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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, who has ordained the seasons of our lives, thank You for the steadfastness of Your mercy and long suffering.

Today, inspire our lawmakers to open themselves to the gift of Your presence, remembering that You are always with them. Where there is fear, give courage. Where there is anxiety, give peace. Where there is despair, give hope. Where there is sadness, give joy. May our Senators joyfully encounter You on a daily basis. Lord, inspire them to hear Your words and obey Your precepts.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 20, 2021.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for decades, both parties have shared a desire to invest in our Nation's infrastructure. It is one of the few issues here in Washington where our two parties can consistently work together, and it has been years since Congress passed a significant stand-alone investment. We are hoping to change that this year.

Nearly a month ago—a month ago—a bipartisan group of Senators came together, along with the White House, and agreed on a framework for a bipartisan infrastructure bill. So last night I moved to set up a process for the Senate to consider that bipartisan framework.

On Wednesday, the Senate will take the first procedural vote on a shell bill, merely a vehicle to get the whole process started. It is not a final deadline for legislative text. It is not a cynical ploy. It is not a fish-or-cut-bait moment. It is not an attempt to jam anyone. It is only a signal that the Senate is ready to get the process started, something the Senate has routinely done on other bipartisan bills this year.

All a “yes” vote on the motion to proceed means is simply that the Senate is ready to begin debating a bipartisan infrastructure bill—no more, no

less. We have waited a month. It is time to move forward.

My colleagues have heard me speak for months about making progress on two different tracks of infrastructure. After the group of Senators reached a deal with the White House, I endorsed it and I announced I wanted to put their agreement on the floor of the Senate in July. This week's vote is an honest attempt to get something done, to get the ball rolling on the Senate floor.

That is why I am giving the maximum amount of flexibility to our Senate colleagues who are negotiating this bill. If the bipartisan group can finalize the text of their agreement by Thursday, I will offer it as the pending substitute amendment. If, for whatever reason, the bipartisan group isn't ready with their final text by Thursday, I will offer an amendment consisting only of the bipartisan infrastructure bills that have already gone through our Senate committees and are actually the core of the bipartisan infrastructure framework. They are the water bill, the highway bill, the rail and safety bill, and the energy bill.

All of them are bipartisan, all of them have gone through committee, and all of them received overwhelming Republican votes. Why wouldn't our Republican colleagues want to move to proceed to debate that bill, at the very minimum, even if we don't have agreement on the broader bipartisan bill?

Just to go over the record, the Environment and Public Works Committee reported the water bill, passed by voice vote, unanimous, in committee and then 89 to 2 on the Senate floor. The Environment and Public Works Committee reported the highway bill, passed by 20 to 0. The Commerce Committee reported the rail and safety bill, passed by 25 to 3. And the Energy and Natural Resources Committee report of the energy bill passed 13 to 7.

So once again, to repeat, this week's vote is an honest attempt to get something done, to get the ball rolling on

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



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the Senate floor, after a month, after the agreement was reached by the bipartisan group and the White House. That is why I am giving the maximum amount of flexibility to our Senate colleagues who are negotiating the bill. If the bipartisan group can finalize their agreement by Thursday, I will offer it as the pending substitute amendment, as I mentioned before. I just wanted to repeat that so people hear it loud and clear.

The bills I mentioned are the lowest common denominator and the most agreeable starting point, a package of bipartisan bills that nearly all the Senators have already supported this year, a package of bills that the bipartisan group is using as the basis of their framework. And once it is on the floor, we can then debate, amend, and work from there. It is not the final word.

There will be no doubt many Senators would want to offer additional items from the bipartisan framework or other issues: from transit to broadband, to resiliency, and more. And, of course, if the bipartisan group finalizes their product over the weekend, Senators can offer it as an amendment at that point, and I will make sure that that amendment is in order.

Let me repeat. Even if the text of the bipartisan framework isn't ready by Thursday and we agree to make the package of bipartisan bills that I mentioned the starting point, Senators can still work on the bipartisan framework and offer it as an amendment later on.

The bottom line is very simple. If Senators agree to start debate, there will be many, many opportunities for the bipartisan group to make their agreement the base of the bill. But if Republican Senators refuse to start debate, they would be denying the Senate an opportunity to consider the bipartisan amendment.

And this is not a new process. We have used it regularly here in the Senate, on the anti-Asian hate crimes bill, the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act. On both of those, the Senate agreed to start debate, just to proceed on a base bill, a shell bill. It took several weeks of amendments before everyone was ready to move forward, eventually and successfully. Both measures passed with significant bipartisan support.

If we did it there—on the anti-Asian hate bill, on the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act—we can do it here. There is no reason we can't do it here with infrastructure.

Look, Senators of good will on both sides want to finish the bipartisan infrastructure bill before the August recess. That is certainly my goal. But in order to finish the bill, we first need to agree to start. Let me repeat that. But in order to finish the bill, we first need to agree to start. That is the first step.

Let's all agree to start. That is what this week's vote is about, and I hope my Republican colleagues will join us in beginning debate.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on another matter, right now, there is a fire burning in Oregon the size of New York City. A heat wave recently rolled through the Pacific Northwest that melted power lines and cracked roadways in two. Hurricanes and flooding in the East have battered one community after the other. Earlier this year, a snowstorm engulfed the typically scorching State of Texas and claimed the lives of hundreds—hundreds—of people. And, of course, we saw what happened in Europe with the flooding.

These extreme, once-in-a-century weather events are now commonplace. The dangers of climate change are here, and they are real. Fighting climate change will take not only new technologies and new ways of thinking but something more basic: It will take people—people, lots of people—working together to fight climate change from the ground up.

This morning, I joined with my Democratic colleagues from the House and Senate to push a bold, new approach to fighting climate change that will help create thousands of good-paying jobs in the process: the Civilian Climate Corps, CCC.

The idea at the core of the Civilian Climate Corps harkens back to the New Deal, when hundreds of thousands of Americans were put to work on conservation and infrastructure projects across the country. During the Great Depression, President Roosevelt needed ways to put Americans to work and to do it fast, and he found a way to do it while having those workers do something enormously productive for their country: building public works and dams and bridges and airfields and flood and forest-fire prevention.

The Civilian Conservation Corps, as it was called at the time, was a brilliant idea—a success—that should be harnessed once again, this time to fight climate change.

The bottom line: We need a CCC for the 21st century. We can put Americans to work on climate and resiliency projects. We can put Americans to work on clean energy initiatives across the country. We can put Americans to work helping poorer and more disconnected communities handle the challenge of climate change. And we can create hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs, particularly focusing on the poorer communities, the communities of color that have been left out in the past.

The Civilian Climate Corps can be one of the largest employment projects and one of the largest environmental projects at the same time. I believe the Senate should work to make this a reality this year. I believe the CCC, the Civilian Climate Corps, should be one of the pillars of the American Jobs and Family Plan. As majority leader, I will ensure that CCC will be included in the upcoming budget reconciliation package in as big and bold a way as possible.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, later, the Senate will pass a long-overdue fix to the Crime Victims Fund to help Americans stitch back their lives after falling victim to violent crime.

As hard as it is to suffer the trauma of a violent crime, survivors almost always face enormous financial hardship in the immediate aftermath. Just think about healthcare or mental health services for victims of human trafficking or sexual assault, emergency housing for victims of serious domestic abuse, legal fees for those who try to pursue justice for the crime committed against them. Those services can cost tens of thousands of dollars. So for nearly 35 years, the Justice Department has operated a Crime Victims Fund that uses money from Federal convictions and fines to help survivors of violent crime. It is a simple idea. It has helped thousands and thousands of Americans during the most challenging moments of their lives.

But today, this popular and effective program is in danger of going into the red. Compared to 5 years ago, the Crime Victims Fund could fall to less than one-twentieth—one-twentieth—of its former size by the end of the next fiscal year. Well, the Senate is not going to abandon Americans who survived violent crimes. Today, the Senate will pass legislation to replenish the Crime Victims Fund and set it on a path toward long-term stability. The Crime Victims Fund has been a beacon of hope and healing for countless survivors over the decades. With today's vote, survivors of violent crime can rest assured that it will continue to be that beacon of hope and healing for decades more to come.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2382

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2382) to authorize the National Cyber Director to accept details from other elements of the Federal Government on non-reimbursable basis, and for other purposes.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceedings.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will now be placed on the calendar.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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 MINORITY LEADER

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

NOMINATION OF JENNIFER ANN ABRUZZO

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, later today, the Senate will vote on President Biden's nominee to serve as general counsel for the National Labor Relations Board.

There actually shouldn't be a vacancy in this position. When President Biden took office, the person serving as the NLRB's top lawyer was still in the middle of a term to which the Senate had confirmed him. He was doing his job, serving the country, and had no intention to skip out of his responsibilities early.

But less than 30 minutes after pledging to heal and unify the country in his inaugural address, President Biden broke precedent and threatened to fire Peter Robb unless he resigned prematurely that very day.

At the very first instant that the new President's statements about norms, institutions, and governance ran up against the demands of the far left—well, the decision didn't take very long. Where Senate confirmation and fixed terms were supposed to create independence, this administration just wanted partisan loyalty.

Unfortunately, this was not an isolated incident. It has actually been a pattern. This small world of independent agencies has offered us actually a case study in the gap between the administration's unifying rhetoric on the one hand and its divisive actions on the other.

Back in March, the Biden administration took aim at another Senate-confirmed official, the general counsel for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. This time, a full 2 years before her term was set to expire. Sharon Gustafson had been engaged in important work, particularly in defense of religious freedom in the workplace. But the President didn't want to wait for our system to play out properly. He broke with norms and he fired her.

Just this month, we witnessed the firing of Andrew Saul, the head of the Social Security Administration. Listen to this. He was just 2 years into a 6-year term. Mr. Saul had kept a critical agency functioning through a historically challenging year. He was not some partisan hack. We are talking about someone the Senate confirmed with 77 votes—77 votes—a bipartisan supermajority for Mr. Saul.

But powerful liberal interests got the President's ear. They wanted their own hand-picked insider. Norms and precedents had to go out the window. Now,

the American people deserve to trust in the independence of crucial watchdog agencies like these, but with these firings, this administration has instead decided to explore frontiers in partisan hardball.

We just spent years listening to the left and the media express outrage over personnel decisions and dismissals, many of which amounted to a heck of a lot less than the three I just mentioned.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, later today, the Senate is set to do some bipartisan legislating.

Back in 1984, Congress passed a Victims of Crime Act, which includes an important Federal program called a Crime Victims Fund. When criminals who commit Federal crimes are charged fines and penalties, some of that money flows into this fund. It goes to State-level programs that help crime victims with services, like counseling and emergency shelters. It also helps compensate the victims directly with their expenses, like medical costs, mental health, funeral expenses, and lost wages. Some of the money also goes specifically to fight child abuse.

This fund needs to rest on firm financial footing, but right now it doesn't have that firm footing. Its balance has been shrinking fast. Congress needs to act to prevent big cuts to victims' services, particularly in rural areas.

A number of Senators on both sides have come together and produced bipartisan reforms that will strengthen the program and keep assistance flowing to the survivors of Federal crimes.

The junior Senator from Pennsylvania has a further amendment to make sure the program can't be used as part of budgetary shell games that deliberately cloud Federal accounting. I will support both Senator TOOMEY's amendment and our colleagues' legislation later today.

But on this subject, for goodness' sake, elected officials should not just be racing to replenish the Crime Victims Fund before it runs out. Leaders at local, State, and Federal levels should be acting to confront the surge in violent crime that is plaguing our Nation.

For about a year now, the political left has grown obsessed with the notion that police officers are inherently bad, policing is inherently evil, and what vulnerable neighborhoods really need is less enforcement of the laws.

As one House Member has informed us:

Defunding police means defunding police.

Another put it this way:

Defunding the police isn't radical, it is real.

Well, academic research has confirmed something troubling. The broad anti-police backlash that sometimes follows high-profile, police-involved in-

cidents subsequently leads to less safety, more crime, and more murders. Sure enough, murders have shot up in cities and communities all across our country.

My hometown of Louisville has seen 66 percent more homicides than we had seen by this time last year—66 percent more. Last year was a record year for carjackings and yet Louisville is on pace to match it once again. The city's police department is short more than 200 sworn officers due to low recruitment, low morale, and resignations.

Leaders should be working to contain this damage, but instead of delivering a sober, responsible message, many of the most prominent Democratic politicians instead grabbed their megaphones and amplified the anti-police sentiment as loud as possible.

As I have noted before, attacking and insulting the police is not just a bad strategy for public safety across the board; the data shows it is an especially disruptive approach to advancing racial justice.

The truth is this:

Larger police forces save lives and the lives saved are disproportionately Black lives.

That is another expert study.

So I am glad the Senate will take the important step today of reforming and strengthening the Crime Victims Fund. It certainly belies any notion that we can't legislate in a bipartisan way. We absolutely can and we do. When a bipartisan outcome is what the Democratic majority leader truly wants, it actually makes it possible.

But I wish anti-crime, pro-police, pro-public safety attitudes and policies could be just as bipartisan at the State, local, and Federal levels as today's vote will likely be. Standing up for law enforcement and the innocent people they protect should never be limited to one side of the aisle.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kenneth Allen Polite, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. 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.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I heard the Republican leader on the floor just moments ago talking about the dismissal of some individuals by the Biden administration and their replacement, and his complaint that this violated the norms and the precedents of the U.S. Senate.

There are certainly two words I would offer in response to that assertion: Merrick Garland.

I would offer those words to the Republican leader as a reminder of what he did when there was a vacancy on the highest Court in the land, the U.S. Supreme Court. Antonin Scalia passed away, and a vacancy occurred. It was the last year of the Obama administration.

Tradition suggested that that President of the United States, duly elected and in office, had the responsibility and the opportunity to fill the vacancy, and so he offered as his nominee Merrick Garland from the DC Circuit court.

What happened to Merrick Garland's nomination? What was the norm and precedent? Well, there would be a hearing and a consideration of that nomination and a vote in the U.S. Senate.

That process was stopped in its tracks by one leader, the Republican leader of the U.S. Senate from Kentucky.

So when he talks about norms and precedents and creating and filling vacancies, he has forgotten that he made history in a very unusual way: by violating the most basic norm and precedent that the U.S. Senate had the responsibility to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. And the President of the United States, duly elected, was not a lameduck in the last year of his administration.

The second issue which was raised by the Republican leader this morning dealt with the phrase "defunding the police." I have rejected that phrase from the first time I heard it. I couldn't imagine anyone thinking that this was a sensible policy to follow when it came to the security of our homes and our communities.

I can't speak for anybody else in the Senate, but in the awful circumstance when one is called on to dial 911, you certainly hope that the police will answer and that they will be there if they are needed. Defunding them lessens that possibility, and I am not a person who supports that.

I want the very best police and law enforcement. I want them well trained,

and I want them to follow norms and conduct that are respectful of American values. But defunding the police is not something I have ever embraced or ever will.

But it is interesting to hear that argument from the Senator from Kentucky. He said that, in a way, you would be insulting and attacking the police by taking that position. One could argue that, but I would suggest to him that, in his position, stopping the creation of a commission to investigate what happened in this Chamber on January 6 and what happened to 140 members of law enforcement in the Halls of the U.S. Capitol on the same day is not respectful of the police itself.

We have had a plea—a direct plea from the men and women in uniform who guard us in this building to have an investigative commission determine what was behind that insurrectionist mob of January 6 and what we need to do to avoid it in the future. That commission and its prospects were stopped cold by the Republican leader from Kentucky. That is a fact.

In terms of being respectful of law enforcement, allowing that commission to be created—a bipartisan commission—to get to the bottom of that horrible incident, that embarrassing incident in the history of the United States, is the least we can do to respond to what the police who guard us have asked for.

I might add one other element while we are on the discussion of law enforcement and protecting America. We have a special security supplemental appropriation that was created by Senator PATRICK LEAHY of Vermont, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, which appropriates the funds to pay the National Guard units who left their families and came here to protect us, and to pay the Capitol Police for the expenses they incurred on January 6 to fortify this Capitol against any future insurrectionist mob. That supplemental appropriations bill, which should have been passed routinely weeks ago, is still languishing for lack of agreement on the Republican side.

If you want to be respectful of law enforcement, whether they are men and women in uniform, in police units, or the National Guard, wouldn't you pay them for the services they have rendered to protect this Capitol and to protect the United States of America?

I call on the Republican leader: Instead of making a speech on the floor, call the Republican ranking member on the Senate Committee on Appropriations and ask him to waste no time in showing respect for law enforcement and to pass that security supplemental.

NOMINATION OF KENNETH ALLEN POLITE, JR.

Mr. President, on another topic, this week, the Senate will vote on the nomination of Kenneth Polite. President Biden has nominated him to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Criminal Division.

As an experienced prosecutor who has served his community throughout his career, Mr. Polite is certainly qualified for this important position. From 2013 to 2017, Mr. Polite served as the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana. While in this role, Mr. Polite's office prosecuted several large, violent, criminal organizations. He held local corrupt politicians accountable and stopped more human traffickers than during any prior U.S. attorney's term in office.

Prior to serving the people of Louisiana, Mr. Polite served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of New York, which is a very busy and important office. There, he took on organized crime, fought corruption, healthcare fraud, and identity theft.

In addition to his extensive experience as a public servant, Mr. Polite also has a remarkable personal story. Born to teenage parents, he spent his youth in public housing projects in New Orleans before moving to the Lower Ninth Ward as a child. He graduated high school as the valedictorian of his class, and he went on to earn his undergraduate degree from Harvard and his law degree from the well-respected Georgetown University. After law school, Mr. Polite initially went into private practice, but he was inspired to become a prosecutor after his half brother was tragically killed by gun violence.

Throughout his career, Mr. Polite has always given back to the community that raised him. He has served on the boards of numerous community organizations and schools in New Orleans, and Mr. Polite's track record as an even-handed public servant has earned him support from across the aisle.

In 2011, he was appointed by a Republican Governor of Louisiana, Bobby Jindal, to serve on the Louisiana Civil Service Commission.

Then, last month, the Republican Attorney General of Louisiana, Jeff Landry, publicly voiced his support for Mr. Polite's nomination to this position in the Department of Justice. In a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee, Mr. Landry wrote that, while serving as U.S. attorney, "Mr. Polite was not only an effective crime fighter, but he was also an invaluable member of the community."

Mr. Polite is an outstanding nominee for this critical role at the Justice Department. You should have been in the Judiciary Committee, which the Presiding Officer serves on, when his nomination came up. The praise that he won from the two Republican Senators of Louisiana is an indication of this man's popularity and of his value to Louisiana and to our country. I hope that he will receive the same broad bipartisan support in the full Senate, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting Mr. Polite's nomination.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. President, last week was an important day for literally millions of Americans because the child tax credit

went into effect on July 15, and many were awakened to the good news that their checking and savings accounts had been increased because of this new child tax credit.

It was part of the American Rescue Plan, the proposal by President Biden to get America back on its feet. You remember that plan, almost \$2 trillion. It was an important infusion into our economy. Money within that plan was being spent on the administration of vaccines across America. In addition to that, money was available for small businesses to receive forgivable loans. And this provision, that of enhancing the child tax credit, was an important part of it as well.

We have had tax credits in the past for families with children, but this was an especially important one because it was fully refundable, which meant it went to the lower-income families who might not have had enough income to merit a tax responsibility. This now is fully refundable, so there is no tax responsibility necessary to receive the payment. It also was a benefit that extended beyond poor and low-income families to middle-income families across America. Some of these families with this payment of \$300 a month for each child under the age of 6 and \$250 a month for those between 6 and 17 would receive resources which they desperately need to make certain that their children have a fighting chance.

We are especially proud of the fact that this infusion of cash into the hands of many families will literally mean it will lift them above the poverty line in America. Almost half of the kids in poverty will be spared that by this tax credit. So it has a direct and important impact.

I had a press conference last Friday in Chicago with one of the parents who will be benefited by this. Her name is Susana Salgado. She is a mother of three—an 11-year-old, a 16-year-old, and a 23-year-old. Her family relies on her husband's income. He works as a restaurant worker in Chicago to pay the bills, but when the pandemic hit, his hours were cut drastically. A return to normal remains elusive for people like Susana Salgado because, at the same time the family's livelihood vanished, their cost of living increased.

During the pandemic, as parents know well, schooling moved into the home and the high-speed internet connection became an absolute necessity for her kids to keep up in school. Thanks to the enhanced child tax credit, Susana can finally afford her monthly internet bill. It sounds like a small thing, but if the alternative is a child falling behind a grade in school, it is a critical family decision. That means her two younger children can keep up with their studies and her oldest son can remain in college. Something as basic as that can mean the difference in a young child's progress in his life.

So I salute President Biden for the American Rescue Plan, which helped to

distribute vaccines across America, helped small businesses get back on their feet, and is helping millions of Americans and children and families as of this day. I am sorry that there was not one single Republican vote in support of that proposal, but I believe it was money well spent and continues to benefit this country. We have a lot of work to do in this country.

I will close by saying this: I was on radio shows this morning in downstate Illinois. Chicago, and the Chicagoland, area have been able to get vaccinated to a level where they are starting to breathe a little easier in anticipating children going back to school in the fall, businesses reopening, and people getting out and about. You can just feel it in the air. Yet that is not the case all over the United States.

The City of Los Angeles, I understand, is opposed to a new mask requirement, which, unfortunately, evidences the fact that there are still too many infections these days related to COVID-19. Unfortunately, as Dr. Fauci and others have said, these infections are reflected in people who have not yet been vaccinated, by and large, and it is an indication that we can't let up on our effort to continue vaccinations across America. It is the only way to successfully put this pandemic to rest and return to normal life in America.

