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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O Holy God, who has taught us to place our confidence in You, give the Members of this body the power of Your wisdom. In all their duties, empower them to be loyal to You and obedient to Your precepts. Although violence, chaos, and turbulence seem to prevail in our land, give our Senators faith to believe that You are willing to help them solve the problems they face.

Lord, be their abiding reality and lead them into the paths of loving service as they strive to honor You. Open their eyes to the many things they can do to accomplish Your will.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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 (Mrs. MURRAY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 9, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH 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 to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of L. Felice Gorordo, of Florida, to be United States Alternate Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of two years.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

DEBT CEILING

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, 7 of the last 10 debt limit increases were attached to bipartisan government spending deals. All three of the debt limit increases from 2017 through 2020 were attached to bipartisan government spending deals.

So there is no reason why our country should be drifting toward crisis. The solution is clear; it has been clear

for months. President Biden needs to negotiate on spending with Speaker MCCARTHY.

The Speaker has been at the table since February. House Republicans are the only people in town who have passed any bill that prevents default. President Biden has been MIA.

House and Senate Democrats have no plan, no proposal. They have no bill to raise the debt ceiling that could pass either in the House or the Senate, let alone both.

So the choice is President Biden's: Either he drives the country into default or he comes to the table.

Four years ago, in 2019, the roles were reversed. Republicans held the White House. Democrats held the White House. I was the majority leader. And my advice to the President then was the same as my advice to the President now: raise the debt limit by negotiating spending levels with the Speaker.

That administration listened. They sent Secretary Mnuchin to hammer out a debt deal with Speaker PELOSI. They struck a compromise. Spending levels were set, and the debt limit was raised.

That is what a responsible Senate majority leader would be telling the Biden White House today: Sit down with the Speaker and strike a deal.

Any compromise flushed out by the Republican House and the Democratic White House will pass the Senate easily. So President Biden's actions will either prevent default or guarantee default.

It is just that simple. It is up to the President.

Either President Biden causes an economic disaster of his own creation or he picks up the 2019 playbook and negotiates with Speaker MCCARTHY.

Everybody knows this is on President Biden. Rank-and-file House and Senate Democrats have publicly called on the White House to negotiate.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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S1553

The Washington Post—the Washington Post—ran an entire editorial entitled, “It’s time for Biden to call McCarthy!”

Last week, an entire news story detailed how the White House is garnering no support from nonpartisan leaders or experts for their bizarre strategy of sleepwalking into disaster.

The people around President Biden, including the Senate Democratic leader, seem to think they can wish away the results of the midterm election. They want to pretend the American people didn’t flip the House.

That is not how it works. In divided government, you negotiate. The President and the Speaker need to talk, just like in 2019. We need a bipartisan spending agreement, just like 7 of the previous 10 debt limit deals. I will be joining the White House meeting later today, and I will continue to support the Speaker.

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.

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 4.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Bradley N. Garcia, of Maryland, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The 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. 4, Bradley N. Garcia, of Maryland, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Ben Ray Lujan, Tammy Duckworth, John W. Hickenlooper, Amy Klobuchar, Jack Reed, Jeanne Shaheen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Edward J. Markey, Alex Padilla, Margaret Wood Hassan, Catherine Cortez Masto, Gary C. Peters.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion filed today be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. 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.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, on May 4, 2019, 15-year-old Mason Bogard died after trying to mimic a choking challenge he saw on social media.

Three days earlier, his parents had found him unconscious in his room with a belt around his neck. There was nothing his doctors could do over that 3-day period to save his life. I am telling Mason’s story today, with the permission of his mother, because it is so different from other stories.

I have shared a lot of these stories about the dangerous influence that online platforms have on our Nation’s children. There is no evidence to suggest Mason was trying to hurt himself. This death was an accident.

We know this because after Mason died, his parents found a self-recorded video on his phone that had happened days prior to the accident. It shows him attempting the same viral challenge that killed him.

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to speak with Mason’s mom Joann about what she is doing to warn other parents about what is happening on these platforms.

Even before she lost her son, Joann knew about the dangers that social media could bring into her home. And she did everything in her power to protect her children from it. She used watchdog apps, physically checked their devices, and had candid conversations with the whole family about how dangerous content can be when it is popping up in your news feed.

At this point, I want to share what Joann told me about her efforts to make online platforms keep their promises about moderating and removing dangerous content like choking challenges.

And I am quoting Joann:

Shortly after Mason’s death, I began searching for Choking Challenge videos on all of the platforms. I searched for them weekly and I have reported hundreds. But the typical reply that I receive, if I receive a reply at all is—

And she quotes the social media platforms—

“We found that the reported content doesn’t violate our Community Guidelines. We understand that you may not want to see this type content, and you have the option to block the account that posted it.”

She went on to tell me that there was no process for an appeal, no way to push for answers from these so-called moderators. The videos stayed online. I would remind my colleagues that the response she is describing was generated after she reported videos of children strangling themselves in order to get clicks.

This is one woman’s story about one precious child—her child—who died because an online platform, a social media platform failed him. But thousands of parents can tell you similar stories about how their children got caught up in viral trends or emotionally spiraled after encountering content that preyed upon their insecurities.

And while we know that social media isn’t the only cause for this decline in mental health, we do know that things have gotten much worse since kids started spending so much time online.

According to the Pew Research Center, close to 60 percent of our Nation’s youth have experienced some form of abuse online. It is safe to assume that at least that many have been exposed to content glorifying bullying, mental illness, and self-harm.

Between 2010 and 2019 teen depression rates doubled, with the largest increase among girls. The CDC recently produced data showing that adolescents are now the most likely age group to visit the emergency room for suicidal thoughts, with nearly one in three teen girls seriously considering attempting suicide.

Before the rise of social media, suicide by the young had stabilized and declined for decades. Now, it is the third leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 15 and 24.

The Consumer Protection Subcommittee, where I serve, has produced five hearings’ worth of evidence showing that harmful content is readily available to minors, that online platforms are aware of this, and that they have made the conscious decision to ignore it. Think about that.

They have proved time and again that they will not follow through on their commitment to moderate harmful content unless they are forced to do so. So I think it is time that we force them to take action.

It is going to be a long road, and I am going to be blunt. When it comes to putting guardrails on Silicon Valley, there are a million different ways to get it wrong. But, over the years, Congress has learned some valuable lessons, and now we know how to fix the

problem, instead of just putting an expensive bandaid on that problem.

First, I am all for encouraging innovation, but let's be clear: The motto "move fast and break things" has a cost, and we don't want that cost to be imposed on our children.

We know that Big Tech will never hold themselves accountable to any acceptable safety standard. The creation of safety by design and the resulting accountability should be our goal.

Second, we want to make sure that these safety standards don't allow these companies to take their hands off the wheel once certain requirements are met. Verifying a user's age or obtaining parental consent for minors to use the platforms—that is important, but it will not stop children from getting bombarded with dangerous content once they are online.

And, finally, legislation must not simply shift the burden of controlling the spread of this dangerous content onto the parents. This is precisely what Big Tech companies have been doing for years, and it is not working. Parents want to be involved, but they cannot protect their children if the platforms keep moving the goalposts to protect their business models.

Unfortunately, when our children are on these platforms, our children are the product. These platforms data mine our children, and then they market that data.

We have seen proposal after proposal fail, but after years of talking to parents and tech companies and policy experts, we finally have the opportunity to support a bill that does get it right.

Last week, Senator BLUMENTHAL and I reintroduced the Kids Online Safety Act. As of today, this bill has 33 bipartisan cosponsors and the endorsement of hundreds of bipartisan organizations because it does exactly what moms like Joann Bogard and other advocates have been asking Congress to do.

First, it would force platforms to give families the ability to protect minors' information, disable addictive product features, and opt out of algorithmic recommendations.

Next, it would give parents the safeguards needed to protect their kids online, as well as a dedicated portal to report harmful behavior.

Predatory content and content that promotes self-harm, suicide, and eating disorders—all of this that causes problems for our kids would become a problem that the platforms have to deal with—no more denial, no more deflection.

We also included requirements for annual risk assessments and access to datasets we can use to assess safety threats to underage users.

This is a very straightforward bill. It won't hinder innovation. It won't allow platforms to take their hands off the wheel, and it won't put the burden on parents to try to figure out how in the world to control the access their children have to this harmful content.

Our children are exposed to things in the virtual space that we would never

allow them to be exposed to in the physical space. Over the past few years we have heard pundit after armchair pundit insist that it is time to treat our kids like grownups. But our children are not adults, and it is our responsibility to protect them so that, one day, they will have the opportunity to be grownups. Our children are being exposed to things that no reasonable parent would ever allow their child to know about these things.

If there is one thing we have learned during our hearings with the Consumer Protection Subcommittee, it is that simply encouraging more supervision is not enough. A high-tech permission slip just isn't going to cut it. If we want to keep kids safe online, we have to demand real accountability from these Big Tech social media platforms.

Last Congress, the Kids Online Safety Act passed out of the Commerce Committee 28 to 0. That is right—unanimous support. I would ask my colleagues on each side of the aisle to join me and Senator BLUMENTHAL in calling for a vote so that we can finally push this bill across the finish line and provide parents the toolbox they need to protect their children from the harm in the virtual media.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. 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.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it has been a rough weekend in Texas. Last weekend, tragedy struck the city of Allen, TX, and a driver in Brownsville drove into a group of migrants, killing a number of them and injuring others. In both cases, the circumstances surrounding these incidents are still being investigated.

On a beautiful Saturday afternoon, people of all ages visited a popular outdoor mall in the suburbs north of Dallas. That is where Allen is. Shoppers filtered in and out of stores with their children and were enjoying what appeared to be a normal weekend, but, as we know now, the day took a tragic turn when a man drove up to the crowded shopping mall and got out of his car with a gun and began firing. Shoppers ducked behind cars and ran into stores. Customers crowded into tiny storage rooms. Parents used their own bodies to protect their children. The shooter murdered eight innocent people and wounded seven others before being killed himself by police. The victims were between the ages of 3 and 37.

A patch on the shooter's clothing and his social media posts suggest that he might have espoused White supremacist and other extremist views. As I said, law enforcement is still gathering

information about him and his motives, but what we know so far is that he was discharged from the army prematurely due to mental health reasons. But it is unclear if that discharge or any other factors would have legally disqualified him from purchasing a firearm.

Obviously, a dishonorable discharge, a felony conviction—those sorts of things—would result in your being prohibited under existing law from purchasing a firearm, but we don't know whether there are other circumstances beyond his premature discharge from the army after only 3 months due to mental health reasons which rise to the level necessary to invoke one of those disqualifying actions.

So at this moment, there is still a lot we don't know. And, of course, at times like this, we are all trying to make sense of this unspeakable tragedy. Obviously, I am eager to learn more about the circumstances that led to this attack. But one thing is for sure, and that is local law enforcement officials leading this investigation and searching for answers have already done heroic work, thanks to an Allen Police Department officer who was at the mall for other reasons and who was able to respond quickly and neutralize the shooter. But for that police officer, many others would have been injured and died.

So I am grateful to the police officers, the emergency medical technicians, and healthcare workers who responded to this tragedy—as I said, especially the heroic officer who responded to gunfire and immediately ran toward the danger.

The shooter was carrying multiple weapons and had five additional guns in his car. If not for the quick action of that police officer, there is no question that even more families would be grieving today. I have spoken to local officials who are responding to this crisis, including Mayor Ken Fulk and Police Chief Brian Harvey. I offered my condolences and offered whatever help we might be able to provide, whatever assistance we can provide.

One of the things Chief Harvey told me that he particularly appreciated is the FBI had come forward with crime victim services, a number of FBI agents providing that assistance to the victims of this terrible shooting, which relieves a lot of the pressure on this local police department. And, of course, the FBI is now taking the lead in the investigation, supported by Texas Rangers, the Department of Public Safety, and, of course, the Allen Police Department.

So, today, I join all Texans in grieving this senseless tragedy. We mourn the eight lives that were stolen and lift up the survivors, who will never forget the horror they endured that day.

I know, Mr. President, because I have been part of negotiations over the last few years involving the so-called Fix NICS legislation—Senator CHRIS MURPHY of Connecticut and I took the lead

on that bill to try to fix gaps in the background check system. The one area of consensus between people who are avid supporters of the Second Amendment and those who believe that we ought to ban some types of weapons, even for law-abiding citizens—the one area we can agree on is that people with criminal records and people who are mentally ill should not be able to purchase firearms. And that is simply enforcing current law.

So we were able to do something in the Fix NICS bill a couple of years back—I think it was 2018 now—that I believed met my test for whether we should do legislation like that, and that is: Will it save lives? And I believe it has.

More recently, we passed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which is so new that it is only now being implemented. This bill did, of course, a number of things. It provided for an enhanced background checks for gun purchasers between the age of 18 and 21. The reason why that age group is so important is because the profile of many of these disaffected young men—who are obviously suffering from severe mental illness, who are so tortured that they not only want to commit suicide, they want to take other people with them—that cohort, that group of young purchasers, I believed we needed to go back and look at some of the juvenile records for mental health adjudications, for criminal convictions.

These are the sorts of things that, if you had been an adult, would disqualify you, and you would not be able to purchase a firearm under existing law. But in Uvalde, TX, Salvador Ramos turned 18 years old, and even though everybody in the neighborhood knew he was a ticking time bomb—he had tortured animals; he had posted threats on social media; he shot his own grandmother who insisted he go back to school after a long absence due to COVID restrictions—he was able to purchase firearms without revealing anything about his juvenile record, without consulting with the local police, who knew him well.

That has all changed by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. And the most recent tally I saw from the FBI is that approximately 100 different purchases have been intercepted for individuals between the age of 18 and 21 who had disqualifying juvenile records that are now being queried as a result of that bill.

But the other parts of it that were so important are that we made the single largest investment in community-based mental health care in American history in that bill. We were able to find an offset so it didn't involve spending new money, but it was billions of dollars in investment so more communities can have locally based community health services. Because, frankly, there are too many people falling through that net. The net doesn't really even exist.

And we also made sure that our schools provided more comprehensive services. Part of the problem, though, is that, as there is more demand for mental health counseling and treatment, there are not enough people qualified to provide those sorts of services. So this is a huge problem.

The bill provided grants and incentives to educational institutions so more people would train in those areas and so there would be more resources available for people suffering from psychological stress or even mental illness so that they can hopefully get better and become productive members of society.

