 of Federal student debt for as many as 43 million Americans with incomes under \$125,000 a year is a historic step to delivering life-changing relief to working families and to helping rebuild America's middle class.

Senator SCOTT's bill is just one of the Republicans' desperate efforts to block cancellation for millions of Americans. Now, the Republicans are happy to pass out tax breaks and regulatory loopholes for billionaires and giant corporations, but they are fighting tooth and nail to keep working families from getting a penny of relief.

Evidently, Senator SCOTT believes that \$2 trillion in Republican tax cuts that were not paid for is fine so long as those tax cuts are aimed mostly at millionaires, billionaires, and giant corporations. But a program that costs a fraction as much and for which 90 percent of its benefits go to people earning less than \$75,000 a year is now somehow a moral outrage.

Today, he claims to worry about those taxpayers who he says will shoulder student loan cancellation, but where was Senator SCOTT, or then-Governor Scott, when Donald Trump and the congressional Republicans handed out \$2 trillion in tax breaks to billionaires and giant corporations, not a penny of which was paid for? Where was he then?

Well, he endorsed the Trump administration's plan to cut taxes for corporations, and he celebrated those tax breaks for the richest among us. He wasn't worried about how taxpayers would pay that off—not a word about the fairness for all of the people who would bear that burden, so long as the benefits went mostly to the rich and powerful.

Senator SCOTT has basically laid it all out there for America to see, and that difference—helping billionaires or helping working families—pretty much sums up Republican and Democratic differences across the board. If we are cutting a break for the rich and the powerful, the Republicans are on board. If we are trying to help out working people, congressional Republicans take to their fainting couches and claim to be so worried about the national debt.

Student loan cancellation is very popular in America, including with a majority of people who have no student loan debt. That is because there is scarcely a working person anywhere in America today who does not know someone who is choking on student loan debt. Yet, evidently, the Republicans in Congress live in bubbles that prevent them from meeting any of the millions of people out there who have busted their tails, who have worked multiple jobs, who have made their payments, and who still watch their debt loads continue to climb.

So let me just set the record straight here. I want to repeat an earlier point. Nearly 90 percent of relief dollars from President Biden's cancellation will go to Americans earning less than \$75,000

a year, and none—none—of the help goes to people making more than \$125,000 a year.

Now, actually, those numbers shouldn't be shocking. Think about who owns student loan debt. Senator SCOTT talked about Harvard multiple times in his speech, but it is not the wealthy people who go to Ivy League schools who end up with the student loan debt. It is middle- and working-class Americans who were born into families who couldn't afford to pay out-of-pocket. In fact, 99.7 percent of borrowers did not attend an Ivy League school. So that would mean—what?—three-tenths of 1 percent of people who went to Ivy League schools borrowed money.

By comparison—I just looked it up while the Senator was speaking—at the University of Florida, 15 percent have to borrow in order to make it through to graduation. At Florida State, 26 percent—that is one in every four people at Florida State—has to take out money in order to be in college. At Florida A&M, the numbers are even higher: 68 percent. More than two-thirds of the people who are in school have to take out money in order to make it through college. This is true across the country. At State schools, about half of all students have to borrow to make it through. At historically Black colleges and universities, the number is about 90 percent.

So let's be really clear about who exactly congressional Republicans are trying to take relief away from. It is not Ivy Leaguer doctors and lawyers. Who are the people the Senate Republicans say aren't worthy of the kind of help that billionaires and giant corporations could get in their big tax package? Who do Senate Republicans think should be squeezed harder? Who do Senate Republicans say should simply be left behind?

Well, the Senate Republicans want to leave behind the 42 percent of borrowers who do not even have a 4-year college diploma. These are folks who took out money—loans—in order to become a nurse's aide, to become a mechanic, to go to beauty school, to get a commercial driver's license to drive a truck, and, too often, the wages that they were promised never materialized.

Senate Republicans say: Let them struggle. Leave them behind.

Who gets the most help under President Biden's cancellation? Senator SCOTT said this is all about doctors and lawyers. Let's take a look at that.

The share of student loan borrowers who earned a cosmetology certificate is about double the share of borrowers who got professional degrees in law and medicine combined.

Senate Republicans say: Let those cosmetology certificate holders struggle. Leave them behind.

Similarly, there are more student loan borrowers who took out debt to earn a certificate for driving trucks and working on the railroad than those who did so to become dentists and optometrists.

Senate Republicans say: Let those truckdrivers and railroad workers struggle. Leave them behind.

It is not just the people who have 2-year degrees or certificates who get help under President Biden's cancellation. It is the people who don't have any degree at all. These are people who did everything our country asked them to do by graduating from high school and advancing their educations, but life happened: They got pregnant or they had to take care of a sick family member, and they had to leave before finishing their degree.

Senate Republicans say: Let them struggle. Leave them behind.

Who gets help? It is women, who hold nearly two-thirds of all outstanding student loan debt. Black women, in particular, shoulder a disproportionate amount of the student loan debt burden—Black women, who hold more debt than any other group.

Senate Republicans say: Let them struggle. Leave them behind.

Who gets help? It is Black Americans, who borrow more money to go to college, borrow more money in college, and have a harder time paying it off after college. They are the ones who will see their debt eliminated under President Biden's cancellation plan. Senate Republicans say: Let them struggle. Leave them behind.

Who gets help? It is the 50 percent of Latino borrowers with debt who will see their student loan debt completely eliminated. Senate Republicans say let them struggle. Leave them behind.

Who gets help? It is the millions of people who couldn't save for retirement, or buy their first home, or start a family because of student debt. Senate Republicans say let them struggle. Leave them behind.

We are living in a moment when the President of the United States has reached out, literally, to tens of millions of families and said: I am putting government on your side. But the congressional Republicans are determined to make this country work even better for the rich and the powerful. That is why they are trying to pass the bill that Senator SCOTT has advanced.

These Republicans are all for giving handouts to giant corporations and billionaires. But the minute—the minute—that our country creates a little breathing room for the millions of hard-working people whose biggest sin is they tried to get an education and they grew up in a family that just couldn't afford to pay for it, those Senate Republicans are right here on this Senate floor trying to undo it.

I want to take a minute and just look at the bigger picture to see how we got here.

We have a student debt crisis because our government stopped investing in higher education and began shifting the costs of college onto working families.

I went to a great public university that costs \$50 a semester—a price I could pay for on a part-time

waitressing job. I got to become a teacher, a law professor, and a U.S. Senator because higher education opened a million doors for a kid like me. But that opportunity no longer exists in America.

Today, college costs thousands, even tens of thousands, of dollars. And instead of investing taxpayer dollars to help bring down those costs, the State governments reduced their financial support, and the Federal Government told everyone to borrow the money they needed to cover the rising costs of going to school. That has left millions of Americans drowning in student loan debt.

What is worse, families have had to navigate a broken student loan system riddled with bad actors who are trying to take advantage of and profit off keeping them in debt.

During the Trump years, Betsy DeVos, the Secretary of Education, threw in with the for-profit schools. And when students who had been cheated asked for some help, she turned her back.

I have long pushed for more accountability and more oversight to bring down the cost of college and to make higher education and training programs more accessible. I have a plan for that. In fact, I have more than one plan for that, and I welcome any Republican to join me in helping make any of these options reality.

But cancellation is the first step to fixing a broken student loan system and to delivering relief to families who have been trapped in it for far too long.

One final point: The President's plan to cancel student debt will make a huge difference for tens of millions of Americans in their day-to-day lives. But it will do so much more. Debt cancellation is about strengthening our whole economy. Better educated workers make us a wealthier nation and one with more opportunity, not just for those at the top but more opportunity for everyone.

Just consider one example. Following World War II, a grateful nation said to returning GIs that taxpayers would pick up the cost of college and technical training. More than 2 million veterans went to college or graduate school and nearly 6 million used this opportunity to pursue vocational training to become construction workers, electricians, mechanics, and other careers. Together, these men—and they were nearly all men—built America's middle class.

Taxpayer investments in post-high school education meant that millions of people were better educated, and they helped fuel an economic boom that lasted for decades and lifted this entire Nation. And it was a bargain. Every dollar that was spent on educating our veterans generated \$7 to taxpayers. That is not even counting for the significant boost to productivity from a more educated population. Just think about that: a 7-to-1 payoff for investing in higher education for all our people.

President Biden saw something that he could do to help tens of millions of Americans struggling under the weight of student debt and invest in the future of our economy, so he did it. Debt cancellation was the right thing to do. That is why the majority of Americans—with or without loans—support cancellation.

I am celebrating because cancellation will provide life-changing relief for working families across this country. That is why I object to the Senate Republican's shameless attempt to deny people the relief they need.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. So the plan that the Democrats are going to give you, not only on this, was put out clearly in President Biden's blueprint for our country to put us \$45 trillion in debt in 10 years, where we will be paying as much on interest as we do on discretionary spending domestically or the military budget. That is no business plan.

How do you think they are going to pay for the debt forgiveness? They are going to borrow the money to do it, to backfill to pay the people who are owed the money.

One other point of clarification. When you had a practical bill—the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which was done before Senator SCOTT and I got here—it was a plan to grow economic activity, a way to pay for it. Had COVID not come along, the CBO was ready to say that it was paying for itself because we were growing the economy at 3 percent. And the \$150 billion per year over 10 years, which is chump change now compared to the \$3 trillion the Democrats have put us in debt over the last year and a half, was growing the economy with zero inflation, raising wages in the toughest spots for those wage earners. We have always tried to do it without borrowing it from our kids and our grandkids.

I yield back the floor to Senator SCOTT.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, so let's remember what we are talking about here. We are not canceling debt; we are transferring debt. We are transferring the debt because this obligation doesn't go away. Somebody still owes this money.

What we are saying is, people who decided—they made the choice—to go to college or go to some higher education, they are not going to have to pay their debt. And people who didn't and already paid off their debt, they are going to pay for it.

My colleague from Massachusetts never acknowledged the example. We all remember when we went out to dinner and we didn't spend the most money and how somebody suggested that, oh, let's just share it. So we paid for the expensive wine, and we paid for the expensive meal. That is not fair.

When you talk to Americans around the country, and they say: Would you like to forgive all the debt? Absolutely. Free is great.

But when you say: You are going to pay for it, they say: Absolutely not. Why would I pay off the debt for somebody else?

Let's remember just what my bill does. It doesn't say we can't forgive student loans; it says that Congress ought to decide if we do it. This is going to cost up to \$1 trillion.

I don't think we ought to, so-called, transfer this debt, but my bill will at least give us a chance to have a debate on it. But that is not what my colleague wants to do.

I hope my colleague understands that her objection is absolutely a slap in the face to all those workers in Massachusetts and around the country who didn't go to college: construction workers, small business owners, chefs, flight attendants, firefighters, landscapers, and so many other groups of people who have made the decision not to pursue a higher education for whatever reason.

There are many others who worked hard to get scholarships or those who worked part time to afford college or plenty others who took the time to pay off their loans. I am going to stand with those people, working-class people—people who are responsible, hard-working Americans who absolutely are willing to pay off their obligations.

I think about people like my dad. My dad had a sixth grade education. He was a truckdriver. He worked his tail off. I can't imagine what he would think about working hard every day, then being forced to pay for some other person's degree as a doctor or a lawyer. He would be beside himself. He would think it was so unfair.

It is not how the real world works. It is a Democrat fantasyland that Joe Biden is trying to turn into reality.

People used to take pride in paying off their debts and working hard to see their commitments come through. Democrats want to destroy that and destroy ideas of fiscal responsibility. They want to forget that we are \$30 trillion in debt. They want to forget that we still have record-high inflation as a result of wasteful spending.

My colleague wants to pretend that we are in this fantasyland because objecting to my bill is an endorsement of Biden's reckless plan and his unconstitutional debt transfer, from the over-achiever, to the Harvard grad, to the working class.

As Members of Congress, we should be interested in checks and balances and the separation of powers. We should guard the powers of the Constitution that is especially reserved for the legislative branch. Spending a trillion dollars with no congressional oversight is wrong. That is not exactly how our Constitution was set up. This shameless decision to block my bill is just another example of how far Senate Democrats will go to appease the radical left.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. So I am still waiting for an answer to the question: Where were these Republicans who were talking about fiscal responsibility and what is fair in terms of transferring costs, when it was the billionaires and the giant corporations who were getting a \$2 trillion tax break?

Let us remember—because I was here when that happened—even the conservative economists and think tanks were saying this is going to go on the debt balance because it is not paid for.

No. At that moment, they were willing to say: But it is going to produce all kinds of wonderful benefits—which, of course, did not come to pass.

What about the example I gave, the example about the investment that we made as a country in our returning veterans; the fact that we invested so 2 million of them could get college diplomas, so that millions more could get technical degrees? What about the fact that the numbers show American taxpayers got a return on that investment of 7 to 1? This really is about who we invest in.

It seems that what Senator SCOTT is saying is people shouldn't go to school. If you are in a family that you can't guarantee that you are going to have some assets to back you up, if you ever have to think about the fact that you might get sick, you might fall down, you might get hurt, and you might not be able to finish, or you might not be able to turn that degree into a high-paying job, or you might graduate at a moment when the economy is in a slump, what Senator SCOTT seems to be saying is: Don't order off that menu. Don't go to school. Don't try to get a post-high school certificate in cosmetology. Don't try to get a certificate for truckdriving school. Don't try to get a 2-year diploma. Don't try to get a 4-year diploma. That is not going to make America a better or richer country. That is not going to be an America that is going to open opportunities.

The next time Senator SCOTT or any other Republican talks to me about fair, I would ask them to explain to me what is fair that the daughter of a janitor a half a century ago could go to a good 4-year college on \$50 a semester? Why? Because American taxpayer invested in those public colleges and universities. And today that opportunity is not there for a single one of our kids.

When you want to talk about who has college debt, instead of talking about the three-tenths of 1 percent of Ivy League grads who have college debt, look at the 68 percent of Florida A&M grads who have college debt. That is shameful. We need to be an America that is about creating more opportunities, not closing them off for tens of millions of people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, first off, my colleague never addressed

the issue that this is a transfer of obligation. I mean, you can have a conversation about what we should have done with regard to tax cuts in the past, but this is a transfer of obligation. This is a transfer of obligation of people who decided to go to school.

We should do everything we can to help people, but we are not addressing the problem here. I addressed it when I was Governor. When I became Governor in January of 2011, tuition in Florida was going up 15 percent a year, plus inflation. I stopped it. We didn't see tuition increase while I was Governor, and we became the No. 1 higher education system in the country according to U.S. News & World Report.

We solved the problem of the cost of higher education to make sure people could afford education. We did it because we invested, we kept tuition low, and we paid our universities based on three things: do you get a degree, how much money you make, and what does it cost to get a degree. So, guess what, all of our universities became more efficient and more accountable.

That is how you fix the problem. This does not fix the problem. This does nothing to reduce tuition. This does nothing to hold our universities accountable. This does nothing to stop our universities from raising tuition. This does nothing to require our universities to make sure our kids get a job. This does nothing to make sure our kids get good-paying jobs.

So I am very disappointed in my colleague in that she would still not address the issue that that is a complete transfer of obligation from some people who decided to go get a higher education to people who decided not to.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, would the Senator yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I yield the floor.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I want to ask the Senator if he believes that the 68 percent of students at Florida A&M University who have student loan debt should never have gone to college because it turns out their families couldn't afford to pay for college in Florida.

Should they just never have tried?

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Are you finished?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Absolutely. I did everything I could to make sure all of our students had the opportunity to go to school. We made sure that they could afford to go to school.

What I have said in my bill today is this ought to be done by Congress. And let's don't just do some blanket transfer of obligations here. Congress should be doing this. This is going to cost us up to \$1 trillion, and we are going to have people like my dad, if he was still

alive—a truckdriver with a sixth-grade education—pay for some Ivy League kid to go to school, and that is wrong.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, can I ask for a clarification of that answer?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. So, among the 68 percent of Florida A&M students who have student loan debt—I believe I heard the Senator say he made it possible for them to afford college, and I am wondering if he could explain how they could have afforded college without taking on that whole student loan debt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I am not suggesting you shouldn't borrow money, but what I am suggesting is, if you do borrow money, you made that decision, all right? You shouldn't transfer it to somebody like my dad, who had a sixth-grade education, couldn't afford to go to school, didn't go to school. There shouldn't be a transfer to make sure they pay off your debt. That is a decision you make. You should pay it off.

Now, if you have an issue because you can't pay it, let's deal with that issue. That is not what this does. This says, whatever your issues, Joe Biden says, by himself, without any act of Congress—he gets to make a decision by himself: Poof, your debt goes away; somebody else picks it up. That is not right.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I am really delighted that my colleague from Florida is suddenly concerned about transfers of wealth—I really am—because, as he may or may not know, over the last 30 years, there has been a massive transfer of wealth. The problem is, it has gone in the wrong direction.

We are talking about the shrinking of the middle class. We are talking about trillions of dollars going to the top 1 percent. And we are ending up in a situation today where you have billionaires and you have large corporations that don't pay a nickel in Federal taxes.

I always find it interesting that whenever Congress does something—ever so rarely—that benefits working people and low-income people, there is an uproar: Oh my God, you are helping young people and working people; you are helping poor people. What a terrible thing to do.

But there is massive silence when you give gigantic tax breaks to the 1 percent or large corporations that are now doing phenomenally well.

So my colleague from Florida is interested in the transfer of wealth? Let's work together. Let's make sure that the working class in this country—not just the billionaires—get a fair shake. Let's help young people. Let's start canceling the student debt that we should have done years ago.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, well, first off, let me make sure my colleague from Vermont knows my background. I actually grew up in public housing, born to a single mom. I do care about people, making sure you can get an education. That is why I did exactly what I did in Florida. I made sure people had the opportunity to get ahead.

The 4 years before I became Governor of Florida, the State lost 832,000 jobs. By cutting taxes and reducing the regulations and streamlining things, we added 1.7 million jobs so people all over my State could get a job. That is how people get ahead. You don't get ahead by just somebody transferring obligations from one person to somebody else. That improves a few people's lives, but that is completely unfair. That is not how this country was set up, that some people are going to pay for somebody else's obligation that they decided to pick up, and that is all I am talking about.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, you know, I really do think about this transfer question, and I find myself asking: Who paid for Jeff Bezos's yacht? Is it the taxpayers who said: Now, we—America's middle class, America's working class—are actually going to have to pick up the slack. And they will be the ones who have to pay to keep the military. They are the ones who will have to pay for roads and bridges. They are the ones who will pay for investment in science. But the billionaires can get richer and richer and richer and pay little or nothing in taxes. That is a giant transfer, and yet none of our Republican colleagues seem interested in talking about that transfer and just putting a stop to the outflow from hard-working, middle-class families over to the billionaires and the giant corporations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I think who paid for Jeff Bezos's yacht is all the people who bought packages from Amazon. And by the way, if you do get one that says "Made in China," I hope everybody will send it back.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S.J. RES. 61

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, in a few minutes, I am going to ask unanimous consent for the passage of the bill. In the interim, I would like to yield some time to my good friend Senator WICKER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I seek recognition to speak on the same matter that Senator BURR has raised and will raise on the unanimous consent request.

Think of the economy right now, Mr. President. Inflation is at 8.3 percent or higher, our GDP is shrinking, and supply chains have not recovered from the pandemic. The last thing we need is a shutdown of this Nation's rail service, both passenger and freight. Yet that is what we are facing in less than a day and a half from this moment: a massive rail strike that will virtually shut down our economy.

Now, this didn't have to happen, but I will tell you, it has been going on since 2019. So we are in our third year of this matter. There has been negotiation among the rails, some 37 companies—including 7 major freight carriers—and 12 unions. They reached an impasse. So, pursuant to statute, the President of the United States, President Joe Biden, appointed a PEB, a Presidential Emergency Board, to help resolve this issue. They brought the parties together and have worked with the suggestions from both sides—both labor and management—and come up with their recommendation, which the President of the United States has endorsed in full.

We are now at the point where we are asking both labor and management to agree to this recommendation of the PEB. One hundred percent of management has agreed to this recommendation of the Biden-appointed Presidential Emergency Board. Of the 12 unions, 8 of the unions have agreed. So we have an overwhelming majority of the unions agreeing to this and 100 percent of management agreeing to it, but under the law that Congress, in its wisdom, passed years and years ago, we have to have 100 percent of the 12 unions, and there are 4 holdouts at this point.

Pursuant to the statute, when we get to a situation like this, Congress can step in, and that is what my friend is going to ask us to do in just a few minutes. Congress can pass the recommendation of the PEB in full. The Senate can pass it, send it over to the House, send it to the President, who has endorsed the recommendation in full, and we can avoid this strike. And that is what we ought to be doing.

So I want to commend my friend from North Carolina for his leadership in this case. If the trains stop running, our economy grinds to a halt. And that is the very reason this law is in place, and it is the very reason why it is incumbent on us as Senators and Representatives to pass a resolution implementing the PEB.

I yield to my friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Mississippi.

There are going to be some who say this is unprecedented by the Congress. In fact, under the Railway Labor Act, Congress is allowed to intervene. In fact, Congress has intervened 18 times in the past, imposing PEB recommendations in whole or in part 4 times.

If we don't do it, if we do not force this issue, at 12:01 tomorrow night, the railroads will shut down, and the economic impact on the American people is \$2 billion a day—\$2 billion.

The Senator from Mississippi and I have introduced a bill that will adopt the Biden administration recommendations—recommendations that include a 24-percent increase in pay, paid retroactively to 2020; annual bonuses of \$1,000; and additional paid leave. This is what has been negotiated by the PEB board, but, as Senator WICKER said, there are holdouts from a standpoint of some of the major unions even though eight have agreed to it.

Now, as I said, Congress has taken this action 18 times to intervene in 12 different rail disputes. It spans back to 1982, and the latest was in 1991. So I dare say there are only a few that are in this body who were here when that happened.

Now, Senator SANDERS is on the floor, and I know he is going to object. I know he is going to object because I read his tweet this week. It said this:

Congress shouldn't stand in the way of railroad workers going on strike. The rail companies have avoided bargaining, abused their workers, and allied with the same forces who killed the Biden agenda in 2021. Now they want Congress to support their greed. Don't.

It sounds similar to the argument he was just making to Senator SCOTT about student loans. It sounds very similar to every argument he uses. It is that there is this thing in America where nobody is speaking up for something.

Listen, this is the President's bipartisan emergency Board that he set up that came back with a recommendation to the Biden administration and said: Here is the solution to this. It should be adopted.

This is really weird that Senator WICKER and I were on the floor introducing legislation that supports the President's position and supports the position of the Presidential Emergency Board.

Now, here is the key thing. This is the takeaway. We don't have to be here. Senator SCHUMER at any point can place this legislation on the floor. Clearly, Senator SANDERS would object then. But let me make a promise. If Senator SCHUMER needs votes, I can deliver 48 Republican votes to implement the PEB recommendation and the Biden-endorsed position.

Let me say that again because I want to make sure Senator SCHUMER's staff understands. This is about how you get to 60. I don't want to give a 101 of the U.S. Senate, but 60 votes, as the President knows, is required. I am offering him 48. He only needs to get 12 on his side to have 60 votes, take this up, pass it, to have this over with. And there is no interruption.

Not only is it \$2 billion a day in economic impact; this is 160,000 trainloads of agricultural product at a time of harvest to cross this country.

There are some who say: Well, this isn't going to affect me. They haul coal. They haul gas. They haul petroleum. They haul gases like helium that are required for manufacturing businesses. They haul auto parts, which means you are going to see auto assembly plants that shut down not because of China but because we let the railroad workers go on strike and did not support the President's position.

This is not political. This is Republicans supporting the President's position and only asking 12 Democrats to support this action.

I ask my colleagues: Drop this concern that you are representing one side or the other. Ask yourself what is best for America.

We just got a report that inflation is 8.3—8.3; food up 7; housing up 6; gasoline was down, and I think everybody expected inflation numbers to go way down. So 8.3 percent—wages aren't keeping up with that.

Every American family is losing money every month. And now you are going to tell them you are going to be paying more because food is going to be scarce. Commodities are going to be scarce. Some things aren't going to be delivered.

If we thought that the port chaos that we saw last year was bad, we are going to see a complete shutdown of rail, and we are just a matter of months away from Christmas, when most retailers are counting on that product to come in.

There are ports like Seattle and L.A., what are they going to do with the containers? You talk about ships staying out at ocean. Amtrak canceled their east-west rail coverage today going forward. Carriers have already stopped hauling hazardous waste because they didn't want to get halfway down a line and not be able to secure the hazardous waste.

We are at a real tipping point on this. And this can all be solved by either no objection to the unanimous consent request or by Senator SCHUMER bringing this to the floor, knowing that he has 48 Republicans, and he only needs to produce 12 to get to 60. This is a really easy thing. It is an easy lift.

Well, my hope is that we will take one of the two paths. But do understand that in less than 48 hours, at 12:01 Friday morning, the likelihood is that without action by Congress, there will be a strike, and rail traffic will stop. Period, end of sentence.

At this time, Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 61 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the joint resolution be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SANDERS. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. And I will object. Let me thank Senator BURR for actually reading my tweets. Much appreciated.

Just a correction of the record. I think Senator WICKER mentioned before that a number of unions had approved this agreement. As I think everybody knows, there cannot be an approval of a union agreement unless the workers themselves vote on it. They have not voted on it. So, in fact, there has been no approval by any union of the agreement. But before I go to the rail situation, I did want to say a few words and put this issue into a broader context, and then I will get to the rail situation.

As I think most Americans know, today we have more income and wealth inequality than at any time in the history of our country. People on top are doing phenomenally well while working people are struggling to keep their heads above water.

During the pandemic, while essential workers, like those employed at the railroads—while these people put their lives on the line and died by the thousands, the billionaire class—the people on top—saw a \$2 trillion increase in their wealth. Workers died by the tens of thousands. People on top became much richer.

Further, as healthcare costs soar, we have over 70 million Americans who are either uninsured or underinsured, and, in addition, the United States remains the only major country on Earth not to guarantee paid family and medical leave. That is the broad issue that we have got to look at as we look at the situation in the rail industry.

As I understand it, it is not accurate to say that the President of the United States has agreed to what the PEB has come up with. They have come up with a proposal. But right now, as we speak, Labor Secretary Marty Walsh is currently meeting with the rail union's end management in trying to forge an agreement. And I happen to wish them well. And I hope that those meetings lead to an agreement that is fair and that is just.

But let us make no mistake about what is happening in the rail industry right now—and I did not hear one word of that from my Republican colleagues—and that is that the rail industry has seen huge profits in recent years and last year alone made a record-breaking \$20 billion in profit. Last year, the rail industry made \$20 billion in profit.

And let me also mention that the CEOs of many of these rail companies are enjoying huge compensation packages. For example, last year, the CEO of CSX made over 20 million in total compensation while the CEOs of Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern made over \$14 million each in total compensation.

In other words, what is happening in the rail industry is what is happening all over this country. Corporate profits

are soaring, and CEOs are making incredibly large compensation packages.

I would also add that the parent company of BNSF—one of the largest freight rail companies in America—is Berkshire Hathaway, owned by Warren Buffett. Mr. Buffett is the fourth wealthiest man in America, worth nearly \$100 billion. During the pandemic, as railworkers risked their lives to keep the economy going, Mr. Buffett became \$33 billion richer.

In the midst of all of those profit increases for the industry, in the midst of huge compensation packages for the CEOs of the industry, in the midst of increased wealth for those who own these companies, what is going on for the workers? I think that is a fair question to ask, if we are in the midst of negotiations. What is going on for the workers? How are they doing?

It turns out that the key issue in the current negotiations is not about salaries. Apparently, there is an agreement on that. The key issue that is being contested is about the working conditions in the industry which are absolutely unacceptable and are almost beyond belief.

Right now, if you work in the freight rail industry—one of the most grueling and dangerous jobs in America—you are entitled to a grand total of zero sick days.