To those who are not vaccinated, I am sure they are not watching C-SPAN for advice, but I hope they will turn to a doctor or a nurse or to someone they trust in the community and hear about the safety of these vaccines, which have been safely administered to millions of people across the United States.

If each and every one of us accepts our personal responsibility to get vaccinated to protect ourselves, our families, those we love, and those all around us, we will finally bring this pandemic to an end. At this point, there are many, many who are still holding back. I hope they will reconsider that position.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The Republican whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators CORNYN, GRASSLEY, and I be allowed to complete our remarks before the scheduled rollcall votes.

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

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it has been all political theater all the time lately as the Democrats attempt to manufacture a crisis that will allow them to pass their partisan Federal takeover of State election law.

There was President Biden's overwrought speech in Philadelphia last week warning that election laws being passed in various States are "the most dangerous threat to voting and the integrity of free and fair elections in our history."

That is right, in our Nation's history.

Apparently, post-Civil War voter suppression laws and poll taxes and other atrocities don't hold a candle to what is happening today in places like Georgia, where—the horror—only election officials will be able to hand out water to those in line at the polls.

Then, of course, there were the Texas Democrats' antics as they flew to Washington via a private jet to shut down the Texas Legislature and prevent election legislation from being passed there, and the Senate Democrats' field hearing in Georgia yesterday to highlight the supposed horrors of Georgia's mainstream election law.

In his speech last week, President Biden mentioned stopping the spread of disinformation, which is an ironic statement when the Democrats are engaging in one of the most massive campaigns of disinformation we have ever seen, because—and let's be very clear—the narrative the Democrats are peddling, which is that States are engaging in a massive campaign of voter suppression, is simply false.

In other years, I doubt whether any of the State voting laws that have been passed would have been more than a blip in the national news because they are nothing more than ordinary, mainstream updates to State voting guidelines. The Georgia law that has provoked so much Democratic hysteria is not only squarely in the mainstream when it comes to State election laws, but it is actually, in some ways, more permissive than voting laws in some Democratic-led States.

A piece in the New York Times, hardly a newspaper that carries water for Republicans, concluded that the voting provisions of the Georgia law are "unlikely to significantly affect turnout or Democratic chances."

In fact, the piece notes that Georgia's law could "plausibly even increase turnout."

Meanwhile, the Washington Post Fact Checker column noted again: "The law does not put up roadblocks to Black Americans registering to vote." That from the Washington Post Fact Checker.

And yet Democrats have repeatedly asked us to believe that this law is "Jim Crow on steroids" and part of "the most significant test of our democracy since the Civil War." Those are quotes, actual quotes, from Democrats.

That is right, since the Civil War. Apparently, segregation and the horrors of Jim Crow are nothing compared to Georgia's adjustment of its regulations on no-excuse absentee voting, which isn't even allowed in some Democrat-led States like New York.

It is almost comical, except that it is not, because there is nothing funny about Democrats irresponsibly evoking the horrors of Jim Crow to convince Americans that reasonable reforms to election laws are really a dastardly plot to suppress votes.

There is nothing amusing about Democrats attempting to deceive the

American people in order to pass their election legislation because that is exactly—exactly—what Democrats are doing.

Democrats have been determined to pass H.R. 1, their Federal takeover of State election law, since 2019. Back in 2019, of course, they told us we needed it because our democracy was broken, but then the 2020 elections happened and, lo and behold, Democrats won, and all of a sudden our democracy was working fine—a record turnout, I might add, in the 2020 election, the largest since the year 1900.

But Democrats still want to pass H.R. 1, now because, as both the Speaker of the House and the House Democratic whip have openly admitted, they think it will improve their electoral chances, and so they have manufactured a crisis in the hope of convincing the American people of the need to pass Democratic legislation.

There is a reason that Senate Democrats haven't managed to pass H.R. 1 so far, and that is because it is a terrible bill. The bill would seize power from States when it comes to regulating and administering elections, an authority that States have held, literally, since the founding.

It would implement public funding of political campaigns, which would mean that billions of government dollars, money that belongs to the American taxpayer, would go to funding yard signs and attack ads—I am sure something the American taxpayers would be really happy to see.

It would impose onerous new requirements and restrictions on political speech. It would open up private Americans to retaliation and intimidation simply for making a donation to support a cause that they believe in.

It would effectively eliminate States' voter ID requirements. It would politicize the IRS by allowing the IRS to consider organizations' beliefs when deciding whether or not to grant them tax-exempt status, and the list goes on.

No less an organization than the American Civil Liberties Union opposed—opposed—H.R. 1 in the last Congress because the bill would “unconstitutionally burden speech and associational rights.”

Let me just repeat that for emphasis. The American Civil Liberties Union opposed this legislation because it would “unconstitutionally burden speech and associational rights.”

In his speech last week, President Biden expressed concern about States like Georgia “moving from independent election administrators who work for the people to polarized state legislatures and partisan actors who work for political parties.”

It made me wonder if the President even knows what is in H.R. 1 because H.R. 1 would make the Federal Election Commission, the primary enforcer of election law in this country, into a partisan body.

Instead of an independent Commission, evenly divided between Demo-

crats and Republicans, the FEC would become, to borrow the President's words, a partisan actor that works for political parties.

If the President is concerned about independent election administrators becoming partisan actors, perhaps he should take a look at revising his party's legislation.

Since they have so far been unable to get their partisan election takeover through the Senate, Democrats are now threatening to include election measures in the partisan tax-and-spending bill that they are planning to force through Congress using rules which allow them to evade objections from the Senate minority.

Their idea is to provide financial incentives for States to adopt Democrats' preferred election standards. I suspect it is an abuse of Senate budget rules that will hopefully not make it through the legislative process. But it is another disturbing sign of how committed Democrats are to shoving through their partisan election measure.

For the sake of our democracy, let's hope that they will continue to be unsuccessful.

While I am mentioning free speech and troubling narratives coming from the White House, I want to mention the White House Press Secretary's comments last week.

The Press Secretary noted that the Biden administration is “flagging problematic posts for Facebook that spread disinformation” and later stated that if individuals are banned on one social media platform, they should be banned on all platforms. Wow.

Now, there is no question that private companies have the right to moderate activity and content on their platforms—although, for the sake of the free exchange of ideas and a culture of freedom of speech, they should be very transparent, principled, and accountable about doing so.

We all remember the backpedaling that recently occurred when media and social media realized that they might have too hastily censored the theory that the coronavirus originated in a Wuhan lab.

But while private companies have a right to police information on their sites, the government cannot be in the middle of colluding with social media platforms to censor Americans' speech. And the Biden administration has no business telling Facebook or Twitter whom they should ban from their platforms.

We condemn governments in other countries, like the Chinese Communist Party, that do exactly this. We condemned the Cuban Government just last week for shutting down their population's access to the internet in the face of widespread protests.

If the government gets into censoring disinformation on social media, as compared to, say, terrorist propaganda, where does it end?

As we are rapidly finding out, “disinformation” tends to mean what-

ever those with censorship power want it to mean.

Is the Biden administration going to start pushing social media companies to censor anything that contradicts its narrative on the supposed voting rights crisis? Is it going to suggest that anyone defending States' election laws is spreading misinformation?

The best way to counter misinformation about lifesaving vaccines is not censorship; it is broadly sharing more persuasive and more accurate information.

The White House Press Secretary's casual admission of a Presidential administration actively monitoring Americans and colluding with social media companies to censor information is deeply troubling, and I am concerned that the Biden administration is moving us down the road toward government control of Americans' speech.

I would like to see the White House worrying about its own campaign of disinformation on State voting laws. That would be a better use of its time than trampling on freedom of speech by censoring Americans' activities on social media.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday, the majority leader teed up the first procedural vote on an infrastructure bill that no one has seen yet.

Our colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been hard at work for weeks negotiating in good faith to get a balanced agreement on an issue that virtually everyone supports. Infrastructure is not a partisan issue.

But at this time, we have no details about how this deal would achieve our common goals. There is no bill text. We don't know what is in and what is out, no information about how it will be paid for and no score from the Congressional Budget Office to tell us whether the proposed pay-fors are credible.

Now, we have been through an extraordinary pandemic, during which we have done some pretty extraordinary things when it comes to spending at the Federal level.

I think the closest equivalent to the pandemic is World War II. Of course, this was a domestic war or battle against the virus, trying to deal with the public health consequences and the economic consequences as well.

I voted for trillions of dollars of Federal spending, something I never thought I would do in the face of an emergency, a global emergency.

But there is no emergency that exists for an infrastructure bill. This is part of the bread and butter of what governments do at the local level, the State level, and at the Federal level, and it is simply irresponsible and reckless to borrow more money from future generations and to throw gasoline on the fire that is already burning when it comes to inflation in pursuit of a bill

that everybody will probably, ultimately, if given enough and opportunity, will ultimately come up with a negotiated bipartisan outcome.

I also am not going to vote to proceed to a bill that my constituents, the 29 million people I represent—they don't know what is in the bill either.

Well, all this doesn't sound like a recipe for success. These are the types of things that typically would be ironed out before you bring a bill to the floor. It is obvious this legislation is not ready for prime time, not even close.

As I said, the specifics of the bill are still being negotiated by our colleagues, of course, with the White House. We are days away from having the opportunity to read a bill, let alone provide the Congressional Budget Office the opportunity to calculate the cost.

Republicans and Democrats may disagree on a lot these days, but I hope we could all agree that it is not wise to advance legislation before you know what is in it.

That is why it is so baffling to me that the majority leader, the Senator from New York, is forcing a vote on this bill before it is even ready.

Of course, that raises a very significant question. Why in the world would he do that? Why is he rushing through with the final stage of what has been a productive bipartisan process?

The only logical conclusion I can come up with is he wants this bill and this bipartisan effort to fail.

Why else would he push forward with a vote when he knows it is doomed from the start?

I believe the Senator from New York wants this vote to fail because he really wants to go the partisan route; namely, the big, ugly, multitrillion dollar spending spree that BERNIE SANDERS and others have been advocating.

He doesn't need Republican votes to do that, and he can implement some of the most radical policies on the far left's wish list, things like the Green New Deal, massive tax hikes, crippling new economic regulations.

It is pretty obvious that has been the goal all along. Why else would the President himself say, once he negotiated a bipartisan deal: Well, I am not going to sign this bipartisan deal until we pass our partisan wish list. There is now \$3 trillion proposed. It is for the same reason NANCY PELOSI said she is not going to let the bipartisan bill, even were we to pass it, see the light of day until she knows that the \$3 trillion tax-and-spending spree is successful, which will require all 50 Democratic Senators plus the Vice President.

It is just strange to me to see a designed-to-fail strategy, unless it is for some political purpose.

So, Senator SCHUMER, if you are listening, please don't do it. Call off the vote. Let the bipartisan group finish their work. Don't set up a vote that will fail just because you want to ap-

pease the far left of your party, because if the vote happens and we don't have bill text or a cost estimate by the time it rolls around, it will necessarily fail.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

Mr. President, on another matter, for more than four decades, the Crime Victims Fund has provided critical funding for survivors, victims, and their families. In Texas and across the country, this funding provides lifesaving support and services for survivors. It supports shelters that provide refuge to victims of domestic violence. It enables critical programming at rape crisis centers and legal services at child advocacy centers. It provides direct compensation for victims and their families in the wake of serious trauma.

I could go on and on naming the countless ways that the Crime Victims Fund supports vital services in our communities, but one of the most remarkable aspects about the Crime Victims Fund is that none of it comes from taxpayers. It is all covered by criminal fines and penalties.

The only downside of this funding stream is that it comes with a fair amount of uncertainty. There is no guaranteed amount that will be deposited into the fund each year, and recent years have brought far less money than is needed by the demand.

In fiscal year 2020, for example, the funding disbursement decreased by 25 percent, and crime victims service organizations have been told to expect even more cuts. We can't let that happen. It is time to address these shortfalls in the Crime Victims Fund and safeguard critical resources for victims and survivors.

I have been proud to work on a bipartisan basis with Senators GRAHAM, DURBIN, and a long list of colleagues to restore this critical funding through the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act. This legislation brings critical new funding sources to the Crime Victims Fund without asking the American taxpayer to do more.

It makes important changes to the Crime Victims Act which will send more money to the States for crime victim compensation programs and gives States more flexibility to spend the money when and where needed.

As I said, this legislation has broad bipartisan support. More than 60 Senators have cosponsored the bill, and it has been endorsed by 1,700 organizations, including 120 in Texas alone. These absolutely outstanding organizations and law enforcement stand behind the crucial commonsense reforms of the VOCA Fix Act and have called on Congress to pass the bill. So I hope we can deliver soon.

This afternoon, I expect the Senate to vote on the VOCA Fix Act to protect the solvency of this vital funding. The Crime Victims Fund brings justice to survivors, victims, and families in the wake of serious trauma. This legislation will protect the solvency and longevity of that fund and reverse the dev-

astating funding cuts we have seen in recent years.

I hope we can send this legislation to the President's desk as soon as possible so critical programs across the country can continue to serve our communities.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from Iowa.

CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I come to the floor to discuss an issue that I have raised during the course of multiple Republican and Democrat administrations. This is a problem that crosses political boundaries, whether you have a Republican or Democrat President. That issue is responding to legitimate and valid congressional oversight requests.

In my time as a public servant, I have seen my fair share of unresponsive government, sometimes downright obstructive government. I have seen it rear its ugly head from decade to decade. There is nothing more eroding to public faith than an unresponsive executive branch that believes that it only answers to the President and not to the U.S. Congress and perhaps, most importantly, we the people.

Based on my interactions with the Biden administration's Justice Department and its component Agencies—specifically, the FBI—the current officials in charge of those Agencies are, at best, unresponsive public servants. That goes all the way to the top, to the President, because the buck stops there.

As I say to many nominees, either you are going to run your Department or the Department runs you. Right now, it looks like the Justice Department is running the Attorney General's office, and that is a great big shame.

I voted to confirm the Attorney General. I had high hopes he would follow through on his public statements of ridding the Department of political infection. Instead, I fear he has taken the Justice Department to new politically charged heights.

To date, I haven't received a full or complete response to a single oversight request from the Justice Department. As one example, on February 3 of this year and March 9 of this year, Senator JOHNSON and I asked the Department about Nicholas McQuaid. Mr. McQuaid is the Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, of which Mr. Polite will be taking his place upon confirmation.

McQuaid was employed by a law firm until January 20 of this year and worked with Christopher Clark, whom Hunter Biden reportedly hired to work on his Federal criminal case.

This arrangement poses a clear potential conflict.

A core function of congressional oversight is to ensure that governmental Departments and Agencies are free of conflicts of interest. That is especially so with the Justice Department and the FBI. If conflict infects them, those investigations and prosecutions, the very purpose of the Department's existence, could be undermined.

So I have requested a recusal memo for McQuaid. I have also requested to know, as a threshold issue, whether one even exists. Attorney General Garland won't answer.

Now, can you believe that? Here we have a Federal criminal case that implicates the President's son, and the Attorney General won't even answer Congress as to whether or not an employee of his Department who has an apparent conflict is recused from that matter?

It certainly looks like the Garland Justice Department is doing all that it can to protect the President's son.

Let me remind the Attorney General that I was the one who led a transcribed interview with President Trump's son. For all of the grief that Trump and his family got from the Democrats, at least that family showed up and answered the questions of legitimate congressional oversight.

Early on in the Attorney General's tenure, I instructed my oversight staff to work diligently and, of course, in good faith with their counterparts at the Justice Department. My staff have done the phone calls. They have had the meetings. They have sent emails, many of which go unanswered. My staff has done this all in good faith.

At my level, I have made every effort to get the Attorney General on the phone to discuss my oversight requests. It took him 2 months to get on the phone with me for a one-on-one call. I found out just the other week that Attorney General Garland's staff never told him of my request to speak with him. This omission is a dereliction of duty by the Department staff, to keep something like that from the Attorney General. Like I said, either you run the Department, or the Department runs you.

This type of unresponsive conduct has consequences. These consequences might not be immediate, but eventually, as I have seen over the years, ultimately the consequences arrive. The more their government tries to hide from them, the more the American people lose faith in government institutions. With such bad government conduct, I don't blame the people for losing faith. The fault is with the government, not the American people. After all, we work for the American people; they don't work for us. It is sad to say, but many in Washington, DC, don't understand that very fundamental precept of our constitutional Republic.

My fellow Senators, this type of conduct from the Biden administration

and the Justice Department is unacceptable. But it isn't just this administration or this Justice Department; it is something I have seen too long under both Republican and Democratic Presidents, and it will have long-term consequences for the integrity of our governmental institutions.

In light of the Department's consistent failure to respond to my oversight requests, I will object to any unanimous consent request that Kenneth Polite be confirmed as Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division. I do not do so on the basis of his credentials, which I don't question; I do it as a message to the Attorney General that he needs to improve DOJ's interaction with the Congress.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

Mr. President, on another matter, we will soon be voting on the Victims of Crime Act. I was an original cosponsor of that act when the Senate Judiciary Committee developed the legislation years ago. I appreciate the opportunity to work with Senators DURBIN, GRAHAM, and other Judiciary Committee colleagues this year on amendments to this landmark law.

The principle behind this statute is very simple. It is that fines and penalties collected by the Department of Justice from those who are convicted of committing Federal crimes should be used to help those who are victims of the crimes.

Because the fund relies solely upon fines and other assessments paid by Federal criminals, not from the taxpayers, it does not add to the deficit. So any of these expenditures are very fiscally responsible.

The money in this fund helps at least 6,800 local organizations, examples like rape crisis centers and child advocacy centers. So this money provides needed services to millions of crime victims across the country each year. The fund supports crisis hotline counseling or medical care or other services to these crime survivors, but it also does things like providing lost wages, courtroom advocacy, temporary housing, and there are a lot of other services that come from this money.

Since its enactment, billions of dollars have flowed through the Crime Victims Fund to our States and our communities to help support victim assistance programs. More than three decades after its inception, the fund is still working, but deposits into the fund have declined significantly in recent years. So obviously the continuation of some of these programs is less effective or even in doubt when the money available for them is not certain to be there. This is an issue of why this bill is before us, the VOCA Fix Act. This bill would resolve this problem of not enough money going into the fund.

Why is the money not going into the fund? The issue stems from Federal prosecutors' increasing reliance upon no- or deferred-prosecution agreements rather than upon conviction. The

money collected by the Department of Justice in these settlement agreements, then, is not attributed to the Crime Victims Fund the same way as if it had gone through the court process and people had been convicted.

Among other provisions, the bill makes a deposits fix to preserve the Crime Victims Fund; in other words, to overcome the fact that these no- or deferred-prosecution agreements—that money doesn't now go into those funds. It requires that the money from the no- or deferred-prosecution agreements must go into the fund rather than the General Fund. The bill also changes the match requirements for State and local grant programs that rely on this statute.

Providing this fix will enable crime survivors in my State of Iowa and across the Nation to continue to have these services available in their communities. I encourage my colleagues to support the legislation.

FILIBUSTER

Mr. President, the last point I want to make is a very short one.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, the definition of "filibustering" is this: "Filibustering includes any use of dilatory or obstructive tactics to block a measure by preventing it from coming to a vote."

Now, this is exactly what Texas Democrats are doing by fleeing their State to avoid a majority vote on an election reform bill. This group of Texas legislators flew to Washington, DC, where they are hypocritically demanding that the Senate abolish its tradition of extended debate so national legislation can be passed on the slimmest of majorities. And you can't get any slimmer than a 50-50 Senate.

The Senate majority leader called these legislators brave and courageous for their dishonest filibuster in the Texas Legislature, while they denounce the filibuster at the national level.

Texas is a very large and diverse State, but the United States is made up of 50 different States, plus territories, spread over a great distance. If the majority ought to not be allowed to rule in Texas, then how can they justify breaking the rules and traditions of the Senate to impose the will of 50 percent of the country on the other 50 percent?

So let's be very clear. As I have said before, the false, evidence-free claims of widespread voter suppression are as damaging as false claims of widespread voter fraud and thus need to stop. The reality is that each State is different, so it makes sense that States will have different voting processes.

Discrimination in voting is illegal. It is a Federal crime, and thank God it is a Federal crime. Beyond that, diversity in our Nation is a strength, not a weakness.

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 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. 195, Kenneth Allen Polite, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Margaret Wood Hassan, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jeff Merkley, Patty Murray, Tammy Baldwin, Debbie Stabenow, Gary C. Peters, Angus S. King, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher Murphy, Ben Ray Lujan, Jack Reed, Chris Van Hollen.

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 Kenneth Allen Polite, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Attorney General, 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.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 268 Ex.]

YEAS—57

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

NAYS—43

Barrasso	Grassley	Romney
Blackburn	Hagerty	Rounds
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Toomey
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Risch	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). The yeas are 57, the nays are 43.

The motion is agreed to.

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 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. 246, Jennifer Ann Abruzzo, of New York, to be General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board for a term of four years.

Charles E. Schumer, Ben Ray Lujan, Jeff Merkley, Raphael G. Warnock, Alex Padilla, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher A. Coons, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Patrick J. Leahy, Tammy Baldwin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher Murphy, Tim Kaine, John W. Hickenlooper, Angus S. King, Jr., Tammy Duckworth, Patty Murray.

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 Jennifer Ann Abruzzo, of New York, to be General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board for a term of four years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 269 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—50

Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	

(Ms. SINEMA assumed the Chair.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 50. The Senate being equally divided, the Vice President votes in the affirmative.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Jennifer Ann Abruzzo, of New York, to be General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board for a term of four years.

RECESS

The VICE PRESIDENT. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:12 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. SINEMA).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

VOTE ON POLITE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the scheduled vote take place immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Polite nomination?

Mr. COONS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 56, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 270 Ex.]