So I know, at times like this, people say: Well, we need to do something. Twice in recent history the U.S. Congress has come together on a bipartisan basis to do something that meets that test I mentioned a moment ago: Will it save lives? And I believe, in both instances, the legislation we passed that was signed by the President will save lives.

But, of course, then we see what happened in Allen, and we wonder: What else is there? I mentioned the fact that these mass shooters, not only are they taking the lives of innocent people, they are, essentially, committing suicide themselves. They know they are not going to make it out of here alive. And there is this phenomenon that I learned from law enforcement called “suicide by cop” where actually mentally ill individuals who are unwilling to take their own life will encounter the police in a violent encounter which results in their loss of life, which, essentially, is a way of their committing suicide.

I believe these mass shootings are also a form of suicide because these shooters know they are not going to make their way out of it. But, tragically, not only do they take their own life; they take the lives of innocent others.

So we grieve with all the families and the entire community in and around Allen, TX, as we do each time one of these incidents occurs, and we will continue to look for ways we can find solutions to this sort of violence. But eventually or ultimately, I believe, what we are talking about are crimes; that while we can investigate crimes, we can prosecute crimes, we can punish crime, and we can even deter crime, but we haven't yet figured a way to stop crime.

But, hopefully, there is more we can do.

DEBT CEILING

Mr. President, on another matter, the President of the United States convened his first meeting of the four top congressional leaders to discuss the looming debt crisis. A potential default has been on the horizon for months now, and from the beginning, both sides—Republicans and Democrats—have said: We believe the debt ceiling needs to be addressed.

Republicans, for their part, have said: We need to do what we have done

before, and that is to couple a debt ceiling increase with spending reforms because you just can't keep maxing out your credit card and go back and ask that the credit card limits be increased without coming up with some plan to actually pay down the debt you incur. That has happened time and time again. I believe President Biden, when he was in the Senate, voted for that sort of coupling of spending reforms and debt ceiling increase. I think it was four times, if memory serves me correctly.

But never before has the national debt been the size it is now. Of course, you can point to COVID-19. This was, to my mind, sort of the equivalent of a domestic “World War III”; although, it was a healthcare battle and war, and we had to do whatever we could to deal with it, and we did. But that spending continued when President Biden was in office with a Democratic House and Senate; and, without any additional votes from Republicans, after we had done that together—as we should do things in a bipartisan way if we can—Democrats, including the President, added another \$2.7 trillion to the national debt.

And now the President takes the incredibly irresponsible position that: I am not going to negotiate. We just want to raise the debt ceiling. We don't want to talk about how we pay down that debt or any spending reforms.

Now, we all know the fact that, at \$31.5 trillion, \$31.7 trillion, we are on an unsustainable path. Everybody knows that. And the debt ceiling is important because it forces us to do something we should do anyway, and that is have a serious conversation about our Nation's spending habits, about Congress's spending habits.

Well, President Biden announced this debt ceiling crisis that was looming and subject only to how much money was coming in the door in terms of tax revenue as to when the “X” date would hit. Now we hear from the Secretary of the Treasury it is probably sometime in June. But instead of engaging back when the announcement was made, the President stuck his fingers in his ears and refused to even discuss any sort of negotiated outcome. Again, this is the party that spent more than \$2.6 trillion by themselves, and now they are refusing to entertain any ideas or any suggestion that, yes, America has a spending problem. But we know it does. We know we do, and we know Congress and the President are the only ones who can deal with it.

Well, to make matters worse, Democrats in Congress, including the President, have even attacked Republicans for trying to act responsibly to deal with this debt ceiling and have the temerity to suggest that, yes, there are some spending reforms that need to be coupled along with it.

Earlier this year, the Senate majority leader criticized House Republicans' approach to the debt ceiling as hostage-taking. He described it as

“dangerous” and “destabilizing,” but he failed to mention this was the exact same approach he took several years ago.

You know, that is one thing I have learned about the Senate. If you are around here long enough and if you are not careful, you are liable to find yourself on both sides of an issue and look a little hypocritical in the process.

So back in 2017, our country was in a similar position. The United States hit the debt ceiling. The Department of the Treasury began using extraordinary measures to continue to pay the bills, and Congress was racing the clock to avoid a default. At that point, Republicans held the majority in the Senate, and Minority Leader CHUCK SCHUMER said the debt ceiling gave Democrats leverage in bipartisan talks. He and then-Speaker NANCY PELOSI strategically used a potential debt crisis to strengthen their hand in broader negotiations, which is a pretty sharp contrast with Senator SCHUMER's position today. When he was the one trying to negotiate, the debt ceiling was fair game as leverage, but when it is House Republicans who are being the responsible ones by initiating a proposal to raise the debt ceiling—and I say initiating a negotiation, hopefully—he says it is dangerous, it is destabilizing, it is hostage-taking. The hypocrisy is palpable.

The problem with Democrats' argument here isn't just rhetorical; it is also impractical. From the get-go, Speaker MCCARTHY has made it absolutely clear that a clean debt ceiling increase will not pass the House. The votes aren't there, plain and simple. Now, Senate Republicans have made it abundantly clear that a clean debt ceiling cannot pass the Senate. Those are the facts. It won't pass the House, and it can't pass the Senate.

Last week, I joined 42 Republican colleagues in affirming our support for the House's proposal to initiate a negotiation to raise the debt ceiling. We signed a letter to Senator SCHUMER, that was led by my friend Senator LEE of Utah, saying, we will not vote for cloture on any bill that raises the debt ceiling without substantive spending and budget reforms.

We all know that in a Chamber that requires 60 votes to move legislation, a united block of 43 Senators means it ain't going to happen. If Senator SCHUMER puts a clean debt ceiling increase on the floor, it will fail; he won't have the votes. And that is just a fact of life.

The big question now is, Where does that leave us? I see two options. Option 1: The Senate can spend the next few weeks holding show votes on bills that are guaranteed to fail. Democrats can waste even more time, as our country inches closer and closer to a debt crisis—something both sides have said they want to avoid—or, second option, the President can get off the sidelines and start negotiating with Speaker MCCARTHY so we can make progress on a bipartisan bill that will actually pass both Chambers of Congress.

I think we know what is going to happen. There has to be a negotiated outcome. The President can say: I am not going to negotiate. He will negotiate if he wants to avoid economic catastrophe.

Already, the public is very anxious about the condition of our economy. Inflation is at a 40-year high. It has come down a tad, but the Federal Reserve continues to raise interest rates, make everything more expensive. Companies are laying off employees, particularly in the tech sector. People are worried. Their cost of living has increased dramatically.

I was having lunch with a friend of mine in Austin, TX, yesterday who is a homebuilder. And he talked about the dramatic increase in the components of homes that he builds—everything from lumber to air-conditioning, to plumbing. You name it, everything is more expensive.

So President Biden will, contrary to his current position, negotiate. I am confident of that. But it seems like he is committed to a soap opera in the meantime—a lot of drama, a lot of wailing, and gnashing of teeth, a lot of speculation that is going to do nothing but to rattle the confidence of the American people in their economy and what the future may hold.

This is really an unforced error by the President. It is time to accept the fact that a clean debt ceiling increase has no chance of becoming law.

So the ball is in our Democratic colleagues' court. I think President Biden didn't think Speaker MCCARTHY would be able to pull together the votes to pass a bill in the House, and he thought, That gives me ultimate leverage because if Republicans in the House can't get it together, they are going to have no option but to deal with me on my terms.

But Speaker MCCARTHY and House Republicans, I am proud to say, were able to come up with a reasonable bill that includes raising the debt ceiling.

Now, I understand President Biden may say: Well, I don't like that; there are parts of it I simply can't accept. But that is how negotiations get started. But not if the President of the United States, the leader of the free world, is sitting on his couch, waiting for the American people to become more and more anxious about their future, including the future of the economy and their jobs.

Last month, the House passed a bill to avert a debt crisis, and now it is the Democrats' turn to respond. That is negotiating 101: One side makes an offer, and the other side counteroffers.

Each day our country is moving closer and closer to a debt default. President Biden has wasted months parroting the same ridiculous talking points, and now is not the time to double down on that tired rhetoric. It is time to start talking. And, again, it is not uncommon for debt limit increases to be coupled with broader negotiations.

As I pointed out, Senator SCHUMER was a proponent of that back in 2017. He said at the time the debt ceiling “gives another ample opportunity for bipartisanship, not for one party jamming its choices down the throats of the other.”

I agree with Senator SCHUMER in 2017, and I disagree with CHUCK SCHUMER in 2023, in his current position.

So far, Democrats have blindly adhered to this position of no negotiations, no reform; let's just keep on spending until we bankrupt this country.

It is time to change course and to focus on solutions. The art of the possible—that is what we are here to do. We need to focus on solutions that can pass a Republican-led House and a Democrat-led Senate.

And that means Speaker MCCARTHY and President Biden need to talk. And more than that, they need to reach an agreement and to do so soon. It is time for President Biden to respond to the House's offer with a reasonable counteroffer and to negotiate an end to this potential debt ceiling crisis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to use a prop or two during my remarks.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 878

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, today, I would like to talk about a distasteful subject to me—I get angry whenever I think about it—fentanyl dealers. I hope there is a special place in Hell for them—fentanyl dealers.

Today is National Fentanyl Awareness Day. In 2021, fentanyl killed 71,000 Americans. If you break down these sterile statistics, you will see that somebody in our country dies from fentanyl poisoning every 7 seconds. There ought to be a special place in Hell for fentanyl dealers.

And these aren't just sterile statistics. These are real people, and they have real families whose lives are torn apart. A lot of these deaths occur among young people. Fentanyl is now the leading cause of death for Americans who are 18 to 49.

From 2020 to 2021, fentanyl deaths in our country increased by 24 percent. It was even more among young people.

What you allow is what will continue. And today, this body—the U.S. Congress—allows fentanyl dealers to carry on their person, if they would like to, enough fentanyl to kill 20,000 Americans before they face a mandatory 5-year minimum sentence if they are caught. Until these fentanyl dealers have to deal themselves with real consequences, I think the carnage is going to continue.

I have a bill—it is called the Fairness in Fentanyl Sentencing Act of 2023, and it will change what I just talked about drastically. It will reduce the amount

of fentanyl that a fentanyl dealer has to possess before facing the mandatory minimum 5 years of prison.

Now, I know you know this, but when you are dealing with fentanyl, the amounts really matter. Fentanyl is 50 times more potent than heroin—not 5, not 15—50 times more potent. It takes only 2 milligrams to kill you.

Here is a pencil. Here is the point of the pencil. The amount of fentanyl you can put on the point of a pencil will kill you.

Let me say that again.

The amount of fentanyl that you can put on the point of a pencil will kill you.

Today, fentanyl dealers can carry up to 40 grams of fentanyl before they face the mandatory minimum 5 years of prison.

And with me today is one of my colleagues, Mr. Wesley Davis, who is also a good lawyer, I might add. This is 40 grams of fentanyl. It is not actually fentanyl; it is flour. But if the flour were fentanyl, this would be 40 grams. You can have this much—you have to have this much before you get a minimum of a 5-year sentence. And remember the pencil? Enough to go on the head of a pencil can kill you. But you have to have this much—I don't know how many pencil points this is, but it is a lot. You have to have this much to get a minimum 5-year sentence—40 grams.

It would kill 20,000 people. This amount will kill every Member of this body 200 times over—every Member of this body 200 times over. And thanks to us, and the laws that we passed, the fentanyl dealer would just get a minimum 5-year sentence.

This bag has 400 grams in it. It is flour, but fentanyl would represent the same thing. This has 400 grams. You have to have 400 grams, given the laws that we have passed, to face a mandatory 10-year sentence, and 400 grams will kill 200,000 people dead as a door-nail.

Shreveport, LA, in my State—some of you have been there; if you haven't, you should visit—is home to 184,000 people. So a dealer has to have 400 grams—an amount that would kill every man, woman, and child in Shreveport, 400 grams—in order to get a mandatory 10-year sentence.

These sentencing guidelines do not reflect how much damage can be done with just a little bit of fentanyl. For example, fentanyl dealers face a 5-year mandatory minimum sentence if they have 5 grams of methamphetamine. To get 5 years in prison, you just have to have 5 grams of methamphetamine, but you have to have 40 grams of fentanyl, which is 50 times more powerful than heroin. Does that make any sense to anyone?

Meth is a bad drug. I am not defending meth. But it is not nearly as lethal as fentanyl. This stuff will kill you, and people deal it every day in America. They deal it every day, and they are not facing consequences. In 2021, in

fact, meth killed less than half as many people as fentanyl. Yet fentanyl traffickers—fentanyl dealers—I don't want to call them traffickers because that sounds too tame to me, too beige. They are dealers. They are drug dealers. They are death dealers. Fentanyl dealers can possess eight times as much fentanyl before facing the same mandatory minimum sentence as somebody who is dealing meth. We need a sentencing scheme that looks like somebody designed the damn thing on purpose.

We need to have a Criminal Code that reflects fentanyl's lethal force.

(Mr. MARKEY assumed the Chair.)

My bill, the Fairness in Fentanyl Sentencing Act of 2023, is pretty simple. It will cut the fentanyl threshold for the 5-year mandatory minimum sentence from 40 grams to 2 grams—from 40 grams to 2 grams. You are not going to have 2 grams of fentanyl on you unless you are dealing.

It would reduce the legal threshold for fentanyl analogs as well. Fentanyl analogs are synthetic copycats of fentanyl, and actually, these analogs can be even more lethal than pure fentanyl itself.

Today, a dealer can carry up to 10 grams of fentanyl analogs before facing a 5-year mandatory minimum sentence. My bill would drop that threshold down to half a gram. By doing this, my bill helps our Criminal Code reflect the reality that fentanyl is not like other drugs. It is not, I mean, as bad as meth is, as bad as PCP is, as bad as crack cocaine is, as bad as heroin is, as bad as powder cocaine is, fentanyl is in a class by itself.

The drug cartels who operate south of our border have found that fentanyl is a cheap way to cut corners and to make more money. They use fentanyl to make other drugs. They put fentanyl into cocaine. They put it into heroin, which makes the final concoction cheaper and more powerful. Today, everything from marijuana to Adderall can be laced with lethal amounts of fentanyl on the black market. It gives the concoction more kick, and the drug dealers make more money, which is all they care about. If the drug dealers don't measure it right, it will kill you.