In case you missed it, let me repeat it: You are entitled to zero sick days.

What that means is that if you as a worker get sick, if your child gets sick, if your spouse gets sick and you need to take time off of work, not only will you not get paid, you actually could get fired. And that is precisely what is happening today in the rail industry. How crazy is that?

Let me remind you of what you undoubtedly know, that hundreds of Americans are still dying every day from COVID and tens of thousands are being hospitalized as a result of this deadly virus. What the freight rail industry is saying to its workers is this: It doesn't matter if you have COVID. It doesn't matter if you are lying in a hospital bed because of a medical emergency. It doesn't matter if your wife just gave birth to your child. It doesn't matter. If you do not come into work, no matter what the reason, we in the industry, we the bosses, have the right to fire you.

Really? Do these conditions really exist in the United States of America, the wealthiest country on Earth in the year 2022?

I do wonder if the CEO of the railroad or other top executives at that railroad—I wonder if they would get fired if they got sick or if they had a medical emergency in their families. I doubt very much that they would get fired.

Further, I should add, that quite sensibly the Federal Government guarantees 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave to its workers. That is what we do as a Federal Government. So if you are an employee at the Department of Transportation in the United

States, sitting behind a desk, you are, appropriately—I believe in this very much—guaranteed 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave. That is if you work at the Department of Transportation. But if you are an engineer running a train with tons of freight behind you—a very dangerous job—you get zero sick leave.

Now, that may make sense to somebody, but it doesn't make sense to me. As a result of this reactionary policy of denying workers sick time, rail conductors, engineers, and other rail employees are coming into work sick and exhausted, which is a danger not only to themselves but to their coworkers and everyone else who is around them.

As part of the contract negotiations, the railworkers are asking for 15 paid sick days. This is not a radical idea. We are the only major country on Earth that does not guarantee paid sick days.

In Germany, workers are entitled to 84 weeks of paid sick leave at 70 percent of their salary. In Norway, workers are entitled to 1 year of paid sick leave at 100 percent of their salary. In the UK, workers are entitled up to 28 weeks of paid sick leave.

The railworkers in the United States are not asking for 1 year of paid sick leave. They are not asking for 6 months of paid sick leave. They are asking for 15 days—15 days. The rail industry has said, as I understand it, that they just cannot afford to do that, just don't have the money. They say it would cost too much money to provide their workers with any paid sick days. They just can't afford to do it. Well, let's see. They made over \$20 billion in profits last year, and they provide their CEOs with huge compensation packages.

And here is something else that everyone should know who is getting involved in this issue: Last year, the rail industry spent over \$18 billion, not to improve rail safety, not to address the supply chain crisis in America, but to buy back its own stock and hand out huge dividends to its wealthy stockholders. In fact, since 2010, the rail industry has spent over \$183 billion on stock buybacks and dividends.

So here is where we are. It turns out that guaranteeing 15 paid sick days to rail workers would cost the industry a grand total of \$688 million a year. That is less than 3.5 percent of their annual profits. It seems to me if four major rail carriers can afford to spend over \$18 billion a year on stock buybacks and dividends, please, please don't tell me they cannot afford to guarantee 15 paid sick days to their workers and allow these workers to have a reasonable quality of life, which they don't enjoy today.

If the Burr-Wicker resolution passed, railworkers would be entitled to zero paid sick days and zero unpaid sick days. That is clearly unacceptable.

The outrage over the lack of paid sick leave is not the only issue being negotiated. The railworkers of this country are sick and tired of unreliable

scheduling, which is having a horrendous impact on their personal and family lives. In America today, railworkers are on call for up to 14 consecutive days, 12 hours a day. In fact, it is not uncommon for many railworkers to be on call virtually 24 hours a day with the requirement to report to work within 90 minutes for shifts that can last nearly 80 hours.

My office has heard from railworkers who received calls from management at 2 in the morning requiring them to show up for work at 4 a.m. Again, this is not only unacceptable; it is dangerous, and it has led to a substantial increase in the rate of injuries in the freight rail industry.

If the Burr-Wicker resolution were to pass, these unfair and unsafe working conditions would be allowed to continue, threatening the safety not only of the workers, but of passengers, as well.

Finally, the Burr-Wicker resolution could allow the freight rail industry to substantially increase the cost workers would have to pay for healthcare.

Let us be clear. We are talking about an industry that not only made \$20 billion in profits last year and spent over \$18 billion on stock buybacks and dividends, we are talking about an industry that has slashed its workforce by nearly 30 percent over the last 6 years, leaving its remaining workforce woefully understaffed and overworked. We are talking about an industry that has seen its profit margins nearly triple over the past 20 years.

Today, what Congress should be doing is not passing the Burr-Wicker resolution and forcing railroad workers back to work under horrendous working conditions. What we should be doing is telling the CEOs in the rail industry: Treat your workers with dignity and respect, not contempt. Do not fire workers for the "crime" of going to a doctor when they are sick. Make sure that your workers have 15 paid sick days and adequate time off to rest and spend with their families. At a time when you, the industry, are making recordbreaking profits, do not increase the cost of healthcare for your employees.

The CEOs in the freight rail industry need to understand that they cannot have it all. The rail industry must agree to a contract that is fair and that is just, and if they are not prepared to do that, it is time for Congress to stand on the side of workers for a change and not just the head of large multinational corporations.

Railworkers have a right to strike for reliable schedules. They have a right to strike for paid sick days. They have a right to strike for safe working conditions. Railworkers have a right to strike for these benefits. The Burr-Wicker resolution would take these fundamental rights away from workers. We cannot allow that to happen. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). Objection is heard.

The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, the objection has been heard and the Senator from Vermont has that right.

I wonder if the Senator would yield for a question concerning some assertions that he has made. It is my understanding—and the Senator is correct in this regard—only two of the unions have actually voted in favor of this plan. Six others have—their leadership has agreed, and we have tentative agreements with six of those. So six plus the two is the eight I mentioned.

Also, the Senator, I think, is mistaken in saying that there is no sick leave policy. That would be unbelievable for the rail industry in this day and age. It works a little differently for the rail. Railroad employees operate trains and have a leave policy under which they first indicate unavailability for work, and when that unavailability is the result of illness, then they receive sick pay through a sickness benefit under a statutory scheme.

The Presidential Emergency Board heard arguments on both sides, recommended an additional paid leave day. And, again, I would stress that this comes on top of a 24-percent wage increase.

But the thing that really strikes me about what my friend from Vermont said is he seems to cast doubt on whether President Biden is actually for this PEB recommendation, and that needs to be cleared up. If the Senator from Vermont is suggesting that President Biden is not behind this, then the White House needs to let us know immediately because when the PEB report was issued, the clear message from the White House is that President Biden was in favor of this and endorses this.

So if there are people in the White House listening to this, if the President of the United States is following this debate, then he needs to clarify this. If he is backing out on his support for the PEB, we need to know that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. My understanding, I say to my colleague from Mississippi, is that as we speak, the Secretary of Labor is in a room—or has been today, with management and labor in trying to forge an agreement. So what is going on right now is they are trying to reach an agreement which is amenable to both sides, so that is a work in process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, it is clearly apparent by listening to this debate, if Senator SANDERS had been on the PEB board, the PEB board wouldn't be making a recommendation and the President wouldn't be behind it. But that is where we are, short of a breakthrough in the negotiations that are occurring and going on.

I grew up listening to Paul Harvey. Paul Harvey had a show, the rest of the

news, the stuff you didn't hear. Let me do Paul Harvey on Senator SANDERS.

The railroad workers today get 3 weeks paid leave on average, plus 11 paid vacation days. PEB made a recommendation that they get 1 additional paid leave day. We will add that in. That is almost a month of paid leave. Regardless of what you call it, there is a month there.

You now mentioned this wasn't as lucrative as Germany and UK. I was home all of August. Nobody was asking: Geez, can you pass legislation that makes us look more like the UK or Germany or the rest of Europe? And I would be willing to bet that 27 paid leave days probably is more than some of the European countries.

Mr. SANDERS. Would you like to bet on that?

Mr. BURR. I will turn to you when I finish, how about that? I gave you a gracious amount of time.

The PEB board determined this was a good solution. And Senator SANDERS says he is here looking out for the middle class because nobody does that. Tell me this: How are you looking out for the middle class when you are risking losing \$2 billion a day in economic activity? Some of those people that you are talking about standing up for, if this rail strike continues, they are going to lose their job because of you. They are going to lose their job because the President took a position and you didn't support him.

I have been amazed with this administration. I find it pretty difficult sitting up here taking the President's position because the CDC today, 78 percent of the CDC workforce does not show up at the office more than 2 days a month. We are in the middle of COVID. We have a monkeypox national medical emergency, and 78 percent of CDC employees—Centers for Disease Control—do not go to the office in Atlanta. As a matter of fact, by, I think, the New York Times report, even the Secretary doesn't go into the office. At a time where you ought to have leadership, the leadership is gone.

Let's give the President a little bit of credit. He is showing some leadership. He realizes this is not good for every American. It doesn't matter whether you are rich or poor or in the middle. Having \$2 billion a day of negative economic impact is not good. It will ruin people's lives, just like COVID, just like monkeypox has done to some Americans.

I am not sure how in good conscience you can roll the dice and say: Boy, 24-percent increase in pay retroactive to 2020—not 2022, 2020—\$1,000 bonus, and 27 paid leave days per year, somehow we are cheating them. It is beyond me.

But an objection has been heard, and now it means this is in Senator SCHUMER's hands. He is the majority leader. He can bring this legislation up on the floor. All he needs is 60 votes because I am convinced, after hearing Senator SANDERS, he is not going to have an epiphany tonight and wake up tomorrow and say: I was wrong, I am for this.

But here is the promise I will make to Senator SCHUMER. If he will bring it to the floor, I will produce 48 Republican votes for it. That means Democrats only need to produce 12 people to support it to keep the American people from having a \$2 billion-a-day economic impact negatively impacting them. It will keep the flow of goods from the east coast to the west coast, and Amtrak will open up again. Christmas that comes in from overseas will hit L.A., Seattle, everywhere, and it will make it to its retail location where my wife can buy it. You could probably squeeze 12 Democratic votes just out of coastal communities that have ports that are going to be the real loser in this.

Remember, not long ago we had a port problem. We had ships that were sitting off L.A. that couldn't unload, and we felt the impact of it. Well, if you thought that was bad, wait until there are no trains because then they will be unloading no ships. They are all going to sit off the shore. When they back up like that, that backs up further and further when these goods are going to come in because once they unload here, they are going to go back and get more.

It also means that what we export in this country, there are no containers and no ships coming in to export those goods. If you are in agricultural territory at harvest time, this is going to be devastating to you. There are 160 million freight cars of agriculture transported every year, and it happens in this period.

So I say to my colleagues, let's all hope that Senator SCHUMER will bring this up, that he will take Republicans up on their position of supporting the President and a solution to this problem, and that all he needs to do is produce 12 folks, and at any point, we can pass this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I was not aware Senator BURR was a railroad worker, so let me, just to set the record straight, tell you what the railroad workers themselves understand the situation is. We might want to listen to those who live the experience. So let me very briefly quote you a statement from Jeremy Ferguson, president of SMART Transportation Division, and Dennis Pierce, president, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, Teamsters Rail Conference.

This is what they say about their working conditions:

Penalizing engineers and conductors for getting sick or going to a doctor's visit with termination must be stopped as part of this contract settlement. Let us repeat that, our members are being terminated for getting sick or for attending routine medical visits as we crawl our way out of a worldwide pandemic. No working-class American should be treated with this level of harassment in the workplace for simply becoming ill or going to a routine medical visit.

That is from the unions themselves.

So let us be clear. I don't think anybody wants a strike or wants a lockout. We hope that a settlement will be reached in the next day. But, in my view, if we are going to reach a settlement, I would hope that the railroads, which are making huge profits, start treating their workers with the respect that they deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I appreciate the debate on this. Here is where we are on this issue. We are going to have a nationwide strike within a day and a half from now, midnight, 12:01 a.m., Friday.

There are two things that could stop this. The distinguished majority leader can bring this PEB recommendation to the floor, and we will produce the Republican votes to get President Biden's administration's recommendation enacted. Send it to the House. The other thing that can happen is for President Biden to do as I have called on him to do just a few moments ago—to make it clear that this is, in fact, his recommendation, his endorsement of the plan that has been put forward by the Board he appointed; make that clear and exercise the Presidential leadership that is needed at this point to persuade his friends and the four holdout unions that this is what needs to be done.

But that is where we are. If we don't have one of those two actions, then we will have done nothing, and we will see a strike and the economic devastation that the distinguished Senator from North Carolina has described. It is really up to the Democratic leader and the President of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I am very pleased to be on the floor today with my colleague Senator HIRONO to express our strong support for the nomination of Dr. Geeta Rao Gupta to be Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues at the Department of State.

The position that Dr. Gupta has been nominated for leads the Office of Global Women's Issues, which is charged with advancing the rights and empowerment of women and girls around the world through U.S. foreign policy, so looking at our foreign policy through a gender lens that recognizes that women are half of the world's population.

Not only does the Office of Global Women's Issues prioritize policies and programs to advance the status of women around the world, it ensures that U.S. policies incorporate a gender lens at all levels of policy and decision making.

The last 2½ years of the COVID-19 pandemic have demonstrated why this office is more important than ever before. Around the world over those last

2½ years, the gender gap has grown as a result of the pandemic. Girls are dropping out and staying out of school at a higher rate than boys. The female labor force participation rate has declined, with women not only holding less secure jobs but also taking on more unpaid work at home with childcare and housing.

Gender-based violence has increased to such an extent that UN Women, the U.N. body charged with advancing the rights of women globally, now warns of what they call a “shadow pandemic” of violence.

These are issues of great consequence to half of the world’s population. They cannot be an afterthought. Gender equity, equality, and the empowerment of women and girls must be a focal point of U.S. foreign policy, and that is exactly what the Ambassador at Large is intended to facilitate.

Unfortunately, this position has been unfilled for too long. Over the past 5 years, beginning in the Trump administration, the position of the Ambassador at Large for Global Women’s Issues has been filled for only 1 year, so 20 percent of the time over the last 5 years.

During that time, we have endured an unprecedented global pandemic. We have ended a 20-year war in Afghanistan. We have watched as Vladimir Putin launched an unprovoked attack on Ukraine. We have experienced a supply chain crisis and suffered a global food shortage. And in every single one of these crises, women have been more acutely affected than men and affected in a different way than men.

During the pandemic, women, who make up almost 70 percent of the healthcare workforce, have been those who have been on the frontlines of providing care for the sick and vulnerable.

With the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, women’s rights have been rolled back at an unprecedented rate, and we have seen—90 percent of the households in Afghanistan have food insecurity, and women are experiencing the greatest part of that.

Displacement from the war in Ukraine has left millions of women vulnerable to human trafficking, even as Russia continues to shell their homes and communities.

The food insecurity from the supply chain crisis and global food shortage has reinforced our understanding of what we have seen for too long: that in times of hunger, it is women who eat last and who eat the least.

Through all of these crises, the Office of Global Women’s Issues has been without a leader to spearhead its work to ensure that women’s needs are incorporated in every aspect of the U.S. response to these crises. Now, why does that matter? Well, not only do women make up 50 percent of the world’s population, but what we know is that where women are empowered, they contribute, give back more to their families. They give back more to their communities. The countries that empower women are more stable; they are more economically secure.

This is a policy that is important not only to our foreign policy writ large but to our national security. That is why we need to fill this position and why we urgently need to confirm Dr. Gupta.

Dr. Gupta has spent her career in service to gender equality and women’s empowerment. She knows better than most the impact that unfair gender norms and inequalities have on women and the importance of prioritizing women’s leadership.

What is so unfortunate is that Dr. Gupta is being punished for her personal views on women’s reproductive choices. As the result of those personal views, those groups who oppose women’s reproductive choices are spreading falsehoods instead of facts. They are doing that, and unfortunately, too many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been willing to listen to those falsehoods without really looking at the facts. This sets a very dangerous precedent for all future nominees.

Let me be clear. The Office of Global Women’s Issues does not lead on sexual and reproductive health and rights, nor does it provide information about abortion services.

When former President Trump nominated someone to lead the Office of Global Women’s Issues, I and my pro-choice colleagues in this body didn’t ask her what her position was on choice because we knew that was not the mission of the Office of Global Women’s Issues, and she was confirmed. And I think by all accounts, people thought she did a good job in the short time that she was there.

So why are my Republican colleagues spreading these falsehoods? They have said that Dr. Gupta has advised the World Health Organization to support abortion as a human right. They have alleged that Dr. Gupta gave a speech saying that abortion should be an essential service. They have alleged that the administration has plans to include abortion in the mandate of the Office of Global Women’s Issues. Let me be clear. There is no truth behind those allegations.

If you missed it, let me say it again. There is no truth behind those allegations.

We cannot let this idea that because somebody has a personal position on an issue that affects them, that that means they cannot be considered for a position within the government. You know, based on that criteria, I wouldn’t be able to be considered for any position.

So for the sake of Dr. Gupta’s nomination today and for the sake of all of those qualified women candidates who are going to come before the Senate in the future, we can’t let this divisive move become the status quo. We have to correct the record. We need to approve Dr. Gupta, and we need to get the Office of Global Women’s Issues back operating at full capacity.

With that, let me yield to my colleague from Hawaii, Senator HIRONO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. I rise today in support of Dr. Gita Rao Gupta’s nomination to serve as Ambassador at Large for Global Women’s Issues, and I am glad to be here with my friend from New Hampshire to argue for her confirmation.

As head of the State Department’s Office of Global Women’s Issues, the Ambassador at Large leads our diplomatic efforts to promote the rights and empowerment of women and girls around the world. Who can argue with that kind of a mission?

From supporting women’s economic participation to combating domestic and gender-based violence, this work is critically important, and Dr. Gupta is well-suited to take on this important task. Dr. Gupta has spent her life working to empower women across the globe. She has led several nonprofit organizations focused on advancing gender equity and has served as cochair of the World Bank’s Gender-Based Violence Task Force.

But for months now, Republicans have blocked consideration of her nomination. Why? Not because she is unqualified. Dr. Gupta’s record is impeccable, and her qualifications are clear. No, Republicans are blocking her nomination simply because she supports the fundamental right of all women to make decisions about their bodies and their futures, including the decision to get an abortion.

Apparently, it is no longer enough for my Republican colleagues to push their extreme anti-abortion agenda. Now that they have overturned *Roe v. Wade*, they are opposing anyone who expresses support for abortion access even if it is their personal view and not one they are going to be pushing forward in the position that we are being asked to confirm them for.

Last year, the Republicans did the same thing to President Biden’s nominee to be Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration, SBA, opposing his nomination because of their opposition to SBA’s totally lawful PPP loans to Planned Parenthood clinics providing critical healthcare to communities across the country.

The Republicans, I have to say, have been on a tear about “How dare SBA provide these lawful PPP loans to Planned Parenthood?” Apparently, it escapes their notice that these are lawful loans.

So Republicans’ opposition to Dr. Gupta’s confirmation is a dangerous position and one that threatens the health, safety, and prosperity of women here in the United States and around the world.

For example, my Republican colleagues raised concerns about the state of women and girls in Afghanistan, and yet in another example of their hypocrisy, they are opposing a nominee who would be in a position to actually help support these women.

As Ambassador at Large for Global Women’s Issues, Dr. Gupta will bring

decades of experience to empower women, improve their economic security, and end violence against women and girls.

There is no legitimate reason for anyone to not support her nomination to this important role. The chaos and fear across the country generated by the Supreme Court's Roe decision is spilling over to block this nomination.

I thank Senator SHAHEEN for her focus on Dr. Gupta's nomination and her dedication to women and girls at home and abroad, and I urge my Republican colleagues to do the right thing for a change and end their bad faith obstruction of Dr. Gupta's nomination.

I yield back to my colleague from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Thank you, Senator HIRONO, and thank you for your eloquent remarks about Dr. Gupta's qualifications and the importance of having someone who has those kinds of qualifications at the Office of Global Women's Issues.

At this time, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee be discharged and the Senate proceed to the following nomination: PN1578, Geeta Rao Gupta, to be Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues; that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; and that any related statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. HAGERTY. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Dr. Gupta received a tie vote in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. There is a Senate process that has been agreed to by both parties by which the leader can discharge a nomination with a tie vote from this committee to bring it before the full Senate, if he so chooses.

I am saying this as a person who has been put through 30 hours of cloture himself when I served in the executive branch and went through this very process.

We should not break from Senate process and procedure with regard to Dr. Gupta's nomination. Members should have the opportunity to vote, and the majority leader can schedule it.

Additionally, I think the vast majority of Senators from both sides value the economic empowerment of women everywhere around the globe. The previous administration made economic empowerment for women worldwide one of its signature initiatives.

I served as a diplomat at that time in the previous administration, and the senior Senator from New Hampshire was a valuable partner in many of our efforts, which I very much appreciate.

So I think that there is a goal we share, but there are valid concerns on our side that the current administration is tainting this worthy goal and dismantling the bipartisan achievements of the previous administration. We deserve to have a better understanding of what this administration is doing before we rush ahead and totally bypass the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to confirm the person who will be the chief implementer of this administration's policies.

I am not comfortable giving consent to expedite consideration of this nomination.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I can buy that answer. Senator HAGERTY and I have worked together on the Foreign Relations Committee. I voted for you to be an Ambassador. I thought you did a good job in that role, and I think you are doing a good job now.

But the fact is that taking up floor time to deal with qualified nominees at a time when we have limited floor time, when we have a position that needs to be filled, when we have a minority position on the Foreign Relations Committee in opposition to authorizing permanently the Office of Global Women's Issues tells me it is something more than that, and I think Dr. Gupta's stalled nomination is emblematic of the intransigence on confirming President Biden's nominees for the Department of State.

That obstructionism is undermining our diplomatic efforts. It is demoralizing to employees at the Department of State who have dedicated their lives to U.S. foreign policy, and I know you understand that because you headed an Embassy. You know how critical our employees are who manage our foreign policy.

Eric Rubin, a former Ambassador to Bulgaria, recently spelled out what this means for U.S. diplomacy and national security, and this is the concern that we all ought to have.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD this article from Puck News.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[Sept. 6, 2022]

WASHINGTON'S NEW CRISIS OF DIPLOMACY
(By Julia Ioffe)

As of this writing, it has been 593 days since an American ambassador has inhabited the Villa Taverna, their official residence in Rome. Ever since the financier and Republican donor Lewis Eisenberg moved out at the end of Donald Trump's administration on January 21, 2021, no one has replaced him. President Joe Biden never nominated anyone, which raised eyebrows both in American foreign policy circles and in Italy. The Romans I've spoken to are furious and see it as a sign of unprecedented disrespect, especially at a time when Washington is asking its European allies—including countries dependent on Russian gas, like Italy—to hold

the line on anti-Russian sanctions. "It's the only G7 country with no U.S. ambassador," one American diplomatic insider told me. "I know the Italians are unhappy and they should be, given the situation politically and what's going on with Russia." Given that Russia is rumored to have had a hand in the collapse of Mario Draghi's sanctions-friendly coalition government this summer, the fact that Washington doesn't have a representative on the ground is more than embarrassing. It's downright negligent.

Currently, the United States is represented in Italy by Shawn Crowley, who is the chargé d'affaires. That's fine, but a chargé doesn't have the same rank and status as an ambassador, and receiving countries have all kinds of protocols and rules about who can meet with whom. Usually, a chargé has a much lower ceiling for whom they can meet than an ambassador; the rank itself can be quite limiting. "The Italians," noted the diplomatic insider, "are very protocol conscious." As are the Ukrainians—so much so that, despite all the aid the U.S. has poured into his country, President Volodymyr Zelensky refused to meet with the American chargé d'affaires until a real American ambassador, Bridget Brink, arrived in Kyiv this May.

Why has Biden left the post in Rome unfilled for so long? It's been an open secret in Washington that the president is holding the spot for Nancy Pelosi, the first Italian-American Speaker of the House and a minor celebrity in Italy. The idea, apparently, was to give her a nice, cushy retirement gig after Republicans take over the House. But why not nominate someone, like a career foreign service officer, to serve in the post, and then shoo them out once Pelosi ripens to the idea? All ambassadors, after all, serve at the pleasure of the president. I asked spokespeople at both the State Department and the White House about this, but they wouldn't—and couldn't—explain to me, even off the record, what the hell is going on there, not even after Fox News published its own story about the Pelosi rumors on Tuesday.

Pelosi's people, meanwhile, offered a familiar line: Why would Pelosi go get another job when she could just retire to Napa, and play with her grandkids? "Fox is just trying to start shit," one source close to the speaker told me. "There are no conversations with the White House. And I've just heard [Pelosi] say 'S.F. is heaven on earth' one too many times to believe that she would realistically want to spend her post-Speaker life anywhere but home with family." Which is also the exact kind of thing you might say before you take a job like that.

The Italian imbroglio is just the tip of the diplomatic iceberg. Over a year and a half into Biden's administration, more than 20 percent of American ambassadorships remain unfilled. Nearly 40 of them have a nominee that is pending confirmation, including for strategically vital posts, like the Czech Republic, Latvia, and the Netherlands—all crucial allies in holding the line against Russia on Ukraine. There is no American ambassador in Saudi Arabia, a fraught but important ally, and there hasn't been one since Biden's inauguration. India, the world's largest democracy, hasn't had an American ambassador since then either. The current nominee, L.A. mayor Eric Garcetti, has been in confirmation purgatory for more than a year, held up over allegations that he knew about his chief of staff's alleged sexual predations. In limbo, too, is the nomination for the ambassador to the U.N.'s Conference on Disarmament. Apparently, the U.S. Senate does not consider nuclear disarmament a pressing matter.

Fifteen more posts are completely vacant, with no nominee anywhere in sight. The abandonment of some places, like Cuba and

Afghanistan, make some sense. Other places, like Ethiopia, or Estonia, which is a crucial NATO ally, do not. "There is no reasonable explanation for why more than 20 percent of our ambassadorships overseas remain unfilled," said Eric Rubin, president of the American Foreign Service Association, which tracks such things. "This is not a world in which we can coast and assume that the rest of the world will wait for us to sort out our parochial difficulties. No other country leaves key diplomatic posts vacant so frequently and for so long."

The problem, though, is that there is an explanation. In fact, there are several. It began with Trump gutting the State Department and the career foreign service. The people he had nominated to represent the United States were comically unqualified if not outright problematic. Once Biden came in, Washington expected him to right the ship. He had been, after all, an old member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a vice president that had handled some of the most complex foreign policy matters under President Barack Obama. He boasted about his foreign policy chops as well as the coterie of smart, experienced advisors he was bringing in with him: the best and the brightest.

And yet, here we are, more than a year and a half later, and one-fifth of the president's ambassadors remain unconfirmed or even unappointed. The first problem for Biden was the Presidential Personnel Office, which, in true Democratic fashion, decided that if the previous administration was going to nominate people with criminal records or ongoing lawsuits for ambassadorships, they were going to do things with extra diligence. Chief of staff Ron Klain also decided he had to vet every single nominee, too, slowing the process even further. Meanwhile, over in Foggy Bottom, the State Department decided that its people also had to be extra vetted by diplomatic security, because everyone now had a digital footprint and social media presence.

Then, last July, Texas Senator Ted Cruz took it upon himself to wage a one-man campaign to kill the Nord Stream II project by putting a blanket hold on all the Biden administration's State Department nominees unless the White House got the German government to kill its pipeline. Since the Biden administration was not about to do so, this created a massive backlog—and that was before Missouri's Josh Hawley instituted his own blanket hold, in September 2021, on State and Defense Department nominees unless Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan resigned for, in his view, bungling the withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Needless to say that never happened. By the time these holds were lifted early this year, the backlog had grown massive. And time on the floor of the Senate of the 117th Congress, which will gavel out on January 3, 2023, had grown ever more precious.