YEAS—56

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

NAYS—44

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rounds
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young
Fischer	Portman	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The majority whip.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

VOCA FIX TO SUSTAIN THE CRIME
VICTIMS FUND ACT OF 2021

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and the Senate begin consideration of H.R. 1652, under the previous order.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1652) to deposit certain funds into the Crime Victims Fund, to waive matching requirements, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2121, AS MODIFIED

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Toomey amendment be called up, as modified with the changes at the desk, and that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN], for Mr. TOOMEY, proposes an amendment numbered 2121, as modified.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To ensure adequate funding in the Crime Victims Fund is disbursed to victims, their families, and their advocates each year)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . POINT OF ORDER.

Section 1402 of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (34 U.S.C. 20101) is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c)(1) Sums deposited in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be available for expenditure under this chapter for grants under this chapter without fiscal year limitation, in accordance with paragraph (2). Notwithstanding subsection (d)(5), all sums deposited in the Fund in any fiscal year that are not made available for obligation by Congress in the subsequent fiscal year shall remain in the Fund for obligation in future fiscal years, without fiscal year limitation.

“(2)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (C), it shall not be in order in the Senate or the House of Representatives to consider a provision in a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for all or a portion of a fiscal year, or an amendment thereto, amendment between the Houses in relation thereto, conference report thereon, or motion thereon, that would cause the amount of annual disbursements from the Fund to be below the annual average amount that was deposited into the Fund during the 3-fiscal-year period beginning on October 1 of the fourth fiscal year before the fiscal year to which the disbursement level applies.

“(B) If a point of order is raised by a Member under subparagraph (A), and the point of order is sustained by the Chair, the provision shall be stricken from the measure and may not be offered as an amendment from the floor.

“(C) A point of order shall not lie in the Senate or the House of Representatives under this paragraph if the difference between the amount in the Fund as of September 30 of the fiscal year immediately preceding the fiscal year to which the annual

disbursements described in subparagraph (A) relates and the amount available for obligation through the annual disbursements described in subparagraph (A) is not more than \$2,000,000,000.

“(3) Paragraph (2) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required in the Senate to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under paragraph (2).

“(4) This subsection is enacted by Congress—

“(A) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the House of Representatives and the Senate, respectively, and as such it is deemed a part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in that House in the case of a joint resolution, and it supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent with those rules; and

“(B) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.”

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5:15 today the Senate vote on the Toomey amendment and on the passage of the bill, as amended, if amended, as provided for under the previous order.

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

The Senator from Montana.

NOMINATION OF TRACY STONE-MANNING

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today, I rise to bring attention to new revelations about President Biden's nominee to head the Bureau of Land Management, Tracy Stone-Manning's involvement in a tree-spiking incident in Idaho, and to share why I oppose her confirmation.

I would have welcomed having a nominee with such strong ties to Montana to be the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, and, until recently, I believed, as did most Montanans, based on her testimony before the Montana State Legislature, back in 2013, that her role in the tree-spiking crime was minimal, her actions were helpful, and she helped bring criminals to justice.

Unfortunately, new information has revealed that this simply was not the case. In fact, rather than bringing criminals to justice, Ms. Stone-Manning assisted in helping them evade justice for years—for years.

I am going to lay this out because I think it is important that the facts are shared before this body. First, it reveals that she withheld the truth from investigators for several years. Second, it reveals that she harshly criticized Federal law enforcement at the very same time she was refusing to tell them the truth. And, third, it reveals that she has not taken responsibility or expressed remorse for not speaking the truth much, much sooner.

I know many of my colleagues are probably just tuning into Ms. Stone-Manning's involvement in a tree-spik-

ing crime committed in 1989 while she was a member of an ecoterrorist group called Earth First!

The picture that she and her advocates have painted about her involvement in this crime is that she was the innocent hero who helped put bad people in jail. Well, in recent weeks, we have learned there is a lot more to this story. It is very alarming. It is very disturbing on many levels.

Ms. Stone-Manning stated to the Montana State Legislature that a rather frightening man approached her with a letter while she was on campus. Come to find out, that man wasn't a stranger. It was her roommate and someone whom she described to the court during the 1993 trial as someone who was in her main circle of friends.

Ms. Stone-Manning stated that she simply mailed the anonymous letter—that she simply mailed it. But in reality, and as we have since found out and as we have explored court records in Idaho, this information had not come out, except in the last 45 days.

The investigation later revealed that this letter had not only been collaboratively composed, but after waiting for a few days, it was typed by Ms. Stone-Manning on a rented typewriter, which, according to her very own testimony, was because she wanted to avoid having it on her own computer and avoid having any fingerprints that could be traced back to her.

The words that Ms. Stone-Manning typed and mailed are explicit. It is not what you type and send to protect people. They are what you say to frighten people.

I am going to read this letter—it is not very long—that Ms. Stone-Manning typed on a rented typewriter and personally mailed. It says:

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being sent to notify you that the Post Office Sale—

If I can add, the Post Office Sale was a timber sale. They labeled it the “Post Office Sale.”—

in Idaho has been spiked heavily.

The reasoning for this action is that this piece of land is very special to the earth. It is home to the Elk, Deer, Mountain Lions, Birds, and especially the Trees.

The project required that eleven of us spend nine days in God awful weather conditions spiking trees. We unloaded a total of five hundred pounds of spikes measuring 8 to 10 inches in length. The sales were marked so that no workers will be injured and so that you assholes know that they are spiked. The majority of trees were spiked within the first ten feet, but many, many others were spiked as high as a hundred and fifty feet.

I would be more than willing to pay you a dollar for the sale, but you would have to find me first and that could be your WORST nightmare.

Sincerely, George Hayduke

P.S. You bastards go in there anyway and a lot of people could get hurt.

The text of that letter was never made public until very recently, just in the last 45 days. Montanans never had the opportunity to read what Ms. Stone-Manning typed on the rented typewriter and sent until just a few weeks ago.

The letter is chilling and it makes you think that, if Ms. Stone-Manning was really concerned about the tree spiking, she could have gone to the authorities immediately in 1989, when this occurred.

We also now know she had firsthand knowledge about the perpetrators. She knew who did it. She knew all of the details about the crime. She knew who spiked the trees.

By the way, why do you spike trees? Why do you put these great big spikes in the trees? That is because, if a logger comes in with a saw and their blade hits it, they could be severely injured. If one of these logs comes through a sawmill, the sawmill operator can be severely injured, as has actually happened. We have had some severely injured individuals because of the tree spiking. This was the ecoterrorism going on several years ago.

But she withheld this information from law enforcement in 1989, even after she was subpoenaed by a grand jury for her hair, her handwriting, and fingerprint samples. She didn't report it to law enforcement in 1990, not in 1991, not in 1992. In fact, she condemned the FBI for investigating her in the first place, despite the fact that she knew all the details of the crime. In fact, she claimed being investigated by the FBI was "degrading" and that the "government does do bad things." She compared her treatment to how the Government of Panama would treat someone.

Ms. Stone-Manning said all of these things and played the victim, despite knowing all the details and players of the crime, despite having had the opportunity for 4 years to put bad people behind bars. What Ms. Stone-Manning did was actively obstruct an investigation.

At no time, by the way, did Ms. Stone-Manning ever come forward from her own volition. Now, she only came forward after there was a break in the investigation. This is now in 1993, after another suspect identified her involvement and after her attorney struck an immunity deal, not before she was caught.

In fact, one of the men she had the opportunity to put behind bars during the time she remained silent went on to commit an act of—this man that she remained silent on went on to commit an act of domestic violence. Her cooperation with law enforcement could have prevented this.

None of her actions show any kind of remorse. They didn't then and they still don't now. Ms. Stone-Manning has not expressed regret for her false and disparaging characterization of Federal investigators.

This deception and misrepresentation of her involvement, coupled with her clear violation of Senate Ethics rules while she served as a U.S. Senate staffer, leave the public with no reason to trust her judgment, her leadership capabilities, or her ability to remain

pragmatic when making decisions on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management.

Ms. Stone-Manning has lost her credibility, and to move forward with her nomination would cause more controversy and distrust for the leadership at the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Senate, and the Biden administration.

You see, there are 10,000 employees at the Bureau of Land Management who report to the Director and they need to have that trust, as well.

President Obama's former Director of the Bureau of Land Management, Bob Abbey, has concluded that Stone-Manning's "questionable past" brings what he said "needless controversy" to the Agency. Obama's very own Director of the Bureau of Land Management said that her involvement in the tree-spiking crime should disqualify Stone-Manning and the Biden administration needs a new nominee.

I agree with Mr. Abbey because, in Montana and the West and all America, we need a Director of the Bureau of Land Management who can garner public trust, bring folks together, and lead with integrity.

Throughout the confirmation process, I have given Ms. Stone-Manning a fair shake, an opportunity to answer questions about important policies that impact our Montana way of life. However, over the course of the last few weeks, this new information has come to light and has led me to now actively and publicly oppose her nomination.

The controversy surrounding this nomination is not and should not be about party-line politics. Montanans care about trusting those in public service, about integrity. The public trust surrounding Ms. Stone-Manning has been wrecked. Her ability to be the Director that the Bureau of Land Management needs has been compromised beyond repair.

As this nomination draws more attention and some continue to contend that her actions were commendable, I hope all my colleagues will give full consideration to the facts laid out here today. I urge my colleagues, especially those who represent western States, to join me opposing this nomination. I would urge the Biden administration to pull Ms. Stone-Manning's nomination. Nominate someone to lead the Agency who can garner the public trust and one who can lead the Agency without the significant controversy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

CRIME VICTIMS FUND ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when the pandemic began last year, Americans across the country were faced with more than one public health crisis. While we all feared contracting COVID-19 outside of our homes, the most vulnerable members of our community feared a danger lurking within the home or, certainly, in the neighborhood—violent crime.

During the first several weeks of the pandemic, police departments across America reported a significant increase in arrests or calls related to domestic violence. And reports of hate incidents and crimes increased, as well, particularly those targeting Asian American and Pacific Islander, or what is known as the AAPI community.

Nearly 4,000 of these hate incidents were reported during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. AAPI women comprised the majority of the victims.

In my home State of Illinois, some of these victims of violent crimes have an indispensable resource they can turn to. It is known as KAN-WIN, a non-profit that supports survivors of violence, particularly women and members of the immigrant community. KAN-WIN offers a 24-hour hotline, legal advocacy, transitional housing, sexual assault services, and many more resources to survivors of violent crimes. They also offer programming to support children who have grown up in a traumatic environment.

During the pandemic, organizations like KAN-WIN have been a beacon of hope for some of the most vulnerable members of our community. But these beacons of hope are at the risk of growing dark, unless we in this Senate today take immediate action by passing the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act. This legislation, which I am proud to have introduced with Republican Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, will replenish the Crime Victims Fund, which Congress established in 1984 with the passage of the Victims of Crime Act, known as VOCA.

The Crime Victims Fund helps abused children, survivors of domestic violence, and other victims of violent crime access the professional services they desperately need. It also assists victims with expenses like medical bills, counseling, funeral costs, loss of wages. And, importantly, the Crime Victims Fund supplies grants to thousands, literally thousands of victim service providers across the Nation, like KAN-WIN.

In KAN-WIN's case, the Crime Victims Fund pays for the salary of their Children's Advocate. That advocate reached out to my office and wrote the following: "The entire Children's Program at KAN-WIN will have to be eliminated" if the VOCA Fix to sustain the Crime Victims Fund does not pass the Senate. Without this legislation, "linguistically and culturally sensitive services and counseling, education assistance, economic assistance, medical assistance, art activities that help regulate children's emotions, parent-child relationship assistance, and other case management services" will be cut.

The kids who receive help from KAN-WIN are far from the only people who would be hurt if the Crime Victims Fund runs dry. Children's Advocacy Centers in Illinois report that a significant cut in VOCA funding would result in more than 1,500 children being deprived of services they need to overcome trauma.

The Chicago Children's Advocacy Center writes: "One of the most important uses of VOCA funds is for mental health therapy for sexually abused children." Without that funding, they will have to "cut the number of children we provide therapy to and more children would go without life-changing treatment to heal from their abuse. Even a small cut in VOCA would mean up to 100 children would go without healing services."

We have a serious problem across America—and I have seen in Illinois, particularly in the city of Chicago—of gun violence. There are so many guns. The city is awash in guns. Too many young people get their hands on them every day.

The Fourth of July weekend, 104 people were shot in the city of Chicago. 104; 19 died. Last weekend, 50. The numbers are staggering. We have a mass shooting in the city of Chicago every weekend. It has become, sadly, expected. It breaks your heart.

I went to the juvenile facility of Cook County several years ago and talked to the counselors who are meeting with the adolescents who have been charged in these gun crimes. Some of these adolescents spend a year or two in that facility waiting for trial. I asked these counselors: Who are these kids? What has happened to them to the point where they can take a gun and just shoot wantonly into a crowd, killing infants and children and grandmothers and innocent people?

The counselor said to me: There are many things. There are hardly any serious mental illnesses that you can think of that we don't find in these kids. But the one thing we find, Senator, consistently is they are the victims of trauma.

Now, by classic definition, trauma is some physical injury, but trauma today is viewed in a much larger context. It goes back to a template that was established by Kaiser Permanente and the CDC called adverse childhood experiences—ACEs for short. Most psychologists and child counselors know exactly what I am talking about.

ACEs, these adverse childhood experiences, can be as simple as witnessing a violent crime or returning to a home where the parent is not a positive force—perhaps the only parent is drug-addicted or an alcoholic or not home at all—or having a situation in which you are never sure where home is. So many kids in school talk about moving back and forth from one relative to another. All of these things take their toll on little kids. It is part of the traumatic experience.

These counselors of these gun-toting adolescents at the Cook County facility say that over 90 percent of them are victims of trauma. Stop and think: Is it possible that that simple thing that happened in a child's life could have that kind of impact? Well, I am afraid it is. For many of us, just to think back on your childhood, of the most memorable moment in your child-

hood—I hope it is a good memory, one that you smile with, but it could be a terrible memory, too, the loss of someone you love or some other tragic event. Well, that is what has happened to these kids. This trauma in their lives runs the risk of changing them and even making them potentially dangerous to the innocent people they live around.

That is why, when we talk about the Victims of Crime Act and giving these kids counseling, a child who witnesses a domestic violence incident in the home, where their mother is being beaten or worse, how in the world do you erase that from your memory? You only hope that you can find someone—some mentor, some counselor—who can talk you through it. That is what the VOCA does. The victims of crime have an opportunity to access those professional services before they do the damage that they do.

So how did we get to this point where we are even debating whether to fund this? Why is the Crime Victims Fund so dangerously close to running out of money when we know we need it so much?

It comes down to how the fund is funded. See, the money for the victims of crime doesn't come from taxpayer dollars. Traditionally, it comes from criminal fines, penalties, forfeited bail bonds, and special assessments collected by the Federal Government. Historically, these criminal fines have accounted for the largest portion of the funding, but in recent years, deposits in the Crime Victims Fund have dropped significantly as the Justice Department has increasingly used deferred prosecution and nonprosecution agreements. Monetary penalties from these deferred prosecutions and nonprosecution agreements are currently deposited into the General Treasury, not into the Crime Victims Fund. As a result, the shift in sentencing has resulted in a devastating impact on the fund.

That is why the bipartisan, bicameral coalition of lawmakers has worked with advocacy organizations to write a fix to the VOCA law to sustain the Crime Victims Fund. Our bill would stabilize the Crime Victims Fund by redirecting monetary penalties from deferred prosecutions and nonprosecution agreements to the victims and service providers that desperately need the financial support.

If you think that is an easy and obvious fix, you don't understand Congress. To have all of the different committees of jurisdiction take a look at it and all of the Members take a look at it and to come up with a solution, it doesn't happen every day. One of the reasons it happened here in the Senate is that one of my colleagues, whom I want to put in the RECORD as a major positive force, Senator TAMMY BALDWIN of the State of Wisconsin. She took a real personal interest in this, and I thank her for it. She brought us together and came up with a solution and worked

out the details—and there were many—until we could all agree. I thank her personally and specifically during the course of this opening remark.

The reduced deposits into the fund have had a devastating impact. She knew it. I knew it. Everyone does. As of this year, victim assistance grants have been reduced by more than \$600 million nationwide, and even more catastrophic cuts are looming if we don't fix it today. So far in 2021, this Crime Victims Fund has already missed out on nearly \$550 million in deposits. We are not even halfway through the year. Imagine how much more money this fund is going to lose if we don't pass this bill.

There is no time to waste. Every day that goes by, we miss an opportunity to help replenish this fund. More importantly, we miss an opportunity to help a crime victim. It may be a medical bill. It could be a funeral cost. It could be counseling for that child whom I described earlier. Missing that opportunity may mean that the life of that child will never quite be the same.

The Senate must immediately pass this bill. The House already did it in March—in March. It is time for us to get around to it. So, with broad bipartisan support in the House, we should be inspired in the Senate by our bipartisan coalition backing the bill. Sixty-three Senators—forty-two Dems, twenty-one Republicans—not bad. We have all come together for the VOCA fix.

Over the past few months, an objection has prevented us from moving forward on this legislation. We have been literally waiting for weeks to pass this bill. Today, we have a chance to do it and to send it to the President's desk. That is why, this afternoon, we are going to take two votes. The first is on an amendment from Senator TOOMEY. It doesn't address the substance of the programs that I mentioned; it addresses the budget process. There is mention, of course, in this bill, but his change would reach far beyond any single piece of legislation. We will consider it. I will be opposing it, and others will get their chance to vote. Then we will face final passage on the House-passed bill.

A broad coalition of victims' rights advocates, service providers, and law enforcement organizations are urging the vote I just described against the Toomey amendment and for the final bill. They recently wrote to us, saying: "The VOCA Fix Act is a narrowly tailored, carefully negotiated, technical fix bill to address the immediate needs of survivors, and the Senate must act now to pass this critical legislation without any amendments. . . . Every delay allows potential funds that should be deposited into the Crime Victims Fund to serve victims to instead be deposited into the General Treasury. The House passed the VOCA Fix Act more than four months ago with overwhelming bipartisan support; we urge the Senate to similarly pass the House-passed VOCA Fix Act, as is, immediately."

More than 1,700 national, regional, State, Tribal, and local organizations are begging us to do this and do it today so we can send it to the President and ensure that the victims are able to maintain access to the services they desperately need. We owe it to the victims to get this done.

I see my colleague on the floor who is the cosponsor of this bill with me. He was the Senate Judiciary Committee's chairman in the previous Congress, and I have that honor in this Congress. I am glad that we could get together, a Democrat and a Republican, again. We have cosponsored things before, and we will continue to. I want to thank Senator GRAHAM for his leadership and in joining on this effort. I think it is a good one, and we need more of them.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRAHAM. I thank Senator DURBIN.

Madam President, it has been a pleasure working with Senator DURBIN on this to, hopefully, get it over the line this afternoon. I think most Americans, if they understood what we were trying to do, would be enthusiastically behind the effort.

As for the deferred prosecution and nonprosecution agreements, the revenues from those procedures—for lack of a better word—go into the General Treasury, not the Crime Victims Fund, and we are fixing that. We have had a reduction in funds available in South Carolina. We have lost \$3.2 million for VOCA crime victims funding for the South Carolina Network of Children's Advocacy Centers' 27 members. Because of this quirk in the law, the Crime Victims Fund is at a historic low, and it is affecting operations in the field.

Attorney General Alan Wilson has been great to work with. With Senators FEINSTEIN and GRASSLEY, we have been a team on this on the Judiciary Committee.

Senator DURBIN went through the ins and outs of what we are doing here. I just want to add this: This was not easy. There are a lot of stakeholders in this, and there are a lot of committees of jurisdiction.

I want to thank Senator BALDWIN, who has been a driving force behind it. That is absolutely true. All of the committees could have easily said no, but this is one time we wanted to get to yes because the lack of funding is beginning to affect the operations of groups that are just indispensable when it comes to providing relief to crime victims.

I would urge a "yes" vote. This has been a bipartisan process from day one. It has been going on about a year. It is now time to correct the quirk in the law to get these funds over to the Crime Victims Fund from the General Treasury.

Senator TOOMEY's amendment, I will oppose. I appreciate Senator TOOMEY very much, but I think that most of the groups and all of the law enforcement groups are opposed to the

Toomey amendment, and I will reluctantly do so.

I hope we can get a really big vote on final passage because we need to prove to the American people that we can do things together. There is nothing that should bring us together more than helping victims of crime and making sure this fund has the resources it deserves to provide the treatment needed. This rise in crime has made this more relevant, not less.

As for Senator DURBIN, as always, I have enjoyed working with him, and we will continue to find common ground where we can. So I urge a "yes" vote on its final passage here in a couple of hours.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Indiana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I rise today because, in a practical place like the State of Indiana, believe it or not, we actually balance our budget every year. We have commonsense things in place that if you are going to receive some benefits of some sort, maybe you do something where we can help to get you to where you do not need the benefits.

In this case, this is again something that was not broken and is now being fixed in a way that takes enterprising States like the State of Indiana, like Texas, like Arizona, places that wanted the ability in administering their share of Medicaid, to have ways to try to get folks into a position where they could get back on their feet, seek work, and do things that would make sense for trying to maybe earn their way into that benefit somewhat.

Do we believe Washington has all the answers? I think that is what you believe when you get rid of something that was working in many places.

I am in the camp that, as much as I know the Federal Government has to weigh in and do things, but if the argument is that we have been knocking it out of the park here, that we have been getting things done that really work, if it wasn't done in the context that of every dollar we spend here, we borrow 23 cents—and in the time I have been here, 2 and a half years, have been probably the loudest voice on trying to fix healthcare.