Now, look, we all know that young people experiment, and many young people—I dare say most young people—are going to try drugs. When my son, whom I love more than life itself, was a youngster—he is no longer young. Well, he is young.

I consider you and I young, Mr. President.

When my son was growing up—he is now a grown man—I would lecture him about drugs, and I would say: Don't use them. I knew he was going to try them, but I would say: Don't use them.

He said: Dad, why?

You get addicted. You get addicted.

I was always terrified that my son would get addicted and would fall in with the wrong crowd.

That conversation today is different for parents with young teenagers. Now it is, you can't even try it once—not fentanyl. You can't even try LSD or meth or PCP or crack cocaine or heroin or powder cocaine. Do you know why? Because it might have fentanyl in it. The drug dealers cut these products with fentanyl, and if they put too much in it, you get one shot—one shot. Forget addiction; the first time a young person experiments might be the last.

My State of Louisiana, like every other State in this country, has seen the carnage of fentanyl. We all have. In 2021, 94 percent of drug overdose deaths in New Orleans were related to what? Fentanyl. In Louisiana, we call our counties parishes. Our coroner's office in East Baton Rouge Parish investigated 300 overdose deaths, and 88 percent of them last year were linked to fentanyl. In an average month in St. Tammany Parish, or county, where I live, we lose 10 or 11 people just about every month—10 or 11 young people usually—to fentanyl overdoses. Why? These weren't people just taking fentanyl; these were people taking other drugs that drug dealers—each of whom should be assigned a special place in Hell—that drug dealers are cutting with fentanyl to give the concoction a higher high to make more money. If they measure wrong and put too much fentanyl in it, you get to try their product one time, and then you are dead. These are sons. These are daughters. These are friends. These are coworkers. And every one of them has a family.

While our families and our kids are suffering, the cartels and the drug dealers who help them in America are getting rich. There was a recent report from the Department of Justice. It stated that fentanyl dealing is one of the Sonora Cartel's most lucrative endeavors. That cartel is led by three of El Chapo's sons. We are not talking choirboys here; they have made a boatload of money selling poison to our children.

But it is not just them; it is dealers in the United States as well. Our Customs and Border Protection officers are working as hard as they can to stop drugs from coming into this country, but their hands are tied by our bad policies.

More people have crossed the border in the last year than at any time in the history of ever. That is a fact. More than 5 million people have entered this country illegally under President Biden, during the Biden administration. I only have 4.6 million people in Louisiana, so imagine just us adding another State besides Louisiana. The problem is expected to get worse. As we know, title 42 expires next week, and more people will be coming in. But it is not just folks who are coming into our country illegally.

Let me say, I don't hate migrants. I don't hate immigrants. I love immigrants. I mean, we are a nation of immigrants. But we have a legal immigration system, and we ought to follow it. Most Americans distinguish between legal immigration and illegal immigration. If you support legal immigration, as I do, and oppose illegal immigration, that doesn't make you a racist, as some people think.

The American people oppose illegal immigration and support legal immigration for the same reason they lock their front doors at night. Most Americans don't lock their front doors at night because they hate everybody on the outside; they do it because they love people on the inside, and they want to know who is coming in and out. They are happy to welcome—I am happy to welcome Nigerian doctors and German engineers and whomever to come into our country legally. Vetting people at the border is not racist; it is prudent.

But a lot comes across that border—not just people. A lot of fentanyl does as well. In 2022, Customs and Border Protection seized 14,000 pounds of fentanyl—a 127-percent increase from the previous year. That is enough fentanyl to kill every man, every woman, every child in the United States.

We have to show the cartels and the people in America, in our communities, who are dealing this stuff that there are consequences for poisoning people, especially young people.

I have also introduced a bill called Ending the Notorious, Aggressive, and Remorseless Criminal Organizations and Syndicates Act of 2023. It is known as the NARCOS Act. It will designate these cartels as foreign terrorist organizations. We need to give our border agents the resources to secure the border and to stop these dealers before they set foot in our country.

Let me return to the Fairness in Fentanyl Sentencing Act of 2023. It is not going to solve the problem, but it is a start. Dealers carrying enough fentanyl to kill a small town deserve to face a minimum mandatory sentence of 5 years, and they deserve to be punished more severely than someone carrying meth or PCP or crack cocaine because fentanyl is in a class by itself. Without serious prison sentences for these drug dealers who put money over human life, we are not going to make progress. A 5-year prison sentence can close one stream of fentanyl into our communities, and it might deter the next person who is looking to make a quick buck while trafficking this poison.

I am going to be clear. I am almost done. My bill is not looking to punish acts. My bill will not punish acts. I believe in free will and responsibility, but I also think there are mitigating circumstances in the nitty-gritty of life. That is why, if you are an addict and you are convicted of a crime, a serious crime, a judge will consider mitigating

circumstances, like addiction. I wouldn't wish addiction on my worst enemy.

This bill isn't about addiction. A lot of these people don't even take their own product. This is about people—fentanyl dealers—who deal death every day to make money, and there ought to be a special place in Hell for them. In Congress, this Senate punishes them less than we punish somebody dealing meth.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 878 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. Further, I ask 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. BOOKER. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, the Senator from Louisiana is a friend and someone who is, as he said, angry about these issues. That passion is real. His anger, his frustration, his determination is something that I share. In fact, I think this is one of the issues that, if you polled 100 Senators, you would see 100 Senators who sincerely and urgently believe we need to do something with this crisis that the Senator from Louisiana has so patiently and clearly and candidly put forward. The fentanyl crisis is killing Americans at outrageous rates. Doing nothing or continuing to do the same thing is absolutely unacceptable.

So my colleague, his passion—Louisianians should know that this is one of the best fighters when it comes to protecting people in his State, and his passion for protection affects people all over this country.

But this is the challenge I have. We have now seen generations of the so-called War on Drugs, and the solutions that we seem to come up with are about more and more and more incarceration, longer and longer and longer sentences. And if that would solve the problem, count me in for continuing to go down that pathway.

We now incarcerate more people than any country on the planet Earth. One out of every three incarcerated women on the planet Earth is here in America. One out of every four incarcerated people in the world is here in America. But has that stopped the crisis of drugs in our communities, kids dying of fentanyl, of opioids? No. There is no correlation. Not one study—nothing—shows that higher and higher rates, higher and higher sentencing relate in any way to safer communities, and I have looked for that data.

The Department of Justice itself—the folks who are prosecuting people for drugs—their own report from the National Institute of Justice says more

severe punishments do not chasten individuals convicted of these crimes. It has no correlation at all.

And yet, as my colleagues pointed out, every 7 seconds someone is dying. And so the question is this: What will make the difference?

My colleague, if you follow the evidence that you so passionately talked about on this day—National Fentanyl Awareness Day—the things that we know are actually driving down the deaths are treating this issue like a national health crisis.

Yes, we need law enforcement. Yes, we need to stop this fentanyl coming into our country. Yes, the law enforcement needs all the tools. I support them. I will fight for them. I will continue to invest in them.

But what is lacking to save lives is the kind of healthcare access that we need. Drug treatment, awareness, public health interventions—we know those work, but yet we don't have the resources in communities to do them.

I bring your attention to some of the facts. The National Institutes of Health reports that 85 percent of our prison population right now—think about that. The overwhelming majority of our prison population right now has an active substance use disorder of people incarcerated involving drug use. That is who we are incarcerating in America right now, folks coming in and out, getting further and further engaged in that dark world of drug abuse and drug sales; but we are not solving the problem.

Let me bring attention to the fact that, when it comes to sentencing, my colleague was talking about the mandatory minimums. But do you know what? If you get caught with possession—I know this—you get tagged with possession with intent to distribute. God, if you are in a school zone, you get tagged with something else.

We have prosecutors now that could stack up 20, 30, 40, 50 years, even more so. I don't know if folks know this, but on your first offense, possession with intent to distribute has a 5-year mandatory minimum, but you could be given up to 40 years. In the second offense in the United States of America, you could get a life sentence. The mandatory minimum is 10 years to life.

Is that stopping the crisis in our country? Do we need to bring in the death penalty? Is that going to stop what is happening in every 7 seconds?

Thirty years I have lived in Newark—25 years to be exact—and God, I have watched the drug war and what it has done: more mandatory minimums, more incarceration, and lives that continue to be destroyed by the horrors of drugs. I beg this body to look at the evidence of what actually saves lives.

Did you know that the No. 1 reason why people don't call for help when someone is having a drug overdose is because they are afraid of the consequences when they engage with the police? People are dying right now because people are afraid of the police because we are treating this like just a

law enforcement problem and not a public health problem.

I will join with any colleague on either side of the aisle to stop the scourge of fentanyl taking too many of our children, but, God, follow the evidence, and let's work together on what we see is actually lowering causes, lowering the rates of death.

So, yes, I object with a heart that is hurting with the same anger that my colleague has shown.

I will work with him. We have worked together before. Let's do something that is a comprehensive approach, that follows the data, that follows the report, that follows the National Institutes of Health and the DOJ's best recommendations.

I will join with him, and we will bring to the floor a comprehensive bill that does affect the fentanyl coming into our country, overwhelmingly being brought by Americans; that does affect law enforcement's capabilities and powers to detect those substances, as I found out on the border; that does impact the addicts that he so passionately and compassionately cares about. Let's do a comprehensive bill, not something that the data does not support will actually stop children from dying like they have died in the many seconds that I have talked.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I listened very carefully to my friend Senator BOOKER's remarks, and I appreciate them, and I thank him for his offer to work together. And I do want to work with him again, but I want to make a couple of things clear. My bill doesn't deal with addiction. My bill deals with dealers.

A pencil, the point of the pencil—enough heroin to fit on a point of a pencil will kill you dead. You are not walking around with 40 grams of fentanyl for your own personal use. You are going to deal it. You are going to cut other drugs with it. You are going to sell it to young people, probably not even tell them fentanyl is in it.

And you are not going to measure the fentanyl very carefully. If you get too much in it, somebody dies. There are others, because if you can get them to take your meth with fentanyl—laced with fentanyl—given that fentanyl is 50 times more powerful, more addictive than heroin, you can get them addicted.

I am not talking about addicts. I am talking about dealers—dealers in death, dealers that this body punishes less severely than a meth dealer or a crack cocaine dealer or a PCP dealer or an LSD dealer.

What you allow is what will continue. I don't know if my bill will stop all the fentanyl dealers in America. I can't make you that promise. But it will, sure as hell, stop the dealer caught dealing, and that will save lives.

I agree with my good friend Senator BOOKER. I believe in justice. The definition of justice for some is complicated. I believe in the definition that was put forth. I think it was Saint Augustine who said: Justice is when you get what you deserve. Justice is when you get what you deserve. And fentanyl dealers deserve, yes, a special place in hell, but they sure deserve to be punished more severely than dealers of less dangerous drugs.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for 11 minutes, followed by Senator GRASSLEY for 10 minutes, and Senator MENENDEZ for 5 minutes prior to the scheduled vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Jersey.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise to speak about another public health crisis. I feel a little bit like I am in this horrific version of Ground Hog Day because I have come to the floor of the Senate to speak about this crisis time and time again.

This is a public health crisis that is happening only in America, a public health crisis that is impacting every community in this country, whether it is a rural town called Uvalde, a movie theater in Aurora, a school in Nashville—the uniquely American crisis of gun violence.

If you love this country, I will tell you, if America hasn't broken your heart, you don't love her enough. This is heart wrenching—a specifically, uniquely American epidemic.

And so I stand here on the Senate floor heartbroken, like so many Americans, and share the sense of obligation that we speak as a nation after a mass shooting, that we don't treat this like business as usual.

Decades ago, in this body, if eight people were shot and killed—I think we should share a sense of outrage with our heartbreak that in the face of almost daily reportings of gun violence victims, many of them innocent children, we have failed to respond to this crisis.

Instead, we choose the pathway of inaction or choosing a pathway where the action is in no way proportionate to the crisis. We have allowed carnage in our country to persist, and we have chosen to value the power of wealth and special interests to overcome the majority will of a nation.

It seems so common now to turn on the TV and see, yet again, Americans being slaughtered in our Nation. This past Saturday, that place was a shopping mall. It was in the suburbs of Dallas. It was in the suburbs of Dallas, where a shooter opened fire on shoppers with an AR-15-style rifle. We are still learning more about this event, but the early reports indicate that at least eight lives have been lost and numerous others wounded. Lives shattered, crippled by weapons that belong in a war zone, firing with bullets that

rip through bodies with gruesome reality; victims from their sixties to a child—to a child—that is 5 years old.

Only in America. Only in America.

Only in this country is something like this routine. Eight people killed, and we continue with a growing savage normalcy that just accepts this carnage. Eight more souls—eight more.

Every time one of these shootings happens, we go through the same motions, almost beginning to seem like autopilot. I see the same tweets. I see the same moans. I see similar statements. And then we seem to get to a point where it leaves the headlines, just to be replaced by another slaughter, by another shooting, by another mass murder, by another child dying, by another kid without his parents. We seem to have resigned ourselves to this cycle of carnage, and the responses are “thoughts and prayers.”

As the death toll climbs, thoughts and prayers. As more people die, thoughts and prayers. As more people are put into the ground, thoughts and prayers. As more families and communities and places of worship and places of commerce are forever remembered as the place where family members, friends, and loved ones died. Only in America. Only in America. Only in America.

Yesterday, May 8, was the 128th day of the year. In those 128 days, there have been 201—201 mass shootings. In those 128 days, more than 14,000 Americans have been killed by gun violence. In 128 days, there have been 12,000 Americans who have been injured, many of them crippled, many of them with forever scars on their bodies and trauma to their souls.

This staggering toll includes people who weren't shot in mass shootings. We just had a 14-year-old girl shot because she was playing hide-and-seek—shot in the back of the head because she went on someone else's property.

What about the young Black boy who was in the wrong place at the wrong time, mistakenly ringing the wrong doorbell, only to be shot and traumatized for the rest of his life.

What about the toddler, a toddler shot in the head after a gun fell off a shelf.

As of 2018, we have seen an explosion of gun purchases in the United States. We now have 390 million guns in circulation, which means there are more guns in this Nation right now than there are people.

In my lifetime alone, just a short 50-plus years of my life, more Americans have been killed by gun violence in the United States than all of our wars, from the Revolutionary War to the World Wars, to the Vietnam war, to the Korean war, to the War on Terror. Than all of our wars combined, we have had more people in our country killed by gun violence in the last 50 years. And every single day that this body does nothing, another 120 people die. Only in America. Only in America.