But before that, let's pause to talk about how ambassadorial nominees get to the floor of the Senate for a vote.

First, they have to be approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is currently headed by New Jersey's Bob Menendez, a Democrat, and Idaho's Jim Risch, a Republican. Both men are steeped in foreign affairs and appear to all outside observers as serious thinkers about world events. But according to people who have regular dealings with the Foreign Relations Committee, they have a relationship that is closer to something out of *Mean Girls*. They are, as one source familiar with the committee described them to me, "like oil and water." They have been known to be so laser-focused on messing with each other, in

fact, that they regularly inhibit the functioning of the Committee. Said one Senate staffer familiar with the workings of the Committee, "It's an open secret that the challenges in their working relationship often impedes us from working together constructively on foreign policy and national security issues."

But there are other issues for ambassadorial nominees to navigate inside the Committee, especially if they're female. There is only one woman senator on the committee, New Hampshire's Jeanne Shaheen, and so the women Biden has nominated often run up against the proclivities of the old men of the Senate, especially of the Republican persuasion. "There is certainly a layer of unconscious bias that is holding back a number of women, that isn't there for the male nominees," said the Senate staffer. This includes "spouses saying things about Trump" or "the way in which women talk and represent themselves, where Republicans have been viscerally opposed to just how the women communicate." According to two sources, Sarah Margon, who had run the Washington office of Human Rights Watch and was nominated to lead the State Department's Office of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, ran into trouble when she met with Senator Risch, who pressed her repeatedly on her position on the BDS movement. She opposed it, she said repeatedly. Afterwards, Risch told colleagues he didn't like Margon's tone. (A committee spokesperson contended that, "The issue was not and has never been her 'tone,' it was her answers to the questions themselves.") The spokesperson did not, however, explain what was wrong with the answers.)

Other women have been pressed by Committee Republicans on their stances on abortion, even if the position they are nominated for has nothing to do with women's health, let alone abortion. This happened, for example, with Dr. Geeta Gupta, who was nominated to be the Ambassador to the Office of Global Women's Issues. The post, and the office, deals with women's security and economic empowerment, and has nothing to do with women's health, let alone reproductive rights. Yet Gupta was held up by Republicans on the Foreign Relations Committee over her alleged support of abortion, sending Shaheen into a righteous fury. "Republican grandstanding that held Geeta Gupta's nomination from advancing in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in July is a pivotal example of this gross display of partisan politics," Shaheen said in an email. "Republicans prevented her nomination from proceeding to fill the urgently needed role as Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues because of their obsession over women's health and access to abortion—neither of which are under the jurisdiction of this role. Senate Republicans are putting our security in danger and our credibility on the world stage at risk—it needs to end now."

The guiding assumption seems to be that if they are women and Democrats, then they are automatically rabid abortionists and will use whatever diplomatic role to advocate for it, from Kyiv to Kinshasa. "Women nominees tend to face more rigor from Senate Republicans and are frequently questioned about extraneous issues like their views on abortion," another Senate Democratic aide told me. "Some of this happens in public during hearings, but the majority of times it takes place behind closed doors when there are no cameras around to catch a senator and his staff go after women over issues well beyond the scope of the position for which they were nominated."

Once upon a time, ambassadorial nominees could count on cruising through the Senate on a vote of unanimous consent. They would

be advanced as a block of nominees and voted through as a block, and people would only get singled out if they had truly bungled their meetings with senators. The feeling at the time was that the President of the United States deserved to pick his ambassadors just as he deserved to pick his cabinet secretaries and the Senate was there only to weed out the truly rotten apples.

No more. If a nominee even makes it out of committee for a floor vote, they are voted on individually, it takes several hours, and any senator can use the opportunity of their nomination to extract something from the administration. Some, like Hawley, have asked for the resignation of cabinet secretaries. Others have asked for small, stupid things like, for example, a visa for a friend in exchange for waving a nomination through. That is to be expected of Republicans who will do whatever they can to impede Biden's agenda, but even some Democrats have caught on to the game. They have also learned that they can use any nomination to extract some choice morsel from the administration, whether it's a pet issue or something they can flaunt to constituents back home.

As a result, every single State Department confirmation hearing, ambassadorial or otherwise, now resembles a hostage negotiation. "This is not how the system is supposed to work," said one insider the process. "You're not supposed to negotiate for individual unrelated reasons. But people have started treating this as normal. I think nominations will look like this forever from now on."

Because of this, and because there are only four working weeks left on the Senate calendar before the midterms, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer has made it crystal clear to his conference that ambassadorial nominees are now at the very back of the line. Why spend hours on the ambassador to Azerbaijan when you can ram through another lifetime judicial appointment to balance out the work done by Mitch McConnell when he had the majority? "You only have a certain number of hours a week," one Senate aide familiar with the process told me. "The more we're spending it on ambassadorial nominations, the less we're spending it on judges." Added a Senate Democratic staffer, "It has been made clear that, through the midterms, the floor will be tied up with judicial nominees."

After the midterms, whether the Democrats hold the Senate or not, it will be a new, 118th Congress and that means all the ambassadorial nominations now floundering in senatorial purgatory will have to be resubmitted, and the process will begin again, from scratch.

Both the White House and State, in their official statements to me, emphasized the number of ambassadors they were able to confirm, despite the unprecedented obstruction they're facing in the Senate. Things are actually going pretty well, they say, all things considered. But privately, the tone is very different. People worry about recruiting and retention. Who in their right mind would want to go through a process like this? Others worry about the irreparable harm this is doing to our relationships with allies and adversaries abroad, especially after the calamity that was the Trump presidency.

"It's baffling to our foreign interlocutors because they don't have these confirmation processes, and our inability to field ambassadors when there are so many crises around the world is unbelievable to them," one former State Department official told me. "It's also having a huge impact at State on morale and retention. I think because there's so much uncertainty over how long it takes to get confirmed, the currency of an ambassadorship is being devalued. You have people

waiting for a year or more to get confirmed. People have quit jobs for these posts. Others are waiting inside State, stuck in limbo forever. I heard of someone who considered retiring while waiting to be confirmed."

Eric Rubin, himself a former ambassador to Bulgaria and deputy chief of mission in Russia, is worried about what message this is sending to the two countries most eager to weaken and replace America on the world stage: Russia and China. "The U.S. no longer has the largest diplomatic service, China does," Rubin told me. "The U.S. no longer has the most embassies and consulates abroad, China does. We have to stop tying one hand behind our backs in our efforts to represent our country and advance its security and prosperity."

Or, in the words of the diplomatic insider, "It's malpractice."

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Ambassador Rubin put it very starkly. He said:

The U.S. no longer has the largest diplomatic service. China does.

He concluded by saying:

We have to stop tying one hand behind our backs in our efforts to represent our country and advance its security and prosperity.

It's malpractice.

It is malpractice.

The fact that too many people in this Chamber are dragging their feet on allowing Ambassadors to be confirmed, on allowing diplomats with the Department of State to be confirmed, on allowing other high level people throughout government to be confirmed because, only, of their opposition to the Biden administration is just untenable, and it is against our national security.

So I think it is time now for the Senate to do its job to confirm Dr. Gupta. So let's move forward. Let's get our foreign policy with respect to gender throughout the world back on track.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, I have great respect for my colleague from New Hampshire. I worked very hard on the WGDP initiative that was put in place by the previous administration. It has the potential to do so much good.

I am very concerned about elements of that being dismantled right now, and I would like to remind my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that this is a matter of priorities.

Again, I will reiterate that I was put through 30 hours of cloture. The rules have been improved since then to reduce that amount of time. I think it would be a total of 4 hours in this case, yet the priorities set by the leadership of the other side indicate that they don't care as much about these positions because they won't even schedule it.

It is certainly within the Senate majority leader's power to do that. Rather, the Senate majority leader would rather prioritize seating the Postal Board of Governors than putting Ambassadors into place.

So I have difficulty with this argument, and, with all due respect, my objection stands.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, my colleague from Tennessee was just talking about priorities of this administration and this Senate, and I want to continue on that area of focus, relating to what many of us believe is probably the most important priority we have in the U.S. Senate, and that is defending our Nation.

Budgets are a reflection of an administration's values and an administration's priorities. And as I mentioned, many of us—and I believe on both sides of the aisle—see that the No. 1 priority we should have in the U.S. Senate is making sure we are a strong nation, to defend this great country of ours and to make sure we have the most lethal, well-trained military anywhere in the world, and that we take care of our troops and their families.

But this is not what this administration—the Biden administration—believes at all. In fact, President Biden's budgets clearly not only do not prioritize our military; they put them consistently last. And that is not a one-time thing. This is a pattern with this administration.

Here was the President's proposed budget last year. Take a look at it. We all know it was trillions and trillions. Department of Commerce, 28 percent increase. EPA, 21 percent. Interior, 16 percent—on and on. There are double-digit increases everywhere except—except—in the two Agencies that actually protect the Nation: the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security.

Last year, the Biden budget put forward a budget that, if it was adjusted for inflation, was almost a 3-percent cut to the Department of Defense.

Priorities matter. This administration has not prioritized our military at all.

Guess who was really pleased by that budget, by the way? The dictator in Beijing and the dictator in Moscow. No doubt when they saw that, they loved it.

Thankfully, the Armed Services Committee, on which I sit, said: Do you know what, Mr. President? With all due respect, this is nuts. We are not going to stand for this.

We put forward in the National Defense Authorization Act last year a 3-percent real increase to the Department of Defense budget. It was very bipartisan in the committee, a complete rebuke to the President of the United States, saying: We don't believe in cuts. We are going to increase. The appropriators, thankfully, did the same.

So that was the Biden administration's prioritization of our military last year.

Now, what happened between last year and this year, when the most recent budget came out? Well, I think a lot of us know, but I am going to talk a little bit about it.

Russia invaded Ukraine, and at an April Armed Services hearing, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

General Milley, said that the invasion was "the greatest threat to the peace and security of Europe and perhaps the world in any of my time of 42 years in uniform."

So this is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff saying we are likely seeing one of the most dangerous periods anywhere in the world in terms of national security in the last four decades.

That was testimony from the President's own Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

That is Russia. And, of course, their ally China is also taking incredibly aggressive actions all around the world. They are beginning to outcompete our country on many fronts—critical minerals, energy, technology.

Certainly, Xi Jinping, the dictator of Beijing, has increased China's aggression all around the world—in India, threatening to invade Taiwan, economic aggression toward Australia, snuffing out liberty in Hong Kong.

What else has China done? It is dramatically increasing its defense spending—more than 7 percent this year—increasing a navy that is almost becoming larger than ours.

This is how General Milley, again, put it in a hearing last April:

We are now facing two global powers, China and Russia, each with significant military capabilities, both of whom intend to fundamentally change the current rules-based global order. We are entering a world that is becoming more unstable and the potential for significant international conflict between great powers is increasing, not decreasing.

So that is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, again.

Now, what do you think the President did, seeing we had this incredibly dangerous period internationally, with his next budget? Last year, as I mentioned, he cut the Pentagon defense budget by almost 3 percent and dead last with Homeland Security in terms of Agencies.

So did he listen to his Chairman? Does he really think it is that dangerous? Let's see.

This is this year's defense budget and other priorities from this administration's multitrillion dollar budget, and, once again, you see the EPA coming in at a 24-percent increase. Commerce, HHS, and Labor are all double-digit—Interior, DOJ.

What about the Department of Defense? It is a 4-percent increase with almost 9-percent inflation. We are talking close to a 5-percent real cut to the Department of Defense. This is outrageous.

Last year, the President put forward almost a 4-percent cut to defense spending. In the interim period, we had one of the most dangerous wars that has happened—certainly in Europe and maybe in the world—in a generation. The President's own Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff come before the Senate Armed Services Committee and say it is an incredibly dangerous time—a period, maybe, in almost 50 years in

which we haven't seen so many threats to the international order. And the President does what? He, once again, prioritizes our defense almost dead last—almost dead last. Adjusted for inflation, it is a 5-percent cut.

Now, with this posture hearing for the Secretary of Defense and Chairman Milley, I asked the question: Gentlemen, with all due respect, you just said it is the most dangerous period in almost the last 50 years. How can you come before this committee and put forward a budget that is almost a 5-percent cut to the Department of Defense and our troops?

They didn't have a good answer. The truth of the matter is, I am quite certain that the uniformed military and probably even Secretary Austin do not support this budget, but they are good soldiers. They had to salute the Commander in Chief and try to support it. But we don't have to support it, and I know the American people certainly don't support it. Once again, I do know two people who support it. Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping look at this, and this is something they are very pleased with.

Once again, the Armed Services Committee, when we met to mark up the NDAA, voted in an overwhelming bipartisan fashion—23 to 3—to, once again, dramatically rebuke the President in a bipartisan way and significantly increase the top line for the Department of Defense to make sure we have a strong nation and that our troops are taken care of and their families by almost \$45 billion over what the President requested. It was a bipartisan rebuke, once again, of this administration that won't prioritize our national security and that keeps putting forward budgets that prioritize the defense of our Nation last.

We also started in this NDAA to course-correct, which we need to do dramatically at the Pentagon. We have had civilian leadership, primarily driven by the Biden administration's far-left nominees, who have not been focusing the Pentagon on its top priority, which is to win our Nation's wars and to make sure we have the most lethal military of any country in the world. So I was able in this NDAA to put forward some amendments that I was glad to get bipartisan support on, that are in the current NDAA, to start a course correction.

First, one of my amendments directs the Pentagon to discontinue any further investment in the DOD-wide effort to root out so-called extremism within the ranks. This has been an obsession of the civilian leadership at the Pentagon, many of whom know nothing about the military. It is an obsession, given the incredibly low rate of extremist activity in our military as determined by the Secretary of Defense's own working group on this topic.

The press didn't write about that because they love to kind of weave into the story that somehow our military is full of extremists. Unfortunately, some

of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle play that up too. One Senator, at one point, said 10 percent of the military might be extremist—a ridiculous besmirching of the men and women in our armed services. The actual report from the Secretary of Defense's office found fewer than 100 cases of extremist activity in a total military force of over 2 million people. When you do the math, that is less than .005 percent.

So let me be clear: Extremism has no place in our military and must be rooted out when discovered, but these numbers simply don't warrant the time and investment that our senior military has put into this issue. So, in the NDAA, we have said we are not funding it anymore.

There is a second issue in the NDAA for which I was able to put forward an amendment. The Department of the Army and the Department of the Air Force, according to press reports, were starting to devise a policy that would allow each servicemember to veto their duty assignment if they disagreed with the laws and regulations in a State or in a community where they were going to be assigned by the military.

Could you imagine the chaos that would result if every soldier, marine, sailor, or airman could say: "You know, I don't want to go to California; its regulations on the Second Amendment are overly burdensome on my Second Amendment right," or for any other reason?

So we said, in the NDAA, a policy that gives service men and women the ability to veto their assignments based on whether they want to go somewhere or not is not the way our military is going to operate. That has been nipped in the bud.

Finally, there is a very simple amendment that I put forward that just provides clarity to the men and women of the Department of Defense. All it does is remind them of what their job is. The military is too often asked to do so many different things—to focus on climate change and to focus on so many other issues. The military has one job: to provide combat-credible military forces needed to deter our adversaries, to protect the security of our Nation, and to win our Nation's wars when called upon to do so.

I put forward an amendment that said just that: Here is your priority, and here is what you are supposed to do. It is needed because of all of the things that our top civilian leaders are now telling the troops they should be focused on. They should be focused on prevailing in a war if they are called on to do so, and that is what my amendment did. Believe it or not, a number of Senators voted against it, but that also made the Defense Authorization Act this year.

In addition to significantly increasing the Department of Defense's authorized budget, we are starting to, once again, get the military focused on their primary job: lethality and winning wars.

So we need to bring the NDAA to the floor. We have passed it 66 years in a row. As I mentioned, the administration's priorities are clearly not with regard to national defense and our military. We can tell by the budget that has been put forward. In the Senate, priorities are often determined by the time on the floor to get a piece of legislation moving. It is clear to everybody who has been here that the majority leader does not prioritize the military in the same way that the President of the United States doesn't.

We passed the NDAA in June—the Armed Services Committee did—in a huge bipartisan vote. The House passed its NDAA in the House in July. So we are waiting to bring up one of the most important pieces of legislation we work on every year: the legislation that sets the policy and funds our troops and their families.

Where is it?

Senator SCHUMER, where is it? When are we going to bring it up?

You have Democrats and Republicans who are looking at this floor time in September, saying: We need to bring up the NDAA.

The rumor, right now, is that the majority leader plans to bring it up in December.

Think about that, America.

I don't even know what we are doing right now on the Senate floor—minor nominations. We should be bringing up the NDAA to protect this country and to make sure the men and women in our military know we have their backs. Right now, nobody has any idea—maybe the majority leader does—as to when we are actually going to bring this most important bipartisan piece of legislation to the floor.

This is why I joined in a letter that we sent out today, led by Senator TUBERVILLE, who serves on the Armed Services Committee with me, signed by 20 of my colleagues. By the way, I know it would have been signed by some Democratic colleagues as well. They didn't want to put their names on the letter, but they feel the same. It says to the majority leader: You control the Senate. You control the priorities of this body. Bring up the NDAA by the end of September.

Here is the letter. I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, September 13, 2022.

Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

LEADER SCHUMER: At the founding of our nation, then-General George Washington penned, "When the civil and military powers cooperate, and afford mutual aid to each other there can be little doubt of things going well". Two centuries later, that still rings true. Yet should this body fail in its top Constitutional responsibility of providing for a common defense, our armed services will be left directionless, lack stable

funding, and be devoid of civilian Congressional oversight.

Chairman Reed and Ranking Member Inhofe saw to it that the FY2023 National Defense Authorization Act remained bipartisan and the result safeguards the United States. Additionally, the bill invests in technology advancements and procurement through a \$45 billion budget topline increase, provides service members with a 4.6 percent pay raise, and strengthens our forces in cybersecurity, space, the Indo-Pacific, personnel management, and many other areas.

Members of the House passed their NDAA on July 14th, by a vote of 329-101. For the bill to go to conference and make it to President Biden's desk, our colleagues must have the opportunity to debate the Senate version with an open amendment process. As such, we the undersigned respectfully request that you call the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 to the Senate floor before the conclusion of the September work period.

Respectfully,

Tommy Tuberville, John Cornyn, Todd Young, Charles E. Grassley, Mike Braun, Joni K. Ernst, Thom Tillis, Roger W. Marshall, Roger Wicker, Tom Cotton, Kevin Cramer, Rick Scott, Deb Fischer, Marsha Blackburn, M. Michael Rounds, Dan Sullivan, Cynthia M. Lummis, Michael S. Lee, James E. Risch, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Crapo, Ted Cruz, Ron Johnson, U.S. Senators.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, the letter says:

At the founding of our nation, then-General George Washington penned, "When the civil and military powers cooperate, and afford mutual aid to each other there can be little doubt of things going well."

As General Milley said, at one of the most dangerous times in recent history, it is vital that our civil and military powers cooperate.

What we need to do in this body right now is get back to the important work of bolstering our economy, of fighting inflation, of bringing down energy costs, of unleashing American energy, and, most importantly, of passing the NDAA so we can bolster the national security of this great Nation in very dangerous times.

I call on the majority leader, along with 20 of my colleagues and some of my Democratic colleagues, to bring the NDAA to the floor and not wait until the end of the year, which is what we hear he is planning to do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Minnesota.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 1137, 1138, and 1108; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Travis LeBlanc, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for a term expiring January 29, 2028 (Reappointment); Richard E. DiZinno, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for the remainder of the term expiring January 29, 2023; and Shefali Razdan Duggal, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL PRISONERS OF WAR AND MISSING IN ACTION RECOGNITION DAY

Mr. KING. Mr. President, Friday, September 16, 2022, marks the National Prisoners of War and Missing in Action Recognition Day. On this day, we join together to honor the brave men and women of our Armed Forces who have been prisoners of war and for those who remain missing in action, including the 477 Mainers still unaccounted for. This solemn day is a painful, important reminder of the sacrifices endured by servicemembers and the immense, incalculable loss and uncertainty borne by their families and communities. Let us renew our commitment to bring answers and closure to the loved ones of those missing in action and to care for all those who have endured the painful silence of these losses.

Today, I join people across Maine and our Nation in saying, "You Are Not Forgotten." The phrase is reminder of our duty to leave no American servicemember or veteran behind, no matter where they may be. I stand humbled and grateful to those who answered the call of their Nation to protect our way of life. We also pay tribute to those who have been POW/MIA and have returned to their loved ones. We have a solemn obligation to take care of them and their families so that they can enjoy the freedoms they sacrificed for.

To the families who have lost their sons and daughters and to the comrades who have lost their friends and companions, know that today and every day we stand with you through your hardships and in honoring the selfless service of America's POW and MIA.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CURTIS D. ROBINSON

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize Mr. Curtis D. Robinson, a long-time resident of Connecticut and outstanding entrepreneur and philanthropist who turns 80 on September 21, 2022.

As a teenager, Mr. Robinson left Birmingham, AL, and the segregation of the Jim Crow South, arriving in Hartford, CT, in 1958 with little more than the clothes on his back. Mr. Robinson began working two full-time jobs and one part-time job and, after several years, was able to purchase a grocery store at the age of 18. By the time he was 22, Mr. Robinson also owned a restaurant, a cleaning service, an apartment building, and a construction supply company. He used this experience to start the Small Business Development Program in 1969, creating over 100 small businesses in the Hartford and Springfield areas. This remarkable success is a testament to Mr. Robinson's extraordinary industrious spirit and tremendous work ethic.

Today, Mr. Robinson is the owner, operator, and president of C&R Development Company, the largest minority construction management company on the east coast. He also owns several shops within Bradley International Airport and runs other businesses, including R&G Services, which operates the shuttle bus service at the airport, and R&G Parking, which operates one of the largest parking lots in downtown Hartford.

In addition to his entrepreneurial endeavors, Mr. Robinson is also an advocate for health equity. As the co-founder and chairman of the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity—CDRCHE—he expands the provision of critical health services in underserved communities, serving over 10,000 people since 2010. Expanding on this firsthand experience in addressing health inequities, Mr. Robinson sits on the boards of Trinity Health of New England, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, and the Connecticut Hospital Association.

Mr. Robinson is also an extraordinary philanthropist and has contributed greatly to the civic life of Connecticut. Along with his wife, Mr. Robinson founded the Curtis and Sheila Robinson Foundation, which provides financial support across a variety of areas—offering assistance with food, rent, clothing, transportation, and scholarship funds for individuals in need. Over the years, they have championed many worthy causes, including efforts to combat food insecurity, domestic violence, and poverty. The Robinsons have also assisted individuals with medical and hospital care, donated buses to churches and schools, and adopted a homeless shelter for displaced children. Their charitable contributions are truly too numerous to list, and I applaud their remarkable efforts to give back to their community.

Mr. Robinson's incredible achievements—building a life for himself through hard work and determination—truly embody the American dream. His willingness to use his hard-earned success to give back to others serves as a model for all of us. I applaud his many accomplishments and hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating Mr. Curtis Robinson on this milestone of his 80th birthday.●

RECOGNIZING THE AL J. SCHNEIDER COMPANY

● Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Al J. Schneider Company for 75 years of service and contribution to the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

On September 30th, 1947, the Al J. Schneider Company began its service by building barracks and other military facilities on Fort Knox. The company has since built and owned four of the largest hotels in Louisville, including the Galt House Hotel, the Executive Inn and Executive West—now known as the Crowne Plaza Louisville Airport—the Waterfront Office Tower, and One Riverfront Plaza, as well as many other commercial properties throughout Louisville.

The Al J. Schneider Company was founded with the belief that great things in great cities are done by the people in the city, including the \$80 million reinvestment of the Galt House Hotel and the employees who serve our community.

The Al J. Schneider Company has also taken great pride in supporting the local community with devout support of the Catholic Church, investment in the University of Louisville, Simmons College of Kentucky, Louisville Metro Police Foundation, King Solomon Missionary Baptist Church, and many other nonprofits throughout the Commonwealth.

I am proud to salute the Al J. Schneider Company for their 75 years of service and accomplishments and have no doubt they will continue to play an integral role in bettering the Commonwealth.●

RECOGNIZING McCALL LAKE CRUISES

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, as a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each month I recognize and celebrate the American entrepreneurial spirit by highlighting the success of a small business in my home State of Idaho. Today, I am pleased to honor McCall Lake Cruises as the Idaho Small Business of the Month for September 2022.

For the last 10 years, McCall Lake Cruises has operated *The Idaho* on Payette Lake, sharing with visitors and locals alike a history of the area, the ship, and Sharlie, the lake monster. *The Idaho* is a 62-foot, 85-passenger cruise vessel built in northern

Idaho in 1983. Its 360-degree view allows passengers to take in the scenic views and landscape that surround Payette Lake on both afternoon and sunset cruises throughout the summer.

McCall Lake Cruises was acquired by Kyle and Jade Enzler, Steven and AJ Lee, and Ryan and Kelsey Parke at the start of the 2022 cruise season. All three couples have a deep love of McCall and, over the years, have translated that love into various ventures in the area, from renovating and running the Scandia Inn, to coordinating beautiful McCall mountain weddings. This group of self-proclaimed Idaho enthusiasts knew a great opportunity when they saw one, so when the prospect of purchasing McCall Lake Cruises came about, they jumped at the chance. With the generous guidance of the previous owners and the help of *The Idaho's* knowledgeable captains and crew, these six enthusiastic entrepreneurs kept this special Payette Lake tradition alive.

Congratulations to McCall Lake Cruises for being selected as the Idaho Small Business of the Month for September 2022. Thank you for serving Idaho as small business owners and entrepreneurs. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:37 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 3103. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to eliminate the statute of limitations for the filing of a civil claim for any person who, while a minor, was a victim of a violation of section 1589, 1590, 1591, 2241(c), 2242, 2243, 2251, 2251A, 2252, 2252A, 2260, 2421, 2422, or 2423 of such title.

S. 4785. An act to extend by 19 days the authorization for the special assessment for the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1066. An act to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide flexibility with the cost share for fire management assistance, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5315. An act to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish in the Department of Transportation a drone infrastructure inspection grant program and a drone education and training grant program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5650. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16605 East Avenue of the Fountains in Fountain Hills, Arizona, as the "Dr. C.T. Wright Post Office Building".

H.R. 5952. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 123 East Main Street, in Vergas, Minnesota, as the "Jon Glawe Post Office".