Part of that issue is in my own party, where I think we are apologists for a broken healthcare industry. The other side of the aisle wants to just spend money to try to fix it without fixing the underlying issues that drive so many of the problems in this country,

where we deal with them in a sustainable way in our State governments, in our local governments. If we take away that flexibility, then we are defaulting to a system that has not been solving the problems.

Today, we are here specifically talking about the Medicaid Program. The way it works currently, the Federal Government pays for half the benefits, and the States pay for half the benefits. The Social Security Act authorizes a framework of flexibility so enterprising, innovative States can maybe do something to bring down the cost of these programs and wean us off the need for them primarily in the long run.

Since President Biden has taken office, several State waivers that were previously approved under the Trump administration have been revoked. It has happened in Texas. It has happened in Arkansas. It has happened in Arizona. And now they are coming after a place like Indiana that has a system that works so well that we are even in the process of giving some revenues back to our citizens this coming year, where revenues were so far above forecast, we are still taking care of issues at the State level and doing what we ought to be considering: returning resources to the taxpayer.

This isn't even that. This is trying to retain the flexibility where it has been working. It is called the Gateway to Work Program, and it is not like it is overbearing. It just requires 20 hours per month of work, job searching, school, or community service. It was designed in a way that engages the individual needing the benefit and that can improve their quality of life over the long run.

It has had a long history. The pilot was first approved by CMS in 2007. It has been renewed as recently as 2018. Yet the Biden administration, right now, by taking these actions—these flexibilities would have been in place until 2025. It is stopping prematurely what I believe is essential if we are going to ever live within our means here, finding better ways to do it and more sustainable ways to pay for it. We should have that flexibility.

With this in mind, I will introduce the Let States Set Medicaid Requirements Act. This legislation will empower States to have the flexibility that they have had that has been making progress. It will encourage behaviors that will improve healthcare outcomes. It has precedence in other Federal programs when it comes to earning unemployment benefits or food assistance. This bill is commonsense policy that I think needs to be put into place so that flexibility cannot arbitrarily be taken away.

I yield to my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, for everything from emergency room visits to mental health care, Medicaid funding is vital to the health of our most

vulnerable citizens. More than 4 million of my constituents, including half of all the children in the State, depend on the stability of the State's Medicaid Program.

Unfortunately, the Biden administration has put the healthcare of these individuals in jeopardy by rescinding a previous approval of Texas's 1115 waiver extension. Basically, that waiver would allow the State to manage the program in a way that maximizes the benefit and save money where possible, mainly through managed care.

Now, those are some pretty bureaucratic terms, the 1115 waiver, but here is the short of it: Texas stands to lose \$11 billion to provide healthcare for underserved patients as a result of this unilateral and unjustified rescission by the Biden administration. All of this was done for an unconstitutional purpose: to force Texas to accept the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion—something the Supreme Court of the United States has said they cannot constitutionally force. Two anonymous Federal officials, in a Washington Post story, reported as much in a recent story.

I said earlier, when this happened to Texas, that if the administration can do it to Texas, they can do it to anyone, any State in this Chamber. My friend Senator BRAUN's home State of Indiana and Senator YOUNG's State of Indiana now is the latest victim, and I appreciate their commitment to ending this game of political chicken.

These actions not only unjustifiably jeopardize the health of millions of vulnerable people, they also erode the trust States have when they negotiate with the Federal Government, where apparently a deal is not a deal. States will never view their Federal partners as working in good faith if these agreements are invalidated by a successor administration.

If we don't stand up against these reckless actions now, which State will be next? It may not be a Medicaid 1115 extension. It may be some other policy by the Biden administration. But how far in this case will this administration go to commandeer State resources in forcing a Medicaid expansion?

I am proud to stand alongside of Senator BRAUN and Senator YOUNG in the fight to protect the healthcare of the most vulnerable Americans in my State and across the country.

I yield to the junior Senator from Indiana. I beg your pardon, Mr. President; maybe the senior Senator or—never mind.

Mr. YOUNG. I thank my colleague very much for his reflections on what is really at stake here, Mr. President.

Last month, the Biden administration's Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services notified the State of Indiana that it was withdrawing approval of the State's Gateway to Work Program. So what does this actually mean to rank-and-file Hoosiers? Well, it means that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has decided to

revoke Indiana's ability to determine appropriate work requirements and appropriate community engagement expectations for Medicaid recipients in our State. It means that this administration regards work as some form of punishment, and efforts to transition to a position of self-reliance are somehow inappropriate.

Now, we Republicans believe in people. We believe in people. We believe in self-reliance. We believe that the vast majority of Americans, Americans of modest means, don't want to be trapped in Government programs.

Medicaid should ideally be a service which is a temporary support for people who really need it. The goal should be to prepare individuals for a life of dignity, and that includes securing a vocation, finding a measure of self-reliance in life.

Now, Indiana wasn't the only State to receive this bad news. Arizona officials also received word that their Medicaid work expectations were being revoked. Just a few months ago, this administration likewise pulled all work expectations from the States of Arkansas, New Hampshire, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Indiana's Gateway to Work Program, again revoked by CMS, would have merely asked Medicaid recipients to report 20 hours of work or volunteer or school or other activities every month. This is really important. These community engagement activities are designed to improve quality of life, to improve the quality of the recipient's life over the long-term and to help Hoosiers transition from Medicaid to full employment. This is what people want.

When we think of the American dream, we think of the ability to go out and start a family and be part of a larger community and to be able to meaningfully participate in a nation's civic life and to secure a vocation.

Most would regard the goals of Indiana's Gateway to Work program as commendable. However, according to CMS, this program would result in significant coverage losses and harm to beneficiaries—harm to beneficiaries—a misleading statement that ignores the extensive list of individuals exempt from this requirement: students, pregnant women, the medically frail or the incapacitated, those with disabilities, and a bunch of others.

Now, luckily for Hoosiers, the State of Indiana had not yet implemented the Gateway to Work program at the time of CMS's notice because of the unique challenges presented by the pandemic; meaning that Medicaid recipients would not face immediate disruption of their benefits.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for other Americans across the country. And we are here to fight for them. This includes Texas, where the administration's decision to revoke that State's waiver put in jeopardy healthcare for 4 million Americans. That doesn't sound very compassionate to me.

Up to this point, Medicaid waivers have allowed the States the ability, the freedom—the freedom under our federalist system—to test new policy approaches within the Medicaid Program, allowing them to design and improve their programs in ways that best fit their own populations and maybe serve as models for other States where successes are elicited and proven.

But with the Biden administration's recent actions, with their one-size-fits-all mandates and mindset, States will now need to be on guard. CMS may decide to revoke its waiver authority at any given time. This means any attempt by a State to improve its Medicaid Program carries a serious risk of disrupting healthcare for the program's beneficiaries if that innovation could ultimately be revoked. God forbid we try and improve a government program. But I guess Medicaid is perfect, and we can't find room for improvement. Certainly, we can't rely on the States to come up with improvements. Any improvements that might be made would have to come from Washington, DC. This is the sort of mindset we seem to be dealing with.

But for a nation that has always valued quality and innovation in healthcare, for Americans who believe we should empower all of our citizens, and for leaders who believe we have a responsibility to provide the least among us the necessary tools to stand on their own two feet, this is an unsustainable situation.

So I urge my colleagues to act now and stand up for their State's ability to set their own Medicaid requirements that meet the needs of their own citizens.

And with that, I yield to my esteemed colleague from Indiana, who has been working very hard on this issue, Senator BRAUN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of my bill, which is at the desk. 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. WYDEN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, first of all, I want to say about my two colleagues, I have very much enjoyed talking healthcare with the Senator from Indiana, the lead sponsor of this. We have had a lot of very productive discussions about the role of healthcare in America.

I strongly support the proposition that the Federal Government doesn't know all the answers here. Sometimes my friends say I am the Senator from innovation because I am always trying to promote innovation. That is what section 1332 is all about.

My other colleague from Indiana is a very valued member of the Finance Committee. So I want it understood that I think Indiana Senators, they are 100 percent straight shooters who I enjoy talking healthcare with.

Let me say, respectfully, why I have a difference of opinion with respect to this issue.

My sense is that what my colleagues from Indiana want to do is based on a premise that comes from the Trump administration, which I think is flawed. The premise is that those on Medicaid really don't work and don't want to work.

Having run the legal aid program for the elderly before I came to the Senate and was codirector of the Oregon Gray Panthers—and, again, it is a good discussion. People have differences of opinion. I think those on Medicaid overwhelmingly—overwhelmingly would like to be able to work and do work, and that is what the difference of opinion is here.

As I understand it, Senator BRAUN wants States to have the authority to condition access to Medicaid on work. Now, his colleague from Indiana noted some exceptions and the like, which sounds like it is of some value, but the basic proposition is conditioning access to Medicaid on work.

It has been my experience—and I have made a practice of it over the years, having been in public life, to go back and talk to people on Medicaid. I think overwhelmingly they want to and do work.

It seems to me, as we emerge from the economic effects of the COVID crisis—and my colleague and I are going to work, for example, on unemployment insurance, where I hope, again, to bring flexibility to the States. For example, my colleague on the Finance Committee knows that we certainly had a lot of serious technology issues with respect to the unemployment insurance programs of the States. So one of the areas I will propose, as we continue our work this year, is that the 53 systems should have a uniform baseline. And I think we are going to have good support, Democrats and Republicans, on it. The key feature will be, of course, giving States the flexibility to innovate, consistent with having a uniform baseline.

So I want my colleagues, both of them, to understand—Senator BRAUN, who I have had some good conversations with, with respect to healthcare; and Senator YOUNG, who is on the Finance Committee—I very much look forward to working with both of them on these healthcare issues.

For the reasons that I am describing today, I am objecting at this time. But I think there are a lot of areas where both parties can come together with respect to healthcare. For these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, my friend from Oregon, we have had a discussion not only on this particular issue. I respect his point of view. And I think we both agree, though, that when it comes to healthcare, it is something that is breaking the bank in this country.

When it is 20 percent of our GDP, and it is 10 to 12 percent in most other developed countries, it has got to be a problem with the underlying industry and the way government has gone about trying to address it.

I am one in my own business, 13 years ago, who declared that no one should go broke because they get sick or have a bad accident, and then took the tools that were out there with a system that didn't give you many to work with, have found a way to make it sustainable, to put skin in the game for my own employees, to get them to get better care for themselves, and to do things that weren't the same things we have been doing, which have not improved the situation.

Medicaid is paid for half by States, half by the Federal Government. I think it does entitle States to have more flexibility on account of it. But what I would ask my colleagues on my side of the aisle is to look at holding the industry more accountable by being competitive, transparent, engaging the healthcare consumer, and that the other side of the aisle doesn't just push through for spending more Federal dollars, where the proof is in the pudding. Neither approach has been working.

It is a tapeworm on the economy. Warren Buffett has got it correct. We need to put our heads together.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

H.R. 1652

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, just about a month ago, I was on the floor. Senator DURBIN from Illinois was here. We were on the floor at that time to ask for unanimous consent to pass legislation to fix a technical issue with the VOCA deposit.

As my colleagues will remember, VOCA is designed to help sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act, or that is the legislation that we had introduced at that time. Just to refresh memories, I would like to reiterate why this fix to the victims fund is so essential.

Effectively, what we are talking about here is stability; sustainability; and, really, certainty.

I had an opportunity in late June to host a roundtable with members from the victim services groups from around the State. We were focused on the impact of the VOCA deposit issue specific to Alaska and what it meant for those who provide the services for victims, whether these are the child advocacy centers, whether these are the domestic violence shelters and the centers, abused women networks. But I was really blown away by the testimony

from so many in these organizations. They were facing a 36-percent cut to the VOCA funds in just this past fiscal year.

When you think about what the impact of cuts at 36 percent means to any organization, it is, obviously, very, very limiting. But for some of these organizations, we are talking about a quarter of their budget. A quarter of their annual budget could be lost just like that.

What they shared with me was that this was everything for them. This was the difference of being able to answer the phone from somebody who has been abused; is in an awful, tragic situation; doesn't know where to go, and they phone that number and there is nobody to take that call, nobody to respond, nobody to save those lives.

It is a matter of not just having the individual there to answer the phone, but, again, when we think about the types of services that are provided by these victim services organizations, they are there for, truly, the most vulnerable at an exceptionally vulnerable moment in their lives.

I was able to hear from those who were gathered at this roundtable, to hear firsthand on the increases in victimization that we have seen in my home State of Alaska during this past year, as we have seen this impact from COVID. But the impacts of this increase on our providers have really been astounding.

Alaska CARES, for example, saw a 173-percent increase in children hospitalized in the pediatric ICU for serious physical abuse and fatal neglect.

Think about that. They had a 173-percent increase in these kids who are being hospitalized, and they have said they were seeing significant brain trauma, significant brain injury. I heard about unprecedented increases that we are seeing in child torture, which our child advocacy centers are witnessing firsthand. Really, when you think about that, it has to just haunt you to the core.

The Alaska chapter of Volunteers of America, which receives VOCA funds to provide at-risk youth and children with vital mental health services, shared a story. They introduced me to Alice.

Alice is a teen who experienced numerous traumatic events in her young life, including child sexual assault and neglect. By receiving services through VOCA, she is pulling her life together. She is learning coping skills, learning to make those positive choices.

So when we think about the role that these victim services play, these providers who, again, are there for truly the most vulnerable at the most vulnerable times that they may face, it should make us want to do everything we can to ensure that they have the resources available for them.

The longer Congress delays this inevitable fix, the larger cuts victim services in Alaska and in every State in our Nation are going to face. I think

we all recognize this has been a difficult time, but for those who are trying to serve victims through a global pandemic, it has really been so much harder. It has been 10 times harder. Our providers are exhausted. They are burned out. And now they are faced with massive cuts.

Now, my colleague from Pennsylvania has some legitimate budget concerns that he hopes to address through an amendment we will take up later today. His concerns with changes in mandatory spending are valid, and I respect that, but this VOCA fix legislation is not the mechanism to address these concerns. I fear that if his amendment should pass, it will delay and perhaps derail this much needed fix.

Again, we are hearing from victims. We are hearing from survivors. We are hearing from victim service organizations. They are asking us—they are asking us—they are begging us for a fix now to the VOCA deposit. I am not hearing too many of them ask for CHIMP reform. The use of CHIMPs is controversial. Our legislation, which would fix the VOCA deposit, is not.

We cannot fail the many who dedicate their lives to serving victims and survivors. There was an Alaska organization at the VOCA roundtable who said it very neatly. She said: It is a representation of our values as a society how we help those who are most vulnerable.

We have the ability today to do what is right, so I would urge my colleagues to vote aye on the VOCA Fix Act.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator HYDE-SMITH and I be allowed to use a prop or two during our next presentation.

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

TRIBUTE TO MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
BASEBALL TEAM

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, thank you very much.

My first prop is a front-page story from the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal on Thursday, July 1, 2021. It says:

Hail State! Bulldogs are national champions. Mississippi State celebrates after winning the College World Series 9-0 against Vanderbilt after the deciding Game 3 on Wednesday in Omaha. See full coverage: Sports, 1B.

That is my other prop, and that headline says:

Best in Show. Decisive win delivers first national title for the Mississippi State Bulldogs.

Senator HYDE-SMITH and I could not be more delighted to rise this afternoon and recognize Mississippi State University and their baseball team on their first national championship in school history in any sport.

The Bulldogs had been to the College World Series 11 times in the past, and that in itself is a remarkable achieve-

ment. They even got to the championship series once in 2013. But this year was the year it all finally came together under Head Coach Chris Lemonis.

They say good pitching wins baseball games, and in this case, it certainly helped Mississippi State win the College World Series.

The hype had been building around MSU by the time they arrived in Omaha in mid-June. After beating Texas and then Virginia and then again beating Texas on a walk-off hit in the bottom of the ninth, the Dawgs advanced to the championship round to face Vanderbilt.

The Bulldogs dropped the season opener, but the next day, on the strength of pitching from Houston Harding and Preston Johnson, who combined to throw a four-hitter, State bounced back with a 13-to-2 victory. They carried that momentum into game 3, where Will Bednar and Landon Sims took the mound and held Vandy to one single hit. The Bulldogs won in a 9-to-0 shutout to bring the national title home for the first time ever to Starkville, MS.

I want to offer my congratulations to Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Lemonis, who was named Coach of the Year by Collegiate Baseball Newspaper.

Congratulations are also in order for Will Bednar, who won Most Outstanding Player at the College World Series and outfielder Tanner Allen, the SEC Player of the Year. He was also named the American Baseball Coaches Association National Player of the Year.

In addition, six Bulldogs were named to this year's College World Series All-Tournament Team: Logan Tanner, Luke Hancock, Lane Forsythe, Tanner Allen, Rowdey Jordan, and Will Bednar.

I want to commend the Mississippi State Bulldogs team for their tireless work throughout this season and for their outstanding achievement. They have made Mississippi State and the entire Magnolia State of Mississippi proud.

In the words of the late Jack Cristil, the voice of the Bulldogs for many, many years, you can wrap this one up in the maroon and white.

I yield to my colleague from Mississippi.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I am so pleased to join my colleague in congratulating Mississippi State University's baseball team on its recent 2021 NCAA College World Series championship, the first NCAA championship in school history.

Mississippi State capped off its extraordinary season by defeating an incredibly talented Vanderbilt University team 9 to 0 in game 3. My house was full. We were all cheering. Their impressive and remarkable run through this year's College World Series is a testament to the rich tradition

of the MSU baseball program, which has now appeared in 12 NCAA College World Series in its history, including most recently 3 consecutive series. The inspiring performance of this baseball team continues to be celebrated all over our State. Maroon is everywhere.

I truly appreciate the hard work, skill, and dedication that earned these athletes the first NCAA Division I baseball championship for Mississippi State, which are aptly described in the accompanying resolution.

We take pride in the legacy and inspiring example of these young men and their coaches. Thank you for such a wonderful and historic season. Hail State.

(Rings cowbell.)

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to oppose Democrats' latest multitrillion-dollar spending spree.

It has only been 4 months since the Democrats passed a \$1.9 trillion spending bill, and it was done through Congress on a party-line vote. Not a single Republican voted for the bill. The Democrats put the whole thing on a credit card. The bill is going to be paid for by our kids and our grandkids, and they are going to have to pay for it with interest.

To me, that bill was completely unnecessary. It was a big payoff to the people who run the Democratic Party—\$86 billion for union bosses, hundreds of billions for bankrupt blue States, and free vacation time for DC bureaucrats. There was a big expansion of Medicaid. There was an even bigger expansion of ObamaCare. Millions of dollars went for so-called climate justice.

The bill flooded the country with cash, and it did so without adding goods or services to the country. So what happens? Well, prices go up. It is no wonder that prices have gone up since Joe Biden took office.

Experts from both parties warned that the so-called stimulus bill would actually cause inflation, and that includes President Obama's economic adviser Larry Summers. Critics also included former Obama economic adviser Jason Furman. I want to make sure I get the quote right. He said: "I don't know any economist that was recommending something the size of what [we passed]." Didn't know a single economist who recommended it.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said we don't need any stimulus funding. Well, that didn't stop the Democrats. The Congressional Budget Office said our economy would be back to normal, they said, this summer without a dime of additional spending.

Democrats, of course, ignored the experts. They got their hands on America's credit card, and they just couldn't resist using it.

One measure of inflation is now the highest it has been in nearly 30 years.

Filling up a pickup truck in my home State of Wyoming—and I was there again this past weekend—is now about \$25 more expensive than it was the day Joe Biden was inaugurated. For 3 months in a row, prices have gone up faster than wages. In effect, the American people, because of the inflation exceeding wages and growth, have taken a pay cut.

Two things I hear about every weekend in Wyoming: one, the cost of things, and then I hear from small businesses trying to hire people, trying to get people back to work.

We know, nationally, nearly half of all the unemployed people have been making more money by staying at home than they would have by going to work. That is because Washington Democrats continue to pay them unemployment bonuses on top of the unemployment earnings that they make in their own State. States have unemployment programs to compensate people who are out of work, but Washington Democrats said: Not enough. We are going to pay everybody a big bonus on top of that.

At the end of June, a poll estimated that 1.8 million people were staying home from work because they were making more money not working than they would make by working. These people aren't lazy. They are logical. They see what the incentives are. Democrats are printing money, and people are not going to work because they are getting paid to stay home. No wonder that we have inflation combined with a record number in this country of unfilled jobs.

Both inflation and worker shortages were created by this Democratic spending bill. It seems the Democrats still haven't learned basic economics, and now the Democrats are getting ready to make the same mistake all over again. This time, it is even on a bigger scale. The Democrats are spending taxpayer dollars like it is Monopoly money.

Democrats are getting ready to cram another bill through Congress on another party-line vote, ignoring all the warning signs. Even the Treasury Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury, Janet Yellen, admitted last week—she said “several more months of rapid inflation”; “several more months of rapid inflation.”

Democrats see the inflation and say: Don't worry about it. We will just send you another government check. Democrats seem to want the entire country getting a government check.

The latest spending spree massively expands ObamaCare, just like the last one. This new spending spree would lower the age of Medicare even though life expectancy has gone up since Medicare was created.

This reckless spending spree would also give amnesty to millions and millions of illegal immigrants. The amnesty includes nothing to strengthen our borders. That is where the work needs to be done. It just creates more

incentives to come here illegally. No wonder we are seeing the highest numbers of illegal aliens in 20 years, right now. Many illegal immigrants have admitted they came here because Democrats promised to give them government benefits: free healthcare, plus the assurance that they could stay in this country.

The spending spree is larded up with giveaways to the Democrats' favorite groups: union bosses, trial lawyers, leftwing professors. It includes taxpayer funding for full-time professional climate activists.