We have gun death rates that are 8 times higher than our northern neighbor Canada; 22 times higher than the

European Union; 23 times higher than Australia. Only in America. Only in America.

Fifty-eight percent of us now—more than half of Americans now—more than half of American adults have someone they care for who has experienced gun violence.

This creeping reality is eating into everyone in America. It is now the leading cause of premature death in the United States and the leading cause of death for our children. The No. 1 killer of American children is gun violence. Only in America. Only in America is the No. 1 cause of death for children gun violence. Nearly 19 percent of childhood deaths in 2021 were caused by firearms. Only in America. In no other comparable country are firearms even in the top four causes of mortality with our children.

Our kids are being forced to do active shooter drills more so now than fire drills, being forced to hold hands, to be taught to escape, to be taught to hide, to be implicitly told by adults that we can't protect you from the No. 1 cause of death.

What is this doing to our society? More than the deaths even is the trauma that is creeping like a cancer into all parts of our society. What is it doing to our collective hearts?

What is it doing to our one Nation under God that this cancer of trauma is entering neighborhoods and communities and towns and cities? What does it mean?

Well, research on trauma shows that the level of collective trauma constitutes a cataclysmic event that affects not just victims of violence but the society as a whole. It is a cancer. It undermines our fundamental sense of security.

If you look at other countries that have suffered these same tragedies that decided to act, that their collective response was to do something—Canada took steps to ban military-style assault weapons. New Zealand placed restrictions on AR-15s and other semi-automatic weapons. In Australia, they implemented a gun buyback program and other actions. In country after country that took action, they affirmed their collective agency to protect their nations. They responded to tragedy with action, to trauma with healing. And yet, only in America, while other nations make progress, we choose to normalize trauma.

People make comments like more guns, more guns will make us safer.

People make comments like, oh, well, it is mental health issues, when other nations have mental health crises.

Some argue—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BOOKER. I ask unanimous consent for 3 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOKER. We cannot profess to be a nation of freedom if we cannot free

our society from fear, if we can't free our society from violence. We cannot profess to live up to our values if the very Nation founded for—one of the reasons being common defense, but we can't defend our children.

Last week, I introduced with Senator WARREN the Firearms Safety Act, which would implement Federal safety regulations for firearms because right now guns—the most lethal of all consumer products—are the only products that aren't even subject to consumer safety regulations.

Look, I want to end with the truth. A police officer who arrived at the shooting in Allentown recounted discovering a young boy beneath his mother's lifeless body who died protecting this child. He shared with anguish the haunting encounter of finding a young girl also crouched in a prayer-like position. As he searched for signs of life, he turned her head to the side only to find the horror of her face missing. In her final moments on Earth, the position of that girl was in prayer—was to pray. And we in this country—only in America—our response is only thoughts and prayers?

We need to be the prayer answerers. We need to be the ones who respond when people call out for help.

How will we respond to this national nightmare?

What will we do to this uniquely American problem?

Will we show American might? Will we show American strength? Will we show American healing? Will we show American community? Will we show American love for our children or will we repeat this national nightmare over and over again?

When the shots ring out, people run, people hide, people pray. It is time that we in America answer those prayers with action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in 1988, President Ronald Reagan first recognized May as National Foster Care Month. Every year since then, the month of May has been recognized as a time to bring awareness to the needs of America's young people who are placed in foster care. It is also important to recognize organizations in Iowa and around the country tirelessly serving kids and families in our foster care system.

I salute these organizations and individuals for their year-round efforts to support the kids, kids who are most in need.

In 2021, there were nearly 400,000 kids in foster care. More than 4,000 of those 400,000 are in my home State of Iowa.

Older youth in foster care and adults who experienced foster care as a child can speak to what worked for them and what didn't work. They should have a seat at the table and a voice in making policy about foster care.

When I founded the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth in 2009, the very special

focus of the caucus was to hear directly from young people in foster care. We also wanted to hear from those who had been aged out of the system without having a permanent place to call home.

Over and over again, I have heard an urgent point of view from these young people and also the teenagers who are in foster care. What I heard was that they would like some permanence. They would say it like they would like to have a mom and dad. They would like to have a family. They would want a place to call home, instead of being shuffled around—maybe two or three different schools in 1 year, which means two or three different foster homes in that year.

All children, no matter of their circumstances then, deserve a permanent, loving home. They need consistent, caring adults in their lives. This year during foster care month, I want to give special recognition to families who answer the call to help vulnerable children and the teens in their communities.

My resolution recognizing National Foster Care Month also marks May 31 as a very particular day to celebrate and show appreciation to foster parents.

Throughout my years in the U.S. Senate, I have worked to keep families together. For example, I have expanded access to prevention services to help parents safely keep custody of their children during substance abuse treatment. The family, as we all know, is the bedrock of our society, so we must work to strengthen the family in the hopes of keeping vulnerable children out of foster care in the first place.

At the same time, it is important that we support the very people who are taking care of these kids—the ones we call foster parents. They answer the call to take into their homes children and teens who have experienced trauma in their very young lives. Foster parents—all of them—deserve recognition and support.

In Iowa, almost every county has a shortage of foster parents who are able to provide temporary homes for these young people. Without volunteer foster parents, kids who cannot remain safely at home often end up sleeping in hotels or in offices of social workers.

I have introduced a bipartisan bill called the Recruiting Families Using Data Act. This legislation would improve how States recruit foster parents and help ensure that they are supported and actually heard. It would help States conduct targeted recruitment for specific areas of need and help kids get matched with the best families for their individual circumstances.

We know that having at least one loving adult in the lives of these young people can meaningfully improve the academic, the social, and the emotional well-being of these kids. That positive experience lasts long into adulthood.

When family reunification is not an option—and that ought to be the first

option—we know that adoption can provide a permanent, loving home for a child in need. Recent data show that adoptions from foster care is declining, with 12,000 fewer children having been adopted in 2021 than in 2019. Currently, more than 100,000 young people in foster care are waiting for adoption across our country, including more than 1,000 in my State of Iowa. By improving support for foster families, we can help increase adoptions for kids who are placed in foster care.

Moving forward, Congress must continue to work to find more solutions and secure better outcomes for youth in foster care. Whether the best choice is family reunification or adoption or living with relatives, the goal is always and must be the same: to protect kids from neglect and from abuse and to provide them with love and with support.

I urge my colleagues to pass my resolution to recognize May as National Foster Care Month.

Once again, I will continue to lead efforts with members of our bipartisan Senate Caucus on Foster Youth to help these young Americans achieve their full potential and have a place to call home for the rest of their lives.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

NOMINATION OF L. FELICE GORORDO

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor today in support of Felice Gorordo, the nominee to be the U.S. Alternate Executive Director of the World Bank.

At a time when China is increasingly willing to use its economic power to pressure other nations to do its bidding, when Latin America is trying to recover from the economic impact of the COVID pandemic, when Putin's war in Ukraine threatens the food supply of developing nations around the world, strong, dependable leadership at the World Bank has never been more important. And Felice Gorordo has the experience and vision the United States needs to tackle the challenges the World Bank faces today.

His journey starts the way mine does. He is the son of Cuban exiles who fled dictatorship in their country. His parents came to the United States in search of the American dream. His dad was in law enforcement, and his mom was a teacher. From them, Felice learned the importance of public service.

He will be a tireless advocate for the democratic values that our Nation and both of our families hold so dear, and he will succeed because of his commitment to helping others, which he has demonstrated throughout his life and career.

Felice founded Raices de Esperanza, which means the "roots of hope." It is a nonprofit that empowers young people in Cuba through technology and entrepreneurship. He also worked for both the Bush and Obama administrations in advancing the U.S.'s national

interests—no matter which party was in the White House.

He should be in this post because, in the wake of COVID, his understanding of finance, economic statecraft, and technology will help the United States and its like-minded partners make the concerted push to prevent economic collapse in the developing world.

He should be in this post because we need to make sure that China doesn't continue getting away with their malign influence at the institutions that we, the United States, created to shape the international order.

If confirmed to his post at the World Bank, Felice will advocate for our values. He will stand up for democracy and human rights. So I urge my colleagues to support the nomination of Felice Gorordo to the post of U.S. Alternate Executive Director for the World Bank.

I yield the floor.

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 bill 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. 71, L. Felice Gorordo, of Florida, to be United States Alternate Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of two years.

Charles E. Schumer, Catherine Cortez Masto, Sherrod Brown, Jack Reed, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jeff Merkley, Michael F. Bennet, Christopher A. Coons, Brian Schatz, Mazie Hirono, Tim Kaine, Richard J. Durbin, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Tammy Duckworth, Margaret Wood Hassan.

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 L. Felice Gorordo, of Florida, to be United States Alternate Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of two years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) would have voted "nay" and

the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "nay".

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 116 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Bennet	Hirono	Sanders
Blumenthal	Kaine	Schatz
Booker	Kelly	Schumer
Brown	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cardin	Lujan	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Collins	Menendez	Van Hollen
Coons	Merkley	Warner
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warnock
Duckworth	Murray	Warren
Durbin	Ossoff	Welch
Fetterman	Padilla	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	Young
Heinrich	Romney	

NAYS—42

Blackburn	Fischer	Mullin
Boozman	Graham	Murkowski
Braun	Grassley	Ricketts
Britt	Hagerty	Risch
Budd	Hawley	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Vance
Ernst	Moran	Wicker

NOT VOTING—5

Barrasso	Hoeben	Tillis
Feinstein	Paul	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The yeas are 53, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

RECOGNIZING R.J. CORMAN RAILROAD GROUP

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, from the early days of the steam-powered locomotive to the modern era's high-speed rail, Kentucky's railroads have been at the heart of our Commonwealth's growth and development. Though railways are no longer our primary mode of transportation, they remain an essential ingredient of Kentucky's economic success, transporting the goods and resources that power our lives. The R.J. Corman Railroad Group, stationed out of central Kentucky, has been a driving force in propelling the rail industry forward. Today, I would like to recognize this organization's contributions to our Commonwealth on its 50th anniversary.

The story of this Kentucky railroad empire begins in 1973 with my good friend and Nicholasville native, Mr. Rick Corman. It was just after high school when Rick founded his first business venture, R.J. Corman Railroad Construction, and, like its founder, the company hailed from humble beginnings.

At 18 years old, Rick started out making track repairs for major railroads equipped with nothing more than a backhoe and a red dump truck. Thanks to his tireless work ethic and shrewd instincts, Rick grew his humble operation into what is now the R.J. Corman Railroad Group, a diversified portfolio of railroad companies. Rick would grow his business across 23 States, employ over 1,600 workers, and expand into a host of verticals that ranged from short-line railroad operations to emergency and natural disaster response.

Amid some of our country's most horrific floods, blizzards, and hurricanes, Rick's team was on the ground to assist in recovery and cleanup efforts. When Hurricane Katrina struck the central Gulf and devastated railroad infrastructure across the South, Rick mobilized his emergency response crew to repair railways in record time.

In his personal life, Rick and his company were avid donors to St. Joseph Hospital in Jessamine County, so much so that the hospital recognized Rick as its largest philanthropic donor. The hospital established the R.J. Corman Ambulatory Care Center in 2008, which continues to serve the community of Nicholasville to this day.

Tragically, the company lost its seemingly unstoppable founder 10 years ago to a hard-fought battle with multiple myeloma, a blood cancer. Rick was just 58. Despite his cancer diagnosis, Rick would continue to enjoy life, travel the world, and even run the Boston Marathon. To this day, his infectious laugh, warm demeanor, and irresistible spirit for life are deeply missed by his family and loved ones. In honor of Rick, the company and its employees contribute to the Richard J. Corman Multiple Myeloma Fund each year, which helps support research work at Harvard's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Despite losing its torchbearer, the company and Rick's legacy prevailed. R.J. Corman continues to operate as one of the leading railroad service providers in the U.S., serving all seven major railroads in North America. Most recently, the company added a 19th railroad to its wide-spanning portfolio. R.J. Corman's iconic red train cars are an unmistakable fixture of central Kentucky, and the company's impact on our Commonwealth continues to extend beyond its railway business.

The company remains a worthy custodian of Rick's name and his legacy of generosity, compassion, and hard work. I am proud to honor this classic American success story and celebrate its

many contributions to the Commonwealth of Kentucky. I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in recognizing R.J. Corman Railroad Group for 50 outstanding years.

NATIONAL FENTANYL AWARENESS DAY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, May 9, is National Fentanyl Awareness Day. In the last 12 months, over 108,000 Americans have died from drug overdoses, mainly from fentanyl and its analogues. Fentanyl overdoses are the number one cause of death for Americans between the ages of 18 and 45, so I come to the floor to do two things.

First, I am here to introduce a bipartisan resolution supporting the goals of National Fentanyl Awareness Day. The resolution aims to increase awareness of the impact of fake or counterfeit fentanyl pills on families and young people. And it applauds the work of Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies that combat the proliferation of counterfeit pills.

And second, I am here to reintroduce my bipartisan legislation, the Stop Pills That Kill Act. This bill creates new penalties for counterfeit pill production. There is a surge throughout the United States of counterfeit pills laced with fentanyl and fentanyl analogues. People unknowingly take these counterfeit pills. Many of them die. Drug traffickers have been marketing and selling these fake pills using social media. The Stop Pills That Kill Act will ramp up criminal penalties to deter this illegal activity and save lives.

Later this week, the Senate Judiciary Committee will mark up another bill I cosponsor, the Cooper Davis Act. This bipartisan bill requires social media companies, the same places where these fake pills are being sold, to report information to Federal Agencies relating to illicit online fentanyl on their platforms. The reporting requirements will help law enforcement root out and dismantle international crime networks and save lives. I look forward to reporting the bill out of committee and quickly getting it to the President's desk.

Whether it is at my roundtables in Iowa or during my 99-county meetings, parents continue to come up to me and tell me about the children they have lost to fentanyl poisoning. It is heart-breaking to see the pain on their face and hear it in their voice, as they share what the fentanyl crisis has done to their family.

I hope we see action to move these bills and permanently schedule fentanyl related substances. I am as committed as ever to cracking down on fentanyl and its analogues, and I hope my colleagues will join me soon.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE RICARDO H. HINOJOSA

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I honor today Judge Ricardo H. Hinojosa for his lifelong commitment to the rule of law, particularly his 40 years of extraordinary service in our Federal judiciary. Currently, Judge Hinojosa is the longest serving Federal judge remaining in active service.