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and

were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-207. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana urging the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to review and reform the National Flood Insurance Program's pricing methodology known as Risk Rating 2.0; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 84

Whereas, various scientific studies have reported climate change as having an impact on the current increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters; and

Whereas, various scientific studies predict continued increases in the frequency and severity of natural disasters; and

Whereas, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has reported that flooding is the most common and most expensive type of natural disaster in the United States; and

Whereas, FEMA has reported that one inch of water pooled in a single-story, one thousand square foot home can cause approximately eleven thousand dollars worth of damage; and

Whereas, a home is the most valuable asset owned by many families; and

Whereas, flood insurance is a product designed to mitigate the cost of repairs needed due to flood damage by offering coverage at a rate based on certain risk factors; and

Whereas, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) offers a maximum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars of flood insurance coverage for residential structures for families of one to four; and

Whereas, beginning October 1, 2021, new flood insurance policies issued by NFIP are subject to the rating methodology known as Risk Rating 2.0; and

Whereas, all flood insurance policies issued by NFIP that are renewed on or after April 1, 2022 are subject to Risk Rating 2.0; and

Whereas, the flood insurance rates for certain families are increasing up to eighteen percent per year; and

Whereas, citizens of the town of Jean Lafitte have elevated their homes but will nevertheless pay higher flood insurance rates under Risk Rating 2.0; and

Whereas, the language used to explain Risk Rating 2.0 in correspondence with policyholders is unclear to laypersons and difficult to understand; and

Whereas, policyholders should receive correspondence explaining Risk Rating 2.0 that utilizes language a policyholder can understand without the assistance of legal counsel; and

Whereas, increased residential flood insurance rates may discourage people from purchasing homes in south Louisiana; and

Whereas, a decrease in demand, as a result of increased flood insurance rates, may discourage individuals and property developers from building new homes in south Louisiana; and

Whereas, increased flood insurance rates may result in homeowners opting to not purchase flood insurance, which would expose them to bearing the full expense of repairing their home if it is damaged by a flood; and

Whereas, many homeowners would be unable to afford to repair their home if it were damaged by a flood and they did not receive flood insurance proceeds; and

Whereas, flood insurance should be affordable to all citizens of Louisiana, including residents of coastal communities in south Louisiana; and

Whereas, congress has oversight authority over federal administrative agencies, including FEMA and NFIP; and

Whereas, the members of the Louisiana congressional delegation have an obligation

to effectuate federal legislative changes for the benefit of the citizens of Louisiana.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to review and reform NFIP's pricing methodology known as Risk Rating 2.0; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-208. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana urging and requesting the President of the United States, the Governor of Louisiana and the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to do everything in their power to halt federal actions resulting in the delay or cancellation of offshore oil and natural gas lease sales and strongly urge the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Biden Administration to expedite actions necessary to comply with the order by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to resolve Lease Sale 257 and finalize a new five-year plan for oil and gas leasing on the outer continental shelf; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 43

Whereas, the Gulf of Mexico produces approximately seventeen percent of the U.S. crude oil and five percent of U.S. natural gas while contributing five to eight billion dollars to the federal treasury each year and sends hundreds of millions of dollars to coastal states for coastal restoration and hurricane protection projects; and

Whereas, the oil and gas industry directly supports two hundred forty-nine thousand eight hundred jobs in Louisiana and the oil and gas industry activities represent twenty-six percent of Louisiana's Gross Domestic Product, accounting for nearly four and one half billion dollars in state and local tax revenue in 2019 alone, with fourteen and one half percent of total state taxes, licenses, and fees collected; and

Whereas, according to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) which regulates offshore lease sales, the Gulf of Mexico continues to be the nation's primary offshore source of oil and gas, generating about ninety-seven percent of all U.S. outer continental shelf (OCS) oil and gas production; and

Whereas, since 2017, Gulf of Mexico lease sales have generated more than one billion dollars from offshore leasing; and

Whereas, since 1953, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior has been required by law to prepare a five-year plan to set a schedule for oil and gas leases in U.S. offshore waters; and

Whereas, it is a lengthy, multi-year regulatory process with multiple stages for public comment, input, and consultation; and

Whereas, the Obama Administration issued a five-year-plan for oil and gas leasing that expires on July 1, 2022; and

Whereas, there are two remaining lease sales for the Gulf of Mexico authorized under the current five-year plan, including Lease Sale 259 and Lease Sale 261; and

Whereas, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) missed the deadline to issue a notice of sale for Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 259 in order to meet the expiration of the current five-year plan; and

Whereas, President Biden signed Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, on January 27, 2021, declaring a pause on leasing on federal lands and waters, including the OCS of the Gulf of Mexico; and

Whereas, the U.S. District Court ordered a preliminary injunction on the leasing pause and ordered federal oil and gas lease sales to proceed on June 15, 2021; and

Whereas, the DOI held Lease Sale 257 on November 17, 2021; however, on January 27, 2022, a ruling by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia invalidated Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 257 requiring the DOI to reassess the environmental impacts of Lease Sale 257; and

Whereas, the DOI is not appealing the court ruling and therefore there is no indication that leases will be awarded to the offshore companies; and

Whereas, there is no indication that the federal government will hold another Gulf of Mexico offshore lease sale for the duration of President Biden's term; and

Whereas, there is no indication that the DOI is working on the next OCS five year plan; and

Whereas, since December 2019 crude output fell slightly, with a drop of nearly thirteen and one half percent in offshore Gulf of Mexico production; however, demand for oil has climbed nine and eight-tenths percent in the same period; and

Whereas, the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA), which allows Gulf states to share in offshore revenue generated from offshore oil activity including bonus bid revenue, is the only reliable source of funding for Louisiana's coastal programs; and

Whereas, over the past five years Louisiana has received between one hundred sixty million and four hundred seven million dollars from bonus bids alone; and

Whereas, it is estimated that the state of Louisiana lost approximately twenty to forty million dollars in 2021 due to the cancelled lease sales and lost bonus bid revenue; and

Whereas, Louisiana depends on GOMESA revenues to fund a fifty billion dollar coastal restoration plan; and

Whereas, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior is required by law to prepare a five-year plan to set a schedule for oil and gas leases in federal offshore waters; and

Whereas, delaying or canceling Gulf of Mexico leasing negatively impacts federal and state revenue, as well as Louisiana businesses and jobs; and

Whereas, drilling contractors will see impacts dropping as many as one quarter of the remaining Gulf of Mexico rigs over the next several years; and

Whereas, every drillship maintains an entire network of staff, supply boats, and other vendors that support roughly one thousand jobs per rig; and

Whereas, the Gulf of Mexico is the safest and cleanest oil produced anywhere in the world; and

Whereas, halting domestic energy development in one of the lowest carbon intensive energy producing regions in the world will shift production and capital investment overseas and undermine decades of environmental progress; and

Whereas, a 2016 Obama Administration study conducted by BOEM concluded that America's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will be only slightly affected by leasing decisions on BOEM's offshore leasing program and could result in an increase of GHG emissions in the absence of new OCS leasing due to an increase in importing foreign oil; and

Whereas, the current administration is pursuing a policy that places the U.S. at the mercy of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia to meet our domestic needs, harming our national and economic security; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the president of

the United States, the governor of Louisiana and the Louisiana congressional delegation to do everything in their power to halt federal actions resulting in the delay or cancellation of offshore oil and natural gas lease sales and strongly urge the U.S. Department of Interior and the Biden Administration to expedite actions necessary to comply with the order of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to resolve Lease Sale 257 and finalize a new five-year plan for oil and gas leasing on the outer continental shelf; and be it further

Resolved, That all efforts should focus on mandated lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico; and be it further

Resolved, That the clerk of the House is hereby directed to forward a copy of this Resolution to the president of the United States, the secretary of the interior, the secretary of energy, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the White House national climate advisor, the speaker and clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the president pro tempore and secretary of the United States Senate, and the members of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-209. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Colorado concerning support for Ukraine against Russian aggression; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22-004

Whereas, The post-war international security order, led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), has relied upon diplomacy, peace, and open communication over armed conflict to ensure prosperity and stability for over one billion people for more than 70 years; and

Whereas, Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian people voted overwhelmingly to form a nation independent from Russia, building a democracy and a thriving country grounded in the rule of law; and

Whereas, In 2014, the pro-Western Euromaidan protest movement in Ukraine led to the resignation of authoritarian president Viktor Yanukovich, a brutal ally of Vladimir Putin, ushering in democratically elected leaders who have sought closer ties to the European Union and the United States; and

Whereas, The Russian Federation, seeking to block the free will of the Ukrainian people in their pursuit of security, peace, and prosperity through closer ties to the European Union and the United States, annexed territory from Ukraine in 2014 and instigated, supported, and supplied a deadly separatist war in Eastern Ukraine that has destabilized the region and killed thousands of civilians; and

Whereas, The Russian Federation deployed military assets to support the separatist militias in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, resulting in the reckless missile attack that downed Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 and killed 298 innocent civilians in 2014; and

Whereas, Vladimir Putin intentionally lied to his own people and to the global community to create a false pretext to invade and occupy Ukraine based on lies that Ukraine posed a threat to Russians and that falsely connected Ukraine and its political leaders to Nazism; and

Whereas, The Russian Federation violated international peace and security agreements that sought a peaceful solution in Eastern Ukraine and instead amassed hundreds of thousands of troops on Ukraine's border; and

Whereas, Vladimir Putin has now launched an unjust and unwarranted invasion upon the peaceful nation of Ukraine; and

Whereas, Russian soldiers are currently sweeping through the country, inflicting violence and terror upon millions of civilians and destroying homes, businesses, and properties; and

Whereas, Ukraine is a proud and honorable nation under siege, and the brutality of this unnecessary and violent war is an affront to both international law and common decency; and

Whereas, Ukraine has been a bulwark against Russian military aggression in Europe, and Vladimir Putin has said that his goal is to recreate the Soviet Union and may have intentions to threaten NATO allies with military force; and

Whereas, Vladimir Putin has sought to destabilize countries across Europe and interfere in other countries' elections and democracies, including the United States; and

Whereas, The United States has galvanized the international community and our allies to impose the strongest possible sanctions on Russia and its financial institutions in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine; and

Whereas, Colorado is home to thousands of Ukrainian Americans and to millions who care deeply for and stand strongly in support of the Ukrainian people; and

Whereas, Ukraine deserves the support of every American and the entire international community as it defends itself from this unprovoked Russian invasion, the largest attack by one state against another in Europe since World War II; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-third General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein: That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly:

(1) Proudly stand alongside Ukraine, its people, and its leaders during this horrific and unnecessary war and vow to support Ukraine and hold Russia fully accountable for its catastrophic decision to invade;

(2) Condemn, in the strongest possible terms, Vladimir Putin's violent attack on the people of Ukraine and strongly endorse the swift and severe economic sanctions and stringent export controls that President Biden's administration has imposed on Russia; and

(3) Urge Russia to immediately cease its violent, illegal, and immoral assault upon Ukraine, end the needless bloodshed, and return to diplomacy and the rules-based international order that has ensured peace and prosperity for so many. Be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Minority Leader of the United States Senate, and all members of Colorado's Congressional delegation.

POM-210. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana encouraging the United States Congress and the President of the United States to take proactive measures to stand firmly against the totalitarian efforts of the world Marxist/communist movement to protect the citizens of our great state and this nation from the leviathan and evil that is the Chinese Communist Party; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 13

Whereas, the initial global Marxist/communist movement was directed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and had as its declared objective, world control; and

Whereas, world hegemony was to be accomplished through aggression, force, violence, and tactics that included fraud, espionage, sabotage, infiltration, subversion, propaganda, terrorism, and treachery; and

Whereas, since the 1991 collapse of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact the hegemonic and totalitarian nation-state of China has become the focal point for the spread of dangerous and tyrannical Marxist, communist, and socialist influences around the globe and has recently aligned with the Russian Federation to act in concert against the West and the rest of the free world, and together they champion tenets of the former Marxist/communist movement; and

Whereas, the direction and control of the world Marxist/communist movement is now vested in and exercised by the People's Republic of China (PRC); and

Whereas, the PRC, subject to the dictatorial authority of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), is actively and surreptitiously furthering the purposes of the world Marxist/communist movement; and

Whereas, the CCP has established or caused the establishment of various action organizations and "front" companies, which are entities that are not free and independent but components of the PRC's apparatus and that are controlled and directed by and subject to the discipline of the dictatorship in the CCP; and

Whereas, the CCP conducts predatory trade practices and is suspected of facilitating the shipment of pirated and stolen goods and technologies, all of which harms Louisiana and American businesses and workers; and

Whereas, the state of Louisiana, as a sovereign political entity under the Constitution of the United States and as a functioning representative state government that is responsible solely to the people of this state under the constitutions of this state and nation, is a most probable and obvious target for those who seek by force, violence, subterfuge, and other unlawful means to overthrow constitutional government, so Louisiana is in perpetual danger of Marxist/communist espionage, infiltration, subversion and sabotage, which would put at risk the state's economy, the international waterway that is the Mississippi River which runs through Louisiana, and these actions will put at risk critical transshipment routes for oil, gas, grain, coal, and chemicals that are all linchpins of the state and nation's economy; and

Whereas, Marxist/communist expansion and ultimately control of a country is characterized by an absolute denial of the right of self-government and by the abolition of those personal liberties which are cherished and held sacred in the state of Louisiana and in the United States of America; and

Whereas, the Legislature of Louisiana highlights the deaths of over seventy million Chinese citizens at the hands of its own state apparatus and dictators, the enslavement and on-going efforts to exterminate the Uyghur people and install Gulag-comparable oppression in the Xinjiang region, the maltreatment of minority citizens including peoples of color, maltreatment of homosexuals, the lack of religious and press freedoms, the persecution of people of faith, and draconian population control measures as the heinous benchmarks of the CCP that must be illuminated as actions the United States and Louisiana will not allow to endanger our great nation and state; and

Whereas, communist action organizations and front companies, as established and utilized in the United States, act under control, direction, and discipline of the CCP and endeavor to carry out the objectives of the world Marxist/communist movement under

the guise of legitimate businesses and academic and political entities; and

Whereas, the world Marxist/communist movement, which, emanating from the CCP and extending to all corners of the globe, aims to bring about the destabilization and subjugation of legitimate and free governments by any available means, including force when called for, and to set up totalitarian dictatorships that suppress liberty and eradicate human rights; and

Whereas, those who unwittingly and/or sophomorically aid the advancement of these aims of the world Marxist/communist movement and who participate in the subversive work of the movement in effect aid in the growth, influence, and detrimental presence of this cancer on liberty that extends from the CCP and are themselves victims of the world Marxist/communist movement; and

Whereas, by insidious and ruthless tactics such as predatory economic actions, infiltration of institutions of higher learning, sabotage, political party infiltration, propaganda, and subversion, the agents of the world Marxist/communist movement are attempting to lay the groundwork for the dissolution of the free society that is the United States of America and the state of Louisiana; and

Whereas, by dangerous experiments, including the possible release of deadly pathogens, and the testing and employment of balance-of-power changing weapons, the CCP puts the health and stability of the entire earth at risk; and

Whereas, the world Marxist/communist movement is not a legitimate political effort but is in fact a tyrannical criminal conspiracy with an end goal of the ruination of western civilization and liberal democracy; and

Whereas, because the world Marxist/communist movement constitutes a clear and present danger to the citizens of the state of Louisiana and is an unequivocal enemy of this state and nation, the Congress of the United States and the president of the United States, in order to protect the people of the country and state, to preserve the sovereignty of the state under the Constitutions of the United States and the state of Louisiana, and to guarantee to the state a republican form of government, should enact appropriate legislation recognizing the existence of the Marxist/communist movement and preventing it from accomplishing its purposes in the state of Louisiana and throughout these United States; and

Whereas, the guarantees of sovereignty and freedom enjoyed by this state and its citizens are certain to vanish if the United States and its constitution are minimized, degraded, or destroyed by the Marxist/communist movement. Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby encourage the Congress of the United States and the president of the United States to take proactive measures to stand firmly against the totalitarian efforts of the world Marxist/communist movement and to protect the citizens of our great state and this nation from the leviathan and evil that is the Chinese Communist Party; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-211. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana commending and honoring the pregnancy care centers of Louisiana; encouraging the United States Congress and federal and state

government agencies to grant assistance to pregnancy care centers for medical equipment and abstinence education in a manner that does not compromise the centers' mission or religious integrity; expressing the sense of the legislature regarding actions of any national, state, or local groups attempting to prevent pregnancy care centers from effectively serving women and men facing unplanned pregnancies; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 93

Whereas, pregnancy care centers have a considerable and growing impact on the women, men, children, and communities they serve; and

Whereas, pregnancy care centers serve women in Louisiana and across the United States with integrity and passion; there are more than two thousand five hundred pregnancy care centers across the United States that provide comprehensive care to women and men facing unplanned pregnancies by providing resources that meet their physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs; and

Whereas, pregnancy care centers offer women free, confidential, and compassionate services including pregnancy tests, peer counseling, twenty-four hour per day telephone hotlines, childbirth and parenting classes, community health care referrals, and other support services; and

Whereas, many medical pregnancy care centers offer ultrasounds and other medical services and provide information on adoption and adoption referrals to pregnant women; and

Whereas, pregnancy care centers encourage women to make positive life choices by equipping them with complete and accurate information regarding their pregnancy options and the development of their unborn children; and

Whereas, pregnancy care centers provide women with compassionate and confidential peer counseling in a nonjudgmental manner regardless of their pregnancy outcomes; they also provide important support and resources for women who choose childbirth over abortion; and

Whereas, pregnancy care centers ensure that women receive prenatal information and services that lead to the birth of healthy infants, and many centers provide grief assistance for women and men who regret past choices; and

Whereas, many pregnancy care centers also work to prevent unplanned pregnancies by teaching effective abstinence education in public schools; and

Whereas, the federal government and state governments have increasingly recognized the value of the services offered by pregnancy care centers and have designated public funds for such organizations; and

Whereas, pregnancy care centers operate primarily through reliance on the voluntary donations and time of individuals who are committed to caring for the needs of women and promoting and protecting life, and the centers operating in Louisiana are most deserving of the highest recognition for their efforts. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend and honor the pregnancy care centers of Louisiana and does hereby strongly support the positive contributions pregnancy care centers make to the lives of women, men, and babies; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the tens of thousands of volunteers and paid staff at pregnancy care centers in Louisiana and across the United States for their compassionate work; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana encourages Congress and federal and state government agencies to grant assistance to pregnancy care centers for medical equipment and abstinence education in a manner that does not compromise the mission or religious integrity of these organizations; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature disapproves of the actions of any national, state, or local groups attempting to prevent pregnancy care centers from effectively serving women and men facing unplanned pregnancies; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the governor, the president of the United States, the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America, and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-212. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana urging the United States Congress to support the Illegal Fishing and Forced Labor Prevention Act and to take such actions as are necessary to compel the United States Food and Drug Administration to fulfill its duties regarding inspection and testing of imported seafood; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 78

Whereas, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in 2019 the United States imported six billion pounds of edible seafood products, including one and one half billion pounds of shrimp, an increase of nearly six and one half million pounds more than the shrimp imported in 2018; and

Whereas, the 2019 shrimp imports alone, valued at six billion dollars, accounted for twenty-seven percent of the total value of imported seafood that year, which reached twenty-two billion dollars; and

Whereas, it is estimated that over half of the imported seafood consumed in the United States is from aquaculture, or seafood farming, rather than wild-caught; and

Whereas, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for the safety of all fish and fishery products entering the United States and sold in Louisiana; and

Whereas, the FDA's seafood safety program is governed by its Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point regulations, which address food safety management through the analysis and control of biological, chemical, and physical hazards from raw material production, procurement and handling, to manufacturing, distribution, and consumption of the finished product; and

Whereas, FDA regulations are supposed to measure compliance for imported seafood with inspections of foreign processing facilities, sampling of seafood offered for import into the United States, domestic surveillance sampling of imported products, inspections of seafood importers, foreign country program assessments, and the use of information from foreign partners and FDA overseas offices; and

Whereas, in 2011 the FDA was only inspecting two percent of the seafood imported into the United States; and

Whereas, unfortunately 2011 is the last year for which data regarding the percentage of imports inspected is available due to a lack of transparency and inadequate assessment measures; and

Whereas, in 2011 the Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted that the FDA's assessments of foreign aquaculture operations was limited by the FDA's lack of 1 procedures, criteria, and standards; and ten years

later, a 2021 GAO report found that the agency was failing to monitor the effectiveness of its own enforcement policies and procedures; and

Whereas, in contrast, the European Union regularly conducts physical checks of approximately twenty percent of all imported fish products that are fresh, frozen, dry, salted, or hermetically sealed, and for certain fishery products, physical checks are conducted on approximately fifty percent of imports; and

Whereas, the Louisiana State University School of Renewable Natural Resources published a 2020 paper titled "Determination of Sulfite and Antimicrobial Residue in Imported Shrimp to the USA", which presented findings from a study of shrimp imported from India, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, China, Bangladesh, and Ecuador and purchased from retail stores in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and

Whereas, a screening of these shrimp for sulfites and residues from antimicrobial drugs found the following: (1) five percent of the shrimp contained malachite green, (2) seven percent contained oxytetracycline, (3) seventeen percent contained fluoroquinolone, and (4) seventy percent contained nitrofurantoin, all of which have been banned by the FDA in domestic aquaculture operations; and

Whereas, although the FDA requires that food products exposed to sulfites must include a label with a statement about the presence of sulfites, of the forty-three percent of these locally purchased shrimp found to contain sulfites, not one package complied with this labeling requirement; and

Whereas, the drug and sulfite residues included in this screening can be harmful to human health during both handling and consumption and have been known to cause all of the following: liver damage and tumors, reproductive abnormalities, cardiac arrhythmia, renal failure, hemolysis, asthma attacks, and allergic reactions; and

Whereas, the results of this study confirm that existing screening and enforcement measures for imported seafood are insufficient; whatever the percentage of imports inspected may be, seafood is currently being imported that contains unsafe substances that put American consumers at risk; and

Whereas, because imported seafood is not held to the same standards as domestic seafood, domestic fishing industries are put at a distinct and significant disadvantage commercially; and

Whereas, according to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the average value of Louisiana shrimp fell from three dollars and eighty cents per pound in 1980 to one dollar fifty cents per pound in 2017; and

Whereas, this unfair competition allows foreign competitors to flood the United States market with seafood harvested under intensive farming practices using antimicrobial drugs, while devastating local industries and the coastal communities built around them; and

Whereas, proposed federal legislation cosponsored by Representative Garret Graves of Louisiana titled the Illegal Fishing and Forced Labor Prevention Act, originally filed as H.R. 3075 and as incorporated into H.R. 4521 of the 117th Congress, seeks to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing practices in the international seafood supply chain which contribute to the foregoing inadequacies; and

Whereas, the proposed legislation seeks to enhance monitoring, inspection, data collection, labeling, and transparency related to imported seafood; to improve the ability of United States regulators to enforce these measures; to increase outreach regarding seafood safety and fraud; and to appropriate

additional money for improved traceability; and

Whereas, if enacted, the Illegal Fishing and Forced Labor Prevention Act could be an essential step towards improving the safety of consumers and the market for domestic fishing industries; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to support the Illegal Fishing and Forced Labor Prevention Act and to take such actions as are necessary to compel the United States Food and Drug Administration to fulfill its duties regarding inspection and testing of imported seafood; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-213. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana urging the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to invest future supplemental funding in the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point located in Jefferson Parish aiding in flood protection and preventing future losses and damages; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

Whereas, the population in Jefferson Parish is approximately 429,711; and

Whereas, Jefferson Parish is the third largest parish in Louisiana; and

Whereas, there are approximately 100,179 properties in Jefferson Parish that have a greater than twenty-six percent chance of being severely affected by flooding; and

Whereas, flood risks have increased in Jefferson Parish, and there is an extreme risk of flooding over the next thirty years; and

Whereas, Jefferson Parish has greater overall flood risk than ninety-nine percent of counties across the country; and

Whereas, the Federal Emergency Management Agency awarded a grant to aid in flood mitigation in Jefferson Parish; and

Whereas, the United States Congress and the president of the United States did not include the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point; however, the state of Louisiana received supplemental funding for the parishes of Lafourche, Terrebonne, Orleans, East Baton Rouge, Tangipahoa, and parts of Jefferson; and

Whereas, continued investments in flood mitigation are needed to prevent future loss and damage resulting from natural disasters in the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point; and

Whereas, the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point have suffered the adverse effects of the West Closure Complex drainage system and the one hundred-year levees three miles north of the area; and

Whereas, the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point have suffered the adverse effects of the sediment diversion on United States Highway 90 and will suffer from the proposed mid-Barataria sediment diversion; and

Whereas, the extreme risk of flooding in Jefferson Parish has shown the urgent need to invest resources for the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point as a means to protect life and property in the future, as citizens are continuously impacted by the flooding and rebuilding of their homes and lives; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to invest more resources into the

communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point to aid in future flood damage mitigation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to include the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point in any future supplemental funding and pre-mitigation funding to provide flood protection and to prevent future losses and damages; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-214. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Michigan urging the United States Congress to pass legislation that would allow farmers, along with coalitions and trade associations representing farmers, to petition the U.S. International Trade Commission to temporarily waive tariffs on imports of fertilizer and fertilizer ingredients imported from Morocco; to the Committee on Finance.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 139

Whereas, Michigan's agricultural industry is vitally important to the state economy. As our nation's second most diverse agricultural system, it contributes more than \$104.7 billion in economic activity annually to the state. More than 800,000 people work in Michigan's agricultural industry, and care for nearly 10 million acres of land; and

Whereas, Fertilizer is a critical agricultural input that is utilized by farmers to provide nutrients to their land and maximize the productivity of their farms. Michigan farmers require access to fertilizers in order to nourish their land and maintain production levels; and

Whereas, The International Trade Commission (ITC) determined that the import of foreign fertilizers injured U.S. manufacturers. As a result, the ITC decided to impose a nineteen percent tariff on imports of fertilizer and fertilizer ingredients from Morocco. The tariffs, which were implemented in early 2021, significantly increased fertilizer prices; and

Whereas, Fertilizer prices in the United States are now at an all-time high. Fertilizer prices had already been increasing due to factors such as rising costs of raw materials and increased demand for inputs. With these tariffs in effect, farmers who were already struggling to compete with rising costs are now faced with an increased financial burden and uncertain future; and

Whereas, Meanwhile, the U.S. continues to rely on imported fertilizer and fertilizer ingredients. For example, more than 95 percent of potash, one of the key components found in fertilizer, is currently imported from outside the U.S.; and

Whereas, Michigan contains the only commercial deposit of natural potash in the U.S. and the highest quality natural potash deposit in the world. The Michigan Legislature recently provided an investment of \$50 million to establish potash extraction infrastructure in Michigan. Once completed, this project will help increase domestic supply of this critical mineral, thereby strengthening and securing the supply of high-quality potash for Michigan farmers, in addition to providing hundreds of full-time jobs and boosting Michigan's economy. This will be crucial for the Michigan agricultural industry, as significant supply shortages and skyrocketing costs continue to burden Michigan farmers; and

Whereas, Legislation has been introduced in Congress that would allow a process for

individual farmers, along with coalitions and trade associations representing farmers, to petition the ITC to temporarily waive tariffs on imports of fertilizer and fertilizer ingredients. With the price of fertilizer on the rise, this would help alleviate costs for farmers, as Morocco is one of the top five exporters of fertilizer to the United States; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge Congress to pass legislation that would allow farmers, along with coalitions and trade associations representing farmers, to petition the ITC to temporarily waive tariffs on imports of fertilizer and fertilizer ingredients imported from Morocco; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-215. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona urging the United States Congress to allow the participation of Romania in the Visa Waiver Program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE CONCURRENT MEMORIAL NO. 2008

Whereas, Romania has been a stable and flourishing multiparty democracy since the end of communism in 1989; and

Whereas, Romania has a fast-growing, market-oriented economy and is a major economic partner of the United States; and

Whereas, Romania is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), meets its defense spending benchmarks and is an active player in regional security; and

Whereas, Romania is an important United States regional security ally and is a close partner in the areas of intelligence and joint security; and

Whereas, Romania has been described as a "stalwart NATO ally" by United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and called a role model ally by senior defense officials; and

Whereas, the Visa Waiver Program allows citizens of approved countries to travel without a visa to the United States for stays of up to 90 days; and

Whereas, despite the close United States-Romanian relationship, Romania remains one of only three European Union countries that are not in the Visa Waiver Program; and

Whereas, Romania's exclusion from the program hampers closer economic, cultural, political and security ties between our two countries. Wherefore your memorialist, the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona, the Senate concurring, prays:

1. That the United States Congress make changes to the Visa Waiver Program to allow Romania to become a participating country.

2. That the Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security work closely with Romanian officials to quickly bring Romania into the Visa Waiver Program.

3. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona and the Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security.