So this morning, this very morning, Representative OCASIO-CORTEZ of New York and 80 other Members and Democrats sent a letter to Senator SCHUMER demanding funding of these activists. Senator SCHUMER went straight to the floor, and he said he would include it.

Now, these full-time climate activists would get a government paycheck, free healthcare, free childcare, free college tuition, free housing—part of the Democrats' goal of replacing middle-class jobs with government checks.

The majority leader came to the floor and talked about hiring hundreds of thousands of climate activists—a climate corps. Think about all the activists against the Keystone Pipeline, against drilling in the Arctic. They would now be paid by the Federal Government.

This bill that we are going to be considering, the budget that the Democratic Party is bringing forth, also includes supersizing the Internal Revenue Service. In total, the bill is the single most expensive spending bill in the history of this Nation. It costs almost as much as America's entire role in World War II. It might not be infrastructure, but it is a bullet train to socialism.

This new spending bill raises taxes. Yet it gives carve-outs to rich people in blue States and owners of electric vehicles.

Let me be very clear. Not one Republican is going to vote for this budget bill—not one in the House, not one in the Senate—not for this loaded, reckless spending spree with all the taxes included. That is why all it takes is one Democrat in the Senate or a handful in the House to stop this freight train to socialism.

This means all eyes will now be on the Democratic caucus. CHUCK SCHUMER and NANCY PELOSI want absolutely every one of them to walk the plank. One Democrat could stop this sprint to socialism, stop this massive amnesty, stop these crippling tax increases. If none do, every single Democrat will be held responsible for the consequences of their actions.

The consequences mean more inflation, with higher costs of gas, goods, groceries, more worker shortages, and more debt for our Nation. Democrats did enough damage with their last spending blowout. The new spending spree is twice as big, and the timing is even worse.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1652

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to speak about the legislation we are going to be voting on later today, including an amendment that I have, and it has to do with the Crime Victims Fund. And I just want to explain and remind my colleagues just how important the Crime Victims Fund is.

This is a very, very major funding source for people who do some of the most important work in America. I know. I have met these folks. I have toured their facilities all across Pennsylvania. I am referring to the advocates for victims of crimes. And these advocates, my goodness, the heinous and horrendous crimes that they guide people's recovery from—I am at a loss for words to describe what these folks do often for children, often for very vulnerable people who are victims of these heinous crimes.

Well, thank God there are people who dedicate their lives, professionals who dedicate their lives to helping people with their recovery, to helping people who are victims to cope with what can be horrific reliving of the experience when they have to recount it to law enforcement or go through physical exams and on and on. It is very, very difficult work, and it is very, very important to help completely innocent victims get through what is undoubtedly the worst experience in their lifetime.

So the Crime Victims Fund provides resources for the people who help the victims of crime and for victims themselves. It is important to point out that the fund is funded entirely by the proceeds from criminal penalties. There is no taxpayer money in this fund. There never has been. It is entirely from criminal penalties.

And there is a statute that created this account in the Federal Government that requires the money that goes into it, these criminal penalties, to go to the victims and their advocates. But it doesn't say when the money has to go, and so that gave rise to a serious problem that developed.

For years, it turns out that money that was put into this fund—money from criminal penalties that went into the fund—didn't go to victims, didn't go to the advocates for victims. It was intentionally withheld because we had these crazy budget rules that created an incentive to withhold it.

The way the budget rule worked is, if there was money in the fund that did not go to the victims of crime and their advocates, as it is supposed to, under the budget rules, you could pretend that that was a savings, and it would therefore allow you to spend more money in other areas. It was effectively a way to circumvent spending caps, and that is how it was used.

Year in and year out, money was systematically withheld from victims of

crime and their advocates, and it was a big problem. I will give you a sense of scale. In 2014, for instance, only \$745 million was obligated, despite a balance of \$9 billion. There was over \$8 billion in funding that was supposed to go to crime victims and their advocates intentionally withheld. In 2013, only \$730 million was obligated out of a little over an \$8 billion balance. There was over \$7 billion intentionally withheld.

From 2001 to 2014, the value of the funds—the money going in—increased by almost 600 percent. Funding for victims of crime and their advocates increased by 39 percent.

This was wrong. It was an abuse. It was based on an arcane and ridiculous budget rule, and it had a very, very deleterious effect. So when I discovered this, I began fighting this aggressively. It was brought to my attention by the people who serve victims of crime.

These groups came to me and asked me to help them in the struggle for them to get the resources they needed to meet the unmet needs of victims of crime all over my State and, I am sure, all over the country.

For instance, in 2015, the National Children's Alliance sent me a letter, and they said:

The [Crime Victims Fund] caps have been set too low; deposits—

Meaning the criminal penalties going into the fund—

have skyrocketed while disbursements have remained almost flat. . . . We look forward to further working with you to make all of the statutory changes needed to update the VOCA Crime Victims Fund and in turn better meet the needs of all victims and survivors of crime.

In 2016, the Court Appointed Special Advocates wrote:

Since 2000, when Congress began capping disbursement from the Crime Victims Fund to prevent fluctuations in deposits, funding has not kept pace with the needs of victims, including the growing population of child victims in America.

In 2015, I got a letter from the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and they said:

The most frustrating thing for someone who has done policy work is that there is money available for these unmet needs.

That is all true. There was money available. It was because money was deposited into the fund. It was just being systematically withheld from the victims of crime and their advocates.

But I got the message, and I think these folks were exactly right. So in response to these groups, I began working closely with appropriators on both sides of the aisle to address this problem and worked extensively with Senator SHELBY and his staff. The fact is, since about 2015, appropriators, the folks who control the effective allocation of this, have voluntarily obligated appropriate levels of disbursements since 2015, and the chart illustrates this very clearly.

Everything to the left of the green line is prior to 2015. You can see these

very, very low levels—less than \$1 billion every year—despite huge amounts of money being poured in; and then afterwards, starting in 2015, large, large increases in disbursements from the fund. Very, very important.

This has changed the circumstances for advocates of crime. They have grown enormously. I know this. In Pennsylvania, they have been able to hire more counselors. They have been able to open more facilities to treat and to help these victims of crime.

This is tremendous progress, but there is no guarantee that it is going to continue. So I have sought to make this simple principle: The idea that the money flowing into the fund should also flow out of the fund to the victims. I have tried to make this a permanent arrangement.

Now, let me be very clear. I am not trying to change budget rules. I am not trying to reopen some general budget. This is one egregious example of a category of budget flaws, and I am not trying to change it. I would love to change that. I should qualify that. I am trying to change it in other venues, but not here, not today. Today, all I am trying to do is something very, very narrow and very specific, and that is to make sure that victims of crimes and their advocates get the money they are supposed to get. It is really and truly as simple as that.

I have introduced legislation to do just this, repeatedly—you know, legislation that would simply require that we appropriate the appropriate dollar amounts each year. It was reported favorably out of the Senate Budget Committee in 2015. It was unanimously adopted in the congressional Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019.

So there is broad bipartisan support for this idea. But we have never been able to get it across the finish line. Again, I am not trying to change all the budget rules, just this one fund. I just want to make sure that crime victims get the money that the statute says they are supposed to get.

The Senator from Illinois, I believe, is the Senator who has introduced legislation that would create a new category of resources for the Crime Victims Fund, and that is specifically to add deferred and nondeferred prosecution agreement payments to the Crime Victims Fund. So it wouldn't be just criminal judgments. It would also be these prosecution agreements.

I fully support that money going into the Crime Victims Fund. It is a new, important source of revenue that can help to serve these victims of crime. There are no tax dollars involved. I support this goal. I support this legislation. I just want to make sure that we don't go back to these days, that weren't so terribly long ago, when money going into the fund stayed in the fund because it served people's purposes.

And that is a problem I have with the underlying legislation in its current form. That legislation has no require-

ment whatsoever that any increase in funding will actually be matched by an increase in outflows for victims and their advocates.

You see, making the fund bigger doesn't by itself guarantee that there will be any more money for victims of crime or their advocates. Ensuring that money goes into the fund is just not enough. We saw this. We need to ensure that more money is actually leaving the fund and going to victims, not remaining unspent so as to offset some other category of spending, who knows what.

I was appreciative back in 2018 for the endorsement from the National Organization for Victim Assistance, who wrote:

A permanent solution is needed. . . . There is no mechanism to stop Congress from diverting money from victims in the future, should it choose to do so.

Well, my amendment solves this problem. It is very simple. It would just require a reasonable minimum level for victims and advocates based on the amounts that have been deposited into the Crime Victims Fund from both of the sources.

As I say, Congress has been adhering to this voluntarily since 2016. What my amendment would do is it would simply create a point of order. If legislation came to the floor that violated this principle and that went back to these days of withholding—intentionally withholding—money that should be going to victims of crime, then that legislation would be subject to a point of order. Now, 60 Senators could override that point of order, but at least it would create the presumption and an incentive for appropriation legislation to actually provide the funding to victims and their advocates that it is supposed to.

I should also be clear. The policy only creates a spending floor. It would be at the discretion of the appropriators first and Congress as a whole later to decide if they wanted to disburse more money than what the floor contemplates, but the floor would at least prevent the worst of these abuses.

So you can imagine my surprise when some of the folks who are big advocates for putting more money into the fund are adamantly opposed to my language that would actually require that money to also come out of the fund and go to the intended beneficiaries.

You have to ask yourself, Why would someone oppose such a requirement? It is hard not to think that maybe one of the reasons that some people are adamant that they not be required to actually disburse this money is maybe they are thinking about going back to what used to happen routinely around here.

Remember, if the money is withheld from victims, if we go back to when the money didn't make it out the door to victims, why, that amount that is withheld can be spent on other things, and that is a powerful incentive for a

lot of folks around here. You can see how it was done.

Now, I have heard people say, some of my opponents say: Don't worry. We have no intention of diverting any of this money. Just trust us, they say.

If they have no intention of diverting the money, then why are they so adamant that they not be required to disburse it to its intended beneficiaries?

Well, we don't really have to speculate anymore because the President of the United States, President Biden, has been very clear about his intentions. In his budget, he has explicitly called for withholding this money from victims. It is right here in black and white. You don't have to be creative here. You don't have to be conspiratorial. The President has declared to the world in a published budget that he wants to withhold the money from crime victims. In fact, he laid it out there. It is in table S-8 of his budget.

I think this is a well-founded concern that we might go back to that practice. And in any case, if nobody wants to go back to that practice, then why wouldn't they agree to a requirement that this money actually be disbursed?

Now, over the course of debating this, much has been made of a letter that has been signed by some victims' organizations. Let's look at this for what it is. Organizations that depend overwhelmingly on congressional appropriations are asked to sign a letter by the very people who control whether or not they get funding, and the letter is advocating against codifying the stable increased funding that would benefit those folks.

I think we know what is going on there. I want to thank the many groups that are supporting this amendment: the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, Heritage Action, FreedomWorks, the R Street Institute, Taxpayer Protection Alliance, Americans for Prosperity, and others.

But, folks, this isn't complicated and it isn't about overhauling budget rules and it isn't about anything that is terribly complicated or arcane. It is about ensuring that crime victims and their advocates get the money they are supposed to get.

I urge my colleagues to stand with me and support this amendment and make sure that the neediest and some of the most vulnerable among us—victims of crime—receive the increased funding they deserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I will oppose this amendment today. I base it on my experience as an advocate for victims of crime that began when I was a prosecutor, certainly during the time when I was the Vice President of the National District Attorneys Association and on their executive board.

If you look at the Victims of Crime Act Fix bill, it has passed the House. It would deposit the proceeds in deferred prosecution agreements and non-prosecution agreements into the Crime

Victims Fund. And I mention this because in recent years, deposits into the fund have shrunk significantly. They actually threatened the ability to sustain payments to crime victims.

Senator TOOMEY's amendment would create a point of order if expenditures from the Crime Victims Fund fall below the 3-year average. The current 3-year average is \$583 million, assuming the CBO estimate of collections in fiscal year 2021 is \$750 million.

The Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agency Subcommittee, Appropriations, has worked to ensure the release of the fund is more than the 3-year average. For example, in fiscal year 2021, the CJS bill allows spending of \$2 billion—\$2.015 billion out of the fund. Now, that is \$1.5 billion more than the 3-year average of fiscal years 2018, 2019, and 2020.

I mention all of this because I support the crime victims. I spent a career supporting and advocating for them. I did that, as I said, before I was in the Senate, when I was a prosecutor.

But this amendment offered by Senator TOOMEY impinges on the ability of the Appropriations Committee to do its job. If it were adopted, here is what would happen. It would create a point of order. It would delay the movement of any appropriations bill that the Crime Victims Fund is part of.

I just put over on the—talking about the average—we have been releasing more than the 3-year average of the fund over the last several fiscal years, but then there could be a time when there is not enough funds to keep it sustainable.

And that is why we are here to vote on the underlying bill, the VOCA Fix Act. That would direct deposits from nonprosecution agreements and deferred prosecution agreements to go into the Crime Victims Fund so we can continue to spend out of the fund at or above current levels. And without it, the spending would continue to fall.

Victims groups like the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence are asking for clean passage of this act.

I went down through it and looked at the various States. I mention a couple: the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Children's Advocacy Centers of Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape authored an opinion piece on July 5. They ask for clean passage of the VOCA Fix Act.

By the way, this bill also has nearly 60 cosponsors, including a number of my Republican colleagues like Senators MURKOWSKI, GRAHAM, CORNYN, and GRASSLEY. And the Senate bill is identical to the one before us, H.R. 1652.

Now, if we don't include amendments, if we pass this bill, we can get it to the President for signature immediately. We can help to ensure deposits into the Crime Victims Fund. That means all crime victims are going to be helped. I want that passage without an amendment.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, the National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families, Council of State Governments, Futures Without Violence, and numerous others be placed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

JULY 13, 2021.

Hon. MEMBER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR: The organizations below, comprising the national VOCA stakeholder workgroup, are writing today to urge you to support a floor vote on the House-passed H.R. 1652, the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021 ("VOCA Fix Act") by allowing a vote on the bill. We further urge you to vote in favor of the VOCA Fix Act and to oppose controversial amendments.

The bipartisan and bicameral VOCA Fix Act, introduced in the Senate as S. 611 by Senators Durbin, Graham, Baldwin, Grassley, Feinstein, Cornyn, Klobuchar, and Murkowski, is a narrowly-focused, carefully negotiated technical fix to address an immediate crisis—massive cuts to Victim of Crime Act ("VOCA") victim service grants and insufficient funding for victim compensation.

VOCA grants are funded by monetary penalties associated with Federal criminal convictions—they are not funded with taxpayer money. In recent years, deposits into the VOCA's Crime Victims Fund ("CVF" or "the Fund") have dropped dramatically, due to the Department of Justice's increasing reliance on deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements (DPAs/NPAs). Unlike criminal convictions, monetary penalties associated with DPAs/NPAs are deposited into the General Fund of the Treasury—they do not go into the Crime Victims Fund, despite being outcomes based on the same crimes.

The VOCA Fix Act fixes this discrepancy by making a technical fix to deposit monetary penalties associated with DPAs/NPAs into the CVF instead of the General Fund, in alignment with the original intent of the statute. It also increases funding for state victim compensation programs and includes other provisions outlined in this letter of support, signed by more than 1,710 national, regional, state, Tribal, and local organizations and government agencies.

The VOCA Fix Act passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, but it has stalled in the Senate due to attempts to use the non-controversial VOCA Fix Act to force a vote on the controversial use of Changes in Mandatory Programs ("CHIMPs") in the Appropriations process. Recognizing the critical need to pass the VOCA Fix Act without further delay, Senators are pursuing a consent agreement to vote on both the VOCA Fix Act and an amendment by Senator Toomey relating to the use of the VOCA CHIMP. We urge you to support a floor vote on the VOCA Fix Act by letting the unanimous consent agreement to go through. Upon the acceptance of the consent agreement, we urge you to vote in favor of the VOCA Fix Act.

We also urge you to vote against Senator Toomey's amendment to limit the use of the VOCA offset by requiring Appropriators to release the average of the past three years' deposits from the CVF annually. We recognize Senator Toomey's desire to help survivors, but his amendment is not the best

way to do so. While on the surface, this proposal may seem reasonable, it actually has the potential to be harmful. The average of the past three years' deposits was less than \$500 million. If there was no balance in the Fund to offset the low deposits, victim service grants would have been \$200 million—a cut of 95% compared to four years ago. The cuts to grants over the last few years have been catastrophic, but a cut of 95% would completely decimate the entire victim service infrastructure. The \$2 billion balance allowed by Senator Toomey's amendment is less than yearly disbursement over the past five years and is insufficient to meet the needs of survivors.

It is also important to note that funding is not being diverted from victims to pay for other programs, as stated by those seeking to amend the VOCA Fix Act. When the CVF is used as a paper offset, funds are not transferred to pay for other programs—they remain in the Fund. Moreover, despite claims to the contrary, Appropriators are not hoarding money in the Fund to use as an offset. Over the past several years, they have reduced the balance in the Fund from \$13 billion in Fiscal Year 2017 to an anticipated \$2.5 billion at the end of this fiscal year by increasing grants to victim service providers. While \$2.5 billion may seem like a large balance, in actuality, it would only cover one year's VOCA grants at Fiscal Year 2020 levels, which were already at a five-year low. The amendment has the potential to bring down future funding bills and cause a government shutdown, and a bill with this language would not pass the House of Representatives. We ask that you join us in opposing this amendment.

Victims, survivors, and victim service organizations are telling us that they are cutting services, laying off staff, and even closing. They are asking for the VOCA Fix Act—they are not asking for CHIMP reform. While we wait for passage, survivors and advocates have watched criminal settlements totaling more than \$545 million directed towards the General Fund rather than into the Crime Victims Fund this calendar year, because this technical fix has not passed. Ultimately, there may be merit in holding a conversation about the structure of Congressional spending bills, but the VOCA Fix Act is not the appropriate forum. The use of CHIMPs is controversial; the VOCA Fix Act is not.

The VOCA Fix Act is a narrowly tailored, carefully negotiated technical fix bill to address the immediate needs of survivors, and the Senate must act now to pass this critical legislation without any amendments. On behalf of a broad and committed group of national, regional, state, Tribal, and local stakeholders, we urge you to support a vote on the VOCA Fix Act, to vote in favor of the VOCA Fix Act, and to vote against the Toomey amendment. Every delay allows potential funds that should be deposited into the Crime Victims Fund to serve victims to instead be deposited into the General Treasury. The House passed the VOCA Fix Act more than four months ago with overwhelming bipartisan support; we urge the Senate to similarly pass the House-passed VOCA Fix Act, as is, immediately.

For more information, contact Denise Edwards, Rachel Graber, Terri Poore, Monica McLaughlin, Daisy Pagan, and Dan Eddy.

Respectfully,

Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities, Council of State Governments Justice Center, Futures Without Violence, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards, Na-

tional Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators, National Children's Alliance, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, National Criminal Justice Association, National District Attorneys Association, National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Organization for Victim Assistance, National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault, Ujima, Inc.: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community.

Mr. LEAHY. I urge a "no" vote on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I join Senator LEAHY and others who have come to the floor this afternoon to urge clean passage of the VOCA Fix Act so that we can secure greater deposits into the Crime Victims Fund and ensure continued support for crime victims.

I am currently the chair of the Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Subcommittee. Senator MORAN from Kansas is my ranking member. Before that, Senator MORAN was chair of the committee, and I was the ranking member. Together, we have committed to a target of spending from the fund at a minimum of the 3-year average of collections. That is a practice that was started by former Appropriations Committee and CJS Chair Senator Mikulski, along with Senator SHELBY, back in 2015.

All deposits made into the Crime Victims Fund should stay in the fund. Our subcommittee directs the amount that is released by the Justice Department from the fund for victim services. But every dollar stays in the fund and is available in future years if it is not used for victim services.

If Senator TOOMEY's amendment passes, if appropriations bills contain less than the 3-year average, either the entire cap falls, depleting the fund in one fiscal year or, more likely, the appropriations bill would be stopped from moving forward on the floor.

Now, I appreciate what Senator TOOMEY is trying to do. He wants to address budget reform and the impact of mandatory spending, but this is not the way to do that. That needs a thoughtful process that goes through the committee that there is debate on. This should not be done as an amendment to a bill that is at a process that is critical to help the victims of crime.

Victims groups and direct service providers are asking for the clean passage of this act, the VOCA Fix Act. They are urging us to vote no on Senator TOOMEY's amendment.

We have all heard from victims groups requesting clean passage of this bill. I have heard from individuals and organizations from across New Hampshire, as Senator LEAHY said, organizations like the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence and the Granite State Children's Alliance which both benefit from the Crime Victims Fund because they get funding for those people who are injured.

This bill has already passed the House. If we pass this legislation today without amendment, it can be quickly signed into law, and we can get these much needed changes to shore up collections into the fund so that the victims of crime can get the help that they need. It will make a meaningful impact to ensure there is adequate funding for survivors now and in years to come.

I would urge a "no" vote on the Toomey amendment.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, before we proceed to a vote on final passage of the VOCA Fix Act, on which I teamed up with Senators DURBIN, GRAHAM, and other members of the Judiciary Committee, we first will turn to the Toomey amendment.

This amendment is loosely based on a bill introduced by Senator TOOMEY in 2015. That 2015 measure, entitled the "Fairness for Victims of Crime Act," would have created a budgetary point of order against legislation that required the Crime Victims Fund to disburse less than the average amount collected by the Fund over the previous 3 fiscal years.

The Senate held a field hearing on this legislation, which was introduced by Senator Toomey, the same year. The Budget Committee, of which I am a member, then approved the legislation by unanimous voice vote. I still support the premise behind this bill, which is to promote fairness for crime victims and restore the original intent of the Victims of Crime Act.