Born in Rio Grande City, TX, to Miguel and Josefina Hinojosa, Judge Hinojosa learned the value of hard work early on, graduating valedictorian from Rio Grande City High School. Judge Hinojosa then went to the University of Texas, where he graduated with honors in 1972. Judge Hinojosa continued his studies at Harvard Law School. After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1975, Judge Hinojosa clerked for a year on the Texas Supreme Court. Judge Hinojosa then entered private practice in McAllen at the law firm Ewers & Toothaker. Rising to the level of partner in 1979, Judge Hinojosa specialized in business litigation and employment law. In 1983, President Reagan nominated Judge Hinojosa to be a U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Texas. On May 5, 1983, he received his formal commission.

During Judge Hinojosa's 40 years on the bench, he has served with distinction, fairness, and impartiality. His peers, colleagues, and the Texas legal community have recognized his immense impact by awarding him the University of Texas Distinguished Alumnus Award, the Edward J. Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award, and the Border Texan of the Year.

As a district court judge, Judge Hinojosa has tirelessly worked to improve the rule of law. Indeed, he has taken on leadership roles in the Fifth Circuit Judicial Counsel, the Judicial Conference of the United States, and on the U.S. Sentencing Commission. In these various positions, he has helped craft solutions and made recommendations to improve sentencing, the operations of the courts, and access to justice.

Judge Hinojosa's distinguished service extends beyond the courtroom. Judge Hinojosa served on the board of directors of the John G. and Marie Stella Kennedy Memorial foundation, the board of trustees of the University of the Incarnate Word, the board of trustees of the University of Texas Law School Foundation, and the board of directors of the Ex Students Association of the University of Texas.

It is evident that Judge Hinojosa has dedicated his life and career to serving others and improving communities in Texas and beyond. For this work and the work that he has still yet to accomplish, I would like to recognize him. Thank you, Judge Hinojosa.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL D. QUICKEL

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I pay tribute to Mike Quickel, the U.S. Senate Finance Committee's policy director, who is leaving Congress after more than 25 years of devoted service.

One of the things that eases our jobs in the Senate is knowing we have solid people working steadily and earnestly beside us on behalf of the great people we represent. Idaho and our country have had that for decades with Mike Quickel. Since 2000, when he came to work in my office, after working more than a year as staff assistant for the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, he has consistently supported Idahoans and the important work we do here in the Senate on behalf of the American people.

After little more than a year of serving as a legislative correspondent, Mike was quickly promoted to serve as my tax and budget adviser, and he has generally served in this capacity through multiple positions since. As senior policy adviser, he staffed my positions on the Senate Finance and Budget Committees. His responsibilities included developing well-defined strategies for various tax legislative efforts. He also helped lead the bipartisan Senate Finance Committee Task Force on Savings and Investment. The task force crafted retirement savings proposals that were later enacted into law as part of the SECURE Act in 2019. Every American worker should have the opportunity to save for a secure retirement, and Mike's work on this legislation has helped make it easier for Americans to do so.

His steadiness, dependability, and strong grasp of policy and its practical effects also saw him tasked with critical, but under the radar, responsibilities like editing constituent response letters. I always have known I can count on him for the small and big tasks at hand. He proved this when he helped develop fiscal reform and debt reduction proposals when I served on the bipartisan Simpson/Bowles Commission in 2010. I cannot mention that commission without also noting that our country would now be on better fiscal footing if Congress had fully enacted the fiscal reforms Mike worked on more than a decade ago.

But, back on point, when I began leading the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs as ranking member and chairman, Mike came with me and served as policy director for the committee. During this time, he worked tirelessly on drafting and negotiating the historic enactment of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, TCJA. This law, which is probably the achievement he is most proud of during his time in the Senate, lowered tax rates for all Americans, ensured American job-creators could better compete and bring jobs back to our country and led to the strongest economy in many of our lifetimes prior to the pandemic.

He also successfully led bipartisan efforts to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank in 2019, as well as Senate confirmation of its chairman and board members. The Export-Import Bank had operated without congressional authorization and a Senate-confirmed chairman for several years, and Mike was instrumental in fixing this lapse. Additionally, he supported the successful bipartisan enactment in 2018 of the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief and Consumer Protection Act. This law has enabled financial institutions to better serve their customers and communities, while maintaining safety and soundness and important consumer protections.

When I became ranking member of Senate Finance in 2021, I once again asked Mike to come with me and serve as policy director for the committee. Throughout this time, he has continued to dependably and professionally contribute to consequential legislation and policy initiatives, including his work to strengthen retirement security through the enactment of the SECURE 2.0 law in December 2022. This law expanded opportunities for Americans to increase their retirement savings and improve workers' long-term financial well-being. He has also been instrumental in successfully protecting the TCJA from attempts to undo its tax reform benefits.

In addition to his policy expertise and keen knowledge of the Senate, Mike has helped and supported others. He has mentored countless young staffers and even set up annual Thanksgiving dinners for staff, many of whom were far away from home during the holidays. He is known as being loyal to everyone he has worked with over the years.

Mike has been a steady, unassuming, and strong influence in the Senate. He is quiet but thorough. When I think of Mike, I think of God's instruction in the Bible verse James 1:19-20. He is truly quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. He listens carefully before framing the task or problem to fix that is weighed against his significant experience, knowledge, and know-how. He listens and reasons first and then acts prudently and never impulsively. This has been invaluable, as he has helped shape tax, retirement and economic policy that has had far-reaching benefits for our country. It will take a great deal of time to get used to not having Mike as a central part of my staff, but I wish him all the best. He has more than earned more time with his lovely family—wife Meg and son Davey—that I am hopeful his departure from Washington, DC, will afford him.

Thank you, Mike, for your 25 years of dedicated, sound, and measured service to our country.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR STEVEN VEAZEY

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and congratulate CSM Steven Veazey on his upcoming retirement from the Arkansas Army National Guard after 44 years of distinguished military service to our great Nation.

CSM Veazey had an exceptional career in the Arkansas National Guard. For the past 12 years, he has served as the senior enlisted adviser to the adjutant general and Arkansas Governor on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale and proper utilization and progress of the Arkansas enlisted force.

After enlisting in the Army in 1979, CSM Veazey would go on to serve in various duties and leadership roles as an infantryman. He deployed in support of the U.S. peacekeeping mission in Bosnia and twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. As the senior enlisted leader of the Joint Forces of the Arkansas National Guard, his integrity, character and transparent leadership built an enduring trust with the 8,000 enlisted members under his command. His passion for building a trained, ready, and resilient force will have lasting positive impacts on the Arkansas National Guard, the servicemembers, and their families.

As the ranking member of the appropriations subcommittee responsible for ensuring our Armed Forces and their families have the infrastructure and facilities to support their needs, I met with CSM Veazey as he encouraged congressional support to strengthen National Guard priorities and military readiness. Arkansas can be proud of his advocacy and leadership that integrally contributed to the U.S. ability to maintain our military superiority.

On behalf of the U.S. Senate and a grateful nation, I extend my deepest appreciation to CSM Veazey and his family for their many years of exemplary military service and sacrifice. I wish him nothing but the very best in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO AIRMAN EARL SMITH

• Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, we will never fully understand—or know—the sacrifices our servicemembers make to keep us safe, both at home and abroad, like Airman First Class Earl Smith of Lincoln, AL. His story of heroism went untold for more than 50 years because of security reasons. His bravery and quick action prevented what could have been the worst nuclear disaster in history.

Raised on a farm in Hatton, AL, Airman Smith and a friend decided on a whim to enlist in the U.S. Air Force after visiting a recruiting office in their local community. Always up for an adventure, Airman Smith decided to enroll in bomb disposal school after enlisting. He recalls his instructor's

warning on the first day that you are only allowed one chance to mess up—because just one mistake could be fatal. Nine months after completing his training, his skills were put to the ultimate test while stationed at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina.

On January 24, 1961, Airman Smith woke up to a midnight call telling him to report to the base as soon as possible. Without any protective gear or fully strapping up his boots, he arrived to the base, where he was then whisked away to the site of a B-52 plane crash 15 miles away. The plane was transporting two nuclear bombs reported to be 250 times more powerful than those used on Japan during World War II. Both bombs had fallen out of the plane during the crash, creating what is now reported as a 100-percent kill zone for surrounding communities.

Upon arriving to the scene, he immediately noticed one of the bombs was activated. Despite a general ordering him not to touch the bomb until receiving permission from atomic support, Airman Smith knew that time was not on their side. Thankfully, he acted quickly to disengage the bomb, saving countless American lives.

Airman Smith now proudly travels across Alabama speaking to local groups about his military service, which has now received national and global recognition. If you travel to Eureka, NC, there is a marker that says, “Nuclear Mishap—widespread disaster averted.” This is all thanks to Alabama’s extraordinary hero—Earl Smith—who I am proud to recognize as May’s “Veteran of the Month.”●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Kelly, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

At 3:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled joint resolution:

H.J. Res. 39. Joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Commerce relating to “Procedures Covering Suspension of Liquidation, Duties and Estimated Duties in Accord with Presidential Proclamation 10414”.

The enrolled joint resolution was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1202. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the first session of the 118th Congress; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1203. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order in order to expand the scope of the national emergency with respect to Sudan declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1204. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, HHS Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2024” (RIN0938-AU97) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 25, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1205. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the first session of the 118th Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1206. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a legislative proposal entitled “To establish the Office of Health Security in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1207. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the second transmittal of legislative proposals that support the President’s Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for the Department of Homeland Security; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1208. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting additional legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the first session of the 118th Congress; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1209. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-87, “Use of Force Review Board Temporary Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1210. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-88, “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Acting Executive Director Temporary Amendment Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1211. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-89, “Certificate of Assurance Moratorium Extension Temporary Amend-

ment Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1212. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-90, “Reverse Mortgage Insurance and Tax Payment Program Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1213. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-91, “Fidelity in Access to Government Communications Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1214. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-67, “General Obligations Bonds and Bond Anticipation Notes for Fiscal Years 2023-2028 Authorization Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1215. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-82, “Woodson Way Designation Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1216. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-83, “Dedication of a Portion of W Street, S.E., S.O. 16-24322 Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1217. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-84, “Bishop Clarence Groover Way Designation Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1218. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-85, “Benjamin Secundy, Sr. Way Designation Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1219. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-86, “Reed Street Realignment Act of 2023”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1220. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Policy Statement of the Federal Trade Commission on Rebates and Fees in Exchange for Excluding Lower-Cost Drug Products” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 17, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 108. A bill to require a guidance clarity statement on certain agency guidance, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118-19).

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 824. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a national

risk management cycle, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118-20).

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. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 1475. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to prohibit certain acts related to fentanyl, analogues of fentanyl, and counterfeit substances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. WELCH):

S. 1476. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the transparency of pharmaceutical research costs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1477. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the cover over of certain distilled spirits taxes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. RISCH, Ms. WARREN, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. ERNST):

S. 1478. A bill to designate United States Route 20 in the States of Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts as the "National Medal of Honor Highway", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1479. A bill to amend section 235(b)(2)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to require the implementation of the Migrant Protection Protocols; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1480. A bill to support the creation and implementation of State policies, as well as the expansion of existing State policies, for improving the quality and affordability of charter school facilities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HAGERTY (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 1481. A bill to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to postpone the date of payment or satisfaction upon redemption of certain securities in the case of the financial exploitation of specified adults, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Mr. WARNOCK):

S. 1482. A bill to provide for the reliquidation of certain entries of golf cart tires; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 1483. A bill to prohibit the purchase of certain telecommunications or aerospace goods or service from entities affiliated with the People's Republic of China or the Russian Federation and to require reporting relating to investment by foreign persons in the aerospace industry in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 1484. A bill to establish requirements for quality and discard dates that are volun-

tarily declared on the food label; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 1485. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to require the Secretary to designate food and food products to be made available under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. COONS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LUJÁN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 1486. A bill to address financial conflicts of interest of the President and Vice President; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1487. A bill to enhance protections for election records; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Ms. HIRONO, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 1488. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to remove certain eligibility disqualifications that restrict otherwise eligible students from participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. ERNST, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 1489. A bill to establish the National Task Force on the Response of the United States to the COVID-19 Pandemic; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. KING):

S. 1490. A bill to establish a permanent rural housing preservation and revitalization program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. CASEY, and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH):

S. 1491. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. MARSHALL):

S. 1492. A bill to provide for the settlement of claims relating to the Shab-eh-nay Band Reservation in Illinois, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself and Mr. MULLIN):

S. 1493. A bill to amend title V of the Public Health Service Act to secure the suicide prevention lifeline from cybersecurity incidents, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 1494. A bill to terminate certain contracts relating to the construction of the

border fence and to transfer unused border fence materials to the States along the southwest border of the United States; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mr. MARSHALL):

S. 1495. A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program to provide support on the use of industrial heat pumps, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Mr. SCHMITT):

S. 1496. A bill to provide that all Federal employees in the executive branch of the Federal Government are at-will employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. SMITH:

S. 1497. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish insulin assistance programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Ms. ERNST, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. COTTON):

S. 1498. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to use, transfer, or donate all excess construction materials intended for the wall on the southwest border of the United States that are being stored by the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 1499. A bill to reduce and eliminate threats posed by nuclear weapons to the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1500. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require the Election Assistance Commission to provide for the conduct of penetration testing as part of the testing and certification of voting systems and to provide for the establishment of an Independent Security Testing and Coordinated Vulnerability Disclosure Pilot Program for Election Systems; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. CRAMER (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Ms. LUMMIS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 1501. A bill to amend the Bank Service Company Act to provide improvements with respect to State banking agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. LUJÁN:

S. 1502. A bill to direct the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out teacher leadership programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. BUDD, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1503. A bill to prohibit the use of Department of Defense funds for adult cabaret performances; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 1504. A bill to ensure peace through strength in Israel by requiring a Department of Defense assessment of the quantity of precision-guided munitions and other munitions for use by Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 1505. A bill to reform and enhance the pay and benefits of Federal wildland firefighters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WARNOCK (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 1506. A bill to improve the processes for type certification, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. TILLIS, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 1507. A bill to provide grants to State, local, territorial, and Tribal law enforcement agencies to purchase chemical screening devices and train personnel to use chemical screening devices in order to enhance law enforcement efficiency and protect law enforcement officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BARRASSO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. Res. 201. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Nurses Week, to be observed from May 6 through May 12, 2023; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. KING):

S. Res. 202. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States must continue to demonstrate leadership to achieve significant reforms to the rules of the World Trade Organization in order to promote the advancement of truly developing countries; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. Res. 203. A resolution recognizing the significance of Jewish American Heritage Month as a time to celebrate the contributions of Jewish Americans to the society and culture of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. MULLIN):

S. Res. 204. A resolution congratulating the University of Oklahoma women's gymnastics team for winning the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association championship, the program's sixth title overall; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 10

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 10, a bill to improve the workforce of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 16

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cospon-

sor of S. 16, a bill to prohibit the award of Federal funds to an institution of higher education that hosts or is affiliated with a student-based service site that provides abortion drugs or abortions to students of the institution or to employees of the institution or site, and for other purposes.