POM-216. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Wisconsin applying to the United States Congress, under the provisions of Article V of the United States Constitution, for the calling of a convention for the limited purpose of proposing an

amendment to the United States Constitution to set a limit on the number of terms that a person may be elected as a member of the United States House of Representatives or as a member of the United States Senate; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 18

Whereas, the United States and its citizens would be best served by limiting the terms of members of the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate; and

Whereas, under Article V of the Constitution of the United States, the Congress, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments to the Constitution of the United States; and this application shall be aggregated with the applications from other states to Congress to call a convention to set a limit on the number of terms that a person may be elected to the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate for the purpose of attaining the two-thirds of states necessary to require Congress to call a limited convention on this subject, but shall not be aggregated with any other applications on any other subject; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring. That the legislature of the State of Wisconsin herewith respectfully applies to Congress, under the provisions of Article V of the Constitution of the United States, for the calling of a convention for the limited purpose of proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to set a limit on the number of terms that a person may be elected as a member of the United States House of Representatives or as a member of the United States Senate; and, be it further

Resolved. That the secretary of state of the State of Wisconsin be, and is hereby, directed to forward a proper authenticated copy of this resolution to the President of the Senate of the United States, and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States; and, be it further

Resolved. That this resolution constitutes a continuing application for a convention for proposing an amendment in accordance with Article V of the Constitution of the United States until such a convention is convened on the same subject or until the legislature of the State of Wisconsin rescinds this resolution.

POM-217. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of New Jersey urging the United States Congress to pass a resolution condemning violence against historically Black colleges and universities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 69

Whereas, In January and February of 2022, at least 30 historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were the targets of bomb threats; and

Whereas, On February 7, 2022, House Concurrent Resolution 70 was introduced in the United States House of Representatives condemning the violence and threats of violence against HBCUs; and

Whereas, HBCUs were established throughout the 19th and 20th centuries in response to discriminatory practices that prevented Black Americans from pursuing higher education; and

Whereas, Quality higher educational opportunities are central to economic prosperity and social well-being in the United States, and dedicated educational opportunities for Black Americans are critical to the pursuit of economic and social equality for Black Americans; and

Whereas, HBCUs are a symbol of independence and resilience for the Black community

and provide important opportunities to uplift Black Americans; and

Whereas, in 2020, enrollment at HBCUs totaled more than 275,000 students, and HBCUs continuously produce a significant share of the country's Black leaders, innovators and artists, including Vice President Kamala Harris, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Toni Morrison; and

Whereas, Bombings were a common tactic during the Civil Rights Movement to terrorize Black institutions and members of the Black community; and

Whereas, The bomb threats against HBCUs in the initial months of 2022 have disrupted campus environments, obstructed educational opportunities, increased anxiety, and instilled fear in students, faculty, and staff; and

Whereas, in 2019, among single-bias hate crime incidents in the United States, 57.6 percent of victims were targeted due to racial, ethnic, or ancestry bias, and among those victims, 48.5 percent were victims of crimes motivated by the offenders' anti-Black or anti-African-American bias, according to the FBI; and

Whereas, The United States has a duty to protect citizens targeted by race-related hate crimes and prevent the continued perpetration of these crimes; and

Whereas, It is altogether fitting and proper for the United States Congress to pass House Concurrent Resolution 70 and thereby vociferously condemn the threats of violence against HBCUs; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:

1. This House supports, and respectfully urges the United States Congress to pass, House Concurrent Resolution 70, condemning the violence against historically Black colleges and universities and reaffirming the commitment of the federal government to combat violence against students, faculty, and staff at historically Black colleges and universities.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and every member of the New Jersey Congressional delegation.

POM-218. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Colorado concerning the designation of March 8, 2022, as "Colorado Aerospace Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22-005

Whereas, Our nation and the world have significantly benefited from technological and scientific advances resulting from space exploration and aerospace activities; and

Whereas, Colorado ranks first in the nation for aerospace employment concentration; and

Whereas, There are over 34,000 Coloradans who are directly employed in aerospace, with the aerospace cluster supporting over 240,000 jobs; and

Whereas, Colorado is home to the nation's top aerospace companies, including Ball Aerospace, Boeing, L3Harris, Lockheed Martin Space, Maxar Technologies, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, Sierra Nevada Corporation, and United Launch Alliance, and close to 500 additional companies that support the aerospace sector by providing services and developing products, including spacecraft, launch vehicles, satellites, command and control software, sensors, and navigation operations; and

Whereas, Colorado is a strategic location for national space and cyber activity, with

five key military commands—North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the United States Northern Command, the United States Strategic Command's Joint Functional Component Command for Space Missile Warning Center, the United States Space Command, and the United States Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command—and three space-related United States Space Force bases—Buckley, Peterson, and Schriever; and

Whereas, The United States Air Force Academy, along with Colorado's colleges and universities, including the University of Colorado Boulder, University of Colorado Colorado Springs, Colorado School of Mines, Colorado State University, Metropolitan State University of Denver, University of Denver, Colorado Mesa University, and Fort Lewis College, provides access to world-class aerospace-related degrees and offers aerospace companies one of the country's most educated workforces; and

Whereas, Various organizations are key to Colorado's prominence in aerospace, such as the Colorado Space Coalition, a group of industry stakeholders working to grow and promote Colorado as a center of excellence for aerospace; the Colorado chapter of Citizens for Space Exploration, in partnership with the Colorado Space Business Roundtable, whose mission is to promote better understanding of aerospace and its importance in our economy and daily lives, as well as promoting the importance of human space exploration; and the Colorado Space Business Roundtable, an organization that works to convene stakeholders from industry, government, and academia to advance aerospace business and workforce opportunities throughout the state. Together they form the Colorado chapter of the Aerospace States Association, a nonpartisan organization of lieutenant governors and associate members from aerospace organizations and academia who represent states' interests in federal aerospace and aviation policy development. Manufacturer's Edge is a statewide manufacturing assistance center that encourages the strength and competitiveness of Colorado manufacturers by providing on-site technical assistance through coaching, training, consulting, collaboration-focused industry programs, and leveraging government, university, and economic development partnerships; and

Whereas, The Colorado Air and Space Port seeks to serve as America's hub for commercial space transportation, research, and development; this horizontal launch facility will have the potential to become the foundation for a global suborbital transportation network connecting Colorado globally; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-third General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein: That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly:

(1) Strongly urge and request the government of the United States of America to take action to preserve and enhance American leadership in space, spur innovation, and ensure our continued national and economic security by increasing funding for space exploration and activities, including aggressively pursuing sending United States astronauts and the first woman onto the Moon in the next few years under the Artemis program, which will have its uncrewed test flight this month, sending along with it the Callisto payload, which uses Amazon Alexa and Webex by Cisco to test and demonstrate commercial technology for deep space voice, video, and whiteboarding communications. The Callisto technology demonstration will be integrated

into NASA's Orion spacecraft for the agency's Artemis I uncrewed mission. Lockheed Martin Space, which designed and built the Orion spacecraft for NASA in Colorado, is leading the development and integration of the payload;

(2) Recognize and appreciate Colorado's space and aerospace companies and organizations, especially the growing membership and activities of the Colorado chapter of Citizens for Space Exploration, in partnership with the Colorado Space Business Roundtable, whose activities to promote space exploration are helping to increase public understanding and enthusiasm for exploration funding;

(3) Recognize and support our congressional delegation in urging the Department of Defense to reestablish the United States Space Command in Colorado;

(4) Recognize and appreciate the contributions of Colorado's universities, colleges, and national research laboratories to the space and aerospace industries, including their expertise in exploration of the planets and the universe and their space-based Earth observation, like the GOES-T weather satellite that launched this month;

(5) Express our most sincere and deepest appreciation to the men and women working in our military installations in Colorado; and

(6) Hereby declare March 8, 2022, to be "Colorado Aerospace Day". Be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to President Joseph Biden, Jr.; Vice President Kamala Harris; Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi; House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy; Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer; Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell; Senator John Hickenlooper; Senator Michael Bennet; Congresswoman Diana DeGette; Congressman Joe Neguse; Congresswoman Lauren Boebert; Congressman Ken Buck; Congressman Doug Lamborn; Congressman Jason Crow; Congressman Ed Perlmutter; Bill Nelson, NASA Administrator; Bradley Mims, Deputy Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration; Governor Jared Polis; Lieutenant Governor and Co-chair, Colorado Space Coalition, Dianne Primavera; Brigadier General Laura Clellan, The Adjutant General, Colorado National Guard; General James Dickinson, Commander, U.S. Space Command, and Commander, Air Force Space Command; Colonel Marcus Jackson, Buckley Garrison Commander, Buckley Space Force Base; Dr. Christopher Scolese, Director, National Reconnaissance Office; Ross B. Garelick Bell, Executive Director, Aerospace States Association; Thomas E. Zelibor, Chief Executive Officer, Space Foundation; Dr. Ronald M. Segal, Co-chair, Colorado Space Coalition; Michael Gass, Co-chair, Colorado Space Coalition; Bob Cone, Chair, Colorado Space Business Roundtable; Stacey DeFore, Chair, Colorado Citizens for Space Exploration; Jeff Kloska, Director, Colorado Air and Space Port; and Debbie Brown, President, Colorado Space Business Roundtable.

POM-219. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Wisconsin applying to the United States Congress, under the provisions of Article V of the United States Constitution, for the calling of a Convention of the States limited to proposing amendments to the United States Constitution that impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for its officials and for members of Congress; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9

Whereas, the Founders of our Constitution empowered state legislators to be guardians

of liberty against future abuses of power by the federal government; and

Whereas, the federal government has created a crushing national debt through improper and imprudent spending; and

Whereas, the federal government has invaded the legitimate roles of the States through the manipulative process of federal mandates, most of which are unfunded to a great extent; and

Whereas, the federal government has ceased to live under a proper interpretation of the Constitution of the United States; and

Whereas, it is the solemn duty of the States to protect the liberty of our people—particularly for the generations to come—by proposing amendments to the Constitution of the United States through a Convention of the States under Article V for the purpose of restraining these and related abuses of power: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That the legislature of the State of Wisconsin hereby applies to Congress, under the provisions of Article V of the Constitution of the United States, for the calling of a Convention of the States limited to proposing amendments to the Constitution of the United States that impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for its officials and for members of Congress; and, be it further

Resolved, That for purposes of this joint resolution, the phrase "limit the power and jurisdiction" means to restrict and constrain the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and that this joint resolution does not authorize a convention for proposing any amendments that expand federal power or jurisdiction, or that legitimize any current use of federal power that is unauthorized by the original Constitution; and, be it further

Resolved, That the secretary of state is hereby directed to transmit copies of this application to the president and secretary of the United States Senate and to the Speaker and clerk of the United States House of Representatives; to transmit copies to the members of the said Senate and House of Representatives from this state; and also to transmit copies hereof to the presiding officers of each of the legislative houses in the several States, requesting their cooperation; and, be it further

Resolved, That this application constitutes a continuing application in accordance with Article V of the Constitution of the United States until the legislatures of at least two-thirds of the several States have made applications on the same subject.

POM-220. A memorial adopted by the Senate of the State of Colorado urging the United States Congress to adopt comprehensive voting rights legislation to protect the integrity of American democracy and the sacred right to vote; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SENATE MEMORIAL NO. 22-001

Whereas, Every January we honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his heroic efforts to advance voting rights and we aspire to follow in his footsteps; and

Whereas, No one did more to promote the right to vote for disenfranchised Americans than the civil rights leaders of the 1960s, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Congressman John Lewis, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Ella Baker; and

Whereas, Until the United States Congress passed the federal "Voting Rights Act of 1965", people of color in the United States were frequently subject to poll taxes, literacy tests, and fraud and intimidation, preventing them from exercising their right to cast a ballot; and

Whereas, The United States Senate is considering critical federal elections reform and long overdue updates to the federal "Voting Rights Act of 1965" to preserve voting rights for generations to come, in honor of the legacy of the late Congressman John Lewis; and

Whereas, Colorado's electoral system serves as an example to the rest of the nation, and in fact the world, of how to expand voter access while protecting electoral integrity through safeguards including risk-limiting audits and signature verification; and

Whereas, In the 2020 election, Colorado had the second highest voter turnout of any state in the nation, and Colorado's largest voting bloc—young people ages 18 to 34—turned out in record numbers; and

Whereas, Efforts to suppress the vote and disenfranchise Americans who historically have had the least access to the ballot have been on the rise across the country in recent years; and

Whereas, Last year, more than 440 bills with provisions that restrict voting access were introduced in 49 states, including here in Colorado, where legislation was introduced to restrict voters' access to Colorado's vote by mail system, a national model of excellence for election access, security, and integrity; and

Whereas, Last year, 19 states passed 34 laws restricting access to voting, including Georgia's Senate Bill 202 and Texas' Senate Bill No. 1, both of which made it more difficult for voters to exercise their fundamental right to vote enshrined in the United States Constitution and the federal "Voting Rights Act of 1965"; and

Whereas, Falsehoods and conspiracies regarding the integrity of the 2020 election have run rampant in our media and public discourse; and

Whereas, The months-long, coordinated attempt to interfere with the democratic process following the November 2020 election and prevent the peaceful transfer of power by overturning the legitimate results of the presidential election, which culminated at the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, serves as a violent reminder of the fragility of our democracy; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-third General Assembly of the State of Colorado: That we, the members of the Colorado Senate:

(1) Reassert the validity of the 2020 presidential election results as legitimate and verified;

(2) Offer Colorado's premier electoral system as a model for states across the country to adopt in order to increase voter participation while ensuring electoral integrity; and

(3) Call on the United States Congress, and specifically members of the United States Senate, to pass comprehensive voting rights legislation to protect the fundamental right to vote, which has been the cornerstone of our democracy since the founding of our republic. Be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Memorial be sent to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Minority Leader of the United States Senate, and all members of the Colorado Congressional delegation.

POM-221. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana urging the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to reject the recommendation to close the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center located in Pineville, Louisiana, as recommended by the

United States Department of Veterans Affairs' report to the Asset and Infrastructure Review Commission; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 27

Whereas, the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center provides inpatient medical and surgical, inpatient mental health, community living centers, and outpatient services to veterans in the surrounding area; and

Whereas, the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center serves thousands of veterans a year, including a potential population of more than one hundred thousand veterans and an active patient roster of more than thirty-seven thousand veterans; and

Whereas, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs recommends closing the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center facility and relocating services to community providers; and

Whereas, the closing of the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center will leave veterans with fewer care options; and

Whereas, Alexandria and Central Louisiana have a long history of support for the military and serve as an ideal location for veterans in surrounding communities to receive treatment; and

Whereas, the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center is a critical institution that should remain operable to better serve the veterans of Louisiana: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to reject the report recommendations by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and support the continued operation of the Alexandria Veterans Affairs Medical Center; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-222. A resolution adopted by the Council of the County of Maui, urging the United States Navy to permanently remove and relocate the Bulk Fuel Storage Facility underground storage tanks located at Kapukaki (Red Hill, Oahu); to the Committee on Armed Services.

POM-223. A resolution adopted by the Alpena County Board of Commissioners, Alpena, Michigan, supporting the Line 5 tunnel; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-224. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas opposing any government's actions related to nuclear testing, storage, and waste disposal in the Pacific, and reaffirming everyone's fundamental right to a safe and healthy living environment; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

POM-225. A resolution adopted by the City Commission of the City of Kalamazoo, Michigan, supporting the Medicare for All Act of 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

POM-226. A resolution adopted by the Lauderdale Lakes City Commission, Lauderdale Lakes, Florida encouraging the United States Congress to enact the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019; providing for the adoption of recitals; providing for instructions to the City Clerk; providing an effective date; to the Committee on Finance.

POM-227. A resolution adopted by the City of Oshkosh Common Council, Wisconsin, urging the United States Congress to enact the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act; to the Committee on Finance.

POM-228. A resolution adopted by the Council of the Village of Yellow Springs,

Ohio, supporting a prompt and meaningful shift away from fossil fuels in the United States as a necessary cornerstone to any meaningful response to climate change; and further supporting the proposed Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (H.R. 2307); to the Committee on Finance.

POM-229. A resolution adopted by the City Commission of Miami, Florida, declaring Vladimir Putin and all his allies, oligarchs, and supporters war criminals and personas non grata in the City of Miami; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

POM-230. A resolution adopted by the Council of the County of Maui, Hawaii, condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and supporting peace; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

POM-231. A resolution adopted by the Council of the County of Maui, Hawaii, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Patsy Takemoto Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

POM-232. A petition from a citizen of the State of Texas relative to amending federal laws regarding "hate crime" statutes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

POM-233. A resolution adopted by the Council of the County of Maui, Hawaii, urging the United States Secretary of Homeland Security to temporarily waive Jones Act requirements for oil imported to Hawaii; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ for the Committee on Foreign Relations. Nathaniel Fick, of Maine, to be Ambassador at Large for Cyberspace and Digital Policy.

Nominee: Nathaniel C. Fick.

Post: Ambassador at Large for Cyberspace & Digital Policy.

(The following is a list of members of my immediate family. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$2,900.00, April 11, 2021, Committee to Elect Jared Golden (Maine); \$2,800.00, October 9, 2020, Biden for President/Biden Victory Fund; \$250.00, March 10, 2020, Sara Gideon for Maine.

2. Spouse: Margaret Angell: \$1,000.00, September 14, 2020, Elissa Slotkin for Congress (Michigan); \$1,000.00, February 16, 2020, Sara Gideon for Maine; \$250.00, November 19, 2019, Joe Kennedy for Massachusetts; \$25.00, April 7, 2019, ActBlue.

Rolfe Michael Schiffer, of New York, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

Patrick Leahy, of Vermont, to be a Representative of the United States of America to the Seventy-seventh Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

James E. Risch, of Idaho, to be a Representative of the United States of America to the Seventy-seventh Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, for the Committee on Foreign Relations I report favorably the following nomination list which was printed in the RECORD on the date indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the ex-

pense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that this nomination lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Foreign Service nominations beginning with Donald R. Alderman and ending with John M. Grondelski, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 19, 2022. (minus 1 nominee: Noah A. Klinger)

By Mr. WARNER for the Select Committee on Intelligence.

* Terrence Edwards, of Maryland, to be Inspector General of the National Reconnaissance Office.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 4844. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to support and stabilize the existing nursing workforce, establish programs to increase the number of nurses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. BARASSO):

S. 4845. A bill to provide for safe schools and safe communities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 4846. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1985 to require institutions of higher education to have an independent advocate for campus sexual assault prevention and response; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 4847. A bill to develop a scenario-based training curriculum for law enforcement personnel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 4848. A bill to provide for the designation of the Russian Federation as a state sponsor of terrorism; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 4849. A bill to require the Commandant of the Coast Guard to establish a process to update the vessel response plan program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Ms. ERNST):

S. 4850. A bill to amend Public Law 117-169 to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from using funds for methane monitoring to be used to monitor emissions of methane from livestock, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. MARSHALL):

S. 4851. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a national project to prevent and cure Parkinson's, to be known as the National Parkinson's Project, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 4852. A bill to permanently authorize the SBIR and STTR programs; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KING):

S. 4853. A bill to require a study of the programs, acquisitions, and budget of the Department of Defense; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 4854. A bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to repeal the Federal charter of the National Education Association; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WICKER:

S. 4855. A bill to protect the rights of student athletes and to provide for transparency and accountability with respect to student athlete name, image, and likeness agreements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. HAGERTY, Ms. ERNST, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 4856. A bill to require the denial of admission to the United States for individuals subject to sanctions pursuant to Executive Order 13876, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S.J. Res. 62. A joint resolution approving the location of a memorial to commemorate the commitment of the United States to a free press by honoring journalists who sacrificed their lives in service to that cause; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. HAWLEY:

S. Res. 763. A resolution establishing a Senate Select Committee on the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. Res. 764. A resolution designating September 2022, as "National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 190

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 190, a bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to require the safe storage of firearms, and for other purposes.

S. 344

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 344, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retirement pay for disability retirees with fewer than 20 years of service and a combat-related disability, and for other purposes.

S. 445

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 445, a bill to amend section 303(g) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)) to eliminate the separate registration requirement for dispensing narcotic drugs in schedule III, IV, or V, such as buprenorphine, for maintenance or detoxification treatment, and for other purposes.

S. 564

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 564, a bill to prohibit Members of Congress from purchasing or selling certain investments, and for other purposes.

S. 1673

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1673, a bill to preserve access to Federal land, control fires, and for other purposes.

S. 1947

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1947, a bill to authorize the position of Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Travel and Tourism, to statutorily establish the United States Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, and for other purposes.

S. 2172

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2172, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve grants, payments, and technical assistance provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to serve homeless veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 2192

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2192, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to require that supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits be calculated using the value of the low-cost food plan, and for other purposes.

S. 2340

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2340, a bill to improve the safety and security of the Federal judiciary.

S. 2798

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2798, a bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to improve compensation for workers involved in uranium mining, and for other purposes.

S. 2952

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO)

was added as a cosponsor of S. 2952, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to allow manufacturers and sponsors of a drug to use alternative testing methods to animal testing to investigate the safety and effectiveness of a drug, and for other purposes.

S. 3018

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3018, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish requirements with respect to the use of prior authorization under Medicare Advantage plans, and for other purposes.

S. 3071

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3071, a bill to protect our Social Security system and improve benefits for current and future generations.

S. 3909

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3909, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make employers of spouses of military personnel eligible for the work opportunity credit.

S. 3938

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3938, a bill to reauthorize the READ Act.

S. 4120

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 4120, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 4169

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4169, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide assisted living services to eligible veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 4592

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 4592, a bill to encourage the migration of Federal Government information technology systems to quantum-resistant cryptography, and for other purposes.

S. 4690

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the names of the Senator from Ohio

(Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 4690, a bill to provide grants for fire station construction through the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes.

S. 4702

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 4702, a bill to impose limits on excepting competitive service positions from the competitive service, and for other purposes.

S. 4739

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4739, a bill to allow additional individuals to enroll in standalone dental plans offered through Federal Exchanges.

S. 4815

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4815, a bill to clarify regulatory certainty, and for other purposes.

S. 4817

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 4817, a bill to prevent the use of additional Internal Revenue Service funds from being used for audits of taxpayers with taxable incomes below \$400,000 in order to protect low- and middle-income earning American taxpayers from an onslaught of audits from an army of new Internal Revenue Service auditors funded by an unprecedented, nearly \$80,000,000,000, infusion of new funds.

S. 4840

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4840, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect pain-capable unborn children, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 61

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 61, a joint resolution to provide for the resolution of issues in a railway labor-management dispute, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 321

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 321, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate to reduce traffic fatalities to zero by 2050.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Ms. ERNST):

S. 4850. A bill to amend Public Law 117-169 to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from using funds for methane monitoring to be used to monitor emissions of methane from livestock, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 4850

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. METHANE MONITORING.

Section 60105(e) of Public Law 117-169 is amended—

(1) by striking “In addition to” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) PROHIBITION.—Amounts made available under paragraph (1) may not be used to monitor emissions of methane from livestock.”.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KING):

S. 4853. A bill to require a study of the programs, acquisitions, and budget of the Department of Defense; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print my bill for introduction in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. The bill requires a study of the programs, acquisitions, and budget of the Department of Defense.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 4853

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “American Defense Programs, Logistics, and Acquisitions for our Nation’s Security Act of 2022” or the “American Defense PLANS Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. STUDY OF THE PROGRAMS, ACQUISITIONS, AND BUDGET OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall seek to enter into an arrangement with a federally funded research and development center under which the center will—

(1) conduct a study of the programs, acquisitions, and budget of the Department of Defense; and

(2) make recommendations with respect to how the Department can ensure that program development cycles and acquisition of new technologies within the Department can best keep pace with the increasing rate at which technologies acquired for programs of the Department become outdated or are replaced by new technologies.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study required by subsection (a).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 763—ESTABLISHING A SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE UNITED STATES WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN

Mr. HAWLEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 763

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This resolution may be cited as the “Senate Select Committee on the Afghanistan Withdrawal Resolution”.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE.

There is established a select committee of the Senate, to be known as the Select Committee on the United States Withdrawal from Afghanistan (referred to in this resolution as the “Senate Select Committee”), to investigate and report on the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan.

SEC. 3. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Senate Select Committee shall be composed of 20 Members of the Senate appointed according to the following:

(1) The majority leader of the Senate shall appoint 2 members.

(2) The minority leader of the Senate shall appoint 2 members.

(3) The chairman of the Committee on Armed Services shall appoint 2 members.

(4) The ranking member of the Committee on Armed Services shall appoint 2 members.

(5) The chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations shall appoint 2 members.

(6) The ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Relations shall appoint 2 members.

(7) The chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs shall appoint 2 members.

(8) The ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs shall appoint 2 members.

(9) The chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence shall appoint 2 members.

(10) The ranking member of the Select Committee on Intelligence shall appoint 2 members.

(b) APPOINTMENT OF CO-CHAIRS.—The majority leader and the minority leader of the Senate shall each appoint 1 co-chair of the Senate Select Committee from the members appointed to the Senate Select Committee.

(c) DATE.—Members of the Senate Select Committee shall be appointed not later than 14 calendar days after the date on which the Senate agrees to this resolution.

(d) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—Members of the Senate Select Committee shall be appointed for the life of the Senate Select Committee.

(e) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Senate Select Committee—

(1) shall not affect the powers of the Senate Select Committee; and

(2) shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

SEC. 4. INVESTIGATION AND REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Senate Select Committee shall investigate and, not later than 1 year after the date of agreement to this resolution, shall submit a report to the Senate on the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall address the following:

(1) Intelligence products available to the United States Government over the course of the withdrawal, including as related to—

(A) anticipated timelines for a Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, especially as the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan districts and provinces, often without fighting, in early to mid 2021;

(B) the ability of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces to prevent a Taliban takeover of Afghanistan after the withdrawal of the United States Armed Forces and associated combat, logistical, and other support;

(C) the willingness of then-President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani and other Afghan political leaders to remain in Afghanistan as the military situation deteriorated, including any plans such leaders may have made to escape Afghanistan as the Taliban advanced;

(D) any other intelligence that may have informed decisions by the United States Government regarding the timeline for the withdrawal of its forces, moving of its embassy in Kabul, initiation of a noncombatant evacuation operation, force requirements for a noncombatant evacuation operation, or related matters; and

(E) any dissenting views shared in writing or other formats, including verbally, by United States diplomats, military commanders, or other government officials regarding the topics described in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

(2) The failure to secure Hamid Karzai International Airport, relocate the United States Embassy in Kabul, and initiate a noncombatant evacuation operation prior to Kabul's imminent collapse, despite warnings by military commanders on the ground that such a collapse was increasingly likely and could occur rapidly, including—

(A) the failure by the United States Government to accelerate the fortification of the Hamid Karzai International Airport, the relocation of the United States Embassy in Kabul, or the initiation of the noncombatant evacuation operation in response to warnings that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was increasingly likely to collapse and could do so rapidly;

(B) the development of a "trigger assessment tool" or other conditions-based planning aids to support monitoring of and timely response to the deteriorating security environment in Afghanistan, including use of such aids by Department of Defense and Department of State officials in Afghanistan;

(C) table-top exercises or other planning events held at agency or interagency levels, with particular focus on planning assumptions, associated timelines, and participant reactions to the planning events;

(D) any decision by the Department of State or other Federal agency to delay or deprioritize planning for a noncombatant evacuation operation, including for the purpose of demonstrating confidence in the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan;

(E) any suggestion by Department of State or other United States Government officials that executing a noncombatant evacuation operation would constitute failure for the United States in Afghanistan, as reported by the United States Central Command investigation of the Abbey Gate bombing; and

(F) any orders, instructions, or other guidance provided to Department of Defense officials to prevent such officials from planning for a noncombatant evacuation operation with multinational partners, as reported by the United States Central Command investigation of the Abbey Gate bombing.

(3) The decision to prioritize evacuating as many individuals as possible over protecting members of the United States Armed Forces and thoroughly vetting all prospective evacuees, as reported by the United States Cen-

tral Command investigation of the Abbey Gate bombing, including—

(A) force protection measures, including obstacles, barriers, and other measures, implemented at the Hamid Karzai International Airport prior to and during execution of the noncombatant evacuation operation; and

(B) force protection measures not implemented at the Hamid Karzai International Airport, with an explanation for why such force protection measures were not implemented and implications of the failure to implement such measures for risk to force during execution of the noncombatant evacuation operation.