Some years ago, appropriators placed an arbitrary cap on the amount of money that could flow out of the Crime Victims Fund each year. The imposition of this cap meant not only that billions of dollars accumulated, unspent, in the fund in later years, but also that this sum could be used as an offset to support other projects backed by congressional appropriators. Meanwhile, the availability of so much unspent money in the Crime Victims Fund made it an extremely tempting target for budget dealmakers. On one occasion in 2015, during the Obama administration, budget negotiators simply rescinded at least a billion dollars of the fund for a budget deal.

As noted by Senator TOOMEY today, the President's budget proposal for the coming fiscal year indicates that he proposes to rely on \$26 billion in the Crime Victims Fund and cancellations in the Children's Health Program to offset an equivalent amount in new discretionary spending. Table S-8 to the President's budget shows that this is the intention.

Every last penny brought into the Victims of Crime Act Fund is supposed to help victims rather than serve as a funding gimmick for other projects supported by appropriators and the White House. It is for this reason that I support the Toomey amendment.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, is there a scheduled vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. To the Senator from Illinois, it is scheduled for 5:15.

Mr. DURBIN. The first vote is on the Toomey amendment followed by a vote on passage of the bill, amended or unamended?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. DURBIN. I would just say in conclusion—and I thank the Senator from New Hampshire and the Senator from Vermont for their comments on this measure.

If you listen carefully to the Senator from Pennsylvania, there is one thing he did not say. He did not say that any surplus in this fund was spent for another purpose.

He seems to worry about the allocation of the balance each year of the fund. I would think a fiscal conservative would want to make certain that the money spent is spent properly, not overspending in some years and underspending in others.

That is exactly what the appropriators are asking for here, the ability to moderate and to regulate the amount of money as it is spent, as it is needed. That seems like a pretty fiscally conservative point of view and a responsible one.

I urge my colleagues to follow the advice of the Senators from Vermont and New Hampshire and to oppose the Toomey amendment and support the passage of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, my understanding is that I would have 1 minute to close out debate on this; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1 minute, and the Senator is recognized.

Mr. TOOMEY. Could I claim that minute now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mr. TOOMEY. Thank you very much. Listen, it is very clear that we have very broad agreements on a provision in this legislation that will dramatically increase the money that goes into the fund. What my colleagues on the other side of the aisle object to is a requirement that the money actually go out of the fund to the victims and their advocates.

And we know that, systemically, money was withheld from this fund for years, and we know that President Biden has stipulated in his current budget that it must happen again.

I am simply saying, if we all agree that this nontaxpayer money coming from criminal penalties and non-deferred agreements, if it is supposed to go into this account, the Crime Victims Fund, which I support, it should actually have to go to the victims of crime and their advocates.

If my amendment passes, this bill could be passed by the House later that same day or the next day. It could be on the President's desk before the end of the week, easily. If it were to pass

and be signed into law, then we would be assured that appropriation bills would be brought to the floor with the proper allocation done. So I urge the support of my amendment, and then the adoption of the underlying bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am not going to read the lengthy statement from the coalition of victims' rights advocates and law enforcement organizations opposing the Toomey amendment and the many organizations that have asked us to vote no on the amendment and yes on the Victims of Crime Act.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the entire statement.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

JULY 13, 2021.

Hon. MEMBER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR: The organizations below, comprising the national VOCA stakeholder workgroup, are writing today to urge you to support a floor vote on the House-passed H.R. 1652, the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021 ("VOCA Fix Act") by allowing a vote on the bill. We further urge you to vote in favor of the VOCA Fix Act and to oppose controversial amendments.

The bipartisan and bicameral VOCA Fix Act, introduced in the Senate as S. 611 by Senators Durbin, Graham, Baldwin, Grassley, Feinstein, Cornyn, Klobuchar, and Murkowski, is a narrowly-focused, carefully negotiated technical fix to address an immediate crisis—massive cuts to Victim of Crime Act ("VOCA") victim service grants and insufficient funding for victim compensation.

VOCA grants are funded by monetary penalties associated with Federal criminal convictions—they are not funded with taxpayer money. In recent years, deposits into the VOCA's Crime Victims Fund ("CVF" or "the Fund") have dropped dramatically, due to the Department of Justice's increasing reliance on deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements (DPAs/NPAs). Unlike criminal convictions, monetary penalties associated with DPAs/NPAs are deposited into the General Fund of the Treasury—they do not go into the Crime Victims Fund, despite being outcomes based on the same crimes.

The VOCA Fix Act fixes this discrepancy by making a technical fix to deposit monetary penalties associated with DPAs/NPAs into the CVF instead of the General Fund, in alignment with the original intent of the statute. It also increases funding for state victim compensation programs and includes other provisions outlined in this letter of support, signed by more than 1,710 national, regional, state, Tribal, and local organizations and government agencies.

The VOCA Fix Act passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, but it has stalled in the Senate due to attempts to use the non-controversial VOCA Fix Act to force a vote on the controversial use of Changes in Mandatory Programs ("CHIMPs") in the Appropriations process. Recognizing the critical need to pass the VOCA Fix Act without further delay, Senators are pursuing a consent agreement to vote on both the VOCA Fix Act and an amendment by Senator Toomey relating to the use of the VOCA CHIMP. We urge you to support a floor vote

on the VOCA Fix Act by letting the unanimous consent agreement to go through. Upon the acceptance of the consent agreement, we urge you to vote in favor of the VOCA Fix Act.

We also urge you to vote against Senator Toomey's amendment to limit the use of the VOCA offset by requiring Appropriators to release the average of the past three years' deposits from the CVF annually. We recognize Senator Toomey's desire to help survivors, but his amendment is not the best way to do so. While on the surface, this proposal may seem reasonable, it actually has the potential to be harmful. The average of the past three years' deposits was less than \$500 million. If there was no balance in the Fund to offset the low deposits, victim service grants would have been \$200 million—a cut of 95% compared to four years ago. The cuts to grants over the last few years have been catastrophic, but a cut of 95% would completely decimate the entire victim service infrastructure. The \$2 billion balance allowed by Senator Toomey's amendment is less than yearly disbursement over the past five years and is insufficient to meet the needs of survivors.

It is also important to note that funding is not being diverted from victims to pay for other programs, as stated by those seeking to amend the VOCA Fix Act. When the CVF is used as a paper offset, funds are not transferred to pay for other programs—they remain in the Fund. Moreover, despite claims to the contrary, Appropriators are not hoarding money in the Fund to use as an offset. Over the past several years, they have reduced the balance in the Fund from \$13 billion in Fiscal Year 2017 to an anticipated \$2.5 billion at the end of this fiscal year by increasing grants to victim service providers. While \$2.5 billion may seem like a large balance, in actuality, it would only cover one year's VOCA grants at Fiscal Year 2020 levels, which were already at a five-year low. The amendment has the potential to bring down future funding bills and cause a government shutdown, and a bill with this language would not pass the House of Representatives. We ask that you join us in opposing this amendment.

Victims, survivors, and victim service organizations are telling us that they are cutting services, laying off staff, and even closing. They are asking for the VOCA Fix Act—they are not asking for CHIMP reform. While we wait for passage, survivors and advocates have watched criminal settlements totaling more than \$545 million directed towards the General Fund rather than into the Crime Victims Fund this calendar year, because this technical fix has not passed. Ultimately, there may be merit in holding a conversation about the structure of Congressional spending bills, but the VOCA Fix Act is not the appropriate forum. The use of CHIMPs is controversial; the VOCA Fix Act is not.

The VOCA Fix Act is a narrowly tailored, carefully negotiated technical fix bill to address the immediate needs of survivors, and the Senate must act now to pass this critical legislation without any amendments. On behalf of a broad and committed group of national, regional, state, Tribal, and local stakeholders, we urge you to support a vote on the VOCA Fix Act, to vote in favor of the VOCA Fix Act, and to vote against the Toomey amendment. Every delay allows potential funds that should be deposited into the Crime Victims Fund to serve victims to instead be deposited into the General Treasury. The House passed the VOCA Fix Act more than four months ago with overwhelming bipartisan support; we urge the Senate to similarly pass the House-passed VOCA Fix Act, as is, immediately.

For more information, contact Denise Edwards, Rachel Graber, Terri Poore,

Monica McLaughlin, Daisy Pagan, and Dan Eddy.

Respectfully,
Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities, Council of State Governments Justice Center, Futures Without Violence, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards, National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators, National Children's Alliance, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, National Criminal Justice Association, National District Attorneys Association, National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Organization for Victim Assistance, National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault, Ujima, Inc.: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2121

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2121, offered by the Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. TOOMEY.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 40, nays 60, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 271 Leg.]

YEAS—40

Barrasso	Hagerty	Rounds
Blackburn	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Inhofe	Sasse
Braun	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Burr	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Lummis	Tillis
Cramer	Marshall	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Tuberville
Cruz	Paul	Wicker
Daines	Portman	Young
Ernst	Risch	
Grassley	Romney	

NAYS—60

Baldwin	Hassan	Ossoff
Bennet	Heinrich	Padilla
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Peters
Blunt	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Hoeven	Rosen
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Cantwell	Kaine	Schatz
Capito	Kelly	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Shelby
Casey	Leahy	Sinema
Collins	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tester
Duckworth	Menendez	Van Hollen
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Moran	Warnock
Fischer	Murkowski	Warren
Gillibrand	Murphy	Whitehouse
Graham	Murray	Wyden

The amendment (No. 2121) was rejected.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. PADILLA. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 272 Leg.]

YEAS—100

Baldwin	Hagerty	Portman
Barrasso	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Hawley	Risch
Blackburn	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Rounds
Booker	Hoeven	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Braun	Inhofe	Sasse
Brown	Johnson	Schatz
Burr	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Shelby
Casey	Lankford	Sinema
Cassidy	Leahy	Smith
Collins	Lee	Stabenow
Coons	Lujan	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lummis	Tester
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Thune
Cotton	Markey	Tillis
Cramer	Marshall	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Tuberville
Cruz	Menendez	Van Hollen
Daines	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Moran	Warnock
Durbin	Murkowski	Warren
Ernst	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wicker
Fischer	Ossoff	Wyden
Gillibrand	Padilla	Young
Graham	Paul	
Grassley	Peters	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 100, the nays are 0.

The 60-vote threshold having been achieved, the bill is passed.

The bill (H.R. 1652) was passed.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate 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.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN WAGNER

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, the U.S. Postal Service always provides outstanding service during every election, but 2020 was something unseen in more than a century. Last year, USPS had to manage processing nearly 66 million ballots, countless safety concerns, and a hostile administration. And as expected, it met these challenges with incredible efforts and determination. A big part of that strength came from the National Association of Postal Supervisors, or NAPS. What started as 50 postal supervisors dedicating themselves to helping their fellow supervisors more than a century ago has become a critical force during our election. They have kept our Nation connected through the mail, and in 2020, they helped keep us connected to our democracy.

With a membership of 27,000, NAPS local ballot ambassadors helped postal leadership process millions of ballots

during this pivotal election. Leading the effort was NAPS national president Brian Wagner. I am grateful for his leadership and service. He has served in NAPS for more than 25 years, and in August, he will be retiring from his position. I would like to share his amazing story with you.

Brian was a paperboy while growing up in Peoria, IL. Right out of high school, he joined the U.S. Postal Service as a letter carrier. It was a perfect fit; Brian just enjoys people. He loves connecting with his neighbors and naturally made friends all along his route. A lifelong lover of ice cream, Brian was happy to have The Spotted Cow ice cream shop on his route as well. Brian even met his wife Carol when he was a letter carrier. Carol ran the mailroom of a business on Brian's route.

While working as a letter carrier, Brian worked hard on his formal education. He earned an associate's degree in business from Illinois Central Junior College, a bachelor's degree in finance from Illinois State University, and an MBA from Illinois State, all while still completing his route every day. Brian and Carol married after he graduated.

In 1990, Brian joined NAPS. He joined NAPS because he knew that being a postal worker was a wonderful job with benefits that were worth fighting to keep. Others deserved to have the same opportunities he had. He began representing NAPS members in 1994 when members elected him president of the Heart of IL Branch 255. Throughout the years, he has served as NAPS secretary/treasurer, central region vice president, and NAPS Illinois State area vice president.

In August 2016, Brian was elected NAPS national president and has been a consistent fighter for postal supervisors. His dedication to NAPS is incredible. Brian even celebrated his 30th wedding anniversary at a NAPS convention. He has been in their corner through these especially tough times in the last several years.

This summer, Brian will retire from his role. He will have more time to travel, practice for his marathons, and watch his beloved St. Louis Cardinals play baseball. In addition, he will be able to spend time with his sons Justin and Ryan and dote on his new grandchild. I have heard Idaho and Hawaii are on the docket for travel plans. I hope he will also find time to enjoy his favorite mint chocolate chip ice cream at The Spotted Cow.

Wishing our best to one of our best.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME ON JULY 19, 2021

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2382. A bill to authorize the National Cyber Director to accept details from other elements of the Federal Government on non-reimbursable basis, and for other purposes.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to

the Senate by Ms. Roberts, 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 and withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

The following messages from the President of the United States were transmitted to the Senate by Kaitlyn Roberts, one of his secretaries:

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13441 OF AUGUST 1, 2007, WITH RESPECT TO LEBANON—PM 11

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To The Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Lebanon declared in Executive Order 13441 of August 1, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond August 1, 2021.

Certain ongoing activities, such as Iran's continuing arms transfers to Hizballah—which include increasingly sophisticated weapons systems—serve to undermine Lebanese sovereignty, contribute to political and economic instability in the region, and continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13441 with respect to Lebanon.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.
THE WHITE HOUSE, July 20, 2021.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13882 OF JULY 26, 2019, WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN MALI—PM 12

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the situation in Mali declared in Executive Order 13882 of July 26, 2019, is to continue in effect beyond July 26, 2021.

The situation in Mali, including repeated violations of ceasefire arrangements made pursuant to the 2015 Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali; the expansion of terrorist activities into southern and central Mali; the intensification of drug trafficking and trafficking in persons, human rights abuses, and hostage-taking; and the intensification of attacks against civilians, the Malian defense and security forces, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and international security presences, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13882 with respect to the situation in Mali.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.
THE WHITE HOUSE, July 20, 2021.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTIONS AND BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2021, the Secretary of the Senate, on June 30, 2021, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled joint resolutions and bill:

S.J. Res. 13. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule sub-

mitted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission relating to "Update of Commission's Conciliation Procedures".

S.J. Res. 14. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New, Reconstructed, and Modified Sources Review".

S.J. Res. 15. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Office of the Comptroller of Currency relating to "National Banks and Federal Savings Associations as Lenders".

H.R. 2441. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to expand the Rural Access Network for Growth Enhancement Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study to assess certain mental health care resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs available to veterans who live in rural areas.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2021, the enrolled joint resolutions and bill were signed on June 30, 2021, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Vice President.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:23 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 826. An act to require consultations on reuniting Korean Americans with family members in North Korea.

H.R. 2931. An act to provide for certain programs and developments in the Department of Energy concerning the cybersecurity and vulnerabilities of, and physical threats to, the electric grid, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3119. An act to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act with respect to functions assigned to Assistant Secretaries, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY) announced that on today, July 20, 2021, he has signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

H.R. 26. An act to amend the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, to correct a provision on the prohibition on the use of a reverse auction, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 826. An act to require consultations on reuniting Korean Americans with family members in North Korea; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 2931. An act to provide for certain programs and developments in the Department of Energy concerning the cybersecurity and vulnerabilities of, and physical threats to, the electric grid, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3119. An act to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act with respect to functions assigned to Assistant Secretaries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2382. A bill to authorize the National Cyber Director to accept details from other elements of the Federal Government on non-reimbursable basis, and for other purposes.

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-1365. A communication from the Director of the Directorate of Standards and Guidance, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Occupational Exposure to COVID-19; Emergency Temporary Standard" (RIN1218-AD36) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 8, 2021; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1366. A communication from the Legal Counsel, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2021 Adjustment of the Penalty for Violation of Notice Posting Requirements" (RIN3046-AB17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 12, 2021; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1367. A communication from the Senior Advisor, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Department of Health and Human Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 12, 2021; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1368. A communication from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Financial Assistance by PBGC" (RIN1212-AB53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 12, 2021; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1369. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report to Congress on the Use of Mandatory Recall Authority Submitted Pursuant to Section 206 of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, Public Law 111-353"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1370. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting a legislative proposal; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1371. A communication from the Executive Director, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Eightieth Financial Statement for the period of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1372. A communication from the Special Counsel, Office of the Special Counsel, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1373. A communication from the General Counsel, Administrative Conference of

the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2020 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1374. A communication from the Officer, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2020 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1375. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24-98, "Coronavirus Business Assistance Income Tax Relief Temporary Amendment Act of 2021"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1376. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24-99, "Coronavirus Public Health Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2021"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1377. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 24-110, "Comprehensive Plan Amendment Act of 2021"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1378. A communication from the Chair of the Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to fourteen (14) legislative recommendations; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-1379. A communication from the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's 2020 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1380. A communication from the Associate Administrator for Policy, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "General Technical, Organizational, Conforming, and Correcting Amendments to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations" (RIN2126-AC33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 12, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1381. A communication from the Associate Administrator for Policy, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of Compliance Date for Entry-Level Driver Training" (RIN2126-AC25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 12, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1382. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2014 Quadrennial Regulatory Review—Review of the Commission's Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996" (DA 21-656) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1383. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to

law, the report of a rule entitled "Television Broadcasting Services; Schenectady, New York" ((DA 21-700) (Docket No. 21-127)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1384. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Television Broadcasting Services; Bristol, Virginia" ((DA 21-695) (Docket No. 21-128)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1385. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Television Broadcasting Services; Peoria and Oswego, Illinois" ((DA 21-702) (Docket No. 21-54)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1386. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Television Broadcasting Services; Freeport, Illinois" ((DA 21-701) (Docket No. 21-152)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1387. A communication from the Associate Administrator for Policy, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of Compliance Dates for Medical Examiner's Certification Integration" (RIN2126-AC18) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1388. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendments of Parts 73 and 74 to Improve the Low Power FM Radio Service Technical Rules" (FCC 21-70) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1389. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1390. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1391. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bell Textron Canada Limited (Type Certificate Previously Held by

EC-1439. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Mooney International Corporation Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1440. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1441. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1442. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1443. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1444. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1445. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1446. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1447. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Leonardo S.p.a. Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1448. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Leonardo S.p.a." (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1449. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited (Type Certificate Previously Held by Bombardier, Inc.) Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1450. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; GE Aviation Czech s.r.o. (Type Certificate Previously Held by WALTER Engines a.s., Walter a.s., and MOTORLET a.s.) Turboprop Engines" (RIN2120-AA64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 7, 2021; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. RISCH, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 2383. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. COTTON, Mrs. CAPITO, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 2384. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the semiquincentennial anniversary of the establishment of the United States; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2385. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to eliminate the corn ethanol mandate for renewable fuel; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2386. A bill to amend the VA MISSION Act of 2018, to expand the peer specialist support program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to all medical centers of the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2387. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the deduction

for qualified business income; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 2388. A bill to require the designation of composting as a conservation practice and activity, to provide grants and loan guarantees for composting facilities and programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 2389. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to provide grants to reduce the quantity of food waste, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and

Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 2390. A bill to allow Americans to receive paid leave time to process and address their own health needs and the health needs of their partners during the period following a pregnancy loss, an unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure, a failed adoption arrangement, a failed surrogacy arrangement, or a diagnosis or event that impacts pregnancy or fertility, to support related research and education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. LEE, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2391. A bill to provide for clarification and limitations with respect to the exercise of national security powers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2392. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow the Secretary of State to make available to the public certain records pertaining to the refusal of a visa or permit based on an alien's involvement in corruption, transnational repression, or human rights abuse, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Ms. LUMMIS, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 2393. A bill to clarify that a state has the sole authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on Federal land within the boundaries of the State; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2394. A bill to achieve domestic energy independence by empowering States to control the development and production of all forms of energy on all available Federal land; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. ERNST, Mr. COTTON, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH):

S. 2395. A bill to require an annual feasibility report on cooperation between the National Guard and Taiwan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WARREN:

S. 2396. A bill to promote ethics and prevent corruption in Department of Defense contracting and other activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2397. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to extend eligibility for child's benefits until age 26 for certain individuals who are at least half-time students

at a post-secondary school, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. OSSOFF:

S. 2398. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to accommodate certain facilities within rights-of-way on Federal-aid highways; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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

S. 2399. A bill to provide Federal student loan relief for teachers who work in a military impacted community; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. SMITH):

S. 2400. A bill to establish a process for the Board on Geographic Names to review and revise offensive names of Federal land units, to create an advisory committee to recommend Federal land unit names to be reviewed by the Board, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. HASSAN, and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 2401. A bill to reauthorize the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2402. A bill to establish a pilot program to incentivize employee ownership in defense contracting; to the Committee on Armed Services.

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

S. 2403. A bill to assist those subject to politically motivated charges in Turkey, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO:

S. 2404. A bill to improve Federal activities relating to wildfires, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH):

S. Res. 307. A resolution congratulating the Mississippi State University baseball team on winning the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I baseball championship; considered and agreed to.

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

S. Res. 308. A resolution commending and congratulating the Hutchinson Community College Blue Dragons football team for winning the 2021 National Junior College Athletic Association football National Championship; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 99

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 99, a bill to implement equal protection under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States for the right to life of each born and preborn human person.

S. 127

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr.

BROWN) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 127, a bill to support library infrastructure.

S. 163

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 163, a bill to address the workforce needs of the telecommunications industry.

S. 344

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 344, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retirement pay for disability retirees with fewer than 20 years of service and a combat-related disability, and for other purposes.