S. 100

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 100, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to expand access to home and community-based services (HCBS) under Medicaid, and for other purposes.

S. 132

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 132, a bill to require a pilot program on activities under the pre-separation transition process of members of the Armed Forces for a reduction in suicide among veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 236

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 236, a bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to award grants to develop, administer, and evaluate early childhood education apprenticeships, and for other purposes.

S. 323

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 323, a bill to ensure the privacy of pregnancy termination or loss information under the HIPAA privacy regulations and the HITECH Act.

S. 388

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 388, a bill to establish universal child care and early learning programs.

S. 547

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 547, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the First Rhode Island Regiment, in recognition of their dedicated service during the Revolutionary War.

S. 576

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 576, a bill to enhance safety requirements for trains transporting hazardous materials, and for other purposes.

S. 596

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 596, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make employ-

ers of spouses of military personnel eligible for the work opportunity credit.

S. 626

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 626, a bill to recommend that the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation test the effect of a dementia care management model, and for other purposes.

S. 711

At the request of Mr. BUDD, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 711, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the invaluable service that working dogs provide to society.

S. 759

At the request of Mr. WARNOCK, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 759, a bill to authorize the National Detector Dog Training Center, and for other purposes.

S. 802

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 802, a bill to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to provide for a consistent definition for plant biostimulants.

S. 835

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 835, a bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to reaffirm the importance of, and include requirements for, works incorporated by reference into law, and for other purposes.

S. 1016

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1016, a bill to address the impact of climate change on agriculture, and for other purposes.

S. 1034

At the request of Ms. LUMMIS, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1034, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to establish a competitive grant program for projects for commercial motor vehicle parking, and for other purposes.

S. 1049

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1049, a bill to ensure that older adults and individuals with disabilities are prepared for disasters, and for other purposes.

S. 1079

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1079, a bill to amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development

Act to provide additional assistance to rural water, wastewater, and waste disposal systems, and for other purposes.

S. 1144

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1144, a bill to establish a grant program to provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 1146

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1146, a bill to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to identify obstacles to identifying and responding to reports of children missing from foster care and other vulnerable foster youth, to provide technical assistance relating to the removal of such obstacles, and for other purposes.

S. 1149

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1149, a bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to make supplemental funds available for management of fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need as determined by State fish and wildlife agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 1271

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) and the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. 1271, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to trafficking of illicit fentanyl and its precursors by transnational criminal organizations, including cartels, and for other purposes.

S. 1300

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1300, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the late Prime Minister Golda Meir and the 75th anniversary of the United States-Israel relationship.

S. 1310

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan

(Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1310, a bill to designate as wilderness certain Federal portions of the red rock canyons of the Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin Deserts in the State of Utah for the benefit of present and future generations of people in the United States.

S. 1315

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1315, a bill to improve the provision of care and services under the Veterans Community Care Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1318

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1318, a bill to provide enhanced protections for election workers.

S. 1336

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1336, 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. 1353

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1353, a bill to amend section 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow adjunct faculty members to qualify for public service loan forgiveness.

S. 1384

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 1384, a bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors.

S. 1398

At the request of Mr. BUDD, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1398, a bill to prohibit agencies of the government from soliciting or entering into agreements with nongovernmental organizations to conduct voter registration or voter mobilization activities on the property or website of the agency or from using Federal funds to carry out activities directed under Executive Order 14019, and for other purposes.

S. 1401

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1401, a bill to establish an inspections regime for the Bureau of Prisons, and for other purposes.

S. 1465

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California

(Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1465, a bill to establish the Baltic Security Initiative for the purpose of strengthening the defensive capabilities of the Baltic countries, and for other purposes.

S. 1473

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1473, a bill to authorize the immediate expulsion of inadmissible aliens attempting to enter the United States by fraud or without a necessary entry document, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 17

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 17, a joint resolution to acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of veterans of the Vietnam war and formally apologize for the treatment they received upon returning home.

S.J. RES. 25

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 25, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "Adverse Effect Wage Rate Methodology for the Temporary Employment of H-2A Nonimmigrants in Non-Range Occupations in the United States".

S. RES. 166

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 166, a resolution honoring the efforts of the Coast Guard for excellence in maritime border security.

S. RES. 188

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 188, a resolution celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 195

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 195, a resolution congratulating the students, parents, teachers, and leaders of charter schools across the United States for making ongoing contributions to education, and supporting the ideals and goals of the 24th annual National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 7 through May 13, 2023.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 201—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL NURSES WEEK, TO BE OBSERVED FROM MAY 6 THROUGH MAY 12, 2023

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BARRASSO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. LUJAN, and Mr. PETERS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 201

Whereas, beginning in 1991, National Nurses Week has been celebrated annually from May 6, also known as "National Recognition Day for Nurses", through May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing;

Whereas National Nurses Week is a time of year to reflect on the important contributions that nurses make to provide safe, high-quality health care;

Whereas nurses serve on the front lines, risking their lives treating the injured and sick during wartime, natural disasters, and public health emergencies;

Whereas nurses are known to be patient advocates, acting to protect the lives of individuals under their care;

Whereas nurses represent the largest single component of the health care profession, with an estimated population of more than 4,500,000 registered nurses in the United States;

Whereas nurses are leading in the delivery of quality care in a transformed health care system that improves patient outcomes and safety;

Whereas the Future of Nursing report of the Institute of Medicine has highlighted the need for the nursing profession to meet the call for leadership in a team-based delivery model;

Whereas, when nurse staffing levels increase, the risk of patient complications and lengthy hospital stays decreases, resulting in cost savings;

Whereas nurses are experienced researchers, and the work of nurses encompasses a wide scope of scientific inquiry, including clinical research, health systems and outcomes research, and nursing education research;

Whereas nurses provide care that is sensitive to the cultures and customs of individuals across the United States;

Whereas nurses are well-positioned to provide leadership to eliminate health care disparities that exist in the United States;

Whereas nurses are the cornerstone of the public health infrastructure, promoting healthy lifestyles and educating communities on disease prevention and health promotion;

Whereas nurses help inform, educate, and work closely with legislators to improve—

(1) the education, retention, recruitment, and practice of all nurses; and

(2) the health and safety of the patients for whom the nurses care;

Whereas there is a need—

(1) to strengthen nursing workforce development programs at all levels, including the

number of doctorally prepared faculty members; and

(2) to provide education to the nurse research scientists who can develop new nursing care models to improve the health status of the diverse population of the United States;

Whereas nurses impact the lives of the people of the United States through every stage of life; and

Whereas nursing has been voted the most honest and ethical profession in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Nurses Week, as founded by the American Nurses Association;

(2) recognizes the significant contributions of nurses to the health care system in the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Nurses Week with appropriate recognition, ceremonies, activities, and programs to demonstrate the importance of nurses to the everyday lives of patients.

SENATE RESOLUTION 202—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE UNITED STATES MUST CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP TO ACHIEVE SIGNIFICANT REFORMS TO THE RULES OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION IN ORDER TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF TRULY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. KING) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. RES. 202

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) although the United States finds value and usefulness in the World Trade Organization in fulfilling the needs of the United States and other free and open economies in the 21st century, significant reforms at the World Trade Organization are needed; and

(2) the United States must continue to demonstrate leadership to achieve reforms that restore the effectiveness of the rules of the World Trade Organization for special and differential treatment to ensure those rules promote advancement for truly developing countries, rather than becoming tools for globally competitive countries, such as the People's Republic of China, to engage in protectionism and market distortions.

SENATE RESOLUTION 203—RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH AS A TIME TO CELEBRATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JEWISH AMERICANS TO THE SOCIETY AND CULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 203

Whereas the Senate and the House of Representatives have recognized many heritage

months that celebrate the various communities that form the mosaic of the United States;

Whereas, through recognizing and celebrating heritage months, we learn about one another, honor the richness of the diversity of the United States, and strengthen the fabric of society in the United States;

Whereas Jewish American Heritage Month has its origins in 1980, when Congress enacted a Joint Resolution entitled "Joint Resolution to authorize and request the President to issue a proclamation designating April 21 through April 28, 1980, as 'Jewish Heritage Week'", approved April 24, 1980 (Public Law 96-237; 94 Stat. 338);

Whereas, on April 24, 1980, President Carter issued the proclamation for Jewish Heritage Week, and in that proclamation, President Carter spoke about the bountiful contributions made by the Jewish people to the culture and history of the United States;

Whereas Congress has played a central role in recognizing Jewish American Heritage Month since the Senate and the House of Representatives passed resolutions in 2006 and 2005, respectively, urging the President to proclaim the national observation of a month recognizing the Jewish American community;

Whereas, since 2006, Presidents Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden have all issued proclamations for Jewish American Heritage Month, which celebrates Jewish Americans and encourages all people of the United States to learn more about Jewish heritage and the contributions of Jewish people throughout the history of the United States;

Whereas people of the United States celebrate the rich history of Jewish people in the United States and the more than 350-year history of Jewish contributions to society in the United States;

Whereas the United States has long served as a haven for Jewish people escaping from oppression in search of liberty, justice, and tolerance;

Whereas the Jewish American community dates back to 1654, when a group of 23 Jewish people, fleeing persecution at the hands of the Portuguese Inquisition, fled Brazil and found refuge in what is now New York City;

Whereas Jewish Americans have established deep roots in communities across the United States, and served their neighbors and the United States as loyal and patriotic citizens, always grateful for the safe harbor that the United States has provided for them;

Whereas the Jewish American community has since grown to over 6,000,000 people, representing approximately 2 percent of the population of the United States in 2023;

Whereas Jewish Americans have served in government and the military, won Nobel prizes, led universities and corporations, advanced medicine and philanthropy, created and performed in enduring works of performing and visual art, written great novels, become emblems of justice as members of the Supreme Court of the United States, and so much more;

Whereas Jewish Americans have been subjected to a recent surge in antisemitism as the Anti-Defamation League's 2022 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents tracked 3,697 antisemitic incidents in the United States, representing a 36 percent increase from 2021 and the largest number on record since the Anti-Defamation League began tracking antisemitic incidents in 1979;

Whereas the rise in antisemitism is being felt by ordinary people in the United States, as a report by the American Jewish Committee revealed that—

(1) 89 percent of Jewish respondents believe antisemitism is a problem in the United States; and

(2) 4 in 10 Jewish Americans reported changing their behavior in at least 1 way out of fear of antisemitism;

Whereas, over the course of the past decade, Holocaust distortion and denial have grown in intensity;

Whereas a 2020 survey of all 50 States on Holocaust knowledge among Millennials and Generation Z, conducted by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, found a clear lack of awareness of key historical facts, including—

(1) 63 percent of respondents did not know that 6,000,000 Jews were murdered during the Holocaust; and

(2) 36 percent of respondents thought that “two million or fewer Jews” were killed;

Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation has aggregated 2021 hate crime data showing that Jewish people remain the single most targeted religious minority in the United States;

Whereas the use of antisemitic language, conspiracy theories, and hatred has increased on multiple social media platforms, including—

(1) tropes about Jewish control; and

(2) messages praising Adolf Hitler and demonizing all Jewish people;

Whereas the most effective ways to counter the increase in antisemitic actions are through education, awareness, and the uplifting of Jewish voices, while highlighting the contributions that Jewish Americans have made to the United States; and

Whereas, as the strength of a society can be measured by how that society protects its minority populations and celebrates their contributions, it is altogether fitting for the United States to once again mark the month of May as Jewish American Heritage Month: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the significance of Jewish American Heritage Month as a time to celebrate the contributions of Jewish Americans to the society and culture of the United States;

(2) recognizes that Jewish American culture and heritage strengthen and enrich the diversity of the United States; and

(3) calls on elected officials, faith leaders, and civil society leaders to condemn and combat any and all acts of antisemitism.

SENATE RESOLUTION 204—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2023 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP, THE PROGRAM'S SIXTH TITLE OVERALL

Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mr. MULLIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 204

Whereas the University of Oklahoma women's gymnastics team (referred to in this preamble as the “Sooners”) won the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as “NCAA”) championship, defeating second seed University of Florida, fifth seed University of Utah, and sixth seed Louisiana State University;

Whereas, as of the 2023 NCAA championship, the Sooners—

(1) have won 6 NCAA championships;

(2) won its second consecutive NCAA championship;

(3) won its third NCAA championship in 4 years;

(4) won its sixth NCAA championship in 9 years; and

(5) are tied for the fourth-most national championships in NCAA women's gymnastics history;

Whereas, at the 2023 NCAA championship, the Sooners, with a score of 198.3875, tied the record for highest score ever achieved at an NCAA women's gymnastics championship, which the Sooners set in 2017;

Whereas the Sooners' score of 49.5625 in the vault at the 2023 NCAA championship is the fourth best score for vault at the NCAA championship in Sooners history;

Whereas, during the 2023 NCAA championship, the Sooners jumped out to a narrow lead over the University of Florida in the first rotation and went wire-to-wire;

Whereas all 6 gymnasts on the Sooners scored a 9.900 or higher on the floor exercise in the fourth rotation to secure the 2023 NCAA championship.