(4) Threat reporting prior to the suicide bombing at Abbey Gate, additional force protection measures implemented in response to such threat reporting, and additional force protection measures not implemented in response to such threat reporting, with an assessment of why certain additional force protection measures were not taken.

(5) The failure to thoroughly vet evacuees prior to their transfer to United States territory, military installations, or other locations outside of Afghanistan, including detailed descriptions of—

(A) any delays by the Department of State to send adequate numbers of consular officials to Hamid Karzai International Airport to facilitate thorough vetting of prospective evacuees;

(B) any changes to guidance issued by the Department of State regarding the vetting of prospective evacuees over the course of the noncombatant evacuation operation;

(C) any guidance issued by the President or other United States Government officials to reduce standards for or expedite vetting of prospective evacuees prior to their removal from Afghanistan;

(D) any failure by the United States Government to utilize all existing biometric databases or proper identification standards when processing individuals to be removed from Afghanistan; and

(E) any criminal incidents involving evacuees following their transfer to United States territory.

(6) The total number of United States nationals left in Afghanistan following the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan, and the knowledge on the part of United States Government officials of the total number of United States nationals left in Afghanistan when such officials informed Congress that the United States Government had not left Americans behind in Afghanistan.

(7) Equipment provided by the United States to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and recovered by the Taliban following the collapse of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, including the type and amount of such equipment recovered by the Taliban as well as the manner in which the Taliban has been able to use such equipment.

(8) Detailed descriptions of—

(A) orders issued by the President related to the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan, including with regard to the relocation of the United States Embassy in Kabul and the initiation and execution of the noncombatant evacuation operation;

(B) analysis or recommendations provided by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Commander of United States Central Command, and other national security leaders related to the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan, including as related to—

(i) the deteriorating military situation in Afghanistan; and

(ii) the consequent need to accelerate the relocation of the United States Embassy in Kabul and the initiation of the noncombatant evacuation operation; and

(C) requests for forces or other requests for additional authorities or resources made to the President by the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, or other national security leaders during the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan, and the President's responses to any such requests.

(9) Any other matters identified by members of the Senate Select Committee.

(c) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

SEC. 5. MEETINGS, HEARINGS, AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION.

(a) MEETINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Senate Select Committee shall meet at the call of the co-chairs or at the request of at least 3 members.

(2) QUORUM.—Half of the members of the Senate Select Committee shall constitute a quorum.

(3) VOTING.—Proxy voting shall be allowed on behalf of the members of the Senate Select Committee.

(b) HEARINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Senate Select Committee shall, for the purposes described in section 4, hold such hearings, compel attendance of such witnesses, take or compel such testimony, receive or compel such evidence, and administer such oaths as the Senate Select Committee considers advisable.

(2) FREQUENCY.—The Senate Select Committee shall hold an open hearing no less frequently than once per month until it has received open testimony from all of the witnesses listed in paragraph (3).

(3) WITNESSES.—The co-chairs shall hear testimony from the following before the Senate Select Committee in open session, even if the person holds a different public office or no longer holds public office at the time of the hearing:

(A) Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Jake Sullivan.

(B) Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

(C) Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin.

(D) Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas.

(E) Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines.

(F) Director of the Central Intelligence Agency William Burns.

(G) Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley.

(H) Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Colin Kahl.

(I) Former United States Ambassador to Afghanistan Ambassador John Bass.

(J) Former United States Ambassador to Afghanistan Ambassador Ross Wilson.

(K) Former Commander of United States Forces Afghanistan – Forward Rear Admiral Peter Vasely.

(L) Former Commanding General of Joint Task Force – Crisis Response Brigadier General Farrell J. Sullivan.

(M) Former Commanding General of 82nd Airborne Division Lieutenant General Christopher T. Donahue.

(N) Any other individuals, including former United States Government officials, identified by the co-chairs or a group of 3 members of the Senate Select Committee.

(4) TRANSPARENCY.—The Senate Select Committee may receive classified testimony in a closed session, but any witnesses questioned in a closed session shall also testify in an open session, in the interest of public transparency.

(5) QUESTIONING.—Co-chairs shall permit members of the Senate Select Committee to question witnesses at a hearing for periods

longer than 5 minutes or multiple periods of 5 minutes, at the request of a member.

(6) PROCEDURES.—

(A) ANNOUNCEMENT.—The co-chairs of the Senate Select Committee shall make a public announcement of the date, time, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted, not less than 7 days in advance of such hearing, unless the co-chairs determine that there is good cause to begin such hearing at any earlier date.

(B) WRITTEN STATEMENT.—A witness appearing before the Senate Select Committee shall file a written statement of proposed testimony and respond in writing to any advance questions from the Senate Select Committee at least 2 calendar days before the appearance of the witness unless the requirement is waived by the co-chairs.

(C) COOPERATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

(1) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Upon written request of the co-chairs, a Federal agency shall provide technical assistance to the Senate Select Committee in order for the Senate Select Committee to carry out its duties.

(2) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—The National Security Council, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of National Intelligence, the heads of the elements of the intelligence community, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies shall expeditiously provide information requested by the Senate Select Committee related to the investigation and report under required under section 4, and in no case later than 3 weeks after a request by a member of the Senate Select Committee.

(3) LIMITATION ON EXCLUSIONS.—Federal agencies shall not withhold information from the Senate Select Committee, including for reasons of classification, executive privilege, or attorney-client privilege.

(d) SUBPOENA AUTHORITY.—Members of the Senate Select Committee are authorized to—

(1) compel by subpoena the furnishing of information by United States Government officials and other individuals, including former United States Government officials; and

(2) take or order the taking of depositions, including pursuant to subpoena, in the same manner as a standing committee of the Senate.

SEC. 6. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) FUNDING.—There shall be paid, out of the contingent fund of the Senate from the appropriations account “Miscellaneous Items,” such sums as may be necessary for the expenses of the Senate Select Committee, subject to the rules and regulations of the Senate.

(b) EXPENSES.—In carrying out its functions, the Senate Select Committee is authorized to incur expenses in the same manner and under the same conditions as the Joint Economic Committee is authorized under section 11 of the Employment Act of 1946 (15 U.S.C. 1024).

(c) STAFFING.—

(1) STAFF DIRECTOR.—The co-chairs, acting jointly, shall hire the staff director of the Senate Select Committee.

(2) OTHER STAFF.—The co-chairs, acting jointly, may employ such additional staff as they determine necessary for the Senate Select Committee to carry out its duties.

(3) COMPENSATION.—The co-chairs, acting jointly, may appoint and fix the compensation of the staff director and additional staff as they determine necessary, within the guidelines for employees of the Senate and following all applicable rules and employment requirements of the Senate.

(4) ETHICAL STANDARDS.—Members and staff of the Senate Select Committee shall comply with the ethics rules of the Senate.

(d) FACILITIES.—The Senate Select Committee shall have priority access to—

(1) rooms of the Senate for purposes of meetings, hearings, and other Senate Select Committee functions; and

(2) secure facilities for purpose of receiving classified testimony and handling other classified materials.

(e) TERMINATION.—The Senate Select Committee shall terminate on the later of the following:

(1) 30 days after the submission of the report required under section 4(a).

(2) 30 days after the Senate Select Committee has held open hearings with all of the witnesses listed under section 5(b)(3).

(3) The expiration of the Congressional session during which the Senate agrees to this resolution.

(f) DISPOSITION OF RECORDS.—Upon the termination of the Senate Select Committee, the records of the Senate Select Committee shall become the records of the Committee on Armed Services.

SENATE RESOLUTION 764—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2022, AS “NATIONAL SPINAL CORD INJURY AWARENESS MONTH”

Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 764

Whereas approximately 299,000 individuals in the United States live with spinal cord injuries, which cost society billions of dollars in health care costs and lost wages;

Whereas there are approximately 18,000 new spinal cord injuries in the United States each year;

Whereas more than 42,000 individuals with spinal cord injuries are veterans;

Whereas motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of spinal cord injuries;

Whereas nearly half of all spinal cord injuries to individuals 30 years of age or younger occur as a result of a motor vehicle accident;

Whereas the average remaining years of life for individuals living with spinal cord injuries has not improved significantly since the 1980s;

Whereas there is an urgent need to develop new neuroprotection, pharmacological, and regeneration treatments to reduce, prevent, and reverse paralysis; and

Whereas increased education and investment in research are key factors in improving outcomes for individuals living with spinal cord injuries, enhancing the quality of life of individuals with spinal cord injuries, and ultimately curing paralysis: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2022, as “National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month”;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month;

(3) continues to support research to find better treatments, therapies, and a cure for spinal cord injuries;

(4) supports clinical trials for new therapies that offer promise and hope to individuals living with paralysis; and

(5) commends the dedication of national, regional, and local organizations, researchers, doctors, volunteers, and people across the United States who are working to improve the quality of life of individuals living with spinal cord injuries and their families.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I have eight requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct an executive session.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed business meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION, CITIZENSHIP, AND BORDER SAFETY

The Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and Border Safety of the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PRIVACY, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE LAW

The Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology, and the Law of the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 4 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Republican

Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 117–81, in consultation with the House Minority Leader, appoints the following individual to serve as co-chair of the Afghanistan War Commission: Dr. Colin Jackson of Rhode Island (co-chair).

STRATEGIC EV MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2022

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 465, S. 4057.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4057) to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan for Federal electric vehicle fleet battery management, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Strategic EV Management Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of General Services.

(2) **AGENCY.**—The term “agency” has the meaning given the term in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives.

(4) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

SEC. 3. STRATEGIC GUIDANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the Director, shall coordinate with the heads of agencies to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan for Federal electric vehicle fleet battery management.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The strategic plan required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) maximize both cost and environmental efficiencies; and

(2) incorporate—

(A) guidelines for optimal charging practices that will maximize battery longevity and prevent premature degradation;

(B) guidelines for reusing and recycling the batteries of retired vehicles; and

(C) any other considerations determined appropriate by the Administrator and Director.

(c) **MODIFICATION.**—The Administrator, in consultation with the Director, may periodically update the strategic plan required under subsection (a) as the Administrator and Director may determine necessary based on new information relating to electric vehicle batteries that becomes available.

(d) **CONSULTATION.**—In developing the strategic plan required under subsection (a) the Administrator, in consultation with the Director, may consult with appropriate entities, including—

(1) the Secretary of Energy;

(2) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;

(3) the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality;

(4) scientists who are studying electric vehicle batteries and reuse and recycling solutions;

(5) laboratories, companies, colleges, universities, or start-ups engaged in battery use, reuse, and recycling research;

(6) industries interested in electric vehicle battery reuse and recycling;

(7) electric vehicle equipment manufacturers and recyclers; and

(8) any other relevant entities, as determined by the Administrator and Director.

(e) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes the strategic plan required under subsection (a).

(2) **BRIEFING.**—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director shall brief the appropriate congressional committees on the implementation of the strategic plan required under subsection (a) at agencies.

SEC. 4. STUDY OF FEDERAL FLEET VEHICLES.

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on how the costs and benefits of operating and maintaining electric vehicles in the Federal fleet compare to the costs and benefits of operating and maintaining internal combustion engine vehicles.

Ms. SMITH. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

Ms. SMITH. I ask unanimous consent that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill, as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Ms. SMITH. I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is, Shall the bill, as amended, pass?

The bill (S. 4057), as amended, was passed.

Ms. SMITH. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUIDANCE CLARITY ACT OF 2021

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 346, S. 533.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 533) to require a guidance clarity statement on certain agency guidance, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which

had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Guidance Clarity Act of 2021”.

SEC. 2. GUIDANCE CLARITY STATEMENT REQUIRED.

(a) **REQUIREMENT.**—Each agency, as defined in section 551 of title 5, United States Code, shall include a guidance clarity statement as described in subsection (b) on any guidance issued by that agency under section 553(b)(3)(A) of title 5, United States Code, on and after the date that is 30 days after the date on which the Director of the Office of Management and Budget issues the guidance required under subsection (c).

(b) **GUIDANCE CLARITY STATEMENT.**—A guidance clarity statement required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be displayed prominently on the first page of the document; and

(2) include the following: “The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and do not, of themselves, bind the public or the agency. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.”.

(c) **OMB GUIDANCE.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue guidance to implement this Act.

Ms. SMITH. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 533), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

AMENDING THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT TO FIX A TECHNICAL ERROR IN THE DEFINITIONS

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 4235 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4235) to amend the Controlled Substances Act to fix a technical error in the definitions.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 4235) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 4235

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT.

Section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (58) as paragraph (59);

(2) by redesignating the second paragraph designated as paragraph (57) (relating to the definition of “serious drug felony”) as paragraph (58); and

(3) by moving paragraphs (57), (58) (as so redesignated), and (59) (as so redesignated) 2 ems to the left.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 VETERANS AFFAIRS MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY AUTHORIZATION ACT

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 7500, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 7500) to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2022, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask for a third reading, and I know of no further debate on the bill.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate on the bill, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 7500) was passed.

Ms. SMITH. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL SPINAL CORD INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 764, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 764) designating September 2022, as “National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month”.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. SMITH. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 764) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, September 15, and that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Merriam nomination

postcloture; further, that all postcloture time on the Merriam nomination be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. and, following disposition of the Merriam nomination, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the Pekoske nomination; further, that the Senate vote on confirmation of the Pekoske nomination at 1:45 p.m. with all other provisions remaining in effect; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday’s session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:06 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, September 15, 2022, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate September 14, 2022:

THE JUDICIARY

LARA E. MONTECALVO, OF RHODE ISLAND, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SHEFALI RAZDAN DUGGAL, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS.

PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD

TRAVIS LEBLANC, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 29, 2028.

RICHARD E. DIZINNO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 29, 2023.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE BETA BETA CHAPTER OF ALPHA PHI SORORITY AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the oldest women's organization in East Lansing, Michigan: the Alpha Phi, Beta Beta Chapter at Michigan State University. This year, they mark 100 years of fellowship, sisterhood, and service to the community.

But the history of this beloved organization dates back even farther than a century. On March 20, 1891, The Feronian Literacy Society was formed. It was the first all-women's group at the Michigan Agricultural College (M.A.C.), the institution that later became Michigan State University. According to the 1891 M.A.C. yearbook, two women worked together to create the initial concept, with stated goals to "advance its members' intellectual, social and moral standing, to train mind, heart, and soul." Together with 15 other women, they formed the initial membership.

Given that there were only 20 women enrolled at Michigan Agricultural College at the time, it will come as no surprise that the group faced opposition from other literary societies on campus. But the Feronian women pressed on, trailblazers from the very start. In 1921, the ban on national Greek organizations was lifted at the college, and one of the first organizations to be established was Alpha Phi Sorority—created by members of the Feronian Society. In 1922, the Feronian Society officially petitioned Alpha Phi Sorority to become the newest chapter, and the Beta Beta Chapter of Alpha Phi was officially born.

Just a few months later, the Beta Beta Chapter of Alpha Phi initiated 78 women to become the first women's panhellenic group at Michigan Agricultural College. It remains the only sorority still in operation after 100 years. In 1935, the chapter was given \$2,000 toward purchasing the land at 616 M.A.C. A few years later, women moved into this stately home, marking the debut of what is now known as "Sorority Row." This house, now expanded, has been the home-away-from-home for generations of Alpha Phi sisters.

That sisterhood now includes thousands of women, and today I honor each one of them. I offer this tribute so that all may know of the courage and leadership of the women who blazed the trail from the Feronian Society to become the Beta Beta Chapter of Alpha Phi Sorority. May they continue to enrich the lives of Spartan women and their communities well into the future.

RECOGNIZING ALABAMA OUTSTANDING YOUNG FARM FAMILY DANIEL AND CARLA TRANTHAM

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Daniel and Carla Trantham and their children, Davis, Sadie, Anna Kate, Sawyer and Callie for being named Alabama's Outstanding Young Farm Family.

The Tranthams are row crop and cattle farmers who run their own feed operation. They bag and sell over 80 tons of feed and grain on a weekly basis at their storefront in Alexandria and through feed stores.

The Trantham family also sells wheat straw and Bermudagrass hay while improving yields on 1,000 acres of corn, wheat, soybeans and cotton through irrigation and seed selection. Since 2010, Daniel has more than doubled grain storage and tripled his cattle herd.

The family also operates a trucking company where Carla manages payroll.

The Tranthams are members of Leatherwood Baptist Church. Daniel is the local Young Farmers chair and serves on the Alabama Farmers Federation State Soybean Committee. Carla serves on the local Women's Leadership Committee.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing this young family on this great honor. Congratulations to the Tranthams.

HONORING THE PITTSTON AREA HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL TEAM, PIAA CLASS 5A STATE SOFTBALL CHAMPIONS

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, today I honor the Pittston Area Girls Softball Team on their perfect season and state championship win. On June 16, 2022, the Patriots clinched their 25th win of the season to be crowned the PIAA Class 5A state softball champions.

Under the direction of head coach Frank Parente and Tori Para, Sage Weidlich, and Skylar Borthwick, three seasoned senior players as captains, the Patriots started the season believing they had the talent and the drive to do something special. They were right. They thrived during conference play in the second largest of PIAA's six enrollment classifications without losing a game.

The team headed to the District 2 Class 5A softball championship game with an undefeated record and sailed to a 1-0 victory over West Scranton High School with pitcher Gianna Adams throwing a no-hitter. Now 21-

0, the Patriots began their state championship run.

After defeating South Western 13 to 0 and Lampeter-Strasburg, the defending state champions, 3 to 2, the team found themselves one game away from the state championship match, staring down the Oxford High School Hornets. Despite the Hornets rallying in the bottom of the sixth to score four runs, the Patriots came out on top, securing their place to compete for the state title. This marked the first state championship game appearance for Pittston Area in any team sport in school history.

On July 16, the Patriots took Penn State University's Beard Field against the Armstrong High School River Hawks for the state championship title. The River Hawks were looking for redemption after their loss to Lampeter-Strasburg in the title game in 2021. Bella Giardina helped the team secure an early lead with a two-run single, and Adams dominated from the pitcher's mound. With two more runs, the Patriots secured a 4-0 lead over the River Hawks, which they held onto to be named state champions.

I am honored to recognize the talented young women of the Pittston Area High School Softball Team on their outstanding season and state championship win. They have made the entire 8th Congressional District proud with their exceptional athletic prowess and sportsmanship. May they continue to find success in their athletic pursuits and all their future endeavors.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SERVICE OF ROBERT PROCTOR

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to a lifelong community leader and the longest serving member of the Board of Trustees of Lansing Community College, Robert Proctor. Mr. Proctor has devoted nearly two decades to the service of the college, and has recently been recognized as the recipient of the M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award from the Association of Community College Trustees.

The list of Trustee Proctor's accomplishments and involvements at Lansing Community College is long, as he has been a driving force in the development and expansion of many programs and initiatives during his tenure. He currently serves as the board's treasurer and historian, and is a past board chair who led two presidential search efforts.

But his commitment to the community goes far beyond the college's walls. Since arriving in Lansing in 1974 to serve as counsel for the Labor Committee of the Michigan House of Representatives, Robert has been involved in many civic, social, and professional organizations, nearly all of which list service to others

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

as their primary mission. He has been a volunteer with the Mid-Michigan Chapter of the American Red Cross for more than 25 years. He has mentored students in Lansing Public Schools since 1990. He is a director of the Black Child and Family Institute and is on the board of the Resolution Services Center of Central Michigan. He volunteers as a mediator for the Center and 54A District Court. Robert is a past president of Michigan State University Black Alumni and a former member of the board of directors of the MSU Alumni Club of Mid Michigan. He was a member of the board of directors of the Lansing Fair Housing Center and was a fair housing trustee.

A lawyer by training, Mr. Proctor earned his bachelor's degree in political science from the University of California, Berkeley and a juris doctor degree from Detroit College of Law. He is deeply connected to professional associations, and served as president of the Lansing Black Lawyers Association from 1996 to 1999. He is a member of the Michigan State Bar Association's labor and employment law section; he served as a member of the section council for 4 years. While he has now retired from his service as an administrative law judge, he continues to practice law and serve as a mediator and labor arbitrator.

Trustee Proctor can only be described as the consummate public servant. It is fitting that his exemplary leadership, involvement, and commitment have been recognized by his peers, and it is equally fitting that I recognize him so that his lifetime of service will be known to all.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WALT MARR

HON. GLENN THOMPSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, today I would like to recognize the passing of Pastor Walt Marr, of Elderton, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Walt was a cherished leader in his community who embodied the values of fellowship and neighborly love. He considered the Cornerstone Church in Indiana, PA his home, but Pastor Walt was always happy to help other ministries in need of his wisdom.

Pastor Walt's ministry of first-person reenactment was cherished throughout his community. He had the unique skill of combining historical and biblical lessons with engaging reenactments. His most notable reenactment of President Lincoln was a favorite of his, as it allowed him to combine his love of our country's history with teachings of faith that were influential to President Lincoln.

Pastor Walt was an example of what it means to truly live for others. His congeniality and humor will be dearly missed by many. The teachings he shared, and the examples he set by living them, are more relevant today than ever before.

He will be remembered as a man who possessed a profound sense of faith and community. He leaves behind a family and community that will sincerely miss him and his reenactments. His positive contributions to his community will be remembered for years to come.

May God bless Pastor Walt and his family.

HONORING DR. DEREK MILES

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable individual, Dr. Derek Miles. Dr. Miles has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to achieve success.

Dr. Derek Miles, a Cleveland, MS, urologist who serves the entire Delta region—including East Arkansas, in Helena—is celebrating the 20th year of the opening of his practice which took place in August of 2002. The Kansas City native said he now considers himself a true “Deltan” and has a passion for his work and serving his many patients in the region.

Dr. Miles came to Cleveland fresh out of residency at the University of Missouri and started his urology practice. He is one of the few full-time urologists and physicians in the Delta keeping up his practice because so many others have either retired or moved on.

Dr. Miles states that “Cleveland is incredible, and I could not be more honored to practice and be based here and serve the Delta community. It's now 20 years down and 20 more to go, in my mind.”

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Derek Miles for his passion and dedication to serving his community.

HONORING LAKE ORION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR 150 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Sesquicentennial Celebration of the Lake Orion United Methodist Church of Lake Orion, Michigan.

Since its founding in 1872, this church has been a focal point of care and compassion for its members and for the community at large. Though the names of the committees and members have changed over the decades, the church's commitment to being a light in the community shines as brightly as ever.

During World War I, church property was donated to the Boy Scouts to grow potatoes, a precursor to the victory gardens that would eventually surface in many communities. The church's annual report of 1917 noted both the extra demands of wartime, as well as the extraordinary donations of its members in helping those in need. Even as the community faced rations of food and fuel, generosity blossomed from the building, as the Lake Orion United Methodist Church increased its attendance—sometimes in the basement to save on heating—and members increased their giving to support the church's outreach and ministry.

More recently, the Lake Orion United Methodist Church has been instrumental in the founding of Oxford-Orion FISH, a food pantry, clothes closet and financial assistance organization that serves both communities. The congregation's goodwill extends to many other community groups which have supported the church's Community Meals program, working

with the church to make and assemble meals for delivery to area residents. These relationships are fostered over time, with each partner deeply rooted in the development of Lake Orion over the past 150 years.

The original lot where the church was built was a haven and refuge from the rough work of farming and lumbering. However, the railroad, among the first of innovations to change the rural landscape, removed the calm and quiet from Sunday services as tracks were laid next to the church, so the building was moved several blocks to the east in 1901. In one day, using logs to roll the building as it was pulled by a team of horses down Flint Street, with the whole town watching, the Lake Orion Methodist Church (as it was first founded) was placed in its current location. Today's congregants enjoy the historical surroundings of the same building that laid its cornerstone in 1872, but in a slightly more tranquil setting.

It is my honor to recognize the contributions and significant history of the Lake Orion United Methodist Church, and all of its 150 years of service to the community. May they stand as a tribute to the pastorate's lineage and its dedicated church members who built, moved and now carry on the legacy of this institution of Lake Orion, Michigan.

RECOGNIZING JAMES WIMSATT

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. GUTHRIE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to wish James L. Wimsatt a happy 104th birthday. James is a World War II veteran and fixture in the Owensboro community for his work to build up Kentucky through his artwork.

James Wimsatt was born in Ohio County on September 18, 1918, to Thomas and Iva Wimsatt. Due to not being able to afford books, James took up painting and drawing and was considered gifted with art at a young age.

Before leaving to serve during World War II, James proposed to Gertrude “Trudy” Mitchell. She would not accept at the time but told him she would wait for him. They were married in 1945 and had 77 years of marriage together when she passed away on July 28, 2022. A member of James' family said James and Trudy were one of the greatest love stories.

Following his military service, James worked at Kroger and then GE until his retirement. He also wanted to showcase the beauty of our Commonwealth, so he used his artistic talents to paint scenes of Kentucky, reminding us Kentuckians of the deep pride we have for our home.

I join the Owensboro community and James' family and friends in wishing James a happy 104th birthday and thank him for all he has done to serve our country and make Kentucky shine through his artwork.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TUAN LE

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, today we honor the life of Tuan Le, an exceptional and

selfless man who uplifted the voices of those in need and who was committed to the notion of bettering the life of others.

Born on June 30, 1962 in Saigon, Vietnam, Tuan was the son of Nhan Le and Hoa Duong. Tuan emigrated with his family to the U.S. in 1975 after the fall of Saigon and settled in Southern California. As a stranger in a strange land, Tuan learned to adapt to his new home and country. He graduated high school and enrolled in Cal Poly where he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree. A family man, Tuan was born as the fourth child in the household of seven siblings and was no stranger to family "comedy" and "drama." He remained unfazed by life-altering events surrounding him. He loved good food and good parties. Above all, he was a selfless man who was always available to lend a sympathetic ear to anyone who needed it.

Tuan was a jack of many trades. While in school, he worked in various stores where he liked their merchandises in order to get the employee's discount. After college, he ran a law office with his brother Kenny and then tried out his luck as an office manager for a dental office in Northern California. He went back to Vietnam and lived there for a while to reconnect with his roots. While there, he managed and owned several businesses as well as dabbled in the entertainment industry.

His compassion was boundless. By nature, his advocacy led to leadership and support for organizations such as GAPS, GVA and VROC. Wherever he lived, he created a support network for young LGBTQ+ individuals struggling with life challenges. He provided emotional support, shelters or food to especially LGBTQ+ youths of color. No matter your ethnic background, if someone refers you to Tuan, he would find ways to assist you. He generously gave times to family and friends, consoled those in time of needs and participated or organized charity events serving the vulnerable children and the poor and disabled elderly in Vietnam. There were many facets of Tuan that we came to know and each piece of him made up the person we all trust, love and respect.

Beside his father, Tuan was predeceased by his brother Duc Le. He is survived by his mother, lifelong partner Ngo Duc Anh, siblings and many nieces and nephews. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this distinguished man and all the hard work he has done for the betterment of his community.

I thank Tuan for the lifelong dedication he has demonstrated in helping others.

HONORING JANELLE EDWARDS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a trailblazer and the receiver of the 2022 Remarkable Woman Award, Mrs. Janell Edwards. Mrs. Edwards has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and determination.

Mrs. Janell Edwards moved from Savannah, Georgia to Fayette, Mississippi, in 2006. For over a decade, she has been the force behind the non-profit, Fayette Community Organization. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and halt

to many of her programs, she decided to turn her focus and pour her energy into helping the community economically.

Mrs. Edwards and her husband are known in their community for their pecan trees. They pick pecans and sell them to a vendor in Natchez, MS. To help their neighbors, adults and children make money in Fayette, MS, they began purchasing the pecans from them. Because many of the trees are native, the Mississippi Extension Service was helpful in coming out to share with the community on how to care for their trees during the year, so that they could get the most potential yield during pecan season. This was truly a great start to broaden the horizon for Fayette, MS.