S. 350

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 350, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain programs under part A of title XI of such Act relating to genetic diseases, and for other purposes.

S. 355

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 355, a bill to provide immediate relief for patients from certain medical debt collection efforts during and immediately after the COVID-19 public health emergency.

S. 452

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 452, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Willie O'Ree, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions and commitment to hockey, inclusion, and recreational opportunity.

S. 610

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 610, a bill to address behavioral health and well-being among health care professionals.

S. 656

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 656, a bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children.

S. 697

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 697, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the Bicentennial of Harriet Tubman's birth.

S. 701

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr.

GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 701, a bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to provide equal coverage of in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests for allergies under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes.

S. 773

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 773, a bill to enable certain hospitals that were participating in or applied for the drug discount program under section 340B of the Public Health Service Act prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency to temporarily maintain eligibility for such program, and for other purposes.

S. 888

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 888, a bill to prohibit discrimination based on an individual's texture or style of hair.

S. 1061

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1061, a bill to encourage the normalization of relations with Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 1295

At the request of Mr. ROMNEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1295, a bill to save and strengthen critical social contract programs of the Federal Government.

S. 1337

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1337, a bill to address the impact of climate change on agriculture, and for other purposes.

S. 1543

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1543, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide best practices on student suicide awareness and prevention training and condition State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and tribal educational agencies receiving funds under section 520A of such Act to establish and implement a school-based student suicide awareness and prevention training policy.

S. 1660

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1660, a bill to expand access to health care services for immigrants by removing legal and policy barriers to health insurance coverage, and for other purposes.

S. 1669

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S.

1669, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to direct the forgiveness or offset of an overpayment of retired pay paid to a joint account for a period after the death of the retired member of the Armed Forces.

S. 1687

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1687, a bill to amend section 21 of the Small Business Act to require cyber certification for small business development center counselors, and for other purposes.

S. 1707

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1707, a bill to ensure that the Department of Defense achieves a clean audit opinion on its financial statements.

S. 1720

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1720, a bill to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

S. 1797

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1797, a bill to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to expand the funding authority for renovating, constructing, and expanding certain facilities.

S. 1856

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1856, a bill to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and stability of the transportation security workforce by applying the personnel system under title 5, United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 1872

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1872, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II in recognition of their extraordinary service during World War II.

S. 1935

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1935, a bill to amend title 38, United

States Code, to provide for an extension of the period of eligibility under the Department of Veterans Affairs training and rehabilitation program for veterans with service-connected disabilities by reason of school closures due to emergency and other situations, and for other purposes.

S. 1936

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1936, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for extensions of the time limitations for use of entitlement under Department of Veterans Affairs educational assistance programs by reason of school closures due to emergency and other situations, and for other purposes.

S. 1973

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1973, a bill to require the Secretary of Defense to conduct testing, removal, and remediation of perfluoroalkyl substances and polyfluoroalkyl substances at all military installations, formerly used defense sites, and State-owned facilities of the National Guard in the United States.

S. 2032

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2032, a bill to extend and modify the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program, to postpone the medical exam for aliens who are otherwise eligible for such program, to provide special immigrant status for certain surviving spouses and children, and for other purposes.

S. 2161

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2161, a bill to modify the restriction in section 3326 of title 5, United States Code, relating to the appointment of retired members of the Armed Forces to positions in the Department of Defense to apply to positions at or above the GS-14 level.

S. 2166

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2166, a bill to provide that certain orders of the Federal Communications Commission shall have no force or effect until certain conditions are satisfied, and for other purposes.

S. 2230

At the request of Mr. LUJÁN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Ms.

ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2230, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to enhance the carbon oxide sequestration credit.

S. 2232

At the request of Mr. LUJÁN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2232, a bill to direct the Secretary of Energy to fund projects to restore and modernize National Laboratories, and for other purposes.

S. 2233

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2233, a bill to establish a grant program for shuttered minor league baseball clubs, and for other purposes.

S. 2238

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2238, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize and extend the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Prevention and Services program, and for other purposes.

S. 2271

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2271, a bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to provide grants for eligible entities for activities designed to expand the sales and use of biofuels derived from agricultural feedstocks produced in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2332

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2332, a bill to place a moratorium on large concentrated animal feeding operations, to strengthen the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921, to require country of origin labeling on beef, pork, and dairy products, and for other purposes.

S. 2333

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 2333, a bill to amend chapter 2205 of title 36, United States Code, to ensure equal treatment of athletes, and for other purposes.

S. 2334

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2334, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a grant program to provide grants on a competitive basis to eligible entities for large-scale water recycling and reuse projects, to amend the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 to make certain modifications to the Cooperative Watershed Management Program, to provide emergency drought funding, and for other purposes.

S. 2364

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2364, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for demonstration grants and create a Federal Work Group to reduce and prevent the incidence of teen dating violence.

S. 2369

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2369, a bill to provide access to reliable, clean, and drinkable water on Tribal lands, and for other purposes.

S. 2371

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2371, a bill to require the Secretary of Defense to enhance the readiness of the Department of Defense to challenges relating to climate change and to improve the energy and resource efficiency of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 274

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 274, a resolution designating July 24, 2021, as "National Day of the American Cowboy".

S. RES. 303

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 303, a resolution supporting the people of Cuba in their demands for freedom and the fulfillment of basic needs and condemning the Communist regime in Cuba.

AMENDMENT NO. 2121

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2121 proposed to H.R. 1652, a bill to deposit certain funds into the Crime Victims Fund, to waive matching requirements, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2385. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to eliminate the corn ethanol mandate for renewable fuel; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President: I rise today to reintroduce bipartisan legislation. The "Corn Ethanol Mandate Elimination Act of 2021" is cosponsored by Senators PAT TOOMEY, BOB MENENDEZ, and SUSAN COLLINS and would end the corn ethanol mandate in the Renewable Fuel Standard.

The mandate requires annual increases in the amount of renewable fuel that must be blended into the total

volume of gasoline refined and consumed in the United States.

Our bill would amend the Renewable Fuel Standard to remove the volume requirements for corn ethanol while leaving in place the requirement that oil companies use low-carbon advanced bio fuels, including cellulosic biofuel and biodiesel.

The Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) was initially included in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and subsequently amended in 2007. The RFS sought to reduce our dependence on oil and increase production of biofuels for transportation. It requires gasoline and diesel producers to blend increasing volumes of renewable biofuels in their supply.

The law includes separate volume requirements for four categories of biofuels: 1) unspecified (completely filled by corn ethanol, also called the "corn ethanol mandate"); 2) advanced biofuels; 3) cellulosic biofuel; and 4) biodiesel.

The EPA is authorized to reduce the required volumes if supply does not match the statutory volume. Every year since 2014, the total production of all ethanol exceeded the "blend wall"—the amount of ethanol that can safely be blended into the fuel supply, which is about 10% of gasoline. A blend beyond 10% ethanol can damage car engines.

Unfortunately, rather than encourage the development of more advanced biofuels with lower carbon emissions, the RFS has resulted in a market flooded with ethanol, which has higher carbon emissions than other advanced biofuels.

This year oil companies will be required to use 33 billion gallons of renewable fuel, and next year the requirement will increase to 36 billion gallons of renewable fuel.

The original law requires that an increasing portion of this mandate be met using low-carbon advanced biofuels that are not derived from corn starch and reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50 percent.

However, last year, 15 billion gallons of the statutory requirement was met using corn ethanol.

The corn ethanol mandate is unwise and unworkable for several reasons.

First, the corn ethanol mandate results in 40% of the U.S. corn crop being used for fuel and not food, nearly double the rate compared to before the RFS was passed. Ethanol production requires 38 million acres of land—an area larger than the state of Illinois—which could be used to feed 150 million people.

We should prioritize our agriculture and land use toward feeding people and combating the climate crisis, not perpetuating it, particularly when severe drought threatens crops throughout the West.

Second, the corn ethanol mandate has increased the price of corn and products made from corn, such as livestock feed. This has made it more ex-

pensive for families to put food on their table.

Third, corn ethanol production achieves little to no reductions in greenhouse gas emissions over regular oil and poses other environmental risks, including deforestation, habitat destruction and diminished water quality or availability due to cropland expansion.

Finally, as fuel economy standards and increased vehicle electrification drive down gasoline consumption, the RFS mandate exceeds the limit at which ethanol can be blended safely into the fuel supply—roughly 10% of total gasoline consumption.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency's final 2013 rule establishing renewable fuel standards, the "EPA does not foresee a scenario in which the market could consume enough ethanol . . . to meet the volumes . . . stated in the statute."

The Congressional Budget Office confirmed this judgment in a June 2014 report, saying that the statutory goal of escalating corn ethanol volumes would be "very hard to meet in future years."

The Corn Ethanol Mandate Elimination Act would make necessary fixes to the Renewable Fuel Standard, reducing our reliance on corn ethanol.

Our bill would address the blend wall directly, thereby allowing EPA to continue increasing volumes of low-carbon advanced biofuels.

It would also maintain important provisions that encourage the development of low-carbon advanced biofuels, like cellulosic ethanol, algae-based fuel and biodiesel.

This would increase the market for the innovative, nascent, domestic industry that this statute was designed to support.

The Federal corn ethanol mandate no longer makes sense when better, lower-carbon alternatives exist. I urge my colleagues to join us in passing this important legislation to eliminate the corn ethanol mandate in the Renewable Fuel Standard.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. ERNST, Mr. COTTON, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH):

S. 2395. A bill to require an annual feasibility report on cooperation between the National Guard and Taiwan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print my bill for introduction in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. The bill's purpose is to require an annual feasibility report on cooperation between the National Guard and Taiwan, and for other purposes.

S. 2395

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Taiwan Partnership Act”.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that the United States should—

(1) continue to support the development of capable, ready, and modern defense forces necessary for Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability by increasing exchanges between senior defense officials and general officers of the United States and Taiwan at the strategic, policy, and functional levels, consistent with the Taiwan Travel Act (Public Law 115–135; 132 Stat. 341), especially for the purposes of—

(A) improving the interoperability of the military forces of the United States and Taiwan;

(B) improving the reserve force of Taiwan; and

(C) expanding cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief;

(2) expand and strengthen Taiwan’s capability to conduct security activities, including traditional activities of the combatant commands, cooperation with the National Guard, and through multilateral activities; and

(3) using appropriate authorities and consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96–8; 22 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.), seek to develop a partnership between the National Guard and Taiwan as a means of maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability.

SEC. 3. ANNUAL FEASIBILITY REPORT ON CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE NATIONAL GUARD AND TAIWAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 15, 2022, an annually thereafter, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees (as defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code) a report on the feasibility and advisability of enhanced cooperation between the National Guard and Taiwan.

(b) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the cooperation between the National Guard and Taiwan during the preceding calendar year, including mutual visits, exercises, training, and equipment opportunities.

(2) An evaluation of the feasibility of enhancing cooperation between the National Guard and Taiwan on a range of activities, including—

(A) disaster and emergency response;

(B) cyber defense and communications security;

(C) military medical cooperation;

(D) Mandarin-language education and cultural exchange; and

(E) programs for National Guard advisors to assist in training the reserve components of the military forces of Taiwan.

(3) Recommendations to enhance such cooperation and improve interoperability, including through familiarization visits, cooperative training and exercises, and co-deployments.

(4) Any other matter the Secretary of Defense considers appropriate.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS**SENATE RESOLUTION 307—CONGRATULATING THE MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY BASEBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE 2021 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP**

Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) submitted the following

resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 307

Whereas, on Wednesday, June 30, 2021, the Mississippi State University baseball team won the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the “NCAA”) College World Series at TD Ameritrade Park in Omaha, Nebraska;

Whereas, by defeating Vanderbilt University 9-0, the Mississippi State University baseball team became the first team in Mississippi State University history to win an NCAA National Championship, wrapping it in maroon and white;

Whereas the Mississippi State University baseball team has appeared in 3 consecutive NCAA College World Series, totaling 12 appearances in school history;

Whereas on June 20, 2021, the Mississippi State University baseball team recorded 21 strikeouts, which set an NCAA College World Series single-game team record;

Whereas Will Bednar was named the 2021 NCAA College World Series Most Outstanding Player;

Whereas catcher Logan Tanner, first baseman Luke Hancock, shortstop Lane Forsythe, outfielders Tanner Allen and Rowdey Jordan, and pitcher Will Bednar were named to the 2021 NCAA College World Series All-Tournament Team;

Whereas Tanner Allen was named the 2021 Southeastern Conference Player of the Year and the 2021 American Baseball Coaches and Rawlings Sporting Goods National Player of Year;

Whereas Head Coach Chris Lemonis was named the 2021 National Coach of the Year by Collegiate Baseball Newspaper;

Whereas Chris Lemonis is the first Division I head coach to reach the NCAA College World Series in his first 2 seasons as head coach of a program in the Super Regional era and just the fifth all-time in NCAA history;

Whereas Dudy Noble Field at Polk-DeMent Stadium on the campus of Mississippi State University holds the NCAA Division I baseball on-campus attendance record and regularly attracts record crowds;

Whereas the Mississippi State University baseball team under the leadership of Head Coach Chris Lemonis displayed outstanding dedication, teamwork, and sportsmanship throughout the 2020–2021 season; and

Whereas the Mississippi State University baseball team has brought great pride and honor—

(1) to Mississippi State University;

(2) to loyal fans of Mississippi State University; and

(3) to the entire State of Mississippi: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Mississippi State University baseball team, including the athletes, coaching staff, administration, faculty, students, and alumni, on winning the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I baseball championship;

(2) recognizes Mississippi State University for its excellence as an institution of higher education; and

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

(A) the President of Mississippi State University, Dr. Mark Keenum;

(B) the Athletic Director of Mississippi State University, John Cohen; and

(C) the Head Coach of the Mississippi State University baseball team, Chris Lemonis.

SENATE RESOLUTION 308—COMMEMORATING AND CONGRATULATING THE HUTCHINSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE BLUE DRAGONS FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2021 NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

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

S. RES. 308

Whereas, on Saturday, June 5, 2021, the Hutchinson Community College Blue Dragons football team (in this preamble referred to as the “Blue Dragons”) defeated the Snow College Badgers by a score of 29 to 27 in the 2021 National Junior College Athletic Association (in this preamble referred to as the “NJCAA”) National Championship game;

Whereas the 2021 NJCAA National Championship is the first in the history of the Blue Dragons’ football program;

Whereas the Blue Dragons were the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference regular season champions;

Whereas the Blue Dragons finished the 2021 season with a perfect 8-0 record;

Whereas, during the championship game, the Blue Dragons overcame a 14 point deficit to take the lead in the fourth quarter;

Whereas quarterback C.J. Ogbonna entered the game in the third quarter to lead the Blue Dragons on 3-straight scoring drives to take the lead;

Whereas linebacker Tre Pinkney intercepted a pass late in the fourth quarter to seal the victory for the Blue Dragons;

Whereas Tye Edwards, Ivan Thomas, Kingsley Ugwu, Aric Harris, Jurriente Davis, and Roterius Torrence were named as NJCAA All-Americans; and

Whereas first-year Head Coach Drew Dallas was named the NJCAA National Coach of the Year: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the Hutchinson Community College Blue Dragons football team for winning the 2021 National Junior College Athletic Association football National Championship;

(2) recognizes the players, coaches, and staff of the Hutchinson Community College Blue Dragons football team; and

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

(A) the President of Hutchinson Community College, Carter File;

(B) the Athletic Director of Hutchinson Community College, Josh Gooch; and

(C) the Head Coach of the Hutchinson Community College Blue Dragons football team, Drew Dallas.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have 11 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to

meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 2:45 p.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

The Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

The Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 3:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

The Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 11 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

The Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 5:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE DEPARTMENT AND USAID MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS, AND BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
S. 1520

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise once again to call for every Senator to have the chance to vote on the Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act. It is time for us to move serious crimes, like sexual assault and murder, out of the chain of command and put them in the hands of the most capable people in the military to do this: independent, impartial, highly trained uniformed prosecutors.

I want to first acknowledge and express my gratitude to my colleagues on the Armed Services Subcommittee on Personnel who recognize the importance of this legislation and this morning voted to include it as an amendment to the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee markup of the NDAA.

The reason we are calling for this reform is because our current system is just not working for our servicemembers. It is not delivering justice on the values of justice and equality that they have sacrificed so much to defend. We are here to serve them. Any reform that we should make should be made with their best interests in mind.

So while I am glad that so many of our colleagues are now looking for ways to help survivors of sexual assault in the military, we must help them by starting to listen to them and what they are saying about the justice they want delivered.

If we move just sexual assault and related crimes out of the chain of command, we are ignoring the voices of the very people whom we are trying to help. Survivors have asked for all serious crimes to be taken out of the chain of command. They have told us time and time again that they do not want to be further isolated, further diminished, by being given special treatment. They do not want to have a separate judicial system. The request is clear: Do not create a pink court, a court that will be perceived by other servicemembers as only serving women. While we know that many sexual assault survivors are men, the perception in the military will be reality, and it will be seen as marginalizing and minimizing women servicemembers.

It is our obligation to listen to the men and women we are serving and to do our job. Creating a bifurcated system will not only silence survivors' voices; it will silence the voices of the enlisted servicemembers who have asked us to provide basic fairness.

Our servicemembers recognize that, intentionally or not, a commander who knows both the accuser and the victim cannot remove bias from decision making. Our servicemembers have told us that they lack faith in the current system, which leaves serious crimes and, potentially, serious sentences with commanders who are not trained lawyers.

We have to listen to the men and women in uniform who have asked us to ensure that their cases will be de-

cided by an independent, highly trained military prosecutor if they are going to face prosecution that can lead to more than a year of confinement.

I ask my colleagues who are in favor of moving just sexual assault and related crimes out of the chain of command: Why should some crimes be handled by better lawyers than others? Don't we want all serious crimes to be given serious consideration by a JAG with criminal justice experience? Don't all of our servicemembers deserve a professionalized judicial system?

As Senator HAWLEY, a former prosecutor, this morning in our subcommittee hearing, said:

[W]hen we have service men and women who have had serious crimes committed against them—felony crimes, as are addressed in this bill—it is absolutely imperative that justice is done to these men and women, is done for them; that the procedures and standards that they can expect are uniform and predictable; [and] that trained military prosecutors make the final call as to whether or not . . . these cases will go forward for prosecution. And the reason for that is we want the evidence to be weighed by the prosecutor—the individual, the woman or the man—who is going to be presenting this to a jury, to a judge in the system. . . . That's a predictable system. I think it is one that both defendants and victims can support because the rules are uniform—it's across the board, it's analogous to our civilian system but still, of course, stays within the military system of justice.

Many of our colleagues brought renewed attention to the need for military justice after the tragic murder of SPC Vanessa Guillen. Her case shows us that a bifurcated system that leaves some crimes with prosecutors and some crimes with commanders will not deliver justice.

Specialist Guillen was sexually harassed by one soldier and then murdered by another. If we remove just sexual assault and related crimes from the chain of command, only her harasser's case would be handled by a prosecutor. Her murderer's case would not. It would be left in the hands of the same command that so deeply mishandled her case that her murderer was able to flee the base and end his own life. Her family, as a consequence, will never have justice.

We have heard from voices inside the Pentagon who have resisted this change for far too long. We cannot let them continue to drown out the voices of the people in the military justice system whom they are supposed to serve. We must listen to the voices of the enlisted. They have asked us to make this reform and to put all serious crimes in the hands of highly trained, impartial, professional military prosecutors.

That is what the Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act would do. Every day it is delayed is another day our servicemembers' voices are silenced. It is time to listen to them and bring this legislation to the floor for a vote.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by

the majority leader in consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate Armed Services Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1520 and the Senate proceed to its consideration; that there be 2 hours for debate, equally divided in the usual form; and that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the bill with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I first want to begin by complimenting my friend and colleague Senator GILLIBRAND of New York, who has been working diligently—and we all know it—for 10 years, a decade, on this issue, particularly the issue of sexual assault and the related crimes in our military. There is nobody who has been more focused on it, and I applaud her for her relentless efforts—relentless. And I have a lot of respect for her.

She has been coming to the floor every night here for the last 3 or 4 weeks and trying to move her bill. I am going to talk about her bill a little bit more and why I and others, in a bipartisan way—the chairman of the Armed Services, the ranking member of the Armed Services, and others—have been coming to the floor to object.

But I also want to say that I care deeply—deeply—about this issue for two very important reasons. No. 1, the issue of sexual assault, domestic violence, is an enormous problem in America but is a huge problem in my State, the great State of Alaska. And since my time as attorney general and now my time as a U.S. Senator, I have been very focused on these issues. And I think, again, Senator GILLIBRAND has done an outstanding job, not just on the military ones but on a whole broad-based number of these kinds of bills that focus on the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault. And I have been proud to work with her on a number of them—my bills, her bills—some of which have become law.

So as Alaska's Senator, I have been 100-percent focused on this issue for American society, certainly for Alaska, which is a big, big problem that continues to impact millions of Americans and tens of thousands of my constituents. So we need to do something about it. I agree, not just for the military but for the country. And I am committed to continuing the work; for example, my "Choose Respect" series of bills that we have here in the U.S. Senate that I am working on with Senator GILLIBRAND.

The other reason I care about this issue—and there is no monopoly, by the way, on people who care about the troops—is that I have a 28-year career in the U.S. Marine Corps and still serving. I have been a commander, and I

care deeply about every single member in the military, the challenges of sexual assault that we have, which are very real, which, again, Senator GILLIBRAND has done such a good job to highlight and to have good order and discipline in our military, which is part of the UCMJ, which is one of the reasons why this issue has taken so long and has been a challenge.