Whereas 8 gymnasts on the Sooners earned a total of 10 NCAA All-America honors, and 5 earned first-team honors;

Whereas the Sooners finished at number 1 in the NCAA women's gymnastics final rankings;

Whereas Olivia Trautman won the NCAA vault title, becoming the seventh University of Oklahoma athlete, and the first athlete since Anastasia Webb in 2021, to win an individual NCAA championship;

Whereas Meilin Sullivan was named the NCAA Elite 90 Award Winner, becoming the fifth University of Oklahoma athlete and second member of the Sooners to receive the award;

Whereas the Sooners head coach, K.J. Kindler, led the team to a 28 win, 2 loss season that included—

(1) a Big 12 Conference championship;

(2) a NCAA regional crown; and

(3) an NCAA championship; and

Whereas the 2023 NCAA championship season is the sixth triple crown for the Sooners and Coach Kindler: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of Oklahoma women's gymnastics team for winning the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association championship;

(2) recognizes the supreme standard set by—

(A) head coach K.J. Kindler;

(B) the University of Oklahoma staff; and

(C) the gymnasts on the University of Oklahoma women's gymnastics team; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) the president of the University of Oklahoma, Joseph Harroz, Jr.;

(B) the athletics director of the University of Oklahoma, Joe Castiglione; and

(C) the head coach of the University of Oklahoma women's gymnastics team, K.J. Kindler.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 89. Mr. SCHUMER (for Ms. CANTWELL) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 346, to establish a task force on improvements for notices to air missions, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 89. Mr. SCHUMER (for Ms. CANTWELL) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 346, to establish a task force on improvements for notices to air missions, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “NOTAM Improvement Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. FAA TASK FORCE ON NOTAM IMPROVEMENT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a task force to be known as the FAA Task Force on NOTAM Improvement (in this section referred to as the “Task Force”).

(b) COMPOSITION.—The Task Force shall consist of members appointed by the Administrator, including at least one member of each of the following:

(1) Air carrier representatives.

(2) Airport representatives.

(3) Labor union representatives of airline pilots.

(4) Labor union representatives of aircraft dispatchers.

(5) The labor union certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code, to represent FAA air traffic control specialists assigned to the United States NOTAMs Office.

(6) The labor union certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code, to represent FAA aeronautical information specialists.

(7) General and business aviation representatives.

(8) Aviation safety experts with knowledge of NOTAMs.

(9) Human factors experts.

(10) Computer system architecture and cybersecurity experts.

(c) DUTIES.—The duties of the Task Force shall include—

(1) reviewing existing methods for publishing NOTAMs and flight operations information to pilots;

(2) reviewing regulations, policies, systems, and international standards relating to NOTAMs, including their content and presentation to pilots;

(3) evaluating and determining best practices to organize, prioritize, and present flight operations information in a manner that optimizes pilot review and retention of relevant information; and

(4) providing recommendations for—

(A) improving the publication and delivery of NOTAM information in a manner that prioritizes or highlights the most important information, and optimizes pilot review and retention of relevant information;

(B) ways to ensure that NOTAMs are complete, accurate, timely, relevant to safe flight operations, and contain pertinent information;

(C) any best practices that the FAA should consider to improve the accuracy and understandability of NOTAMs and the display of flight operations information;

(D) ways to work with air carriers, other airspace users, and aviation service providers to implement solutions that are aligned with the recommendations under this paragraph; and

(E) ways to ensure the stability, resiliency, and cybersecurity of the NOTAM computer system.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the establishment of the Task Force, the Task Force shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report detailing—

(1) the results of the reviews and evaluations of the Task Force under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (c);

(2) the best practices identified and recommendations provided by the Task Force under subsection (c)(4);

(3) any recommendations of the Task Force for additional regulatory or policy actions to improve the publication of NOTAMs; and

(4) the degree to which implementing the recommendations of the Task Force described under paragraph (2) will address National Transportation Safety Board Safety Recommendation A-18-024.

(e) **APPLICABLE LAW.**—Chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to the Task Force.

(f) **SUNSET.**—The Task Force shall terminate on the later of—

(1) the date on which the Task Force submits the report required under subsection (d); or

(2) the date that is 18 months after the date on which the Task Force is established under subsection (a).

(g) **AUTHORITY.**—The Administrator shall have the authority to carry out the recommendations of the Task Force detailed in the report required under subsection (d).

(h) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to require the FAA to duplicate any prior, ongoing, or planned efforts related to the improvement of NOTAMs, including any efforts related to implementing any previously enacted requirements.

(i) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **FAA.**—The term “FAA” means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) **NOTAM.**—The term “NOTAM” means a notice containing information (which is not known sufficiently in advance to publicize by other means) concerning the establishment, condition, or change in any component (including a facility, service, or procedure thereof) or hazard in the National Airspace System, the timely knowledge of which is essential to personnel concerned with flight operations.

SEC. 3. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

Not later than September 30, 2024, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall make the following improvements:

(1) Complete implementation of a Federal NOTAM System (in this section referred to as a “FNS”).

(2) Implement a back-up system to the FNS.

(3) Brief the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on a plan to enhance the capability to deliver information through the FNS that is machine-readable, filterable, and in the format used by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to promote further global harmonization among neighboring Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) and provide users of the National Airspace System with one consistent format for domestic and international operations.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I have one request for committee to meet during today’s session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committee is authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

The Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during

the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at 4:45 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

NOTAM IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2023

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 346 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 346) to establish a task force on improvements for notices to air missions, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Cantwell substitute amendment that is at the desk be considered 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 amendment (No. 89) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “NOTAM Improvement Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. FAA TASK FORCE ON NOTAM IMPROVEMENT.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a task force to be known as the FAA Task Force on NOTAM Improvement (in this section referred to as the “Task Force”).

(b) **COMPOSITION.**—The Task Force shall consist of members appointed by the Administrator, including at least one member of each of the following:

- (1) Air carrier representatives.
- (2) Airport representatives.
- (3) Labor union representatives of airline pilots.
- (4) Labor union representatives of aircraft dispatchers.
- (5) The labor union certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code, to represent FAA air traffic control specialists assigned to the United States NOTAMs Office.
- (6) The labor union certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code, to represent FAA aeronautical information specialists.
- (7) General and business aviation representatives.
- (8) Aviation safety experts with knowledge of NOTAMs.
- (9) Human factors experts.
- (10) Computer system architecture and cybersecurity experts.

(c) **DUTIES.**—The duties of the Task Force shall include—

- (1) reviewing existing methods for publishing NOTAMs and flight operations information to pilots;
- (2) reviewing regulations, policies, systems, and international standards relating

to NOTAMs, including their content and presentation to pilots;

(3) evaluating and determining best practices to organize, prioritize, and present flight operations information in a manner that optimizes pilot review and retention of relevant information; and

(4) providing recommendations for—

(A) improving the publication and delivery of NOTAM information in a manner that prioritizes or highlights the most important information, and optimizes pilot review and retention of relevant information;

(B) ways to ensure that NOTAMs are complete, accurate, timely, relevant to safe flight operations, and contain pertinent information;

(C) any best practices that the FAA should consider to improve the accuracy and understandability of NOTAMs and the display of flight operations information;

(D) ways to work with air carriers, other airspace users, and aviation service providers to implement solutions that are aligned with the recommendations under this paragraph; and

(E) ways to ensure the stability, resiliency, and cybersecurity of the NOTAM computer system.

(d) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the establishment of the Task Force, the Task Force shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report detailing—

(1) the results of the reviews and evaluations of the Task Force under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (c);

(2) the best practices identified and recommendations provided by the Task Force under subsection (c)(4);

(3) any recommendations of the Task Force for additional regulatory or policy actions to improve the publication of NOTAMs; and

(4) the degree to which implementing the recommendations of the Task Force described under paragraph (2) will address National Transportation Safety Board Safety Recommendation A-18-024.

(e) **APPLICABLE LAW.**—Chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to the Task Force.

(f) **SUNSET.**—The Task Force shall terminate on the later of—

(1) the date on which the Task Force submits the report required under subsection (d); or

(2) the date that is 18 months after the date on which the Task Force is established under subsection (a).

(g) **AUTHORITY.**—The Administrator shall have the authority to carry out the recommendations of the Task Force detailed in the report required under subsection (d).

(h) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to require the FAA to duplicate any prior, ongoing, or planned efforts related to the improvement of NOTAMs, including any efforts related to implementing any previously enacted requirements.

(i) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **FAA.**—The term “FAA” means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) **NOTAM.**—The term “NOTAM” means a notice containing information (which is not known sufficiently in advance to publicize by other means) concerning the establishment, condition, or change in any component (including a facility, service, or procedure thereof) or hazard in the National Airspace System, the timely knowledge of which is essential to personnel concerned with flight operations.

SEC. 3. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

Not later than September 30, 2024, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall make the following improvements:

(1) Complete implementation of a Federal NOTAM System (in this section referred to as a "FNS").

(2) Implement a back-up system to the FNS.

(3) Brief the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on a plan to enhance the capability to deliver information through the FNS that is machine-readable, filterable, and in the format used by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to promote further global harmonization among neighboring Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) and provide users of the National Airspace System with one consistent format for domestic and international operations.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 346), as amended, was passed.

Mr. SCHUMER. A word on what we just did. A few moments ago, the Senate unanimously passed the NOTAM Improvement Act requiring the FAA to look into the resiliency of the cyber security of Notice to Air Missions system, which is critical for alerting pilots of danger when flying.

Nobody wants a repeat of the chaos and delay we saw at our airports back this January when FAA's NOTAM system went down.

This legislation will get the FAA to take a hard look under the hood of NOTAM to ensure it is as safe and reliable and well-protected from cyber attacks and technical glitches as possible.

I want to thank my colleagues who worked hard on this: Senator KLOBUCHAR, the lead sponsor; Senator CAPITO; and Senator MORAN for their work on this legislation. And, of course, I thank Senator CANTWELL, chair of the Commerce Committee, for her good work on this as well. She gets a lot done.

COMMEMORATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 157.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 157) commemorating the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to,

and 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. 157) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 30, 2023, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2023 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP, THE PROGRAM'S SIXTH TITLE OVERALL

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 204, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 204) congratulating the University of Oklahoma women's gymnastics team for winning the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association championship, the program's sixth title overall.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and 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. 204) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m., Wednesday, May 10; following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Gorordo nomination, postcloture, and that all time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m.; that following the cloture vote on the Wright-Gallo nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; that if cloture is invoked, notwithstanding rule XXII, at 2:30 p.m., the Senate vote on confirmation of the

Wright-Gallo nomination; that upon disposition of the nomination, the Senate resume consideration of the Shogan nomination; that there be 10 minutes, equally divided, prior to a vote on confirmation of the nomination; and that upon disposition of the Shogan nomination, the Senate resume consideration of the Gupta nomination and the Senate vote on confirmation at 5:30 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. For the information of the Senate, there are two rollcall votes at 11:30, two at 2:30, and one at 5:30 p.m.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks—I am sure they will be excellent—of Senator MURKOWSKI of Alaska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would welcome the majority leader to stay and listen to my comments this evening because I am speaking about the Arctic, and as a Senator from New York, he could certainly appreciate the role that the Arctic plays.

Mr. SCHUMER. If the Senator would yield, I love the Arctic. I have never been there, but I have seen many films and movies about it. I am sure her remarks will be excellent, but I must give a speech at the bipartisan spouses' dinner. So I regret that I will not hear her remarks directly, but I will scan them in the RECORD.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. The majority leader is invited to the Arctic at any time of his choosing. January is a fine time.

Mr. President, I do share with colleagues—they hear it from me quite frequently—that the United States is an Arctic nation. Hailing from the fine State of Georgia, in the South, the Presiding Officer might not think or appreciate the role that your State plays in the Arctic, but each of our 50 States—each of our 50 States—sees benefit, sees opportunity because we are an Arctic nation. And we are an Arctic nation by virtue of the fact that, in my home State of Alaska, parts of it sit above the Arctic Circle.

It is our status as a nation. It is our good fortune, I think, as a nation. We have opportunities to come together as Arctic nations and work on its common challenges and shared opportunities, and we had such an opportunity

just a couple of weeks back when, here in Washington, DC, we were able to be an Arctic host nation in welcoming the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region for our conference. We held it here in the Capitol.

I think many have heard of the Arctic Council. The Arctic Council is the governing body. It is the primary institution for intergovernmental cooperation in the Arctic. You may know that, currently, as of this moment, the Arctic Council is chaired by Russia. Obviously, it is very challenging right now, at a time when Russia is engaged in this horrible war against Ukraine.

I will have an opportunity to speak, in just a few moments, to that, but as we think about the Arctic Council, I think it is also important to recognize that the standing committee—the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region—is also a body that is quite important. It facilitates a biennial gathering of representatives from the various parliaments and legislatures of the eight Arctic nations. There are also permanent participants, indigenous groups that are part of the Arctic parliamentarians, as well as representatives from the Nordic Council and other councils. As an entity, then, the standing committee helps to make recommendations to the Arctic Council itself.

But the standing Committee is made up of policymakers, again, from these Arctic nations coming together, talking about the issues in our respective regions and how together we can guide the broader Arctic toward a more sustainable future. I have been involved as a member of the standing committee for nearly my entire tenure here in the U.S. Senate.

I am the United States' sole representative on the standing committee, and I am now very privileged to serve as its vice chair and have done so now for the past 3 years.

We hold our conferences in, obviously, other parts of the Arctic. We have been to Helsinki in Finland. We have been in Reykjavik in Iceland. We have been up to Norway, Sweden, and several times in Alaska itself, one meeting in Anchorage and then a ministerial meeting held in Fairbanks.

And then, as I mentioned, just a couple weeks ago now, we held our conference for 2023 here in Washington, DC. It is not exactly an Arctic capital here—I get that—but it is a place where we could all come together to convene and discuss the challenges and the opportunities that we face in the Far North.

So we were proud to welcome representatives from five Arctic nations at the conference. In addition to the United States, we had delegates present from Canada, Denmark, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.

(Mr. KELLY assumed the Chair.)

And I am going to share with you and those here in the Chamber a map of the Arctic region. I think, when most people think about the Arctic, they think

about the globe, and there is the top of the globe. You have that piece up there that looks so far and so remote. The Presiding Officer is probably the only one in this Chamber who has had an opportunity to see the Arctic as it really is. The Presiding Officer was up there in space and had a chance to see the Arctic region laid out as it is.

Here is Alaska here, Canada, Greenland, and Iceland, just on the outside; obviously, Russia, with the vast, vast territory above the Arctic Circle; Finland, Sweden, Norway above here.

But not only do we include in our delegation representatives from the Arctic nations, but we also include those from the European Parliament.

We had a representative from the Nordic Council, the West Nordic Council, the Saami Council, the Gwich'in Council International, the Aleut International Association, and the Arctic Athabaskan Council.