Mrs. Edwards is a member of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. She is no stranger to leading and being a part of organizations that help make a change. She was born a leader and holds the capability to mobilize others towards action. She attended Savannah State College, where she was engaged in several organizations; leading and supervised many activities and was the overseer for many projects.

With all the work Mrs. Edwards has done and doing, she has been recognized and received several awards. Some of them include the Outstanding Community Service Award in 2014, Inaugural Award of Rural Champions in 2014, and Nominated for the 4th Annual Gulf Coast Gospel Music Awards in the category: Radio Personality of the Year Kingdom Influencer in 2020, just to name a few. Mrs. Edwards was also the host of the Annual FAT to FIT Event in Fayette, MS, in 2011, averaging 500 attendees per day and she is currently working to make it an ongoing and large event on a local and national level.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Janell Edwards for her outstanding service and leadership in Fayette, MS.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROSE WILDER

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a trailblazing educator and a good friend, Dr. Rose Ann Davis Hilliard Wilder, who transitioned on August 30, 2022 after a valiant battle with cancer. Her impact on the State of South Carolina will be felt for generations to come.

Born Rose Ann Davis on November 4, 1955, in Santee, South Carolina, Dr. Wilder was a daughter of the late Laco and Ruby Mae Fogle Davis.

From a young age, Dr. Wilder was passionate about education. It led her to earn an undergraduate degree in guidance and counseling, a master's in special education, and a PhD in education administration.

Dr. Wilder began her teaching career in 1979, and 8 years later she became assistant principal at Manning Primary School in Clarendon County. She went on to serve as the first principal of the new Manning Elementary School and later returned as principal of Manning Primary.

In 1994, Dr. Wilder was appointed assistant superintendent of instruction for Clarendon School District 2. Later that year, she was

chosen to lead the school district and made history by becoming the first African American female superintendent in South Carolina since the Reconstruction era. She served in that capacity for seven years, and in 1999, was named Outstanding Superintendent by the South Carolina School Board Association.

She left Clarendon County to serve as superintendent for the Fairfield County School District, but in 2004 returned to Clarendon County to serve as superintendent of Clarendon School District 1 in the Summerton area. While there, Dr. Wilder was recognized as the South Carolina Superintendent of the Year in 2014.

She retired in 2017, and became Director of Teaching Education at Morris College. In 2018, South Carolina Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman named her the Superintendent of Williamsburg County School District where she led the district under the supervision of the state department until her passing.

Dr. Wilder was an active member of several professional organizations and previously served as President of the South Carolina Association of School Administrators. In 1999 and 2020, the South Carolina General Assembly passed resolutions commending Dr. Wilder for her outstanding service in education.

In 2020, the Clarendon School District 1 Board of Trustees voted to officially rename St. Paul Elementary School the Dr. Rose H. Wilder Elementary School after receiving overwhelming community support to rename the school in Dr. Wilder's honor.

She was married to Dr. James C. Wilder, and they shared three children, Warren Lamont Wilder (deceased), Sharon Hilliard Horace, and Michelle Wilder Bedford. They also shared two grandchildren, Jaleah Wilder and Blake McKinley Horace.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and our colleagues to rise to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Rose Wilder. This remarkable woman helped shape the education and future of countless children throughout her career. They were her passion and her purpose, and she left no stone unturned in her determination to educate future generations and improve their quality of life. This giant and lifelong educator will be sorely missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. COLIN Z. ALLRED

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. ALLRED. Madam Speaker, on September 13, 2022, I was participating in a Presidential Delegation to the Republic of Kenya and absent during the time of votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

YEA on Roll Call No. 421, S. 4785, a bill to extend by 19 days the authorization for the special assessment for the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund;

YEA on Roll Call No. 422, H.R. 5315, the Drone Infrastructure Inspection Grant Act; and

YEA on Roll Call No. 423, H.R. 1066, the Wildfire Recovery Act.

HONORING MADISON GRACE
SULLIVAN

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a tenacious and jovial young lady, Madison Grace Sullivan. Madison Grace has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to achieve success.

Madison Grace Sullivan currently holds the title "Little Miss Vicksburg". She will be a contestant in the state-wide Little Miss and Mr. Magnolia State Pageant finalists. As a contestant she will compete against contestants ages zero to eleven years old for the coveted title, "Little Miss Magnolia State".

Madison Grace is the daughter of Megan Sullivan and Marcus Wilson.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Madison Grace Sullivan for her passion and dedication to achieve new goals.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAHANA HAYES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mrs. HAYES. Madam Speaker, due to travel delays I missed roll call number 421. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 421.

**HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
JOHN CRUTCHFIELD**

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I'm honored to celebrate and recognize the extraordinary work of John Crutchfield. His eighteen years dedication to his beloved city of Killeen are the reflection of a true and devoted public servant.

With his "can-do" spirit and high-minded vision, John is a trusted community leader. He brought his tremendous work ethic and commitment to excellence to every challenge he encountered.

As President/CEO of the Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce, John won numerous awards and spearheaded many critical projects over the decades such as Texas A&M University Central, Interstate 14, business recruitment, the research park, as well as protecting and growing Fort Hood. He also had a part in setting up the Fort Hood Regional Economic Development Foundation. It's public servants like him that make Killeen the welcoming, successful city that it is.

While John isn't tired of the privilege of public service he knows that everything has its season and the time has come to allow the next generation of leaders to take the stage. Stepping away from his office won't give him much idle time as he remains a vital part of

the Central Texas community and will spend more time with his beloved wife Sheila and their family.

Retirement is meant to be celebrated and enjoyed. It is not the end of a career, but the beginning of a new adventure. It is my honor to recognize the selfless service of John Crutchfield as he starts this new chapter of his life. On behalf of Central Texas, I thank him for his superb work and wish him the very best.

HONORING RUBIE HANKS-BUCK

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable person, Rubie Hanks-Buck.

Rubie Hanks was born in Crenshaw, MS. She is the third of seven children (three boys and four girls). She is a 1970 graduate of Quitman County High School (now Madison S. Palmer High) in Marks, MS. After high school, she worked for a year at her church teaching illiterate adults to write their names and basic math. She later attended Coahoma Community College majoring in Vocational Business.

She is married to Willie James Buck, and they are the proud parents of three girls (Patricia, Andrea, and Kyndall) and two grandchildren (Jordan and Tru).

Mrs. Buck is a member of Holly Grove Missionary Baptist Church, where she serves in various capacities. She promotes healthy living and eating by educating church members and others about the importance of knowing and controlling their blood pressure.

Mrs. Buck worked for 40 years in the Quitman County School District as a Secretary and later as Payroll Clerk until her retirement in 2014.

She's active in her hometown of Crenshaw, where she serves as Chairperson of the Annual Christmas Parade Activities, and she has held this position for over 5 years. Mrs. Buck is Treasurer of the Les Grandes Soeurs Social Club in Quitman County, where they work with churches, organizations, schools, and local communities to improve the lives of the youths and elderly through scholarships and donations.

Her legacy is more important than simply earning a salary but to live in peace and strive to make each day better than the one before.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Rubie Hanks-Buck

**HONORING THE LIFE OF MARGARET
MICHAEL DEBRANSKI
KELHART**

HON. CONNIE CONWAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Ms. CONWAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Margaret "Megan" Michael Debranski Kelhart. Born on December 2, 1975, in Norfolk, Virginia, Megan peacefully entered the arms of our Lord on August 19, 2022. She was a proud and passionate moth-

er, charismatic leader, staunch advocate of public service, and a resolute supporter of crucial public institutions and community members in need.

In 1994, Megan graduated from Lakeland High School, where she was an outstanding student and a standout tennis player on the State Champion Tennis Team. She was also a cheerleader, school band member, and prom queen. Megan later studied political science at Virginia Tech, where she was an active member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority, and went on to earn her Master of Science degree in natural resources.

In 2001, while working in the United States Senate, Megan met her husband Matthew while playing in the Senate summer softball league. The pair married on October 25, 2003, and spent the next 18 and a half years traveling the world together, sharing a love of college football, European travel and culture, and Italian wine.

In 2009, Megan and her husband welcomed their son, Matteson Michael Donnan Kelhart. Matteson was Megan's world—while Megan was a tireless professional and truly remarkable friend and wife, it was as a mother that her grace and selflessness were most prominently displayed. Megan passed on to Matteson her passion for reading, her fanatical dedication to her passion for policy and her love of travel, and her unwavering loyalty and integrity.

Megan, who selflessly answered a call to service at the United States Senate, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Reclamation, worked with nearly every congressional office. This body owes a debt of gratitude to her passion for policy and her unyielding dedication to public service.

She is survived by her loving husband Matthew Joseph Kelhart; their son, Matteson; her parents, Dr. Michael Debranski and Margaret Debranski of Suffolk, VA; her grandmother Margaret Beamon of Suffolk, VA; her father-in-law and his wife, Joseph and Lily Kelhart of Bethlehem, PA; her mother-in-law and her husband, Terri and Joseph Costa of Perkaspie, PA; and other loved ones.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Margaret "Megan" Michael Debranski Kelhart. Her service and contributions to the Department of the Interior and the United States Congress will long be remembered.

**RECOGNIZING THE 50TH WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY OF CHARLES AND
NATALIE MANISCALCO**

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th wedding anniversary of Charles and Natalie Maniscalco.

Charlie and Natalie met at John Carroll Catholic High School in Birmingham, Alabama. They both attended Jacksonville State University. Charlie graduated with an Education degree and Natalie with a Dietetics degree.

Charlie coached football and baseball at Oxford High School in Oxford, Alabama, before moving to JSU as the offensive coordinator. The JSU Gamecocks were national champions in 1992. After leaving JSU, he worked

for Oxford City Schools in several roles and later became principal at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Anniston, Alabama.

Natalie worked as a licensed registered dietitian at several local health care facilities before working in private practice in Oxford.

The Maniscalcos were blessed with five sons: Michael, Andy, Tony, Matthew and Adam. They have 14 grandchildren: Kate, Celia, Reid, Emerson, Charlie, Rocco, Claire, Sam, Paul, Roman, Natalie, Perry, Mia, and Mary.

Charles and Natalie are active members of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church and volunteer at All Saints Interfaith Center of Concern in Anniston.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Charles and Natalie on this important milestone and wishing them a very happy 50th anniversary.

HONORING ARMITIE PRICE HERRINGTON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable professional, Armitie Price Herrington.

Armitie was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in April of 1985. She is married to Dr. Reginald Herrington, who serves as assistant principal for Grenada Lower Elementary. They have two children; a son, Reginald II (known as Prince), who is 4 years old, and a daughter, Armitie Christine, who is 9 months old.

Armitie holds a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Mississippi. During her time at Ole Miss, she excelled playing for the Lady Rebels basketball team and led the team to the NCAA Tournament three times. She received Kodak AH-American honors, among other accolades, and upon graduation, entered the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) draft in 2007. Armitie played for nine seasons, and four season overseas from 2007 to 2015.

Armitie started out playing for the Chicago Sky and was named the 2007 WNBA Rookie of the Year. She was traded to the Atlanta Dream in 2009, and the team earned spots in the finals every year. She also became an assistant coach for the Ole Miss Lady Rebels; a position she held from 2009 to 2012. In 2014, she became a free agent and played for the L.A. Sparks before rejoining the Ole Miss WBB staff in 2016. She served the Lady Rebels as assistant coach one last time, for the 2018–2022 seasons, before leaving Ole Miss.

Armitie now has joined Holmes Community College (Grenada, MS campus) staff as the new business office/ financial aid advisor. Armitie is an active member of her church, Abundant Life Assembly in Grenada, and she looks forward to getting involved in more community activities.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Armitie Price Herrington for her dedication and tenacity to serving her community and desire to be an example for all.

RECOGNIZING ANA M. FIGUEROA
ON HER RETIREMENT AFTER
THIRTY-ONE YEARS OF PUBLIC
SERVICE

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ana M. Figueroa, my District Chief of Staff who retired on March 4, 2022, after almost 30 years on my district staff. It also gives me great pleasure to help her celebrate her 53rd birthday today, September 14, 2022.

Ana is a proud Mexican immigrant born in the town of Cuernavaca, Guanajuato. Her parents, Jose Dolores Figueroa and Consuelo Figueroa Laguna, immigrated to the United States with two of Ana's four siblings, Rigoberto, and Rosa Maria, in 1974 and settled in the Los Angeles area. Ana and her older sister, Maria Guadalupe, joined the family in Los Angeles one year later, reuniting the 7-member family which now included Ana's youngest sister, Maricela.

Ms. Figueroa grew up in Boyle Heights and the unincorporated East Los Angeles community. She attended Lorena Street Elementary School, Rowan Avenue Elementary School, Robert L. Stevenson Jr. High School and graduated from James A. Garfield High School in 1987. The proud Bulldog graduate then attended Occidental College where she majored in Cognitive Science and minored in Sociology.

Upon college graduation, Ana began her public service career with the office of Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley as the assistant to his Liaison to the Latino Community and Eastside Area Coordinator in 1991.

In July 1992, Ana was recruited by my California State Assembly office to serve as a field representative for Southeast Los Angeles cities, Boyle Heights, and East Los Angeles in the 56th Assembly District. She was then promoted to field deputy when I was elected to represent the 33rd Congressional District in January 1993. She became Senior Field Deputy and Casework Director in June 1995, and my District Chief of Staff in May 1998.

Ana earned the respect and gratitude of staff, colleagues, and elected officials at the congressional, state, and local levels as a result of her effectiveness, collaborative leadership, unwavering commitment to community service, and outstanding dedication.

With impeccable integrity, compassion, and distinction, she served the constituents of the 33rd, 34th, and 40th Congressional Districts I represented through the years as the first Mexican American woman elected to the U.S. Congress.

Ana officially retired from the U.S. House of Representatives on March 4, 2022, after almost 30 years as a member of my district office team.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and thanking Ana M. Figueroa for her 31 years as an exemplary public servant and extending sincere best wishes for a healthy, prosperous, and richly rewarding retirement, and a very happy 53rd birthday.

RECOGNIZING GRANVILLE EDISON
FISHER, JR.

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 95th birthday of Mr. Granville Edison Fisher, Jr. Granville is a veteran, a pillar of his community, and a loving father and husband.

Granville is a lifelong resident of Westmoreland County. As a youth, he attended the Kremlin School and A.T. Johnson High School. He then attended Virginia State College and Echols Mortuary School. However, before attending Echols, he heroically served in the U.S. Army in World War II in the Occupation of Japan.

After returning home and graduating from Echols, Granville began working at Weldon's Funeral Home. In 1995, the business changed its name to the Weldon-Fisher Funeral Home. The funeral home has operated for an impressive 72 years.

Granville also selflessly serves his community. He has been a Deacon at Galilee Baptist Church for 65 years and counting, and a part of the Northern Neck Deacon's Union since 1985. Furthermore, he formerly served as a Worshipful Master at the Westmoreland Masonic Lodge No. 212. He served on the Peninsula Emergency Service Council Board of Directors for 11 years and has served on the Central Virginia Health Service Board of Directors since 2000. He is also the former President and a current member of the Westmoreland Chapter of the Virginia State University Alumni Association.

Most importantly, Granville is a dedicated father and husband. He and his late wife, O. Bernice Roane Fisher, to whom he was married for 45 years, had 4 children: Mr. Gary Wayne Fisher, Sr., Ms. Cecelia A. Robinson, Pastor Darryl E. Fisher, and Dr. Wanda M. Fisher.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing the accomplishments and service of Mr. Granville Edison Fisher, Jr. May God bless him and his family.

HONORING TERRIONNA WILSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a bright and vibrant student, Terrionna Wilson. Terrionna has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to help.

Terrionna Wilson is a senior at Warren Central High School in Vicksburg, MS. Terrionna is also a student in Claiborne County's Summer Youth STEM Program which is sponsored each summer by the Claiborne County Board of Supervisors and Entergy Nuclear.

For Terrionna's community service project in the program, she assisted younger students in Port Gibson, MS with their multiplication skills. They were learning complex sets of time-tables. In the words of Terrionna, "At first, they were nervous and were shying away, but

now they have learned new math skills. I enjoyed working with these young ladies.”

Terrionna shows how compassion for others and education can mold the next generations. She made a lasting impact on the lives of those young ladies. Her work is greatly appreciated, and her future is very bright. Terrionna is a resident of Port Gibson, MS and the daughter of Latoya Jackson and Terrance Wilson.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Terrionna Wilson, for being an exemplary student and citizen.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SHELBY JACOBS

HON. MIKE LEVIN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. LEVIN of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable life of Shelby Jacobs, who passed away on Monday September 5, 2022, in Oceanside, California. Mr. Jacobs is survived by his wife Elizabeth Portillo-Jacobs, his daughter Shelley Modaff, and his granddaughter Shelby Beverly Jacobs.

Due to his extraordinary contributions to the country and his life as a trailblazer, I selected Mr. Jacobs as my first Constituent of the Month on March 8, 2019.

Born in Dallas, Texas, on April 27, 1935, Mr. Jacobs demonstrated an exceptional ability for math and science as well as a strong work ethic from an early age. After moving to California when he was eight, Mr. Jacobs began working on farms and in restaurants to help support his family before going on to study engineering.

For 40 years, Mr. Jacobs worked on NASA's Apollo and Space Shuttle programs, serving as the project manager of the Apollo-Soyuz orbiter and designer of the camera that captured the iconic 1968 Apollo 6 rocket separation.

As an African American working in an industry with few people of color, Mr. Jacobs often faced discrimination and was overlooked for his contributions. While employed by the Rocketdyne division of North American Aviation, he was one of eight African Americans out of 5,000 engineers at that time. Despite the barriers he faced, Mr. Jacobs went on to be a role model to younger generations, pushing for equality and progress throughout his life.

In 2008, Mr. Jacobs was officially recognized by NASA as one of the space program's "Unsung Heroes" and he is remembered as one of the "Hidden Figures." Additionally, his work was highlighted in the Columbia Memorial Space Center's "Achieving the Impossible" exhibit.

Mr. Jacobs moved to Oceanside in 1996 with his family and quickly became an active member of the community, sharing his knowledge and unique life story with his neighbors and the public.

Madam Speaker, it has been an honor to celebrate Shelby Jacobs' remarkable life and his legacy which continues to inspire.

SHEPHERD SIMS

HON. BARRY LOUDERMILK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce the birth of one of our newest citizens, who's grandparents and mother hail from the 11th Congressional District of Georgia. Shepherd Marshall Sims was born on Tuesday, August 30, 2022 in Johnson City, Tennessee. Shepherd was a healthy 8 pounds 8 ounces at birth.

Shepherd is the brother of Wyndor Anne Sims, age two, and is the son of Patrick Nicholas and Lauren Alexis Sims. The very proud grandparents are Beverly Ann Sims, and Gerald and Tonya Veitch.

Please join me in celebrating this joyous occasion with my friends.

OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

HON. DON BACON

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today during Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month to recognize women who have been diagnosed with ovarian cancer and have either survived or unfortunately lost their hard-fought battle. A rare but deadly disease, only approximately 19,880 women will receive a new diagnosis this year—this past March, our Communications Director Danielle Jensen was one of them.

The deadliest of the reproductive cancers, only 20 percent are diagnosed early in Stages I or II, with a five-year survival rate of over 93 percent. Unfortunately, the majority of cases are diagnosed in Stages III or IV, when the survival rate can be as low as 30 percent. The risk of a woman getting ovarian cancer is about 1 in 78 in her lifetime and it is estimated that 12,810 women will lose their lives to ovarian cancer this year. Fortunately, Danielle was diagnosed as Stage II and recently completed chemotherapy.

There are several factors that can increase the risk of ovarian cancers. Age is the biggest one. Half of all ovarian cancers are found in women 63 years of age and older. Another is if a woman has never carried a pregnancy to full-term or had a child after the age of 35. Hormone replacement therapy, a family history of ovarian, breast or colorectal cancer, or a personal history of breast cancer are also risk factors.

There is no reliable screening or diagnostic test for ovarian cancer, and it cannot be detected during a pap smear, so it is important to know the signs and symptoms. This includes back pain, bloating, frequent urination, feeling full quickly after eating, fatigue, upset stomach-heartburn-or constipation, pelvic or abdominal pain, or changes in menstrual cycles. While these symptoms are most likely not signs of cancer, they should be of concern if they don't go away after two weeks following normal interventions such as changing diet and exercise, laxatives, or rest. It is because of this that ovarian cancer is often referred to as "the silent killer."

There are different treatments for ovarian cancer. Danielle had surgery and she went through six cycles of chemotherapy to kill any cancer cells that may have been left. Some women will also undergo radiation to treat it.

What can lower the risk of ovarian cancer? Women who have been pregnant and carried to term before the age of 26, and each full-term pregnancy lowers the risk. Some studies show that breastfeeding may lower the risk even further, as well as using birth control pills.

Finally, we are thankful that Danielle was diagnosed when she was and is on the path to being a survivor. She said she credits God and her faith for keeping her motivation focused and strong, as well as her medical team at Estabrook Cancer Center, including Dr. Crotzer, her nurse navigator Emily and PA Lorna, and her infusion nurse Abbey. She also thanks her family, including her mom who went to every appointment and her daughter who would check in on Danielle when she heard her crying from the pain, and her friends who supported her every day.

RECOGNIZING GEORGE GRAHAM FOR HIS 50 YEARS OF SERVICE TO WVIA FM

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, today I honor George Graham for his 50 years at WVIA FM, our region's NPR affiliate. George was celebrated by his colleagues, family, and friends on August 29, 2022, for his service to our region and public radio.

George was born and raised in Carbondale, Pennsylvania. After high school, he enrolled at Duke University to study electrical engineering. During his time at Duke, he served as the program director of the student radio station, bringing eclectic, contemporary music radio programming to the Durham, North Carolina-based university.

After graduating magna cum laude in 1972, George returned to Northeastern Pennsylvania where he was hired as the first employee of WVIA Radio to do studio design and construction for WVIA-FM. With his impressive background of on-air work at Duke, he soon found himself with a regular on-air spot.

While on the air, he introduced his popular show Mixed Bag which has become the longest, continuously running adult alternative program in the country. The show features weekly album reviews, new release segments, and a Friday night request show. In 1976, he started Homegrown Music to highlight regional artists from a variety of genres including rock, folk, bluegrass, jazz, blues, and World Music. Performances have been held in the studio weekly with a monthly concert for a live studio audience. George also hosts All That Jazz, which also highlights and provides live radio coverage of regional jazz festivals from the Delaware Water Gap and Scranton.

When WVIA acquired Chiaroscuro Records, a 50-year-old jazz label, in 2010, George was appointed the director of artistry and repertoire, overseeing the extensive archive and production of new recordings and reissues. With his impressive background in the industry, he has written for many regional publications and lends his time and expertise as a

freelance recording engineer, producer, and mastering engineer.

George has been an essential voice over the air waves championing regional musical talent, and generations of music connoisseurs and casual fans alike have tuned in to discover new music and listen to George's impeccably curated shows. I am honored to recognize George for his five decades of service to Northeastern Pennsylvania public radio and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

FLORIDA'S 16TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FIRE AND RESCUE EMS AWARDS

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. BUCHANAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize fire, rescue and EMS personnel who have provided distinguished service to the people of Florida's 16th Congressional District.

First responders, fire departments and emergency medical service teams are summoned on short notice to serve their respective communities. Often times, they arrive at scenes of great adversity and trauma, to which they reliably bring strength and composure. These brave men and women spend hundreds of hours in training so that they are prepared when they get "the call."

Ten years ago, I established the 16th District Congressional Fire and Rescue and EMS Awards to honor officers, departments, and units for outstanding achievement.

On behalf of the people of Florida's 16th District, it is my privilege to congratulate the following winners, who were selected this year by an independent committee comprised of a cross section of current and retired fire and rescue personnel living in the district:

Manatee County EMS Paramedic Lydia Wilkinson for the Preservation of Life Award.

Manatee County EMS Charge Paramedic Karleigh Alday for the Preservation of Life Award.

Manatee County EMS District Chief Jason Evans for the Dedication and Professionalism Award.

Manatee County EMS Charge Paramedic Joe Savasta for the Preservation of Life Award and the Above & Beyond the Call of Duty Award.

Manatee County EMS Paramedic Carlos Santos for the Preservation of Life Award and the Above & Beyond the Call of Duty Award.

Parrish Assistant Fire Chief Wayne Ownbey for the Career Service Award.

Cedar Hammock Fire Inspector Adam Chrisman for the Dedication and Professionalism Award.

Hillsborough County Fire Captain Kevin Kahmeyer for the Dedication and Professionalism Award.

Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Shift Commander Gil Reyes for the Career Service Award.

Manatee County EMS Operations Chief Larry Luh for the Career Service Award.

Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Deputy Fire Marshall Ray Hansen for the Career Service Award.

East Manatee Fire Lieutenant Steve Baker, Firefighter Larry White and Firefighter Michael Guard for the Unit Citation Award.

CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREENBACK VALLEY RANCH

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary of the Greenback Valley Ranch, owned and operated by Bill and Penny Conway in the Sierra Ancha Mountains 14 miles to the east of Tonto Basin, Arizona. The valley derives its name from a Confederate greenback found by an army captain in an Indian camp in 1865.

The ranch was founded by pig-farmer David Harer in 1872. Harer originally came from California and was looking for land to raise his pigs. When scouting for a possible site, Harer encountered an Apache Indian camp and decided to approach with a rattlesnake on his back. After allowing the snake to bite him, he earned the Indians' respect for this impressive feat to challenge and defeat death. He never told them that he defanged the snake.

Harer's bravery and resilience has been passed on to five generations of ranchers. His daughter married Edward Conway, and the Conways have immersed themselves in cattle ranching since the end of the 19th century with no plans to stop.

Bill Conway has been working on the ranch for nearly 50 years and married Penny in 1979. His family is an embodiment of the American spirit that hard, honest work and openness to life will yield "fruit that will last." I pray that the Greenback Valley Ranch will continue to provide for the material and spiritual needs of the Conways and the community for at least another 150 years to come.

RECOGNIZING CONSTITUTION WEEK AND THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HON. TOM RICE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Constitution Week and the Theodosia Burr Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

It is a privilege and duty of the American people to commemorate the two hundred thirty-third anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution of the United States of America by the Constitutional Convention. As citizens of this great nation, we must reaffirm the ideals the Framers of the Constitution had in 1787.

Public Law 915 guarantees the issuing of a proclamation each year by the President of the United States of America designating September 17 through 23 as Constitution Week. It is fitting and proper to officially recognize this magnificent document and the anniversary of its creation.

Madam Speaker, I join the Theodosia Burr Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American people in recognizing September 17 through September 23, 2022 as Constitution Week and honor the Framers for their contributions.

HONORING THE LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated leadership of an outstanding institution of higher education in Michigan's 8th Congressional district: the Board of Trustees of Lansing Community College.

Founded in 1957, the trustees of Lansing Community College have guided the school through years of growth, change, and most recently, a global pandemic. Through it all, they have maintained a forward-looking focus, and recently their efforts in the area of educational equity have been recognized on a national scale.

While some organizations may talk the talk when it comes to addressing issues of equity, Lansing Community College truly walks the walk. The school's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are embedded throughout operations at the college, including at the board level and as part of the college's formal strategic plan. In 2020, the LCC Board of Trustees penned a resolution that specifically addressed racial injustice, resulting in the development and implementation of a collegewide Equity Action Plan.

For these and many other reasons, the Board of Trustees of Lansing Community College has been named the recipient of the 2022 Charles Kennedy Equity Award from the Association of Community College Trustees. This prestigious award honors their exemplary commitment as a governing board to the achievement of equity in the college's education programs and services, and in their administration and delivery.