Now, the issue that Senator GILLIBRAND is talking about right now, we will be debating in the full committee in the Armed Services starting tomorrow. Actually, we are starting today, as she mentioned, in the Personnel Subcommittee today. This, again, a lot of the credit—most of the credit—I give to Senator GILLIBRAND on this issue.

We will have a fulsome debate, probably all day, on this issue tomorrow. And if her bill, which is often understood as removing these issues of sexual assault and violent crimes relating to sexual crimes, was the bill that will be passed tomorrow, I will be supportive, removing that out of the chain of command. That is what many, many Senators—and I have had discussions with them—believe that the primary focus of her legislation is and has been. She has convinced now the Secretary of Defense and the President of the United States and the members of the Joint Chiefs. And if that is what the bill was, she would have very, very broad-based support. And I applaud her for that. That victory would be hers more than anyone's. In terms of legislation, of course, I think it will help our troops. Will it ultimately solve this problem, which is a problem in our country and in our military, a huge problem? I think it will help.

My view, as someone who understands the military well, is that it is not going to be solved until we have leaders who take this issue very seriously. That is what we need more than anything, and I think our leadership in the military is starting to do this, but more needs to happen.

So that would be what most of us think has been the focus of her legislation for 10 years and what would be the result likely to come out of committee as early as tomorrow, carving out these issues, not creating pink courts but creating a professional class of prosecutors and defense attorneys who know these issues, which are often challenging. Senator GILLIBRAND knows this. "He said, she said" kinds of accusations often are at the heart of these horrible crimes. And to have that for men and women—so there is no pink court there, by the way—to have that class of cases removed from the chain of command for all of the reasons she and others have been arguing, if that is the result tomorrow, I think it is going to get strong bipartisan support and support from the administration.

Unfortunately, that is not where the bill is. As she is now indicating, this bill would remove all crimes, all felonies—1 year in jail, anything; a bar

fight, anything. In terms of the commander's ability to have good order and discipline, all of that under this legislation would be covered—1-year felony. And in many people's view—in my view, certainly—and in the chairman of the committee's view, and the ranking member's view, and many others, this is a hugely broad reworking of the UCMJ, probably one of the most dramatic reworkings of the Uniform Code of Military Justice ever.

Now, why are Senator GILLIBRAND and others making the argument? What she has been doing—she didn't come down here today, but I have been reading her speeches. She has been essentially saying we need this broad carve-out for every crime, every felony in the chain of command because of racial problems in the military.

This is a new argument. She and I have talked about it. This is a dramatic argument. This is essentially saying what she said in a recent speech: It is "necessary"—1 year more—"because the current military justice system is simply not delivering justice, especially not to servicemembers of color." This is a big claim.

What Senator GILLIBRAND has been doing with her previous legislation—8 to 10 years of data to back it up on the sexual assault issues. Again, I applaud her on that. She has been dogged. She has gotten data. She has searched for data herself. But this new argument basing this whole broad-based revamping of the whole UCMJ based on the fact that she is now claiming the military justice system of the United States cannot serve minority members has not been backed up by data—has not been backed up by data.

She cites three studies, recent studies. Again, this is a new argument. A lot of my colleagues say: Whoa. I didn't sign up for that bill thinking it was based on some kind of broad-based systemic racism in the military. But that is the new argument. We need to get that right before we claim that every member of the military, every commander, is somehow a racist. Even the studies that she has now focused on are saying that disparity is not proof of racial discrimination.

The U.S. Air Force—one of the studies that she has talked about says:

While the presence of disparity alone is not evidence of racism, discrimination, or disparate treatment, it presents a concern that requires more in-depth analysis.

I fully agree with that.

Last year, when we were debating the NDAA, there was an issue that came to my attention about how we had very senior military members, four-star generals, who were not making the rank. We have a Service Chief right now, General Brown, who is the first African-American Service Secretary, Indian Services. When I talked to him, that was disturbing to me. I put forward legislation saying: Why is that? What is going on with our military? Let's figure that out.

What I am saying to Senator GILLIBRAND is and what the Air Force is saying is, if this is a problem, let's figure that out.

The GAO study that she cites says this:

These findings show an association for disparities at particular stages of the military justice process, but are inconclusive regarding other stages. However, GAO's findings of racial disparities, taken alone, do not establish whether unlawful discrimination has occurred, as that is a legal determination that would involve other corroborating information and supporting statistics.

Again, is there a challenging disparity right now that Senator GILLIBRAND has been highlighting? I believe so. Is it proof that the UCMJ is somehow systemically racist and needs this broad-based change? That is what she has been arguing on the Senate floor.

Unlike her other argument on sexual assault and the crimes that we have seen over the years where there is 8 to 10 years of data that we have all been looking at—again, a lot to her credit—this is something that needs much, much more data before we make broad-based claims. For example, some of those who are supporting her bill sent out this supporting blog post that they said was supporting the legislation, the broad-based legislation. This was from the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review. This has been put out by staff to support her broad-based legislation. It says:

Almost all military disciplinary action occurs at the discretion of military officers, and with over 75% of the officer corps [being] white, systemic bias is not just a function of military justice, it's a foregone conclusion.

That is a pretty broad statement. That is a pretty broad statement. Where is the data to back that up? In essence, because you are a White commander, you are not going to give justice to minorities? I find that offensive as a commander who has commanded all kinds of Alaska Natives, African Americans, Hispanics, Whites.

So we can't base this broad-based legislation—all felonies—on this relatively new claim that does not have data supporting it that somehow we need to revamp the entire UCMJ because White commanders are racist. I don't think we should do it.

I want to work with Senator GILLIBRAND on these and other issues tomorrow. It will be an important debate. I am hopeful that the years of her hard work and data on this issue are going to result in a carve-out for sexual assault and related crimes of violence that will be bipartisan. It will be supported by the Secretary of Defense, the Service Secretaries. Again, I think Senator GILLIBRAND will deserve an enormous amount of credit for her determination over a decade to make that happen. But with regard to the broader legislation that she has asked for unanimous consent on, for the reasons I just discussed, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, my colleague has made some serious

misstatements and allegations in his remarks.

I never said White commanders are racist, nor would I ever. In fact, all I have done is cite 3 years of evidence published by the Department of Defense about disparities in sentencing and punishment, with the Marines, for example, having 2.61 times more likely to be punished for Black servicemembers versus White servicemembers. It is DOD data. It is DOD information.

As the Senator knows, this bill was written 8 years ago, and the reason it was written with a bright line was for three reasons.

The first is that our allies already have done this. They created a bright line of felonies for both plaintiffs' and defendants' rights—the UK, Israel, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, and Australia. They did this because they believed servicemembers deserve basic civil liberties. The commander is not a trained lawyer. They thought a trained military prosecutor should make those decisions for serious crimes.

We were told by every military justice expert available that to do anything less than a bright line would be a terrible disservice to the UCMJ, that bright lines work, that bright lines are necessary, and that having the bright line be a punishment of more than a year would serve the servicemembers better.

Second, we heard from servicemembers, particularly female servicemembers. And I know there is a lot of mansplaining in this body, but JONI ERNST is the only female combat commander Republican in this body. TAMMY DUCKWORTH is the only female combat veteran Democrat in this body. They helped to write this legislation, and when they wrote it, they said this: They said women in the military are often marginalized, and the perception, dear colleague, is that although men are sexually assaulted, more often than not, it is the women who come forward. More often than not, they will associate a sexual assault procedure and process that is unique to be specialized treatment.

JONI ERNST is not only a combat veteran, she is also a sexual assault survivor. So I don't think you can put yourself in her shoes, nor should you try to. This is legislation that she worked hard over the last 6 years with me on to tailor it, to narrow it.

Bar fights are excluded specifically because JONI ERNST knows as a commander that bar fights are prevalent, and we don't want to have to deal with bar fights when we are talking about serious felonies. They are carved out. They are carved out as to all military crimes.

The reason why this bright line of felonies protects servicemembers is because—you know this, dear colleague. You know that in domestic violence cases, often other serious crimes are at play. We have a case where a boyfriend and girlfriend—the girlfriend breaks up with the boyfriend, and he shoots her

dead. Her case would not be taken to a special commander—excuse me—a special prosecutor because she was murdered.

Vanessa Guillen. Her case would not have the benefit of a special prosecutor because she was murdered.

We have another case just published last week, a domestic violence case where a servicemember is beating his wife. A neighbor hears the screams and intervenes to try to protect her. The servicemember shoots the neighbor, who is killed. The commander decides that that is a stand-your-ground case, and he decides not to prosecute, and all that happens is that servicemember is moved. He is moved. So the next time he is beating his wife and she finally reports, that evidence of the murder isn't even in his case file. It is nowhere to be found. So they don't protect her. She doesn't get special review.

You need other serious crimes to be part of this; otherwise, they won't necessarily get the proper review. I know that you don't want to include serious crimes like check fraud or stealing or arson because you are like, what does this have to do with sexual assault? The truth is, in many cases of domestic violence, arson is used to cover up the crime. In many cases, when you have a domestic violence victim, 99 percent of them, their spouse or their partner used money as a way to isolate them. They use it to create dominance. They will steal her money. They will steal her credit card. If you don't have a specialized prosecutor look at the case, the commander might say: You took her checkbook; stop doing that. That is ridiculous. He won't even know this is something that happens in domestic violence cases all the time.

There are a lot of reasons. We wrote it this way because the military experts told us.

The issue of race has come up recently because the DOD started taking data. But the Air Force, you must know, started taking data about 20 years ago. In 1972, the Nixon administration had a task force specifically about this issue and found disparities. All we have done is cited the disparities as confirmation that if you fix the whole system, maybe you can fix other problems too.

But make no mistake, it was written this way initially specifically to end sexual violence. This Commission that President Biden asked for and Secretary Austin supports, every crime they looked at, every single one, they took and said it had to be taken out of the chain of command, not just sexual assault but sexual harassment, domestic violence, child abuse, trafficking of children, all of these related things. They looked at these and said these kinds of cases all need to be taken out. They didn't look at murder. They didn't look at the other serious crimes because it wasn't their mission.

I stand ready to work with you, Senator SULLIVAN, on a bipartisan, commonsense solution, but to say that just

because you have the chairman and the ranking member, that somehow you have the moral authority here—I disagree. I disagree because we have 66 Members on this bill and another 5 or 6 who would vote for this. So that is about 70 Members who have stated they want to do this bright line.

I have been very forthright with every Senator whom I have spoken to about why this bill is written the way it is. We don't want to marginalize women. We don't want them to be perceived as getting special treatment. We just want to professionalize the whole system.

I can tell you, when we talk to commanders who are fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and they have to do the analysis of a highly complex crime, it distracts them from the work of training troops and winning wars. So why not give these hard issues, just the felonies, to the smartest military prosecutor we can find?

Why not fix the system for all plaintiffs and all defendants? Why just draw out just one set of plaintiffs and one set of defendants?

I know this will not undermine good order and discipline because Secretary Austin said, taking out sexual assault-related crimes does not undermine good order and discipline; it does not undermine command and control. When asking the Chairwoman of this Commission whether taking out serious crimes would undermine command and control, she said absolutely not. So I believe this is the right answer. I have believed it was the right answer for 8 years.

Every year, I have asked my colleagues to look at the bill, study the bill, give me questions on the bill. When colleagues have wanted to shave off crimes because they thought they didn't rise to the level of a serious crime, like a bar fight, we have taken it out. We took out all military crimes because the commander has a unique understanding of those crimes. We have worked so hard for 8 years to do this one solution, and to imply that it is all new or it is only about this one set of data is so inappropriate and wrong.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I just want to again compliment my colleague from New York, who has worked this issue hard. It is an emotional issue. I think we all have good intentions on this issue. We all want to get to the right answer for men and women in the military as it relates to these crimes and still have a force. As she said, it is the best military fighting force in the world.

I think we are going to have a good debate on this tomorrow, and I am certainly committed to continuing to work with Senator GILLIBRAND on these issues as they relate to the military and as they relate to the civilian world. They are enormously important, and I take them very seriously.

Again, I want to applaud her for her passion, her focus, her commitment. We wouldn't be this far in this debate at all if it weren't for her, and I have a lot of respect for that.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I just want to thank the Senator and my colleague for his tireless work on this issue, and I do stand ready to work with him because I know how much he cares about the issue. He has led great reforms in his State of Alaska, and I believe, if his voice were lent to this issue, it would be unanimous.

So I thank the Presiding Officer, and I thank my colleague from Alaska.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA SOONERS SOFTBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE 2021 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S COLLEGE WORLD SERIES

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration and that the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 291.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 291) congratulating the University of Oklahoma Sooners softball team on winning the 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's College World Series.

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

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 291) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of June 24, 2021, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

CONGRATULATING THE MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY BASEBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE 2021 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 307, submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 307) congratulating the Mississippi State University baseball team on winning the 2021 National Collegiate

Athletic Association Division I baseball championship.

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

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 307) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE HUTCHINSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE BLUE DRAGONS FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2021 NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 308, submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 308) commending and congratulating the Hutchinson Community College Blue Dragons football team for winning the 2021 National Junior College Athletic Association football National Championship.

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

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 308) 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, JULY 21, 2021

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, July 21; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Jenkins nomination; further, that at 11:30 a.m., the

Senate vote on confirmation of the Abruzzo nomination; that the cloture vote on the Jenkins nomination occur immediately upon disposition of the Abruzzo nomination; that if cloture is invoked on the Jenkins nomination, all postcloture time expire at 2:30 p.m.; finally, that if any of the 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 action.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senator RUBIO.

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

The Senator from Florida.

CUBA

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, we have heard more about Cuba in the last week than probably the 10 years that I have been here combined.

And yesterday we heard from the White House. The White House was having some sort of a meeting and conference call and came out and said that they are going to be looking at remittances and increasing and making it easier to get money to relatives in Cuba.

That is not surprising. The people in charge of Cuba policy at the White House, at the National Security Council, and at the State Department—the people in charge of Cuba policy have long been advocates for dialogue with the regime and an economic opening to the regime. They have been for getting rid of the embargo and that sort of thing.

I think it is important, given the fact that I recognize that most people in this country and in the Senate don't follow this issue on a regular basis, that we address that. Because the fundamental question being put to us is—so the people of Cuba are suffering. The people of Cuba are going through a difficult economic time. I would argue that they have done so for 62 years—why don't we get rid of the embargo? It would make life easier for them.

And I want to address it. I want to address it especially to those who are not as familiar with this issue.

First of all, let me begin by saying there are no American ships blockading Cuba, surrounding the island of Cuba. In fact, Cuba, frankly, does not have an embargo in the way people think.

Cuba trades with the whole world. For example, Cuba, every year, exports \$1.2 billion, which doesn't sound like a lot, but it is a lot for an island of 11 million people. OK?

They export \$461 million to China; \$127 million to Spain; \$65 million to the

Netherlands; \$64 million to Germany. This is not a country that is isolated. They trade with every country in the world.

They import \$5.3 billion a year. With Spain alone, they export—they import, I am sorry, \$1 billion from Spain; another \$790 million from China; \$327 million from Italy; \$285 million from Canada and from Russia.

So they import 5—over \$5 billion. They export over \$1.2 billion. Cuba is not isolated. They trade with every country—this regime trades with virtually every country on the planet.

You know who else they trade with? The United States of America. Cuba trades with the United States of America. They import almost \$280 million a year; almost as much as they do with Canada and Russia. And no one accuses Canada and Russia of having a blockade on Cuba.

Sixty-six percent of the chicken that is eaten in Cuba, which is the staple protein in Cuba, comes from the United States. Half their soybeans come from the United States.

There is only one blockade in Cuba, and it is the blockade that this regime has imposed upon its people.

Now, yesterday, the President announced—or the White House announced they are going to stand up some remittances group to try to figure out: So how do we make it easier for relatives to send money to their relatives on the island of Cuba?

Well, that work group is going to not have a long time to meet. They are not going to have to meet for very long because U.S. law allows that now. It is not illegal to send money to your relatives in Cuba.

The only thing that is prohibited is you can't send the money—you can't send the money through this bank that the Cuban military set up in Panama. That is the only thing that is prohibited.

And to the extent money can't reach the people of Cuba, it is because they refuse to allow anyone other than that bank to do these remittances.

And, by the way, they have prohibited depositing dollars. Here is how it works for them: You send your relative \$100. They take 10 percent of it. Then they take the dollars—they don't let them deposit it. They pocket the dollars, and they give them this worthless Cuban currency. So they have the dollars so they can buy things for themselves and on the global market.

So the blockade, to the extent that there is something that is preventing remittances directly to the Cuban people, it is not U.S. policy; it is regime policy. They are the ones who need a work group.

How about this argument that there is a blockade on travel? If only more American tourists could go to Cuba.

By the way, Cuba is already filled with Canadian tourists and Italian tourists who enjoy 5-star accommodations. And I will be frank, many of them go there—these sick, disgusting

men who go there to hook up with a 16- or 17-year-old girl.

But that said, they talk about travel to Cuba. Well, let me tell you something. Travel is allowed now. An American can go to Cuba. You just can't stay at a military-owned hotel or eat at a military-owned restaurant or shop at a military-owned store. You can stay at the private homes of people who rent them out on Airbnb. You can do that. You can eat at a restaurant that is owned by a private person. You can shop at stores that are owned by private people.

The reason why they have nowhere to stay, nowhere to eat, and nowhere to shop is not U.S. policy. It is that the Cuban regime won't allow privately owned hotels, privately owned shops, privately owned stores. They won't allow it—privately owned restaurants. They are the ones who have a blockade on travel, not the United States.

What about medicine? That is another thing they have put out there. This is so cruel. We don't allow medicine in.

Do you know what the Cuban regime announced last week? This is what they announced on their national television: We are going to lift the ban on the importation of medicine.

What? You mean there was a Cuban ban, a regime ban on importing medicine? Yes, there was. They are the ones who weren't allowing medicine in. And to the extent they were allowing it in, they were putting a tariff on it. So there is no blockade on medicine. We sell them medicine.

And you can donate medicine, unlimited amounts, under U.S. law. If there is a blockade on medicine, it is the regime's blockade.

The other one I hear is the internet. I support the internet. Why don't we allow—I had somebody say this to me yesterday: Why don't we allow American companies to go and provide internet, then they would have internet? It is the embargo.

And these people don't know what they are talking about. They literally are just parroting stupid, ridiculous talking points, because the law in the U.S. on trade with Cuba specifically exempts telecoms. AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, every American telecom could go into Cuba tomorrow and offer phone and internet service.

You know why they can't? Not our law. It is the Cuban regime because they want to control that.

And you see a pattern here. Blockade on travel, blockade on private ownership of business, blockade on bringing in medicine, blockade on bringing in money. Why?

Because the Cuban regime wants to control people. They don't want an individual Cuban to have a paycheck that they earn for themselves. They want what little you have to come from them because if you don't do what they tell you, they can take it from you. That is what they want.

They don't want you to have internet companies offered by AT&T and Sprint

and Verizon or anybody else because they want to be able to shut it off when you are saying things they don't like and things against them.

Same with medicine. They use all of these things as a tool. It is hard to fathom because we live here, but they use all of it as a tool. You want medicine? Are you posting stuff on the internet? Are you saying things against the regime? Are you speaking out? Are you not participating in these acts of repudiation that we force people to do? Because if you don't, you are not going to get your medicine.

And they certainly don't want the cash flowing around. They don't want independent ownership. They don't want the people of Cuba to have liberty. This is all about control, all about control.

And, by the way, in the law that codified the embargo, it has a clause that automatically triggers the end of the embargo. And you want to know what this tough standard is that is in the law? Free the political prisoners, free press, free and fair elections, multiparty elections. If the regime does those three things, the embargo ends automatically, automatically.

There is no embargo on Cuba. There is an embargo on Cuban regime, an embargo on companies they own, because what they wanted to do is they wanted to take the Obama opening, funnel all that money through their companies—people say there are Spanish companies that own hotels. They don't own the hotels in Cuba. The regime owns the hotels.

These hotel chains that open in Cuba on the beaches, they don't even pay their employees. They pay the Cuban Government. The Cuban Government pays the employees. Control.

So the bottom line is this: Anybody who stands up and says there is an em-

bargo, there is a blockade by the United States, and it is cruel and it is causing all these problems is one of two things: They don't know what they are talking about and they are just parroting some talking point or they are liars. Those are the only two options.

This is not about an embargo. The people of Cuba did not take to the streets, did not have their heads cracked open, did not have their kids arrested and put in jail. Mothers, tomorrow, plan to march in Cuba because they don't know where their children are; arrested. They don't know where their kids are.

They broke into homes. They grabbed 16-year-old boys, they gave them a bat. They said: You are going halfway across the country to beat people up in the street.

They didn't stand up against all those things because of an embargo or because they wanted remittances. They stood up because they wanted liberty, libertad. That is what they wanted. That is what they are telling us.

Why don't we listen to them? They have told us what they want. They want libertad. They want liberty. And if there are any people on this Earth that should understand that, it should be Americans.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:15 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, July 21, 2021, at 10:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ANDREW PHILIP HUNTER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY, VICE BRUCE D. JETTE.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

LAURIE E. LOCASCIO, OF MARYLAND, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY, VICE WALTER G. COPAN.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CARYN R. MCCLELLAND, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM.

MICHAEL J. MURPHY, OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA.

HOWARD A. VAN VRANKEN, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

JAMES D. RODRIGUEZ, OF TEXAS, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING, VICE JOHN LOWRY III.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate July 20, 2021:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

KENNETH ALLEN POLITE, JR., OF LOUISIANA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL.

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on July 20, 2021 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

MICHAEL A. BROWN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION AND SUSTAINMENT, VICE ELLEN M. LORD, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON APRIL 12, 2021.

JAVIER M. GUZMAN, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE JOSEPH H. HUNT, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON APRIL 28, 2021.