We were able to meet over in the Capitol Visitor Center for a morning of open discussion. We began with remarks from the chair of the Standing Committee, Aaja Chemnitz Larsen. Aaja is from Greenland. She is a member of the Danish Folketing.

We take care of the business and presentations from not only our perspective here in the United States. We had a good strong discussion about the United States and our role, how we have stepped into a greatly amplified role when it comes to Arctic leadership, personnel, policies, as well as infrastructure.

Following our meetings, we were able to go over to the Norwegian Embassy and held a policy-focused panel. We had a reception with the Fulbright Arctic Scholars and a pretty robust Arctic working dinner. We called it our Arctic salon to kind of close out the day. But it was an opportunity to really come together and share many of the issues that these Arctic nations are dealing with today.

Obviously, climate change was front and center as part of these discussions. We talked about the threats from coastal erosion and increasing wildland fires that we are seeing in the tundra and taiga areas, the challenges that a warming climate brings with food security issues, and, certainly, from Alaska's perspective, the challenges that we are seeing with our fisheries—a subsistence identity that is key and central to so many of not only our Native people around the State but so many who live a subsistence lifestyle.

So many of us, as Arctic nations, share common challenges like lack of core infrastructure, our need for sustainable economic development, and the priorities for our First Peoples. We talked about what we see with the rise of shipping and trade, as well as new industries, such as mariculture. There are a lot of real positives that I think we are seeing, but we are also seeing significant shared challenges.

So many are facing outmigration of young people. We are certainly seeing

that in my State, but also in the Far North, in Canada and in some of the other areas, and, certainly, an issue in Greenland.

We talked about housing shortages and what that means in Arctic environments. We talked a lot about mental health issues and the challenges that so many in the northern regions face, and public safety issues.

There was so, so much that was on our plate, and, again, talking about challenges but also talking about some of the best practices. And, of course, you have to talk about the geopolitical landscape and how it is impacting these shared challenges and really how we move forward to address them.

And you can't avoid this. You can't avoid these geopolitical discussions because the largest Arctic nation, Russia, is typically part of the standing committee. They are one of the eight Arctic nations. But this year they were not present. They were not welcomed. They were not represented due to their own doing, due to this catastrophic war in Ukraine.

And the Presiding Officer and I know that is what happens when you move to declare war against a free and sovereign nation. There are extensive, there are far-reaching consequences. So they are not part of the discussions within the Arctic Council. They are not part of the discussions within the Standing Committee of the Arctic Parliamentarians. But I think we know that even though they are not part of these discussions, Russia continues to lean in, to exert its influence, its dominance, in the Arctic.

After Finland's accession into NATO, we saw Russia step up its military drills in the Arctic. In recent years, we have seen increased military buildup. Again, even while Putin is prosecuting this awful criminal war in Ukraine, he is pushing resources to, again, put his military influence in an area that, for a period of years, has been relatively dormant.

Just a couple of weeks ago, Russia has signed an agreement to strengthen cooperation with China in the region, signaling very clearly that, perhaps, for the multilateral discussions in the Arctic that they had been part of, as with the Arctic Council, now they are seeking to pursue a more bilateral strategy.

So Russia is absolutely—absolutely—not stepping off the gas when it comes to its engagement and interest in the Arctic. So even though Russian parliamentarians might not be sitting with us, it is not as if we can ignore the elephant in the room.

I think that the conversations that the parliamentarians had, again, a couple weeks ago, are worth sharing here, worth an entry into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, because the future of the Arctic is literally being defined as we speak—as we speak.

There is more attention that is being paid to the Far North by more people and more nations with more varied interests than we have ever seen before,

and I think that there is a greater need for us here in the United States for co-operation and sharing best practices with friends and those with similar interests.

Just last week, I had an opportunity to sit down with a member of the Japanese House of Representatives, Ms. Kamikawa. She is the head of the Polar Caucus, and she shared with me Japan's plans to build an icebreaker designed for research in the area.

They are not an Arctic nation. Japan does not pretend to be a near-Arctic nation, as China has self-labeled themselves, but they do believe that the area, the region is so significant and so important, and so how can they be a helpful participant? How can they help in that shared research? So to be able to cooperate in these ways, I think is key.

I think those of us here in the United States, especially those of us who serve as policymakers, need to be aware of those other non-Arctic nations that are looking at the Arctic with a heightened sense of interest and desire to be either a participant or how they might take advantage of the Arctic.

Don't get me wrong: We have got a very strong and inviting commitment from nearly all of our Arctic partners to work together to find solutions to the challenges and the issues that we face. I believe equally strongly that the United States has got to be a leader in advancing those solutions. For a long while, the United States was lagging behind. I had suggested we were not at the table, we were not in the game; but I can assure you, we have taken some very important steps. We have made progress. It has been noted by other nations, and it is good to see.

We have taken some steps to put people and policies in place that will guide our actions in this very, very dynamic region. We are investing billions of dollars now in core infrastructure.

Again, I need to remind colleagues, we are not talking about earmarks or even congressionally directed spending for Alaska. We are talking about national security investments—investments in our national Arctic strategy.

You can't have coverage of the U.S. Arctic if you don't have a deepwater port. Right now, our deepwater port is down in the Aleutians—Dutch Harbor. It is 800 to 1,000 miles to get yourself up there into the Arctic.

So we have moved ahead. The Port of Nome is coming on. It is going to be significant. It is going to be important. Hopefully, there will be just a system of deepwater ports in the Arctic.

Investment has been made in broadband connectivity. You cannot have this extraordinary mass and be blanked out when it comes to Arctic communication—so everything we have done to invest not only in communications to communities in the North Slope but what it means to be in these waters—to be in these skies.

I have had a pretty good day and a half. I just came back this afternoon

from Alabama and Mississippi, where I was able to visit shipyards that are in the process now—Alabama shipyard is building out offshore patrol cutters—OPCs—that are going to be significant to us in the region.

Even more exciting—I have been waiting for this for, I swear, 20 years now—but I was able to go to Bollinger Shipyard down in Pascagoula and to actually see—actually see—where we are going to be building—hopefully, cutting steel by the end of this year—the first polar security cutter. It is the first polar security cutter that this country has built since the early 1970s. We are well, well, well overdue.

We have authorized now six icebreakers. We have fully funded two. We are pushing hard to advance commercially available icebreakers. My hope is that we will get that resolved this year. The Coast Guard is committed to it. The administration is committed to it. We are all-in, and we need it. We need it because, right now—this is no great secret—but the United States has no icebreaker—no polar-strength icebreaker that is in our waters.

We do have a polar-strength icebreaker, but she breaks out Antarctica. That is the requirement. She has been doing it for a long, long time. But that vessel doesn't see these Arctic waters. We have a medium-strength vessel that is very capable, the *Healy*, but we need to have our polar security cutters. We need them in the water. I was really encouraged to see the forward movement. It is coming. These ships are coming, and it is going to make a difference. They are part of our Arctic strategy.

We have got an updated national strategy for the Arctic region. This came from the White House. We have got a new Goals and Objectives Report from the U.S. Arctic Research Commission. Every branch of the military has now developed its own strategy for the Far North. We have reestablished the Arctic Executive Steering Committee featuring the Deputy Secretaries or their equivalents from the Departments in the key Agencies. We have revived the Arctic Energy Office at DOE. We stood up the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies. This is located in Anchorage. It is part of the Department of Defense; but like the other security centers that look out over the Pacific or Europe or Africa, this is specific and unique to the Arctic only with brilliant people who are thinking about where we sit in this extraordinary space.

We have also convinced the State Department to establish an Ambassador at Large for the Arctic region, as many, many countries have already done. So the President has nominated a great guy. He is a fellow Alaskan, Dr. Mike Sfraga, to be the first person to hold this position. I am really looking forward to the Foreign Relations Committee—hopefully, they will be able to consider his nomination later this month and get him confirmed.

I met with the Ambassador from Norway. Norway is set to assume the chairship of the Arctic Council on the 11th of May. This week, it is going to transfer from Russia to Norway.

I asked the Ambassador what can the United States do to be most helpful to Norway as you resettle the Arctic Council. And he said: Confirm your Arctic Ambassador. So we need to do that.

We made important progress in recent years, but what has happened so far is really only the beginning of what we need to do in and for the region, as we continue to face major challenges that I think take all of us to address.

The Arctic's future must always be determined by the people of the Arctic. But having said that, there is good reason for us here in Congress to pay attention and a role for us to play in how to guide its future. And I have a pretty long list in that regard.

I am dusting off my Arctic Commitment Act. It is a comprehensive package focused on security, shipping, research, and trade policy improvements.

I mentioned the Arctic Ambassador position. We need to codify the Arctic Ambassador position into law. We need to grow our diplomatic capacity and our soft power.

I feel pretty strongly. We need to ratify the Law of the Sea Treaty. We need to do this. We need to ensure that our rightful claims in these areas aren't snapped up by those who want to control as much territory and resources as possible.

We need to do more to invest in our defense. Again, I mentioned our icebreakers, but also our Coast Guard, a naval presence, a missile defense, and advanced fighter jets that can respond to all threats, whether it is Russian Bear Bombers that are coming over just right here—coming right there—or whether it is these unidentified aerial objects the whole country is tracking as they are coming right up through the Bering Strait and across Alaska. We are on the frontlines.

We need to invest even more in core infrastructure like water and wastewater, broadband—I mentioned—so that all those who live in the U.S. Arctic have access to basic necessities and a modern standard of living.

We need to tap into some of the new opportunities, including for food security. I have got a measure that I am going to be introducing—we call it our "Arctic ag" bill—focusing on not necessarily traditional agriculture, so to speak, but things like mariculture, which will contribute to our growing food economy.

We need to produce the resources that we need now and that we will need for decades to come. This means not just the recently approved Willow Project that was approved within the National Petroleum Reserve—and we are thankful that the administration saw the benefit of that—but we also

need to be looking to the commercialization of our vast natural gas resources, the build-out of our renewables and clean technologies like advanced nuclear power, the approval of new mines that can produce the minerals that we are going to need that is going to power our future. We need to do all of this while we work to address the issues of climate change by dramatically working to reduce our emissions and also finding solutions for adaptation which is just as critical.

We have to be ready for new threats as they arise. As I mentioned, the enhancer, that growing relationship between Russia and China strengthening their ties—what we are seeing coming out of Russia right now is a move to ship oil to China through the Northern Sea Route. So they will be moving their oil through the Northern Sea Route, coming right through the Bering Straits here to deliver—to go down to China.

When you look at choke points. It is 57 miles—57 miles—between mainland Russia and mainland United States right here—not a lot of room. We have got two islands across the middle: the Big Diomedes and the Little Diomedes, one Russian and one United States. But I am worried that what we may see are non-Polar Code-compliant tankers coming through these waters at a time when Russia is looking to do everything they can to evade Western sanctions. But I am concerned that we may see an accident. We may see some kind of a spill. And our response capacity is extraordinarily limited—potentially thousands of miles away.

So there is a lot that we are watching; there is a lot that we have got to do. And I think that there is still not enough of us giving the Arctic the attention that it deserves. It is still harder than it should be to secure critical Arctic policy and investment.

I know more and more Members of Congress are visiting the region. I think, maybe, I may have gotten a commitment from the majority leader to come and visit the Arctic—maybe not in January—but he says he likes the Arctic. But people need to see it for themselves to understand what we are talking about. So welcome all of you.

But for those of you who aren't able to visit and, frankly, don't understand the significance of the region, I think—I think some still ask the question: Why bother? Why is the Arctic important? Why does it matter?

And the answer to that—my answer to that is that the future of the Arctic matters more to the future of the Na-

tion than most can possibly imagine. The Presiding Officer probably well-recalls a famous general by the name of Billy Mitchell. And General Mitchell, back in 1935, said:

I believe that in the future, whoever holds Alaska will hold the world. I think it is the most important strategic place in the world.

Billy Mitchell said that in 1935, and I think it is fair to say that the future has arrived, because General Mitchell is absolutely right. Alaska is the most strategic place because of our location, because we are part of an Arctic nation, and because we are sitting right on top of the world. We are sitting in the center of it. We are, oftentimes—oftentimes—on the frontline of our Nation's sovereignty and defense. Now new cargo, new shipping trade routes are creating challenges, yes—I have mentioned—but also economic opportunities that can deliver benefits all over the country—the investment in ships and planes and manufacturing facilities and everything else that that involves in creating jobs and furthering opportunities in every State in the country.

When I was at the shipyard this morning, they had a map of the Lower 48 States with the number of dollars—and I don't believe it was just dollars—but I think it was the number of dollars that comes to each State because of investments that are made purchasing, whether it is raw materials or built parts. You look at—48 States on that map now; there wasn't Alaska. We are not building any of that yet, but we are going to be hosting this. So it points to the value, whether you are from Arizona or whether you are from Georgia, in that you have a stake in the Arctic.

As fellow Arctic parliamentarians, we say, in coming back to our conference, what happens in the Arctic doesn't stay in the Arctic. We know that it isn't frozen in time. It is not frozen in place. It really affects every single one of us and, I think, more by the year. I think the sooner folks realize that, the better, and the time is really now.

On the heels of our meeting of the standing committee, as I mentioned, later this week, we will transition the chairship of the Arctic Council from Russia to Norway. We are hoping that transfer is going to be very quiet, very uneventful. There will be, I think, a fair amount of anticipation and, hopefully, relief on the 12th of May that we will begin to really renew our intergovernmental collaboration as Arctic na-

tions, with Norway at the helm, working together to work through some common challenges but to do so much more to share best practices. I think here in the United States, we meet this with determination and commitment as we work to do our part as an Arctic nation.

With that, I invite the Presiding Officer as well to come to the Far North and to the Arctic.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:31 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, May 10, 2023, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

JOHN W. LESLIE, JR., OF CONNECTICUT, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 22, 2025. (REAPPOINTMENT)

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

DEBORAH ROBINSON, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ENFORCEMENT COORDINATOR, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, VICE VISHAL J. AMIN.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be colonel

THOMAS A. BIEDIGER
RYAN D. NUDI

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR ARMY MEDICAL SPECIALIST CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531, 716, AND 7064:

To be major

RYAN R. POMMIER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 7064:

To be major

SEBASTIAN A. COATES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 7064:

To be major

JAMES M. CALDWELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 7064:

To be colonel

THOMAS A. SUMMERS