Diversity brings with it a number of educational benefits, including improved racial and cultural awareness, enhanced critical thinking, higher levels of service to community, and a more educated citizenry, to name a few. However, other components—namely, equity and inclusion—are essential to delivering on diversity's promise to higher education more broadly. I am thankful for the dedication the Board of Trustees of Lansing Community College brings to this vision and this mission, and it is my great honor to officially recognize their accomplishments.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF CLEARFIELD WHOLESALE PAPER COMPANY

HON. GLENN THOMPSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Clearfield Wholesale Paper Company on their 100th anniversary.

Since 1922, CWP has provided top notch janitorial and paper supplies to hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and local businesses across Clearfield County and the Commonwealth.

As fourth generation businesses owners, Joel and Cindy Peterson know the key to success is customer satisfaction.

They pride themselves on strong customer relations, some of which dates back 95 years.

For generations, CWP has served not just their community, but the larger area as a key employer to the community.

CWP recognizes the importance of great employees and are thankful for their everyday commitment and hard work.

Congratulations to Clearfield Wholesale Paper on this impressive anniversary. May they continue to serve the community for another 100 years.

HONORING TAYLOR READY LABORERS STAFFING SERVICES, LLC

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable and impactful business, Taylor Ready Laborers Staffing Services, LLC. The CEO, R'Shonda Taylor, has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to achieve success.

Taylor Ready Laborers Staffing Services, LLC (TRLSS) is new, blackowned, and the first staffing agency in Indianola, MS, servicing the entire MidSouth Delta areas families and communities. They are offering temporary, temp to hire, contract, and direct hire positions for small, large, and independently owned businesses. The CEO, R'Shonda Taylor, has over 21 (8yrs Human Resource) years of staffing, recruiting, and job placement expertise. Ms. Taylor stated that she "will be working with local businesses to help them locate people who can fill the positions that they have available."

Ms. Taylor states that TRLSS will also train the workers about company culture, use employers' videos and materials to train the potential workers, and train the employees on how to retain the job that they've been hired for, which includes working with each employer's on-the-job-training programs.

TRLSS will take a holistic approach to providing support for local workers. According to Ms. Taylor, her services will extend to most of the Delta and the City of Indianola, where three buses will be donated for workers with transportation challenges. The buses will be for pickup and drop-off at the worksite only. There will also be programs put in place to assist workers with concerns about childcare.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Taylor Ready Laborers Staffing Services, LLC for their passion and dedication to achieve new goals, while making history and serving their community.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference.

This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 15, 2022 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

SEPTEMBER 20

9 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine tightening the screws on Russia, focusing on smart sanctions, economic statecraft and next steps.

SD-538

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States nuclear strategy and policy.

SH-216

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development
To hold hearings to examine the Department of Agriculture's rural housing service, focusing on stakeholder perspectives.

SD-538

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

To hold hearings to examine uncounted deaths in America's prisons and jails, focusing on how the Department of Justice failed to implement the Death in Custody Reporting Act.

SD-342

3 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Competition Policy, Antitrust, and Consumer Rights

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Federal enforcement of the antitrust laws.

SD-226

SEPTEMBER 21

Time to be announced

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Karla Ann Gilbride, of Maryland, to be General Counsel of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Jessica Looman, of Minnesota, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, Moshe Z. Marvit, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, and other pending calendar business.

TBA

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine the VA's electronic health record modernization, focusing on rollout, cost, and schedule.

SD-124

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine putting the Bipartisan Infrastructure law to work, focusing on state and local perspectives.

SD-406

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Colleen Joy Shogan, of Pennsylvania, to be Archivist of the United States, Vijay Shanker, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, and Laura E. Crane, Leslie A. Meek, and Veronica M. Sanchez, each to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine pending nominations.

SD-226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on National Parks

To hold hearings to examine S. 305, to establish the Springfield Race Riot National Monument in the State of Illinois, S. 1211, to establish the Cahokia Mounds Mississippian Culture National Historic Park in Collinsville, Illinois, Monroe, Madison, and St. Clair Counties, Illinois, and St. Louis City County, Missouri, S. 3447, to authorize the National Service Animals Monument Corporation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, S. 3579, to authorize the Embassy of France in Washington, DC, to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs to honor the extraordinary contributions of Jean Monnet to restoring peace between European nations and establishing the European Union, S. 3873, to designate the outdoor amphitheater at the Blue Ridge Music Center in Galax, Virginia, as the "Rock Boucher Amphitheater", S. 4122, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the Housatonic River in the State of Connecticut as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 4168, to amend title 54, United States Code, to reauthorize the National Park Foundation, S. 4222, to establish the St. Croix National Heritage Area, S. 4371, to establish the Cesar E. Chavez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park in the States of California and Arizona, S. 4464 and H.R. 1908, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land as the Ka'ena Point National Heritage Area, S. 4693, to amend the National Trails System Act to include national discovery trails and designate the American Discovery Trail, S. 4784, to modify the boundary of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument in the State of Maine, to improve public access to the National Monument, and S.J. Res. 57,

redesignating the Robert E. Lee Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery as the “Arlington House National Historic Site”.
SD-366
2:30 p.m.
Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the SBA’s State Trade Expansion Program.
SR-428A
3 p.m.
Committee on Veterans’ Affairs
To hold hearings to examine ensuring veterans’ timely access to care in VA and the community.
SR-418

3:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
To hold hearings to examine the status of military recruiting and retention efforts across the Department of Defense.
SR-222
SEPTEMBER 22
10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine opportunities and challenges in deploying innovative battery and non-battery technologies for energy storage.
SD-366

OCTOBER 12
10 a.m.
Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine putting the Bipartisan Infrastructure law to work, focusing on the private sector perspective.
SD-406

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S4585–S4625

Measures Introduced: Thirteen bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 4844–4856, S.J. Res. 62, and S. Res. 763–764. **Pages S4619–20**

Measures Passed:

Federal Electric Vehicle Fleet Battery Management: Senate passed S. 4057, to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan for Federal electric vehicle fleet battery management, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

Page S4624

Guidance Clarity Act: Senate passed S. 533, to require a guidance clarity statement on certain agency guidance, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

Page S4624

Controlled Substances Act: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. 4235, to amend the Controlled Substances Act to fix a technical error in the definitions, and the bill was then passed.

Pages S4624–25

Medical Facility Projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs: Senate passed H.R. 7500, to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2022.

Page S4625

National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 764, designating September 2022, as “National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month”.

Page S4625

Appointments:

Afghanistan War Commission: The Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 117–81, in consultation with the House Minority Leader, appointed the following individual to serve as co-chair of the Afghanistan War Commission: Dr. Colin Jackson of Rhode Island (co-chair).

Pages S4623–24

Merriam Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Sarah A. L. Merriam, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

Pages S4590–S4611

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 52 yeas to 47 nays (Vote No. EX. 336), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination.

Page S4590

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination, post-cloture, at approximately 10 a.m., on Thursday, September 15, 2022; that all post-cloture time on the nomination be considered expired at 11:30 a.m.; that following disposition of the nomination of Sarah A. L. Merriam, Senate begin consideration of the nomination David P. Pekoske, of Maryland, to be Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration; and that Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination of David P. Pekoske at 1:45 p.m., with all other provisions of the order of Thursday, September 8, 2022, remaining in effect.

Page S4625

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By 52 yeas to 47 nays (Vote No. EX. 335), Lara E. Montecalvo, of Rhode Island, to be United States Circuit Judge for the First Circuit.

Pages S4585–90

Travis LeBlanc, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for a term expiring January 29, 2028.

Richard E. DiZinno, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board for the remainder of the term expiring January 29, 2023.

Shefali Razdan Duggal, of California, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Page S4611

Messages from the House:

Page S4612

Petitions and Memorials:

Pages S4612–19

Executive Reports of Committees:

Page S4619

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages S4620–21

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:

Pages S4621–23

Additional Statements:

Pages S4611–12

Authorities for Committees to Meet:

Page S4623

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—336)

Pages S4589–90

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:06 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, September 15, 2022. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S4625.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee ordered favorably reported S. 4802, to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

NOMINATION

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Shailen P. Bhatt, of Michigan, to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senator Hickenlooper, testified and answered questions in her own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 4428, to support the security of Taiwan and its right of self-determination, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 4653, to provide for certain authorities of the Department of State, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

The nominations of Rolfe Michael Schiffer, of New York, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, Nathaniel Fick, of Maine, to be Ambassador at Large for Cyberspace and Digital Policy, Department of State, Patrick Leahy, of Vermont, and James E. Risch, of Idaho, both to be a Representative of the United States of America to the Seventy-seventh Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and a routine list in the Foreign Service.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine social media's impact on homeland security, after receiving testimony from Alex Roetter, formerly of Twitter, Boulder, Colorado; Brian Thomas Boland, formerly of Facebook, Bellevue, Washington; Geoffrey Cain, Lincoln Network, Hamilton, New Jersey; Chris Cox, Meta, Menlo Park, California; Neal Mohan, YouTube, San Bruno, California; Vanessa

Pappas, TikTok, Inc., Culver City, California; and Jay Sullivan, Twitter, Inc., San Francisco, California.

MONKEYPOX

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine stopping the spread of monkeypox, focusing on the Federal response, after receiving testimony from Rochelle P. Walensky, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Anthony S. Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Robert M. Califf, Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Food and Drug Administration, and Dawn O'Connell, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response, all of the Department of Health and Human Services.

FLATLINING CARE

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and Border Safety concluded a hearing to examine flatlining care, focusing on why immigrants are crucial to bolstering our health care workforce, after receiving testimony from Benny Martinez, Brooks County Sheriff, Falfurrias, Texas; Sarah K. Peterson, SPS Immigration PLLC, Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Ram Alur, Marion VA Medical Center, Marion, Illinois, on behalf of Physicians for American Healthcare Access.

PROTECTING PRIVATE INFORMATION

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology, and the Law concluded a hearing to examine protecting Americans' private information from hostile foreign powers, after receiving testimony from Samm Sacks, Yale Law School, New Haven, Connecticut; Susan Landau, Tufts University Fletcher School and School of Engineering, Medford, Massachusetts; Matthew Pottinger, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, Washington, D.C.; and Adam I. Klein, University of Texas Robert Strauss Center on International Security and Law, Austin.

BUSINESS MEETING

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Terrence Edwards, of Maryland, to be Inspector General of the National Reconnaissance Office, Department of Defense.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 15 public bills, H.R. 8817–8831; and 7 resolutions, H.J. Res. 95; and H. Res. 1347–1352 were introduced.

Pages H7840–41

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages H7842–43

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H.R. 4819, to require the Secretary of Energy to revitalize existing university infrastructure relating to nuclear science and engineering and establish new university-based nuclear science and engineering facilities, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 117–466).

Page H7840

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Roybal-Allard to act as Speaker pro tempore for today.

Page H7787

Recess: The House recessed at 11:08 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon.

Page H7794

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Trahan wherein she resigned from the Committee on Natural Resources.

Page H7795

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Morelle wherein he resigned from the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Education and Labor.

Page H7795

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 1347, electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives.

Page H7796

Consensus Calendar: The Chair announced the Speaker's designation, pursuant to clause 7(a)(1) of rule 15, of H.R. 3173 as the measure on the Consensus Calendar to be considered this week.

Page H7796

Suspension: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure:

Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act: H.R. 3173, amended, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish requirements with respect to the use of prior authorization under Medicare Advantage plans.

Pages H7796–H7804

Suspending the Rules and passing bills en bloc: Pursuant to section 8 of H. Res. 473, Representative Hoyer made a motion to suspend the rules and pass the following bills en bloc, and therefore the ordering of the yeas and nays on postponed motions would be vacated to the end that all such motions would be considered as withdrawn: H.R. 1468, S. 4205, H.R. 7939, H.R. 7846, H.R. 7735, H.R. 5916, H.R. 8260, and H.R. 5865, which was agreed

to by a yeas-and-nays vote of 397 yeas to 29 nays, Roll No. 426.

Pages H7814–22

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

National Aviation Preparedness Plan Act: H.R. 884, amended, to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a national aviation preparedness plan for communicable disease outbreaks, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 293 yeas to 133 nays, Roll No. 427;

Pages H7822–23

Expediting Disaster Recovery Act: H.R. 5774, amended, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to ensure that unmet needs after a major disaster are met, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 406 yeas to 20 nays, Roll No. 428;

Pages H7823–24

Civilian Reservist Emergency Workforce Act: S. 2293, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide certain employment rights to reservists of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 387 yeas to 38 nays, Roll No. 429; and

Page H7824

Bulb Replacement Improving Government with High-efficiency Technology Act: S. 442, to amend title 40, United States Code, to require the Administrator of General Services to procure the most life-cycle cost effective and energy efficient lighting products and to issue guidance on the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of those products, by a 2/3 yeas-and-nays vote of 347 yeas to 78 nays, Roll No. 430.

Pages H7824–25

Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act: The House considered H.R. 2988, to amend title 5, United States Code, to modify and enhance protections for Federal Government whistleblowers. Consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, September 15th.

Pages H7825–33

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Reform now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part B of the report of H. Rept. 117–464, shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole.

Pages H7828–30

Proceedings Postponed:

Carolyn B. Maloney (NY) amendment en bloc No. 1 consisting of the following amendments printed in part C of H. Rept. 117–464: Auchincloss (No. 1) that seeks to require GAO to conduct within four

years of enactment a study that at a minimum examines the timeliness of MSPB whistleblower complaint rulings, reports on the rate of whistleblowers opting for a district court trial, and offers recommendations for MSPB to make improvements to its whistleblower complaint review process; Jackson Lee (No. 2) that seeks to direct each Office of Inspector General to establish and maintain a mechanism to receive anonymous whistleblower information that conforms to specified requirements to ensure and maintain anonymity; Porter (No. 3) that seeks to create new reporting requirement for Inspectors General to provide to Congress the number of instances in which their Office did not resolve a whistleblower retaliation complaint within 8 months after receiving the complaint; and Spanberger (No. 4) that seeks to add language to allow whistleblowers to challenge adverse security clearance actions through the same adjudication process used for other whistleblower retaliation complaints.

Pages H7830–33

H. Res. 1339, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 302), (H.R. 2988), and (H.R. 8326) was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 219 yeas to 209 nays, Roll No. 425, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 213 yeas to 206 nays, Roll No. 424.

Pages H7804–14

Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act: The House considered H.R. 8326, to amend title 13, United States Code, to improve the operations of the Bureau of the Census. Consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, September 15th.

Pages H7833–40

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117–64, modified by the amendment printed in part D of H. Rept. 117–464, shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Reform now printed in the bill.

Pages H7837–38

Proceedings Postponed:

Danny K. Davis (IL) amendment en bloc No. 1 consisting of the following amendments printed in part C of H. Rept. 117–464: Jackson Lee (No. 1) that seeks to direct the Deputy Director to appoint an employee within the Census Bureau who will be responsible for optimizing racial and ethnic equity in the decennial census count of the population by engaging in specified activities, the progress of which shall be included in the Secretary's biannual reports to Congress; and Case (No. 3) that seeks to require the Census Bureau to submit a report to Congress on the agency's current processes for consulting and engaging with jurisdictions and local partners in conducting the decennial census and efforts by the

Bureau to improve local-level data collection and coordination of local field operations.

Pages H7838–39

Hice amendment (No. 2 printed in part C of H. Rept. 117–464) that seeks to eliminate for-cause removal requirements of the Director of the Census Bureau; strikes the requirement that the Deputy Director position be a career-reserved candidate and certain qualifications for the position; and adds that the Deputy act as the Director in the event of a vacancy in the Director position.

Pages H7839–40

H. Res. 1339, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 302), (H.R. 2988), and (H.R. 8326) was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 219 yeas to 209 nays, Roll No. 425, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 213 yeas to 206 nays, Roll No. 424.

Pages H7804–14

Quorum Calls—Votes: Seven yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7812–13, H7813, H7821–22, H7822–23, H7823–24, H7824, and H7825.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Committee Meetings

SOIL HEALTH PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Soil Health Practices and Programs that Support Regenerative Agriculture”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

IN SOLIDARITY: REMOVING BARRIERS TO ORGANIZING

Committee on Education and Labor: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “In Solidarity: Removing Barriers to Organizing”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a markup on H.R. 3173, the “Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act of 2021”; H.R. 3655, the “Vaccine Injury Compensation Modernization Act of 2021”; H.R. 5141, the “Maximizing Outcomes through Better Investments in Lifesaving Equipment for (MOBILE) Health Care Act”; H.R. 8163, the “Improving Trauma Systems and Emergency Care Act”; and H.R. 6737, the “Flint Registry Reauthorization Act”. H.R. 3173, H.R. 3655, H.R. 5141, H.R. 8163, and H.R. 6737 were forwarded to the full Committee, as amended.

WHEN BANKS LEAVE: THE IMPACTS OF DE-RISKING ON THE CARIBBEAN AND STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING FINANCIAL ACCESS

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “When Banks Leave: The Impacts of De-Risking on the Caribbean and Strategies for Ensuring Financial Access”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

STRENGTHENING U.S. ENGAGEMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia, and Nonproliferation held a hearing entitled “Strengthening U.S. Engagement in Central Asia”. Testimony was heard from Donald Lu, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Department of State; Kaur, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Asia, U.S. Agency for International Development; and David De Falco, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Europe and Eurasia, Department of Commerce.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 8446, the “Global Food Security Reauthorization Act of 2022”; H.R. 2374, the “Peace and Tolerance in Palestinian Education Act”; H. Res. 1240, requesting the President, and directing the Secretary of State, to transmit to the House of Representatives copies of all documents in their possession referring or relating to certain aspects of the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan; H. Res. 1266, requesting the President to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to any initiative or negotiations regarding Iran’s nuclear program; H. Res. 1342, reaffirming the importance of diplomacy and development in United States-African Union relations, promoting strategic partnerships and shared objectives between the United States and the African Union, and expressing strong support for the successful implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement; H.R. 4213, the “YSEALI Act”; H.R. 8681, the “John Lewis Civil Rights Fellowship Act”; H.R. 8153, the “Indo-Pacific Engagement Act”; H.R. 8813, the “AFFECT Human Rights in Venezuela Act”; and H.R. 6846, the “CORRUPT Act”.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a markup on H. Res. 1236, of inquiry directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide certain documents in his possession to the House of Representatives relating to the Disinformation Governance Board; H. Res. 1328, requesting the President, and directing the Secretary of Homeland Security, to

transmit to the House of Representatives copies of all documents in their possession referring or relating to certain aspects of border policies of the United States; H.R. 3756, the “Department of Homeland Security Climate Change Research Act”; H.R. 8610, the “Health Security and Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Act”; and H.R. 8801, the “DHS Joint Task Force Reauthorization Act of 2022”. H.R. 8610, H.R. 8801, and H.R. 3756 were ordered reported, as amended. H. Res. 1236 and H. Res. 1328 were ordered reported, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H. Res. 1238, of inquiry requesting the President to provide certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the October 4, 2021 memorandum issued by the Attorney General entitled “Partnership Among Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Law Enforcement to Address Threats Against School Administrators, Board Members, Teachers, and Staff”; H. Res. 1239, of inquiry directing the Attorney General to provide certain documents in his possession to the House of Representatives relating to the October 4, 2021 memorandum issued by the Attorney General entitled “Partnership Among Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Law Enforcement to Address Threats Against School Administrators, Board Members, Teachers, and Staff”; H. Res. 1241, of inquiry directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide certain documents in his possession to the House of Representatives relating to immigration enforcement and border security; H. Res. 1249, of inquiry directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the impact of illegal immigration on federal or tribal lands; H. Res. 1250, of inquiry directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the impact of illegal immigration on Federal or Tribal lands; H. Res. 1257, of inquiry directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide certain documents in the Secretary’s possession to the House of Representatives relating to the establishment of an Emergency Intake Site in Erie, Pennsylvania, at the Pennsylvania International Academy, to house the influx of unaccompanied migrant children; and H. Res. 1325, of inquiry requesting the President and directing Attorney General Merrick B. Garland to transmit, respectively, a copy of the affidavit to the House of Representatives related to the raid on the former President. H. Res. 1325, H. Res. 1238, H. Res. 1257, H. Res. 1239, H. Res. 1241, H. Res. 1249,

and H. Res. 1250 were ordered reported, as amended.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRMS IN PREVENTING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “The Role of Public Relations Firms in Preventing Action on Climate Change”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a hearing on H.R. 8108, the “Advancing Tribal Parity on Public Land Act”; H.R. 8109, the “Tribal Cultural Areas Protection Act”; and H.R. 8719, the “Great Bend of the Gila Conservation Act”. Testimony was heard from Chairman Grijalva; Brian Newland, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States held a hearing on H.R. 6032, the “Katimiîn and Aamekyáaraam Sacred Lands Act”; H.R. 6964, to authorize leases of up to 99 years for lands held in trust for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation; H.R. 7581, the “Yurok Lands Act of 2022”; H.R. 8115, the “Recreation and Public Purposes Tribal Parity Act”; H.R. 8286, to take certain Federal land in the State of Washington into trust for the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, and for other purposes; H.R. 8380, the “Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Shab-eh-nay Band Reservation Settlement Act of 2022”; and H.R. 8387, the “Parity for Tribal Law Enforcement Act”. Testimony was heard from Chairman Kilmer, and Representatives Garcia, Huffman, Strickland, and Newhouse; Wizipan Garriott, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

FREE SPEECH UNDER ATTACK (PART III): THE LEGAL ASSAULT ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Committee on Oversight and Reform: Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties held a hearing entitled “Free Speech Under Attack (Part III): The Legal Assault on Environmental Activists and the First Amendment”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

RIGHT TO REPAIR AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Underserved, Agricultural, and Rural Business Development held a hearing entitled “Right to Repair and What it Means for Entrepreneurs”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

CARGO PREFERENCE: COMPLIANCE WITH AND ENFORCEMENT OF MARITIME’S BUY AMERICAN LAWS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing entitled “Cargo Preference: Compliance with and Enforcement of Maritime’s Buy American Laws”. Testimony was heard from Rear Admiral Ann C. Phillips, Administrator, Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation; Andrew Von Ah, Director, Physical Infrastructure, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

THE FUTURE OF U.S.-TAIWAN TRADE

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “The Future of U.S.-Taiwan Trade”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

CONGRESSIONAL MODERNIZATION: A ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Congressional Modernization: A Roadmap for the Future”. Testimony was heard from Catherine Szpindor, Chief Administrative Officer, U.S. House of Representatives; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: to hold hearings to examine S. 4760, to amend the Commodity Exchange Act to provide the Commodity Futures Trading Commission jurisdiction to oversee the spot digital commodity market, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of General Anthony J. Cotton, USAF, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander of United States Strategic Command, Department of Defense, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Securities and Exchange Commission, 10 a.m., SD-538.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine the Federal government's role in supporting the commercialization of fusion energy, 10 a.m., SD-366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine assessing United States policy towards Venezuela, 10 a.m., SD-419.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 4524, to limit the judicial enforceability of predispute nondisclosure and nondisparagement contract clauses relating to disputes involving sexual assault and sexual harassment, S. 673, to provide a temporary safe harbor for publishers of online content to collectively negotiate with dominant online platforms regarding the terms on which content may be distributed, and the nominations of Dana M. Douglas, of Louisiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, Bradley N. Garcia, of Maryland, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit, Frances Kay Behm, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan, Jerry W. Blackwell, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota, Anne M. Nardacci, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of New York, and Kevin G. Ritz, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee, Department of Justice, 9 a.m., SH-216.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, hearing entitled "A 2022 Review of the Farm Bill: Broadband", 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth and Zoom.

Committee on Education And Labor, Full Committee, business meeting to approve Subcommittee assignments; and markup on H. Res. 1295, of inquiry directing the Secretary of Education to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the Department of Education's cost estimates for the Secretary's waivers related to public service loan forgiveness and income-driven repayment; H. Res. 1296, of inquiry requesting the President and directing the Secretary of Education to transmit, respectively, certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the legal authority to forgive Federal student loan debt; and H. Res. 1273, of inquiry directing the President to provide certain documents in the President's possession to the House of Representatives relating to communication between the executive branch and the American Federation of Teachers regarding reopening schools and supporting safe, in-person learning, 10:15 a.m., 2175 Rayburn and Zoom.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, continue markup on H.R. 8446, the "Global Food Security Reauthorization Act of 2022"; H.R. 2374, the "Peace and Tolerance in Palestinian Education Act"; H. Res. 1240, requesting the President, and directing the Secretary of State, to transmit to the House of Representatives copies of all documents in their possession referring or relating to certain aspects of the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan; H. Res. 1266, requesting the President to

transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to any initiative or negotiations regarding Iran's nuclear program; H. Res. 1342, reaffirming the importance of diplomacy and development in United States-African Union relations, promoting strategic partnerships and shared objectives between the United States and the African Union, and expressing strong support for the successful implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement; H.R. 4213, the "YSEALI Act"; H.R. 8681, the "John Lewis Civil Rights Fellowship Act"; H.R. 8153, the "Indo-Pacific Engagement Act"; H.R. 8813, the "AFFECT Human Rights in Venezuela Act"; and H.R. 6846, the "CORRUPT Act", 9 a.m., 2172 Rayburn and Webex.

Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and Global Corporate Social Impact, hearing entitled "The Sustainable Development Goals and Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic: Implications for U.S. Policy", 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn and Webex.

Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Civilian Security, Migration and International Economic Policy, hearing entitled "Learning Loss in Latin America and the Caribbean: Building Better Education Systems in the Wake of the Pandemic", 12:30 p.m., 2127 Rayburn and Webex.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Innovation, hearing entitled "Building on our Baseline: Securing Industrial Control Systems Against Cyberattacks", 10 a.m., 310 Cannon and Webex.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, markup on H. Res. 1247, of inquiry directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the 2023-2028 five-year program for offshore oil and gas leasing; H. Res. 1248, of inquiry directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the compliance with the obligations of the Mineral Leasing Act; H. Res. 1251, of inquiry directing the Secretary of Agriculture to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the mineral withdrawal within the Superior National Forest; H. Res. 1252, of inquiry directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the mineral withdrawal within the Superior National Forest; and H. Res. 1253, of inquiry directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the actions of the Department of the Interior's Departmental Ethics Office, 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth and Webex.

Committee on Oversight and Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Fueling the Climate Crisis: Examining Big Oil's Prices, Profits, and Pledges", 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn and Zoom.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight, hearing entitled "The Fountain of Youth? The Quest for Aging Therapies", 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn and Zoom.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Workforce Development,

hearing entitled “Back to School, Back to Startups: Supporting Youth Apprenticeship, Entrepreneurship, and Workforce Development”, 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn and Zoom.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, hearing entitled “Recovery Update: Status of FEMA Recovery Efforts in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands 5 Years After Hurricanes Irma and Maria”, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn and Zoom.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing entitled “Veteran Readiness and Employment: Is VA Succeeding?”, 10 a.m., HVC–210 and Zoom.

Full Committee, hearing entitled “Examining Women Veterans’ Access to the Full Spectrum of Medical Care, Including Reproductive Healthcare, through the Department of Affairs (VA) Veteran Health Administration (VHA)”, 2 p.m., HVC–210 and Zoom

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Preparing America’s Health Care Infrastructure for the Climate Crisis”, 11 a.m., 1100 Longworth and Webex.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: to hold hearings to examine Taira Paievska on Russia’s war in Ukraine, 9 a.m., SD–106.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, September 15

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: After the transaction of any morning business, Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Sarah A. L. Merriam, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, post-cloture, and vote on confirmation thereon at 11:30 a.m.

Following disposition of the nomination of Sarah A. L. Merriam, Senate will begin consideration of the nomination of David P. Pekoske, of Maryland, to be Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, and vote on confirmation thereon at 1:45 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

12 noon, Thursday, September 15

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 302—Preventing a Patronage System Act. Complete consideration of H.R. 2988—Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act. Complete consideration of H.R. 8326—Ensuring a Fair and Accurate Census Act.

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